

**UPSURGE** OF  
**PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE**  
**IN**  
**THE PHILIPPINES**  
**AND** **THE WORLD**

☆ SELECTED WORKS 2020 ☆



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**Upsurge of People's Resistance  
in the Philippines and the World**

**Selected Works 2020**

**Julieta de Lima, Editor**

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## Author's Preface

I thank the International Network for Philippine Studies for publishing this book, *Upsurge of People's Resistance in the Philippines and the World* and Julieta de Lima for editing it. I am glad that it is made available in both electronic and printed copies from well-known international outlets for the purpose of wider and faster distribution.

This book compiles all my significant writings in 2020 in the form of articles and speeches; statements and interviews; and messages and letters in my various capacities as Chairperson Emeritus of the International Network for Philippine Studies, Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and as a public intellectual and social activist.

The year 2020 is one of my most productive years in my entire writing life, including those during which I participated in building the ideological, political and organizational foundations of the CPP, the New People's Army (NPA), the NDFP, the revolutionary mass organizations and the local organs of political power, constituting the people's democratic government.

In the first quarter of 2020, I was requested by my friends in the Philippines and abroad to write articles and speeches for their publications and organizations to shed light on the worsening crisis and the rising resistance of the people. When the lockdowns started in mid-March due to the Covid-19 pandemic, at first it looked like I would suffer from house arrest, scarce activity and boredom.

But soon enough, anti-imperialist and democratic organizations in the Philippines and abroad launched many series of video conferences and online fora, especially webinars, on ideological, political, economic and cultural issues. I received an avalanche of invitations to participate in these and they kept me busy and productive. Never in my life have written more than I did from April to the end of 2020.

The product, *Upsurge of People's Resistance in the Philippines and the World*, reflects the upsurge of anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles in so many countries in all continents from 2019 onward. Even in the heartlands of monopoly capitalism, the broad masses of the people have risen up against neoliberalism and the increasing tendency of the state to promote fascism and resort to use fascist methods.

Armed resistance has grown against the ceaseless wars of aggression, proxy wars and military interventions carried out by US imperialism. The US and its imperialist allies and the puppet regimes are entrapped by the

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

drive of the transnational corporations to extract superprofits by obtaining cheap sources of raw materials and assured markets for consumer manufactures and sales of weapons.

Most powerful resistance are the people's wars led by parties of the revolutionary proletariat, as in the Philippines, India, Nepal, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, Lebanon, Colombia, Peru and elsewhere. The crisis of the world capitalist system is pushing the monopoly bourgeoisie to unleash chauvinist, racist and fascist movements but these are driving the proletariat and people to rise up.

The fast growing socioeconomic and political turbulence of the world capitalist system signals the transition to the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution after decades of capitalist restoration in former socialist countries and the global reign of the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed. The lockdowns and other restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic have only served to stimulate various forms of revolutionary struggle.

We can anticipate that revolutionary resistance will intensify in the current year of 2021 because of the rapidly worsening economic and political crisis of the world capitalist system. The pandemic has aggravated this crisis by seriously slowing down production, disemploying huge numbers of working people, causing widespread hunger and misery and exacerbating the conditions of oppression and exploitation.

All basic contradictions in the world are escalating: those between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries; those between the imperialist countries and the oppressed peoples and nations; those among the imperialist powers themselves, especially the US and China. The neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization has gone bankrupt and the imperialist powers underscore the fact by whipping up protectionism against one another as well as state terrorism and wars of aggression against the people's resistance.

The crisis of the world capitalist system has a serious impact on the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines because this has been perpetuated as exporter of cheap raw materials, a few semimanufactures and low-wage workers; and importer of consumer manufactures, including food products, luxury items for the exploiting classes and the type of machinery and electronic equipment that do not industrialize the country.

Even as neoliberalism has aggravated and deepened the underdevelopment of the Philippine economy, the officials of the reactionary state and petty bourgeois intellectuals continue with the illusion that the Philippines is a newly- industrializing capitalist country. Thus, I have taken time to write a number of articles to demonstrate that the Philippine economy is still semifeudal, ruled by the big comprador

bourgeois, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

The economy is indeed capitalist because the commodity system of production is dominant. But it does not produce the machine tools, the basic metals and chemicals and the digital programs for speed-up. The luxury high quality consumer goods and the high-rise buildings are sustained by the export of cheap raw materials, semimanufactures and labor and by a mounting debt burden to cover the growing trade deficits.

The crisis of the ruling system is bound to worsen in 2021 and thereafter because of the conditions of economic depression, further underdevelopment, the massive losses of employment and income, mass poverty and hunger among the toiling masses of workers and peasants. More raw materials are being exported at cheaper prices and are underdeclared for the purpose of tax evasion.

At the same time, food production has suffered from the reduction of agricultural land by real estate speculation, mining and monocrop plantations, lack of grain stockpiling, price support, facilities and extension services, the onslaught of import liberalization and big comprador manipulation of local food supplies and devastation due to typhoons, floods and drought. the costs of food imports are fast rising.

The Philippine economy is beset by a sharp fall in GDP, widening trade and budgetary deficits, skyrocketing public debt, mounting debt service payments, the return of millions of overseas contract work and drastic decline of their foreign exchange remittances, food scarcity and inflation. Bureaucratic corruption and military overspending have caused the bankruptcy of the reactionary state and deprived the people of social services and economic assistance for coping with the pandemic and economic crisis.

Not satisfied with causing economic and social catastrophe, the Duterte regime persists in committing the most revolting crimes of treason, tyranny, mass murder and plunder and is hellbent on imposing fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. It has taken advantage of the lockdown due to the pandemic to rob the national treasury and to railroad the passage of the law of state terrorism, which practically realizes the fascist scheme of the tyrant Duterte.

In the book, I try to present and analyze the major events and issues that agitate the people in the Philippines and world in 2020 and that continue to drive them to carry out mass protest actions as well as the revolutionary armed resistance. The perfect storm--the convergence of extreme conditions of oppression and exploitation--has already beset the Philippines and is generating the powerful resistance of the Filipino people and all their patriotic and democratic forces.

Thanks to the Philippine and international organizations that have invited me to write papers and deliver them in video conferences and webinars,

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

I have taken up a wide range major issues on imperialism, neoliberalism, fascism, wars of aggression, hunger and famine, and the relationship of the pandemic to biochemical warfare and the rape of the environment by monopoly capitalism.

I have also discussed the historic significance, fundamental principles and current relevance of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao on various large subjects, including dialectical materialism, historical materialism, political economy, scientific socialism, on the correct of handling of contradictions in socialist society and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Upsurge of People's Resistance in the Philippines and the World contains the texts of the contributions that I have made to the aforesaid video conferences and webinars that have been sponsored by the International League of Peoples' Struggle, BAYAN, Congress of Teachers/Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND), Kilusang Mayo Uno, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Anakbayan-Philippines, the National Democratic Online School of Anakbayan-Europe, Paaralang Jose Maria Sison of Metro Manila and other organizations.

The book also contains my messages of solidarity and support to various anti-imperialist and democratic mass organizations and movements of the Filipino and other peoples of the world as well as tributes to long-time revolutionary patriots and communist fighters such as Fidel Agcaoili who died of illness and revolutionary martyrs Julius Giron, Eugenia Magpantay and Agaton Topacio, who were NDFP political consultants in negotiations with the GRP but were brutally murdered by Duterte's butchers within 2020.

The evil character of the Duterte regime is most demonstrated by the murder and torture and abduction of political consultants of the NDFP in peace negotiations with the reactionary state since the tyrant Duterte was assured of US military support by US President Trump in 2017 for terminating said peace negotiations, designating the CPP and NPA as "terrorist" and stepping up the all-out war policy to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people.

May the accumulated strength and victories of the Philippine revolution, the current upsurge of revolutionary struggles, the accelerated growth of the revolutionary forces and the examples of long revolutionary service, martyrdom and heroism further inspire the proletariat and the rest of the people to win ever greater victories towards the goals of national liberation, people's democracy and socialism.

**Jose Maria Sison**  
**March 1, 2021**  
**Utrecht, The Netherlands**







# I. Articles and Speeches



# **Terrorist crimes of Trump and US imperialism turn the peoples of the Middle East against them**

January 7, 2020

The acting Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi revealed in his recent address to the Iraqi Parliament that US President Trump had asked him to “play the mediator’s role” between the US and Iran and that consequently General Qassem Soleimani flew to Baghdad with a message from the Iranian government regarding the lowering of tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

General Soleimani was on a peace mission when Trump ordered his military minions to track the flight and arrival of the celebrated Iranian general at the Baghdad airport in order to target him with an air strike by drone and to murder him together with Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units leader Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis and their Iranian and Iraqi companions.

The revelation of Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi completely belies the claim of Trump and the Pentagon that they took “decisive defensive action” to preempt an attack directed by Soleimani. In fact, Trump knew that Soleimani was traveling to Baghdad in a diplomatic capacity as an emissary of Iran to discuss with the Iraqi Prime Minister the de-escalation of violence involving the US and Saudi Arabia.

Although previously known as a close ally of the US, Abdul-Mahdi is totally offended by the multiple murder of his official guest General Soleimani, PMU leader Al-Muhandis and the accompanying Iraqi and Iranian citizens in brazen violation of Iraqi national sovereignty and territorial integrity and has recommended to the Iraqi Parliament to approve the resolution to kick out the US military forces from Iraq.

As already resolved by the Iraqi Parliament, the US must withdraw its military forces from Iraq. But in reaction, Trump is aggravating his crime of multiple murder and flagrant violation of Iraqi sovereignty by refusing to withdraw US military forces from Iraq, demanding payment for US military bases and threatening to impose sanctions far worse than those on Iran.

In the first place, the US has been in Iraq because of its war of aggression and its illegal occupation on the false pretext of taking out nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction. The US is under obligation to make war damage payments to Iraq for the large-scale destruction of Iraqi lives, infrastructure and properties.

The US must respect Iraqi sovereignty and territorial integrity. It has no choice but to yield its military bases to Iraq as sovereign owner of the

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

land and pay the rent for the use of said bases for many years. It is the US that has the moral and financial obligations to Iraq and not the other way around. Otherwise, there is just cause for the Iraqi people to rise up against US imperialism and its terrorism.

Far beyond the gangster mentality of Trump, there are far reaching consequences of his criminal acts. He has driven the Iraqi and Iranian governments and peoples to stand together against US imperialism. They can use their own resources, means and alliances to fight US imperialism and its closest allies, Israeli Zionism and the Saudi monarchy. And they can avail of the support of Russia and China in countering the high-tech weaponry of their enemies.

Thanks to the terrorist roguery of Trump and US imperialism, they are becoming further isolated and there is high potential for the Middle East to become a new Vietnam on a much wider scale for US imperialism and its regional puppets and with far worse consequences for them. The ceaseless wars that the US has unleashed in the region under the neoconservative policy are graduating to a grand war between increasingly independent states and US imperialism on accelerated decline.

Under these conditions, the people and their revolutionary forces (especially national liberation movements with a socialist perspective) can gain strength for themselves from the opportunities arising from the inter-imperialist contradictions and contradictions between imperialist powers and recalcitrant or discreditable client-states. The proletariat and people of the world are steadily moving and advancing in the direction of widespread anti-imperialism and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.



# On the Prospect of Peace Negotiations during the Time of Duterte or Thereafter<sup>1</sup>

Assembly for Peace, Quezon City  
January 17, 2020

Dear Peace Advocates,

Thank you for inviting me to your assembly. I wish to discuss recent and current circumstances pertinent to the prospect of resuming the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and then I shall try to estimate whether such a prospect will be realized before the end of the Duterte regime. I shall also make suggestions pertaining to the role of the peace advocates during and after the Duterte regime.

## ***I. Recent Circumstances Pertinent to Peace Negotiations***

Since November 23, 2017, President Duterte had issued proclamations and executive orders (especially Proclamations No. 360 and No. 374 and Executive Order No. 70) to terminate and further prevent peace negotiations between the authorized negotiating panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). But on December 5, 2019, he publicly ordered Secretary Bello to meet me in Utrecht in order to explore the resumption of peace negotiations.

As it is the consistent NDFP policy to be open to peace negotiations with the GRP, I readily agreed to meet Secretary Bello. Thus, from December 7 to 9, 2019, Secretary Bello and Nani Braganza held informal talks in Utrecht with a team of the NDFP, including panel chairperson, Fidel Agcaoili and senior adviser Luis Jalandoni, myself and a few others. Further informal talks occurred from December 19 to 21.

In the presence of a representative of the special envoy of the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG), Katrina Lie Revheim, the following agreements were made as a result of the informal talks:

First: The reciprocal unilateral ceasefire to run from December 23 to January 7 and the consensus on the desirability of the GRP President releasing the sick and elderly political prisoners, especially the NDFP consultants on humanitarian grounds;

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<sup>1</sup>Address delivered as NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

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Second: The informal meeting on the second or third week of January 2020 to pave the way for the first formal meeting to resume the peace negotiations with the following tasks, to reaffirm the joint agreements since 1992 and to supersede the presidential issuances terminating and preventing the peace negotiations and to set the agenda for further formal meetings for the finalization of the Interim Peace Agreement (IPA), previously drafted jointly by back channel teams of the GRP and NDFP.

The Interim Peace Agreement is a package of agreements on a) general amnesty and release of all political prisoners; b) approval of the articles of Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER), on 1) agrarian reform and rural development and 2) national industrialization and economic development; and c) coordinated unilateral ceasefire agreement.

Third: I agreed to meet Duterte in April in Hanoi after the mutual approval of the IPA and to meet him in the Philippines after the mutual approval of CASER.

On the whole, on a nationwide scale, the reciprocal unilateral ceasefire ran successfully from December 23, 2019 to January 7, 2020, despite a few incidents which became the subject of publicized complaints from the direction of the GRP and NDFP. These complaints ought to be submitted to the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) under the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

It should be noted that not a single political prisoner was released on humanitarian grounds in the spirit of Christmas and the New Year, contrary to expectations of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, the political prisoners and their families.

## ***II. Current Circumstances Pertinent to Peace Negotiations***

Even before the ceasefire ended, certain GRP officials (including national security adviser Esperon, Defense secretary Lorenzana, DILG secretary Año, OPAPP secretary Galvez and ultimately the newly appointed AFP chief of staff Santos) took turns in opposing the resumption of the peace negotiations between the duly authorized panels of the GRP and the NDFP.

They harped on the following points:

1) They can destroy the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA) before the end of the Duterte regime despite the failure of all previous regimes to destroy the people's revolutionary movement and the repeated failure of the current Duterte regime to comply with its deadlines for destroying said movement.

2) They oppose peace negotiations in a neutral venue abroad but favor



negotiations for the surrender of the CPP, the NPA and entire revolutionary movement to the unchanged tyrannical regime in a Philippine venue under the control and manipulation of said regime and its armed minions.

3) They have rendered peace negotiations at the national level unnecessary and superfluous because they are already destroying the revolutionary movement and are successfully staging fake localized peace talks, despite the glaring fact that all organs of the CPP and commands of the NPA at all levels have publicly rejected and condemned such fakery.

4) They are supposedly making their own reforms and consider as unnecessary the social, economic and political reforms proposed by the NDFP and those already agreed upon by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels in order to realize full independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development and they are most vehemently against genuine land reform and national industrialization.

5) They are satisfied with and enjoy the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation under the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats who are servile to the imperialist powers, their banks and monopoly firms.

Esperon and Galvez have been the most vicious in opposing the CASER, which has long been considered by the broad masses of the people as the meat or even the heart and soul of the peace negotiations. They use disinformation and outright lies to deny the hard work and achievements of the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels and their reciprocal working committees on social and economic reforms in negotiating and jointly drafting provisions of CASER.

They misrepresent CASER as the sole product of the NDFP and accuse the NDFP of being one-sidedly responsible for formulating the provisions already agreed upon by the reciprocal working committees of the GRP and the NDFP. In effect, they are sabotaging the resumption of the peace negotiations and the prospect of formalizing the Interim Peace Agreement, which carries the mutual approval of the articles on land reform and national industrialization in CASER.

The statement of the NDFP Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms (RWC SER) titled "Military Hawks Sabotage Peace Talks and Oppose Social and Economic Reforms", dated January 14, 2020 gives you an accurate picture of the process of negotiating and drafting the CASER and debunks the false claims of Esperon and Galvez who are hell-bent on sabotaging the peace negotiations and carrying an all-out war against the people and the revolutionary movement.

President Duterte has allowed his subordinates with militarist hawk mindset to speak publicly against the resumption of the peace negotiations and against the negotiations on CASER. He has so far disallowed his civilian peace emissaries, Bello and Braganza, from coming to Utrecht

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in the second or third week of January as promised in order to engage in informal meeting to prepare the formal meeting for the resumption of peace negotiations.

On Friday, January 10, 2020 Duterte spoke to the press on that he would like to have a one-on-one meeting with me in Manila before the resumption of the peace negotiations. I have refused the invitation in the following terms:

The repeated offer of Duterte for me to have a one-on-one meeting with him in Manila is done in bad faith. It is either a malicious scheme to put me in a lethal trap or an equally malicious maneuver to prevent peace negotiations upon rejection of his offer by me and the NDFP as an unacceptable precondition.

There are three reasons why Duterte is being malicious about his offer of a one-on-one meeting in Manila:

First, he wants me to drop the legal protection that I have under the Refugee Convention and Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and to put myself under the control and disposition of his butcher regime upon my arrival in Manila.

Second, he wants me to violate my principles by submitting and surrendering myself to the tyrannical regime and to the actions that he has taken to terminate and prevent the peace negotiations between authorized panels of the GRP and NDFP.

Third, he wants to preempt the absolutely necessary formal meeting that has to be held in a neutral venue abroad in order to resume the peace negotiations by reaffirming the joint GRP-NDFP agreements since 1992 and by superseding the presidential issuances that he has made to terminate and prevent peace negotiations.

Duterte is making the fake offer of one-on-one meeting in Manila as an unacceptable precondition which invites rejection by me and by the NDFP and thereby prevents the peace negotiations. I do not think that he actually believes that I would take his bait or he is unintelligent enough not to appreciate my ability to discern what is mere trickery from him and his military advisors.

### ***III. Prospects of Resuming the Peace Negotiations***

In view of the foregoing circumstances, I do not think Duterte is serious about resuming the peace negotiations. The prospect of resuming the peace negotiations before the end of the Duterte regime is close to nil or already nil.

There is no sign from him whatsoever that peace negotiations are to be resumed by reaffirming the joint agreements made by the GRP and NDFP since 1992, by superseding the presidential issuance that have terminated

and prevented peace negotiations and by taking up the Interim Peace Agreement.

Previously, when I responded positively to his offer of resuming the peace negotiations on December 5, 2019, I gave him the benefit of a doubt that he would be interested in leaving a legacy that is not as ignominious as it has already taken shape. So far, he has not done anything to assure the people that his regime is treasonous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and mendacious.

It appears that he still overestimates his capabilities of clinging to power and that he does not need any peace negotiations with the NDFP. He continues to let his political agents in Congress to push charter change for installing a fascist dictatorship as Marcos did in the past or for choosing a successor that will protect him from possible prosecution for human rights violations, plunder and other grave crimes.

It is absolutely clear that Duterte is responsible for terminating and preventing the peace negotiations. To him belongs the responsibility for accepting or refusing the consistent openness of the NDFP for peace negotiations.

By refusing to negotiate with the NDFP, it is absolutely clear that he is fixed on pursuing his all-out war against the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces. It is therefore entirely just for the sovereign people and their revolutionary movement to defend themselves and wage all forms of struggle against the Duterte regime.

But despite the counterrevolutionary violence, arrogance and intransigence of the Duterte regime, the NDFP remains open to resuming the peace negotiations. It holds the view that peace negotiations might reduce or stop the human rights violations being perpetrated by the regime or might even lead to substantial reforms that contribute to laying the basis for a just peace.

But of course, time is fast running out for the Duterte regime to make agreements and implement these. It is now in its twilight years if the regime respects the 1987 Constitution of the GRP and does not amend it to install a fascist dictatorship. But I think that there is enough time to make CASER and implement it to a sufficient and dramatic extent before the Duterte regime ends if Duterte can give up his scheme of fascist dictatorship and can prevail upon his anti-peace and anti-CASER military subordinates from sabotaging the efforts to resume the peace negotiations.

What can the peace advocates do in the face of the current circumstances and what I estimate as the dismal prospect for resuming peace negotiations before the end of the Duterte regime? I think that it remains their moral duty to persevere in the noble task of peace advocacy and to try to persuade or prevail upon the Duterte regime to engage the NDFP in peace negotiations.

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Most important of all, the peace advocates must work to unify the people on the necessity of addressing the roots of the armed conflict and laying the foundation for a just peace through economic, social and political reforms agreed upon in the peace process.

Like the NDFP, the peace advocates cannot do anything to persuade the Duterte regime to negotiate if for whatever reason it refuses all the way to its very end. But the work done and agreements made in previous negotiations since 1992 and the continuance and intensification of peace advocacy keep open the prospect of peace negotiations if not in the time of the Duterte regime, in the time of the next regime.

The previous achievements, in the form of agreements and accumulated experience and expertise in peace negotiations, remain on record and are not lost. In the future, they shall be the foundation for renewed peace negotiations between the NDFP and a new regime that is truly determined to strive for a just peace through economic, social and political reforms that address the roots of the armed conflict. Thank you.



## **Fight for Land, Justice and Peace**

### **Message on the Occasion of 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Mendiola massacre<sup>2</sup>**

January 22, 2020

Dear Advocates of Land Justice and Peace!

I convey to you warmest greetings of peace and solidarity on the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre and the holding of a forum on land justice and peace to be followed by candle lighting in honor of the 13 peasants who were martyred and all others who were wounded, beaten up and abused by the reactionary military and police officers under the first Aquino regime.

I salute and congratulate the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), Tanggol Magsasaka, and Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, in cooperation with PATRIA and CLAMOR and the Movement Against Tyranny, for successfully organizing this commemorative event. You are among the most respected organizations concerned with land justice and peace.

#### ***The Mendiola Massacre and Its Aftermath***

The Mendiola massacre of January 22, 1987 was a grievous crime perpetrated by the reactionary military and police officers in order to put the Aquino regime in violent opposition to the peasant masses and the land reform movement and in order to sabotage prospective peace negotiations between the Manila government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

At the time of the massacre, the negotiating panels that had earlier forged the agreement to hold ceasefire between the armed forces of the reactionary government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, starting from November 22, 1986, were already preparing the substantive agenda for the peace negotiations to follow the ceasefire.

The Aquino regime did not investigate and did not hold accountable the military and police officers responsible for the massacre. Instead, she used the massacre as pretext for unsheathing the sword of war and ending the prospect of peace negotiations. A strategic campaign plan was immediately unleashed, with more peasants being massacred.

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<sup>2</sup> Issued as Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

Since then, the NDFP has been confronted with the phenomenon of a regime publicly wishing in its early months to have peace negotiations with the NDFP only to end these eventually upon the ruling clique's consolidation of power or upon the open resistance of military officials to peace negotiations.

As a result of the NDFP negotiating in Manila under the surveillance of the reactionary military and police, NDFP negotiators, staffers, technical assistants and CPP and NPA personnel exposed to their enemy subsequently became subject to abductions, torture, indefinite detention and death in the national capital region and other regions where ceasefire rallies were held.

When Aquino approached the NDFP again for possible peace negotiations in 1989, the NDFP had to insist that the peace negotiations had to be held in a foreign neutral venue, free from surveillance and punitive actions by the military and police of the regime. Eventually, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees would require a foreign neutral venue for peace negotiations.

It is important for me to recall the circumstances and aftermath of the Mendiola massacre in connection with my task of discussing the prospects and challenges in the pursuit of a just and lasting peace. We must learn from history in order not to avoid the pitfalls of the past and to do what is possible and necessary as much as we can to achieve a just peace for the benefit of the people.

### ***Current Challenges and Prospects***

To discuss the current challenges and prospects in the pursuit of a just and lasting peace, I need not review the long history of peace negotiations from one regime to another since 1992. It suffices for me to say that in the 27 years since The Hague Joint Declaration, not more than two years have been used by the negotiating panels to meet and work in compliance with the substantive agenda of the peace negotiations.

The ruling politicians and their military subordinates have frequently delayed or stopped the peace negotiations for long stretches of time in compliance with the interests of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. They have used the peace negotiations at the minimum as an occasional tool for propaganda and at the maximum as a device for seeking the fragmentation of the revolutionary movement and the surrender of the revolutionary forces.

Thus, they keep on staging sham localized peace talks as a substitute for real peace negotiations between duly authorized negotiators of the GRP and NDFP. These fake localized peace talks do not involve any duly-authorized representative of the CPP, NPA or NDFP. Military assets

and fake surrenderers pose as NPA surrenderers and the corrupt military officers pocket the public money that is supposed to go to surrenderers.

Last December 5, 2019, Duterte publicly announced that he wanted the resumption of the peace negotiations and ordered Secretary Bello to meet me in Utrecht. I agreed to meet him because it is the consistent policy of the NDFP to be open to peace negotiations despite such previous bitter experiences as the ceaseless all-out war operations of the Duterte regime even during ceasefire periods and, of course, the continuing termination and prevention of peace negotiations by Duterte' own presidential issuances.

My meeting with Secretary and Nani Braganza in December was productive. We agreed on the reciprocal unilateral ceasefire from December 23, 2019 to January 7, 2020 as a goodwill and confidence building measure for the resumption of peace negotiations. We also agreed on the desirability of the release of the sick and elderly political prisoners, especially the political consultants, on humanitarian grounds and in the spirit of Christmas and the New Year.

We further agreed that Secretary Bello and Braganza would come again to Utrecht to prepare for the formal meeting in Oslo to resume the peace negotiations by reaffirming all joint agreements since 1992, by superseding the presidential issuances that have terminated and prevented the peace negotiations and by taking up the Interim Peace Agreement which includes the general amnesty and release of all political prisoners, the mutual approval of the articles on land reform and national industrialization in Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER), and the coordinated unilateral ceasefire agreement.

Even before the reciprocal unilateral agreement ended, a series of officials (national security adviser Esperon, defense secretary Lorenzana, DILG secretary Año and the peace process adviser Galvez) made public statements opposing the peace negotiations by the duly-authorized panels of the GRP and NDFP. They claimed that such negotiations are unnecessary because they are already succeeding with their fake localized peace negotiations, because the CASER was a violation of national sovereignty and that reforms, if still needed, can be done without peace negotiations with the NDFP.

The second and third weeks of January have passed. Secretary Bello and Braganza have not returned. Instead, Duterte earlier invited me to go to Manila to give up the legal protection that I enjoy as a political refugee, betray my principles and surrender myself to a butcher regime. The malicious intent of the invitation is to end the prospect of resuming the peace negotiations. Thus, I have said in a recent assembly for peace that prospects for peace negotiations during the Duterte regime are close to nil or already nil.

### ***Continuing Openness of NDFP to Peace Negotiations***

Notwithstanding the continuing termination and prevention of peace negotiations by the Duterte regime, the NDFP continues to be open to peace negotiations even with the Duterte regime. The crisis of the ruling system is rapidly worsening and the clamor of the people for peace negotiations is rising together with their call for the ouster of the Duterte regime. This power-crazed regime might still have a lucid moment before its end.

If the Duterte regime remains intransigent and refuses to negotiate with the NDFP, there is nothing that the NDFP and the peace advocates can do but to let the people do their best in ousting the regime or stopping it from staying in power beyond 2022 under its scheme of fascist dictatorship through charter change. It is understandable why the Duterte regime is averse to peace negotiations of social, economic and political reforms. These run counter to its traitorous, tyrannical, murderous, plundering and mendacious character.

We can look forward to a new administration of the Manila government that is willing to negotiate with the NDFP. All the work and agreements that have been accomplished in previous peace negotiations remain on record. They can be the foundation for the resumption of peace negotiations. Likewise, the peace advocacy now is not wasted because it continues to promote the people's desire for peace negotiations as the way to a just a lasting peace through social, economic and political reforms.

Peace negotiations are urgently needed in order to confront the feudal and semifeudal problems that afflict the peasant masses and farm workers. There are the traditional landlords who exact high rent from tenants and the merchant-usurers who pay low prices for farm products and charge high for the commodities that they deliver. Even so-called land reform beneficiaries have been deprived of their allotted land through indebtedness and through bureaucratic reclassification of the land as outside of land reform.

There are modern corporate vultures, foreign and local, that grab land from the peasant masses and indigenous peoples in order to open or expand plantations, logging areas, mines and real estate projects. They give starvation wages to both agricultural and non-agricultural workers. Most of these corporations pollute and damage the rivers and streams and degrade the environment at the expense of the peasant masses and farm workers.

The National Food Authority is supposed to assure the farmers of a stable market for their produce and reliable income from their production of rice and other staples. But it is in cahoots with merchant cartels in manipulating prices in the local market and in facilitating the importation



of food products at the expense of the peasant masses. At the same time, under the so-called TRAIN program, excise taxes on fuel and other basic commodities are raised to inflate prices and make these unaffordable to the peasant masses.

The Duterte regime is responsible for the aggravation of the feudal and semifeudal problems that the peasant masses suffer. Even if there were peace negotiations, the regime would block their demands. But while there are no peace negotiations, the peasants, indigenous people and farm workers need to wage various forms of struggle in order to demand and work for genuine land reform, free land distribution, and thereby strive for the peace and justice that they have long fought and died for.

Wherever possible, they can carry out land reform by themselves, combat exploitation by landlords and merchant-usurers, engage in various forms of cooperation and raise production in agriculture and sideline occupations. They can also fight the corporate landgrabbers, break up their land monopoly and assist the farm workers in obtaining higher wage as well as the small contract growers in getting better payments.

The time will certainly come when the national democratic movement shall have reached such a high level of strength that a new administration of the GRP would be willing to negotiate with the NDFP. In anticipation of this, the NDFP can continue to muster its own personnel and other organizations concerned to continue working and improving on the current draft of the CASER and making it more realizable than ever.

As it is, the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) can be the basis for genuine land reform and for mobilizing the support of the peasant masses and the entire Filipino people. It is a noble purpose that you aim to gather the broadest sectors of land reform and peasant rights advocates, Church-based and religious organizations, members of the academe, civil libertarians and multisectoral groups.

It is a moral imperative that the majority of the people who are poor peasants, lower middle peasants and farm workers must benefit from genuine land reform and thereby achieve economic and social liberation. The coupling and interaction of genuine land reform and national industrialization are necessary for achieving economic development and rising above the morass of gross underdevelopment, high unemployment, inequality and mass poverty.

So long as there is no genuine land reform, the ground will be exceedingly fertile for the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. The poor peasants, lower middle peasants, farm workers and the rapidly growing surplus rural and urban population will continue to be the main source of Red fighters for the New People's Army.

In the absence of both genuine land reform and national industrialization, the broad masses of the Filipino people have no choice but to wage a

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revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

Long live the peasant masses and farm workers!

Fight for land justice and peace!

Resume the peace negotiations!

Adopt and carry out social, economic and political reforms!

Long live the Filipino people and the national democratic movement!



# **Celebrate the First Quarter Storm of 1970, Honor and Emulate the Heroic Activist Youth**

January 26, 2020

Beloved fellow activists,

Once more I wish to express warmest greetings of solidarity to the First Quarter Storm Movement and my congratulations for the successful preparations directed by the FQS@50 Coordinating Committee for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the FQS of 1970 from January to March this year.

I am happy and gratified to have participated in the preparations from the beginning in 2018 by presenting at the maiden forum of the Forum Series on the FQS of 1970 an overview of this event as framework for succeeding forums until 2020. I discussed the chain of events in the 1960s that led to the FQS of 1970, its distinctly great historic significance, its far-reaching consequences and continuing relevance.

By way of further contributing to the celebration of FQS, I have also proposed to the International Network for Philippine Studies the republication of the book, *First Quarter of 1970*. This can be read as a partner to the eye witness and insightful reports in Jose Lacaba's book, *Days of Disquiet and Nights of Rage*.

It carries the evaluative articles of Amado Guerrero, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and editor of *Ang Bayan*, on the series of mass protests by students, teachers, other professionals, workers and other urban poor who rose up and asserted the general line and popular strength of the national democratic movement and rocked the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system from base to rafters.

## ***The Significance of FQS of 1970***

The FQS of 1970 broke out in the revolutionary spirit of continuing the unfinished Philippine revolution and confronted the three evil forces that oppressed and exploited the Filipino people: US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism then chiefly represented by the Marcos regime.

The gigantic mass protests in FQS of 1970 were unprecedented in scale and intensity. They were the culmination of the long series of smaller mass protests launched by the youth from 1961 onward and carried out even more militantly and more widely since 1964 under the leadership of

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the comprehensive youth organization, Kabataang Makabayan.

Marcos had just won his reelection by spending a colossal amount of public money in the 1969 presidential elections and was widely denounced for the resultant soaring of the prices of basic commodities. Reacting to protest mass actions in December 1969, he threatened to declare martial law by way of intimidating the opposition and the people.

But he would concur with the reformists, including the clerico-fascists who called themselves social-democrats, that charter change was necessary to prevent the social volcano from erupting. He had the ulterior motive of imposing a fascist dictatorship on the people by initially using transitory provisions of a new constitution.

On January 26, 1970 in front of Congress, 10,000 student demonstrators came from the Catholic schools under a reformist leadership. The bigger KM contingent, consisting of students and workers, joined them. Marcos made the mistake of ordering the attack on the demonstrators after a cardboard coffin was thrown at him by a small group headed by the radio broadcaster, Roger Arienda.

The police brutality inflicted casualties on the student demonstrators. But it served to ignite the series of mass protests, which ranged in size from 50,000 to 150,000, from January to March 1970 in the national capital region. These spread to other universities, colleges and high schools on a nationwide scale.

As a result of its previous work in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the youth in the sixties, the KM was able to spearhead the FQS of 1970 as it grew and developed. At the same time, the Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP) sought to build a broad united front to oppose the US-Marcos regime.

The FQS gave birth to so many youth activists and so many youth groups. The organizers and speakers of the main political organizations and cultural groups played a key role in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the youth. They generated thousands of young activists who advanced the national democratic movement in schools, urban communities, factories and farms.

The FQS became a cultural revolution, as Propaganda and Education (Prop-ED) teams, schools for national democracy and cultural groups of creative writers and artists proliferated and became active. Revolutionary literature flourished. The marches and rallies were always enlivened by artistic murals and performances.

Many of those who joined Kabataang Makabayan (KM-Patriotic Youth), the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK/Association of Democratic Youth) and various cultural groups in the course of the FQS eventually became proletarian revolutionaries and joined the Communist Party of the Philippines. They were determined to carry out the people's

democratic revolution through people's war in response to Marcos' threat and preparations for fascist dictatorship. By the time that Marcos suspended the writ of habeas corpus on August 21, 1971 and then proclaimed martial law on September 22, 1972, there was already a large corps of educated youth and workers determined to wage the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. All the time that the Marcos fascist regime enjoyed the support of US imperialism, the conservative opposition was reduced to making legal protests and lobbying for the US to change its policy of supporting Marcos. The CPP led the people's resistance by waging armed struggle in the countryside and carrying out workers' strikes and lightning mass protests in urban areas.

The CPP was energized by activists from the FQS on a nationwide scale. They did revolutionary mass work among the workers, peasants, indigenous people, youth, women, professionals and other people in order to wage all forms of struggle, especially people's war, against the fascist puppet regime.

Despite the grave risks of capture, torture, prolonged detention or death, the veterans of the FQS contributed greatly to the development of the armed revolutionary movement and the building of underground and aboveground organizations and networks for people's resistance.

The aggravation of the chronic crisis of the ruling system by the Marcos regime and the rise of the armed revolutionary movement ultimately persuaded US imperialism to consider the regime as more of a liability than an asset and thus started to junk him from the time that Marcos made the mistake of having Benigno S. Aquino assassinated on August 21, 1983 and unwittingly igniting the gigantic mass protest actions from 1983 to his downfall on February 25, 1986.

The activists generated by the FQS of 1970 were at the forefront of the mass protest actions from 1983 onward, which ranged in size from 50,000 to several hundreds of thousands. They constantly waged all forms of struggle against the Marcos regime until 1986 when two to three million people rose up on EDSA and the contingent of more than one thousand people directly encircled the presidential palace and compelled the fascist dictator to give up power and flee to Hawaii in a US helicopter.

### ***Continuing Relevance of FQS of 1970***

Since the fall of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, many veterans of the FQS have continued to contribute to the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation in various capacities in the legal democratic movement or in the field of revolutionary armed struggle.

In the course of this protracted struggle, FQS veterans have paid for their achievements in serving the people by working hard, going against

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tremendous odds and making sacrifices in terms of martyrdom and deprivations.

They are leaving to the current generation and succeeding generations a great legacy that must be cherished as a source of inspiration and as a lasting relevant guide to patriotic and revolutionary activism. To this day, the FQS of 1970 remains relevant to the continuing struggle for full national independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development against the persistent semicolonial and semifeudal conditions.

The FQS of 1970 is a fountain of knowledge and collective experience about the socioeconomic and political conditions of Philippine society, the general line of people's democratic revolution, the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle and the mass line and slogans that can arouse, organize and mobilize the people.

We can learn from the FQS of 1970 how to prepare for gigantic mass protests, how to use indoor and outdoor rallies on campuses and communities, how to do propaganda and agitation, how to make artistic works to serve the mass actions and how to assemble at different points in a city and then march to the converging point.

It is our noble and urgent task to celebrate the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and to honor and emulate those who participated in this revolutionary storm by carrying out mobilizations, forums and other gatherings.

Today the best way to fulfil our task is to call on the broad masses of the people to rise up against the tyrannical, treasonous, murderous, corrupt and mendacious Duterte regime and realize the intensification of mass protests and other forms of struggle in order to hasten the end of this malignant regime.

We are confronted today by a regime which idolizes Marcos and which is quite similar to the Marcos fascist regime in being a puppet of US imperialism and chief representative of the local exploiting classes. It would be a sterile way of celebrating the FQS of 1970 if we do not pay attention to the need for mass protests against the Duterte regime.

It should be easier now to carry out mass mobilization against the regime because the legal democratic forces are now far stronger than they were in 1970 and have become far more experienced in waging mass struggles.

The chronic crisis of the ruling system has been aggravated by extreme oppression and exploitation under the combined policies of neoliberalism and fascism. These conditions are exceedingly favorable for strengthening and advancing the national democratic movement through mass struggles.

In view of the gross crimes of the Duterte regime against the people, it is necessary and possible to realize a broad united front to arouse, organize and mobilize the people in their millions against the common enemy.

Rely mainly on the basic forces of workers and peasants, win over the

middle forces of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the power of the enemy regime.

It is high time for the Filipino youth and people to rise up against a terrorist and plundering regime that has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations in order to wage all-out war against the broad masses of the people and their revolutionary forces as well as the legal democratic forces.

It slanders the people's democratic revolution as terrorism, labels activists as communist terrorists, extends the murderous methods of Oplan Tokhang to the brutal suppression of political opponents and critics and uses the slogan of anti-communism in order to militarize and make fascist the entire reactionary government and society.

Without a strong mass protest movement, the Duterte regime will continue to carry out its scheme of imposing fascist dictatorship on the people through charter change. In fact, the regime has continued to impose a state of national emergency on the people since September 4, 2016.

The Filipino youth and people of today must cry out as in the FQS of 1970: Makibaka, huwag matakot! Digmang Bayan ang sagot sa Martial Law! Their organized forces are far stronger than ever before and the desire of the people for revolutionary change is far stronger than ever before.

The escalating oppression and exploitation under the policy regimes of neoliberalism and fascism are inflicting intolerable suffering and are driving the people of the Philippines and the world to wage all forms of resistance against imperialism and all reaction.

The crisis of the Philippine ruling system coincides with the crisis of the world capitalist system. Conditions are exceedingly favorable for the Filipino people to advance their struggle for national and social liberation and contribute significantly to the global resurgence of the anti-imperialist, democratic and socialist forces of the people.

Long live the revolutionary spirit of the First Quarter Storm of 1970!

Down with imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism!

Long live the memory of martyrs and heroes of the FQS of 1970!

Long live the FQS veterans and their successors!

Makibaka, huwag matakot! Digmang bayan ang sagot sa martial law!

Continue the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people!







# Relevance of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 to the Global Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Struggle<sup>3</sup>

February 15, 2020

Dear Comrades and Friends,

I am grateful to the organizers for inviting me to speak in this gathering to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Quarter Storm of 1970. I am glad that you are launching the second edition of the book which chronicles and evaluate the heroic mass actions from January 25 to March 16, 1970, that you are featuring distinguished reviewers of the book and that you are letting some veterans of the FQS share their experiences and views with us today.

I am pleased with my assignment to speak on the relevance of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 to the global anti-fascist and anti-imperialist struggle. In all previous speeches about this historic event, I have focused mainly on its significance and relevance within the context of the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation. Now, I have the opportunity to focus on the relevance and connections of the FQS of 1970 and the Filipino people's revolutionary struggle to the global anti-imperialist and democratic struggle.

I wish to discuss the issues and struggle against fascism and imperialism that connected the FQS of 1970 in its own time and now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to the global struggle against fascism and imperialism. Ultimately, I shall discuss the mass line and methods of struggle that can be learned from the FQS in order to further strengthen the national democratic movement and enable it to contribute more to the global struggle against fascism and imperialism.

## ***1. Connections with the Global Struggle in 1970***

The FQS of 1970 arose from the history and circumstances of the Filipino people. It resounded the need for continuing the Philippine revolution, which had been started by the Katipunan led by Andres Bonifacio. This revolution had won against Spanish colonialism but was subsequently interrupted by the US imperialist conquest of the Philippines, by the US colonial regime and then by the nominal grant of independence in the

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<sup>3</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle and Founding Chairman, Kabataang Makabayan

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

establishment of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The activists of the FQS of 1970 understood that the basic problems of the Filipino people were imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Thus, they aroused, organized and mobilized the youth to respond to the need of the people for a national democratic revolution of the new type to confront and overcome the domestic semicolonial and semifeudal conditions dominated by US imperialism and the local exploiting classes in the era of modern imperialism and world proletarian revolution.

The recent reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on December 26, 1968 under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought proclaimed the program for a people's democratic revolution. This concurred with the national democratic line of the Kabataang Makabayan, which spearheaded the youth mass movement since 1964. The implementation of the CPP program through protracted people's war was in response to the fascistic acts and threat of fascist dictatorship by Marcos under US instigation.

It was inevitable that the FQS had connections with the global struggle against fascism and imperialism in 1970. US imperialism was the common enemy of the Filipino people and the people of the world. Emerging as the No. 1 imperialist power after World War II, it controlled the colonies and semicolonies that persisted in Asia outside of the countries that had adopted people's democracy and socialism.

The activists of the FQS of 1970 studied how the Chinese people won the revolution against fascism and imperialism, how they established socialism and how they waged cultural revolution to combat modern revisionism, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism. They admired the Korean people for putting US imperialism to a stalemate and upholding national independence and socialism. They applauded the revolutionary victory of the Cuban people against the tyrannical regime and US imperialism.

They supported the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They condemned US imperialism and the Suharto military fascist dictatorship for suppressing the revolutionary movement of the Indonesian people. They supported vigorously the revolutionary armed struggle of the Vietnamese people and the rest of the Indochinese people against US imperialism and the local fascist puppets.

At the time of the FQS of 1970, the revolutionary storm in the world was in Southeast Asia and the eye of that storm was in Vietnam. The Vietnamese people were rapidly advancing in their struggle for national liberation. The Filipino youth and the youth of the world were inspired by the heroic revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people and were moved to engage militantly in mass protest actions against the US war of aggression.

## **2. Connections with the Global Struggle Now**

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the FQS, the Filipino people are suffering grievously the US imperialist imposition of the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed and the state terrorism unleashed by the de facto fascist dictatorship of Duterte. The semicolonial and semifeudal system is in severe crisis and once more like during the fascist dictatorship it cannot rule in the old way. The people are desirous of revolutionary change.

The Kabataang Makabayan and other mass organizations that gained experience and strength from the FQS of 1970 have assisted in the propagation of the national democratic movement and the nationwide expansion of the revolutionary forces. The CPP as the revolutionary party of the proletariat is stronger than ever. It leads tens of thousands of cadres and members, thousands of Red fighters in the New People's Army, hundreds of thousands of people in revolutionary mass organizations and millions of people in local organs of political power that constitute the provisional revolutionary government.

As the leading class, the proletariat relies mainly on its basic alliance with the peasantry, wins over the middle social strata and takes advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the power of the treasonous, tyrannical and corrupt Duterte regime. The legal democratic forces and the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people have developed extensive relations of international solidarity with their counterparts along the line of anti-imperialist and democratic struggle in all continents and in most countries.

As in the Philippines today, the people of the world suffer grievously from the neoliberal policy of imperialist plunder, state terrorism, fascism, gender discrimination, oppression of indigenous people, environmental destruction and wars of aggression. Thus, since last year, there have been militant mass protest actions of unprecedented scale and intensity all over the world. These are a manifestation of how serious the contradictions in the world capitalist system have become. They are a signal that we are in transition to the global resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and proletarian-socialist revolution.

In both developed and underdeveloped countries, the proletariat and people have been ruthlessly subjected to the imperialist policy of neoliberal globalization and to the laws and practices of state terrorism. The contradictions between labor and capital are sharpening in the imperialist countries. Those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations are intensifying more than ever because they suffer the main brunt of imperialist oppression and exploitation. We see therefore the upsurge of mass protests by the proletariat and people in all continents.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

In certain countries, there are governments and people, like those of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Venezuela and Syria, which uphold national independence and the socialist cause and they stand up against imperialist economic sanctions, military blockade and even acts of aggression. In other countries, like the Philippines, India, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, Peru and Colombia, the proletariat and people are waging revolutionary armed struggle for national and social liberation.

The contradictions between the traditional imperialist powers headed by the US and the new imperialist powers like China and Russia are intensifying. Formerly the main partners in neoliberal globalization, the US and China are now the main contenders in the inter-imperialist struggle for a redivision of the world. In Southeast Asia, the US and its traditional allies still have overall dominance. China's economic challenge to them is encumbered by its extraterritorial claim over 90 per cent of the South China Sea in violation of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea.

### ***3. Lessons from FQS for the Current Struggle in the Philippines***

The current forces of the national democratic movement have a lot of indispensable lessons to learn from the FQS of 1970 in terms of revolutionary principles, policies and methods of mass struggle.

As a matter of principle, it is just for the Filipino people to wage all forms of struggle against oppression and exploitation by the imperialists and local reactionary classes. The people's democratic revolution must be carried out. The national democratic forces must employ the mass line in order to arouse, organize and mobilize the people.

Today we are confronted by a regime that is traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and extremely deceptive. It seeks to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people with the use of state terrorism and psywar in the name of anti-communism and by militarizing and making fascist the reactionary government and entire society under Executive Order No. 70. It obscures the reality of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism as the root cause of underdevelopment, widespread unemployment, mass poverty and civil war.

Instead, it blames the ideology of communism and the revolutionary forces of the people as the cause of all problems in the Philippines in order to unleash state terrorism, preserve the ruling system and further aggravate the oppression and exploitation of the people. To confront and fight the reign of terror and greed, the people and their revolutionary forces need to assert the justness of the revolutionary struggle and the sovereign right of the people to rise against an unjust ruling system.

Duterte the demagogue sometimes claims to be for independent foreign

policy and against the oligarchy. But in fact, he is the chief puppet of US imperialism by pledging to it the destruction of the revolutionary movement and the removal of constitutional restrictions on foreign investments, while he collects commissions from contracts with China and lords over drug smuggling by Chinese criminal syndicates. He is the chief oligarch and has his own coterie of oligarchs against other groups of big comprador-landlords and corrupt politicians who are out of the ruling clique.

As the revolutionary activists of today persevere in propagating the general line of people's democratic revolution and waging all forms of revolutionary struggle, the Duterte regime and all other reactionaries serving imperialism and the local exploiting classes are exposed and opposed effectively. Today the forces of the national democratic movement are far larger, more widespread and stronger than in 1970 and are far more capable of fighting and winning against the Duterte tyranny and the entire ruling system.

But there are plenty of lessons to review and relearn from the FQS of 1970 as well as to overcome new factors favorable to the Duterte regime in order to accelerate its ouster. We must employ the mass line effectively in order to arouse, organize and mobilize the people. We must have many assembly points from which the people march to converge on the presidential palace and the provincial offices of his regional and provincial agents. Between the gigantic rallies, we must have outdoor and indoor activities in schools, communities, factories and farms to prepare for the next gigantic rally.

We must be able to counter what has been the monopoly of the regime over the propaganda agencies of the government, opinion poll survey firms, the troll armies and so-called influencers and the paid TV and radio broadcasters. We must be able to expose and oppose strongly the crimes of the Duterte regime as well as those who glorify the tyrant and who ridicule, slander and threaten his critics and opponents. Factual and truthful exposure of the anti-people policies and crimes of the Duterte regime definitely makes effective the informative and educational campaigns that the mass activists and the people can wage.

#### ***4. Enable the Philippine Revolution to Contribute More to the Global Struggle***

In the last 50 years, we have seen how the anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian-socialist revolution have been afflicted by serious setbacks since the Dengist counterrevolutionary coup against the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1976 and the subsequent rapid restoration of capitalism in China. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, US imperialism became the sole superpower and its propagandists

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boasted that the cause of socialism was dead and history could not go further than capitalism and liberal democracy.

But despite such dismal developments, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have persevered in the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war and have strengthened themselves through revolutionary struggle. They have stood out as the torch bearer of the anti-imperialist struggle and the world proletarian-socialist revolution. They have demonstrated that the revolutionary movement can preserve itself and grow in the favorite neocolonial base of US imperialism in Southeast Asia.

The revolutionary prestige of the Filipino people has shone ever more brilliantly as the strategic campaign to destroy the people's war in the Philippines has failed from one regime to another and as the strategic decline of US imperialism has accelerated and become conspicuous as a result of the US wasting its resources in endless wars to replace the influence of Soviet social-imperialism in a number of countries and also as a result of the frequent recurrence and worsening economic and financial crisis of the US and the world capitalist system.

Reminiscent of the crisis of overproduction taking the form of stagflation in the mid-1970s, when US capitalism was hemmed in by the full reconstruction and increased production of capitalist countries that had been ruined by World War II, the economic rise of China has aggravated the crisis of overproduction in the US and the world capitalist system. Since the 2008 global financial crash, the US strategic decline has accelerated conspicuously. In 2015 even the Chinese economy started to falter and to lose steam.

All basic contradictions in the world have worsened and sharpened. They include those contradictions between labor and capital in imperialist countries and worldwide, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed nations, those between the imperialist powers (especially the US) and governments that uphold national independence and the socialist cause and those among the imperialist powers themselves. They have resulted in aggravating the oppression and exploitation of the people and in driving the people to rise up in mass protest and rebellion.

The new democratic revolution of the Filipino people can take advantage of the rising mass struggles of the people of the world against US imperialism and fascism in imperialist and nonimperialist countries. These struggles can further dissipate the already overextended attention and resources of US imperialism, while the legal forces of the national democratic movement and the broad united front of anti-fascist forces can concentrate on denouncing, debilitating and defeating the Duterte regime and the armed revolutionary movement advances.

By benefiting from the upsurge of the anti-imperialist struggles and the

proletarian-socialist movements, the Philippine revolution can strengthen itself and contribute more to the resurgence and advance of the anti-imperialist struggle and the world proletarian-socialist revolution. The best result that can be obtained from the upsurge of urban mass protests in the underdeveloped and pre-industrial countries is to train and temper cadres and mass activists for redeployment in the countryside in order to wage a protracted people's war.

Such was the result of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 which expanded and strengthened the mass organizations nationwide for various forms of struggle, especially the main form of struggle to address the central task of the revolution, which is to overthrow the counterrevolutionary state and win total victory of the revolution. Once more the Filipino people are confronted by a Marcos-type tyrannical regime that goads them to wage armed revolution.

Long live the revolutionary spirit of the First Quarter Storm of 1970!

Long live the Filipino people and the Philippine revolution!

Long live proletarian internationalism and the solidarity of all peoples!







# In Transition to the Resurgence of the World Proletarian Revolution

March 15, 2020

## *Introduction*

I wish to trace certain developments in recent history and current circumstances that have led to worldwide mass protests taking up the current burning issues of neoliberalism, fascism, austerity measures, gender discrimination, oppression of indigenous peoples, wars of aggression and environmental destruction.

I daresay that the current wave of mass protests signals the transition to a new era of unprecedented anti-imperialist and anti-fascist resistance by the peoples of the world and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. I am confident that the transition will be accomplished by the intensified revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and peoples of the world.

## *I. Advances of the Proletarian Revolution Soon After World War II*

As a consequence of the struggle against the fascist powers in World War II, several socialist countries and newly-independent countries arose. It could be said by the early 1950s that one-third of humankind was under the governance of communist and workers' parties. National liberation movements grew strong in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

However, the US emerged as the strongest imperialist power. It launched the Cold War since 1947 and unleashed propaganda campaigns of anticommunism, touting "free enterprise" as the guarantee to democracy. It violently opposed the people's movements for national liberation, democracy and socialism. It waged wars of aggression in Korea from 1950 to 1953 and in Vietnam and the rest of Indochina from 1955 onward.

The Korean people and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) fought and stalemated US imperialism. And the Vietnamese and the rest of the Indochinese people inflicted on the US its first categorical defeat in 1975. All the while, China was engaged in socialist revolution and construction and stood as a bulwark against US imperialism.

Meanwhile in the Soviet Union, modern revisionism rose to power and totally negated Stalin in 1956. It overthrew the state of the working class

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and allowed the bourgeoisie and the factors of capitalism to grow within socialist society. It pushed reformist and pacifist lines under Khrushchov and then social-imperialism under Brezhnev.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) opposed the modern revisionist line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in the international communist and workers' movement. It also opposed within China the blatant Rightists as well as the home-grown and Soviet-influenced revisionists. It prevailed over a number of anti-socialist elements before, during and after the Great Leap Forward but there were those who persisted.

Recognizing the crucial importance of upholding Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, Mao carried out the socialist education movement to cleanse politics, economy, organization, and ideology from 1962 to 1966. But this did not suffice. And thus, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) was carried out from 1966 to 1976 on the theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through cultural revolution in order to combat revisionism, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism.

The CPC thought in 1969 that the victory of the GPCR and defeat of the revisionist capitalist-roaders in China would pave the way for imperialism to head for total collapse and socialism to march towards world victory. But Mao cautioned that it would take 50 to 100 years to defeat imperialism and pave the way for the world victory of socialism.

### ***II. Monopoly bourgeoisie inflicts major defeats on the proletariat***

In fact, the GPCR went through twists and turns and ups and down. It may be said that while Mao was alive the CPC under his leadership prevailed over the revisionists from 1966-1976. But soon after his death in 1976, the capitalist roaders led by Deng Xiaoping successfully carried out a counterrevolutionary coup against the proletarian revolutionaries and the socialist state of the working class.

Consequently, the Dengist counterrevolution carried out the restoration of capitalism in China through capitalist reforms and opening up to the US and world capitalist system. It was able to suppress the mass protests at Tiananmen in Beijing and in scores of other cities in China in 1989 against inflation and corruption. And it became even more determined to strengthen capitalism in China

By 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and its satellite revisionist-ruled states in Eastern Europe disintegrated. The bourgeoisie took full control of all the countries in the Soviet bloc. US imperialism became the sole superpower. And its ideologues and publicists proclaimed the death of socialism and the end of history with the supposed permanence of capitalism and liberal democracy.

Further the US proceeded to propagate and impose on the world the policy regime of neoliberal globalization and unleash wars of aggression in the Middle East (in Iraq, Libya), and Syria), in Central Asia (Afghanistan) and in the countries near or adjoining Russia (former Yugoslavia, Georgia and Ukraine). It sought to expand NATO to the borders of Russia. It overestimated its role and its capabilities as sole superpower and continued to adopt and implement policies that appeared to advance its interests but which in fact aggravated the problems that had caused its strategic decline since the middle of the 1970s.

As a result of the reconstruction of the capitalist countries ruined in World War II, the US had become afflicted by stagflation. This was the offshoot of the crisis of overproduction in the US and the world capitalist system. In trying to solve the problem of stagflation, the US adopted neoliberalism and favored the military-industrial complex to strengthen the US military as well to sell weapons to the oil-producing countries.

But ultimately, neoliberalism never solved the crisis of overproduction which had been the root cause of stagflation. The increased production of the military-industrial complex was profitable within the US economy and in sales to oil-producing countries. But it was counterproductive and unprofitable in the failure of the wars of aggression to expand stable economic territory for US imperialism abroad.

Under the neoliberal policy regime, the dogma is to accelerate the centralization and accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie supposedly in order to create more jobs. Thus, the monopoly bourgeoisie is favored by tax cutbacks, wage freezes, erosion of social benefits, privatization of profitable public assets, antisocial and anti-environmental deregulation and denationalization of the economies of client-states.

The money supply and interest rates are either expanded or contracted to prevent inflation or stagnation but always favoring the monopoly bourgeoisie by expanding the public debt and subjecting the working class to further austerity measures and reduction of real wages. At the same time, legal and political measures have been undertaken by the monopoly bourgeoisie to attack job security and curtail trade union and other democratic rights.

### ***III. US-China Collaboration in Neoliberal Globalization***

The US was in need of expanding its market due to the recurrent and worsening crisis of overproduction. Thus, it took in China as its main partner in neoliberal globalization by conceding to it low technology for sweatshop consumer manufacturing and a big consumer market in the US and elsewhere. The US thought that it could concentrate on manufacturing

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the big items (especially by the military-industrial complex) and on financializing the US economy.

The export income of China swelled. Before the end of the 1980s the US became the biggest debtor from being the biggest creditor at the beginning of the decade. But in the aftermath of the nationwide mass protests against inflation and corruption in China in 1989, China pleaded to the US to loosen up on the restrictions on foreign investments and technology transfer.

The US agreed on the condition that China privatized the state-owned enterprises, desisted from providing state subsidies to enterprises, opened itself further to foreign investments and entered the World Trade Organization (WTO). China concurred but actually continued to use state planning and state-owned enterprises and copy without permission foreign technology in order to achieve its own strategic economic and security goals.

The US-China economic and trade partnership seemed to be going well, especially after China entered the WTO in 2001. The US and other imperialist powers were pleased that every time there was a major global financial and economic crisis the growth of China's GDP served to compensate for the stagnant growth of the world economy. It took 10 more years from the financial crash of 2008 before the US started to accuse China of unfair economic practices in their relationship.

The crash caused a global depression which would protract up to now. It has adversely affected China's economy. The growth rate has slowed down. China suffered in 2015 a stock market crash that wiped out 30 per cent of stock values. Foreign investors transferred their plants to other countries with cheaper labor in the Asian mainland. The huge mountain of unpaid debts by Chinese local governments and corporation and high ratio of public debt to GDP became exposed even while China deployed capital for its Belt Road Initiative (BRI).

### ***IV. Growing Conflict Between US and Chinese Imperialism***

Trump started in 2018 to accuse China of maintaining a two-tiered economy of state monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism, stealing US technology, providing state subsidies to economic enterprises, manipulating finance and the currency, adopting Chinese brands on products previously patented by US and other foreign companies and using stolen technology to build the military might of China.

By this time, US imperialism was already strained by its stagnant economy, the loss of competitiveness of US products, the extreme cost of overseas US military bases and endless wars of what should I do to register aggression and the rapid rise of its public debt. The wars of

aggression cost at least USD 6 trillion and failed to expand and stabilize the US economic territory abroad. The US strategic decline accelerated and became more conspicuous.

Consequent to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US emerged as the winner in the Cold War and as sole superpower. But it actually continued to decline as a result of the high costs of its military bases overseas and its wars of aggression and its investment, trade and technological concessions to China. The US is still the No. 1 imperialist power but has declined to being one among several imperialist powers in a multipolar world.

China has risen as the main economic competitor and political rival of the US. It has become so ambitious as to design and implement the Belt Road Initiative in order to make a radical departure from the pattern of maritime global trade which the Western colonial powers had established since the 16th century. But China also has serious economic problems, especially its sitting on a mountain of bad debts by local governments and corporations, the high ratio of public debt to GDP and the onerous terms of Chinese foreign loans which are vulnerable to debtors' default and revolt.

In the Philippines and other Southeast Asia countries, the peoples are confronted with the extraterritorial claims of China over the 90 per cent of the South China Sea in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. But in other regions of the world, certain governments that assert national independence and the socialist cause, have taken advantage of inter-imperialist contradictions and availed of China's cooperation in order to counter sanctions and acts of aggression instigated by the US and its traditional imperialist allies.

## ***V. Intensification of Contradictions Due to Crisis of World Capitalist System***

We see today the intensification of all major contradictions in the world capitalist system, such as those between labor and capital, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, those between the imperialist powers and states that assert national independence and the socialist cause and those among the imperialist powers.

The intensification of contradictions between labor and capital within imperialist countries and among imperialist powers is due to the worsening crisis of overproduction relative to the drastically reduced income of the working class in imperialist countries and in the rest of the world capitalist system. The workers have become restless and rebellious due to unemployment, low income, rising prices of basic commodities, austerity measures, the curtailment of their democratic rights and the rise

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

of chauvinism, racism and fascism.

Among the imperialist powers, the US and China have emerged as the two main contenders in the struggle for a redivision of the world. Each tries to have its own alliance with other imperialist powers. The traditional alliance of the US, Europe and Japan is still operative in such multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO and in NATO and other military alliances. Ranged against the traditional imperialist powers are China and Russia which have broadened their alliance in BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS Development Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Fund.

Since so many decades ago when they developed nuclear weapons of mass destruction and missile delivery systems, the major imperialist powers have so far avoided direct wars of aggression against each other by undertaking proxy wars despite the frequent US wars of aggression against underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They have developed the neocolonial ways and means of shifting the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries. They engage in a struggle for a redivision of the world but so far they have not directly warred on each other to acquire or expand their sources of cheap labor and raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence.

They make the oppressed peoples and nations of the underdeveloped countries suffer the main brunt of the recurrent and worsening economic and financial crisis of the world capitalist system even as they make them the main source of superprofits through a higher rate of exploitation. Currently they continue the policy of neoliberal globalization for the purpose. To suppress the people's resistance to oppression and exploitation, they provide their client-states with the means of state terrorism and fascist rule by the bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie. They also use their respective client-states for proxy wars and counterrevolutionary wars for maintaining their economic territory or for redividing the world.

Despite their attempts to shift the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations, the imperialist powers are driven to extract higher profits from their own working class under the neoliberal policy regime. To suppress the resistance of the proletariat and people to oppression and exploitation in both the developed and underdeveloped countries, they have enacted so-called anti-terrorist laws and are increasingly prone to the use of state terrorism and sponsor fascist organizations and movements to counter the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

In the underdeveloped countries, US imperialism and its puppet regimes are unleashing the worst forms of aggression and state terrorism against the people in order to perpetuate the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed. Since the end of World War II, the wars of aggression and campaigns of terror unleashed by US have resulted in 20 to 30 million killed in Korea,

Indochina, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries.

But US imperialism has also suffered outstanding defeats, such in north Korea, Cuba, Vietnam and other Indochinese countries. It has been unable to stop the decolonization of colonies and semi-colonies which is still an ongoing process. The proletariat and people have persevered in protracted people's war in the Philippines, India, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, Peru, Colombia and elsewhere. The spread of arms where US imperialism have unleashed wars of aggression, such as in the Middle East and Africa, can open the way to the rise of more armed revolutionary movements.

There are effective governments like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Venezuela and Syria that assert national independence and the socialist cause. They enjoy the support of the people, stand up against US imperialism and take advantage of the contradictions among the imperialist powers in order to counter sanctions, military blockade and aggression. The people and revolutionary forces led by the proletariat can strengthen themselves in the course of anti-imperialist struggles.

## ***VI. Mass Protests Signify Transition to the Resurgence of World Proletarian Revolution***

Since last year, we have seen the unprecedented rise and spread of gigantic anti-imperialist mass protests occurring in both the underdeveloped and developed countries. These signify the transition to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. They are a manifestation of the grave crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling systems and the inability of the imperialist powers and their puppet states to rule in the old way.

The massive and sustained mass protests in various countries of Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and Africa bring to the surface the deep-seated detestation of the people for the extreme oppression and exploitation that they have suffered. The proletariat and people of the world are fighting back. We are definitely in transition to a great resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution.

The broad masses of the people are rising up against the worst forms of imperialist oppression and exploitation, such as neoliberalism, austerity measures, gender discrimination oppression of indigenous peoples, fascism, wars of aggression and environmental destruction. The starting points or inciting moments for the mass protests may be concrete issues of wide variability but they always rise up to the level of protests against imperialism and all reaction.

In the last 50 years, we have seen imperialism, neocolonialism, modern

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revisionism, neoliberalism and neoconservatism attack and put down the proletariat and people of the world. Now, the people are resisting as never before and generating new revolutionary forces, including parties of the proletariat and mass organizations.

These will ultimately result in the spread of armed revolutionary movements and the rise of socialist states and people's democracies with a socialist perspective.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces are gratified that they have persevered in the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war and with a socialist perspective in the last more than 50 years. Loyal to the just revolutionary cause, they have waged revolutionary struggle resolutely and militantly and have fought even more fiercely against the counterrevolutionary campaigns of the enemy. They have been inspired by the revolutionary victories of national liberation movements and socialism abroad and have become ever more determined to contribute the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

They take pride in being referred to as one of the torch bearers of the anti-imperialist struggles of the peoples of the world and the world proletarian revolution. Their revolutionary will and fighting spirit are more than ever higher as their revolutionary struggles are now in concert with the resurgent mass struggles of the proletariat and people on a global scale. We foresee that in the next fifty years the crisis-stricken world capitalist system will continue to break down and give way to the rise of anti-imperialist and socialist states and societies.

Long live the proletariat and peoples of the world!  
Down with the imperialist powers and all reaction!  
Long live the anti-imperialist and socialist cause!  
Victory for the world proletarian-socialist revolution!





# In Transition to the Resurgence of the World Proletarian Revolution<sup>4</sup>

March 15, 2020

Dear Comrades,

It is an honor and privilege for me to be invited to the Symposium titled “The World is Opening a New Page: Revolution’s Time Has Come!” here in Istanbul. I thank the Socialist Party of the Oppressed and the Marxist Theory Journal for inviting me.

I convey warmest comradely greetings of revolutionary solidarity to all participating in the symposium, especially my fellow speakers from Rojava, Tunis, Lebanon, Sudan, Argentina, Chile, Philippines and other countries.

The symposium is prompted by the unprecedented scale and intensity of the people’s mass protests which have been breaking out in all continents since last year. These have been directed against imperialism and local reactionary forces.

I daresay that the current wave of mass protests signals the transition to a new era of unprecedented anti-imperialist resistance by the peoples of the world and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

## ***I. Intensification of Contradictions Due to Crisis of World Capitalist System (Part V of Full Text)***

We see today the intensification of all major contradictions in the world capitalist system, such as those between labor and capital, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, those between the imperialist powers and states that assert national independence and the socialist cause and those among the imperialist powers.

The intensification of contradictions between labor and capital within imperialist countries and among imperialist powers is due to the worsening crisis of overproduction relative to the drastically reduced income of the working class in imperialist countries and in the rest of the world capitalist system. The workers have become restless and rebellious due to unemployment, low income, rising prices of basic commodities,

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<sup>4</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines: Text of Video Message (Abridged Version of Paper for Symposium)

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austerity measures, the curtailment of their democratic rights and the rise of chauvinism, racism and fascism.

Among the imperialist powers, the US and China have emerged as the two main contenders in the struggle for a redivision of the world. Each tries to have its own alliance with other imperialist powers. The traditional alliance of the US, Europe and Japan is still operative in such multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO and in NATO and other military alliances. Ranged against the traditional imperialist powers are China and Russia which have broadened their alliance in BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS Development Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Fund.

Since so many decades ago when they developed nuclear weapons of mass destruction and missile delivery systems, the major imperialist powers have so far avoided direct wars of aggression against each other by undertaking proxy wars despite the frequent US wars of aggression against underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They have developed the neocolonial ways and means of shifting the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries. They engage in a struggle for a redivision of the world but so far, they have not directly warred on each other to acquire or expand their sources of cheap labor and raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence.

They make the oppressed peoples and nations of the underdeveloped countries suffer the main brunt of the recurrent and worsening economic and financial crisis of the world capitalist system even as they make them the main source of superprofits through a higher rate of exploitation. Currently they continue the policy of neoliberal globalization for the purpose. To suppress the people's resistance to oppression and exploitation, they provide their client-states with the means of state terrorism and fascist rule by the bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie. They also use their respective client-states for proxy wars and counterrevolutionary wars for maintaining their economic territory or for redividing the world.

Despite their attempts to shift the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations, the imperialist powers are driven to extract higher profits from their own working class under the neoliberal policy regime. To suppress the resistance of the proletariat and people to oppression and exploitation in both the developed and underdeveloped countries, they have enacted so-called anti-terrorist laws and are increasingly prone to the use of state terrorism and sponsor fascist organizations and movements to counter the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the people.

In the underdeveloped countries, US imperialism and its puppet regimes are unleashing the worst forms of aggression and state terrorism against

the people in order to perpetuate the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed. Since the end of World War II, the wars of aggression and campaigns of terror unleashed by US have resulted in 20 to 30 million killed in Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries.

But US imperialism has also suffered outstanding defeats, such as in north Korea, Cuba, Vietnam and other Indochinese countries. It has been unable to stop the decolonization of colonies and semi-colonies which is still an ongoing process. The proletariat and people have persevered in protracted people's war in the Philippines, India, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, Peru, Colombia and elsewhere. The spread of arms where US imperialism have unleashed wars of aggression, such as in the Middle East and Africa, can open the way to the rise of more armed revolutionary movements.

There are effective governments like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Venezuela and Syria that assert national independence and the socialist cause. They enjoy the support of the people, stand up against US imperialism and take advantage of the contradictions among the imperialist powers in order to counter sanctions, military blockade and aggression. The people and revolutionary forces led by the proletariat can strengthen themselves in the course of anti-imperialist struggles.

## ***II. Mass Protests Signify Transition to the Resurgence of World Proletarian Revolution (Part VI of Full Text)***

Since last year, we have seen the unprecedented rise and spread of gigantic anti-imperialist mass protests occurring in both the underdeveloped and developed countries. These signify the transition to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. They are a manifestation of the grave crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling systems and the inability of the imperialist powers and their puppet states to rule in the old way.

The massive and sustained mass protests in various countries of Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and Africa bring to the surface the deep-seated detestation of the people for the extreme oppression and exploitation that they have suffered. The proletariat and people of the world are fighting back. We are definitely in transition to a great resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution.

The broad masses of the people are rising up against the worst forms of imperialist oppression and exploitation, such as neoliberalism, austerity measures, gender discrimination oppression of indigenous peoples, fascism, wars of aggression and environmental destruction. The starting points or inciting moments for the mass protests may be concrete issues

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of wide variability but they always rise up to the level of protests against imperialism and all reaction.

In the last 50 years, we have seen imperialism, neocolonialism, modern revisionism, neoliberalism and neoconservatism attack and put down the proletariat and people of the world. Now, the people are resisting as never before and generating new revolutionary forces, including parties of the proletariat and mass organizations. These will ultimately result in the spread of armed revolutionary movements and the rise of socialist states and people's democracies with a socialist perspective.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces are gratified that they have persevered in the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war and with a socialist perspective in the last more than 50 years. Loyal to the just revolutionary cause, they have waged revolutionary struggle resolutely and militantly and have fought even more fiercely against the counterrevolutionary campaigns of the enemy. They have been inspired by the revolutionary victories of national liberation movements and socialism abroad and have become ever more determined to contribute the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

They take pride in being referred to as one of the torch bearers of the anti-imperialist struggles of the peoples of the world and the world proletarian revolution. Their revolutionary will and fighting spirit are more than ever higher as their revolutionary struggles are now in concert with the resurgent mass struggles of the proletariat and people on a global scale. We foresee that in the next fifty years the crisis-stricken world capitalist system will continue to break down and give way to the rise of anti-imperialist and socialist states and societies.

Long live the proletariat and peoples of the world!  
Down with the imperialist powers and all reaction!  
Long live the anti-imperialist and socialist cause!  
Victory for the world proletarian-socialist revolution!

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# **An Update on the International Situation<sup>5</sup> for the International Coordinating Committee of the International League of Peoples' Struggle**

**March 30, 2020**

Dear Colleagues,

As Chairperson Emeritus of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I am happy to share with you my views on the international situation and try to clarify the major events and issues, the trends and direction of the crisis of the world capitalist system and what the peoples of the world can do in order to advance their anti-imperialist and democratic struggles for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

## ***Background to the Current Situation***

The Great Depression of the 1930s led to World War II as basically an inter-imperialist war in which the Allied Powers had to include the Soviet Union in order to defeat the Axis Powers. As a result of the war, one third of humanity came under the governance of socialist states and the struggles for national liberation broke out in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

But the US also emerged as the strongest imperialist power. It proclaimed the Cold War in 1947 in order to confront the rise of socialism and the national liberation movements. It waved the flag of anti-communism against the socialist challenge and offered neocolonialism as the alternative to decolonization as a process of national liberation from colonialism and imperialism.

The Soviet Union recovered from the death of more than 25 million people and the destruction of 85 per cent of its industrial capacity by the Nazi invasion, rebuilt its productive on an unprecedentedly scale and caught up with the US in the development of nuclear weapons in order to put the US in a nuclear stalemate.

After the death of Stalin, however, Krushchov rose to power in order to impose modern revisionism on the Soviet Union in 1956. He used methods of decentralization to breach the socialist state and economy. He was followed by Brezhnev who used methods of recentralization in order to further strengthen the monopoly bureaucrat capitalism and engage in

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<sup>5</sup>Delivered as ILPS Chairperson Emeritus.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

social-imperialism.

Under the leadership of Mao, the Communist Party of China and China emerged as the strongest defenders of the socialist cause and the world proletarian revolution against Soviet modern revisionism and social-imperialism, from the start of the Sino-Soviet ideological debate and disruption of state-to-state relations in 1959 to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976.

In the meantime, the national liberation movements surged forward. The Korean people fought US imperialism to a standstill in 1953. The Vietnamese people dealt a resounding defeat to US imperialism in 1975. The Cuban people moved out of the orbit of US imperialism in 1961 and inspired the peoples of Latin America to fight US imperialism. The process of decolonization accelerated in Africa from 1950s to the 1980s. The apartheid regime in South Africa came to an end in the 1990s.

Soon after the death of Mao in 1976, the capitalist roaders led by Deng Xiaoping successfully carried out a counterrevolutionary coup in China against the proletarian revolutionaries and the socialist state of the working class. The Dengist counterrevolution carried out capitalist reforms and opening up China for reintegration in the world capitalist system. It was able to suppress the mass uprisings against corruption and inflation in scores of Chinese cities in 1989 and it pleaded to US for further investments, trade and technological concessions in order to stabilize the economy.

In December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and its satellite revisionist-ruled states in Eastern Europe disintegrated. The bourgeoisie took full control of all the countries in the Soviet bloc. US imperialism became the sole superpower and sought to fill the vacuum left by Soviet social imperialism in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The ideologues and publicists of US imperialism proclaimed the death of socialism and the end of history with the supposed permanence of capitalism and liberal democracy.

### ***Strategic Decline of US Imperialism as Sole Superpower***

Having become the sole superpower, US was at its strongest in propagating and imposing on the world the policy of neoliberal globalization and unleashing wars of aggression in the Middle East (in Iraq, Libya, and Syria), in Central Asia (Afghanistan) and in the countries near or adjoining Russia (former Yugoslavia, Georgia and Ukraine).

It sought to expand NATO to the borders of Russia and use it for aggression in Central Asia. It overestimated its role and its capabilities as sole superpower and continued to adopt and implement policies that appeared to advance its interests but which in fact were extremely costly

and aggravated the problems that had caused its strategic decline since the middle of the 1970s.

Since becoming the sole superpower, the US has spent more than USD 6 trillion to unleash endless wars of aggression that have rapidly increased its public debt. And yet these wars have not resulted in expanding stable economic territory abroad to offset the crisis of overproduction in the imperialist homeland. By assisting China in capitalist restoration and development, the US has also unwittingly aggravated its crisis of overproduction.

This is reminiscent of how the US undermined itself by stepping up war production, building hundreds of military bases abroad and engaging wars of aggression and at the same assisting the reconstruction of the capitalist countries ruined in World War II and thereby bringing about the crisis of overproduction of the US and world capitalist system. As a result, the US became afflicted by stagflation in the mid-1970s.

In trying to solve the problem of stagflation, the US adopted neoliberalism and favored the military-industrial complex to strengthen the US military as well as to sell weapons to the oil-producing countries. But neoliberalism never solved the crisis of overproduction and excessive military spending which had been the root causes of stagflation.

The increased production of the military-industrial complex was profitable within the US economy and in sales to oil-producing countries. But it was counterproductive and unprofitable in the failure of the wars of aggression to expand stable economic territory for US imperialism abroad. In assisting the development of capitalism in China, it has ultimately brought about a new economic and political rival, despite the previous notion of the US that it could exploit China as a new big market.

The neoliberal policy regime has abetted the wrong notion of the US that it can without limits accelerate the centralization and accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie supposedly in order to create more jobs by using in its favor tax cutbacks, wage freezes, erosion of social benefits, privatization of profitable public assets, antisocial and anti-environmental deregulation and denationalization of the economies of client-states. But the crisis of overproduction within an imperialist country arises from shrinking the domestic market by pushing down the incomes of the working and consuming public.

Another blinding factor in neoliberal policy is the manipulation of the money supply and interest rates supposedly to expand or contract them in order to prevent inflation or stagnation and to always favor the monopoly bourgeoisie by expanding the public debt and subjecting the working class to further austerity measures and reduction of real wages. At the same time, legal and political measures have been undertaken by the monopoly bourgeoisie to attack job security and curtail trade union and

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other democratic rights.

### ***Collaboration and Contention Between US and Chinese Imperialism***

Because the US was in need of expanding its market due to the recurrent and worsening crisis of overproduction, it adopted China as its main partner in neoliberal globalization and at first conceded to it low technology for sweatshop consumer manufacturing and a big consumer market in the US and elsewhere. The US calculated that it could concentrate on manufacturing the big items (especially by the military-industrial complex), financializing the US economy and ultimately making direct investments in China.

But it was depressing its own consumer manufacturing and disemploying millions of workers. The export income of China swelled as the US suffered trade deficits. From being the biggest creditor of the world, the US became the biggest debtor at the end of the 1980s. Further, the US expanded its foreign investments and technology transfer after China pleaded for these in the aftermath of the nationwide mass protests against inflation and corruption in China in 1989.

The US set preconditions for China to privatize the state-owned enterprises, desist from providing state subsidies to enterprises, liberalize further its policy on foreign investments and imports and enter the World Trade Organization (WTO). China agreed but in fact continued to use state planning and state-owned enterprises and copy without permission US and other foreign technology in order to achieve its own strategic economic and security goals.

The US-China economic and trade partnership appeared to be running smoothly, especially after China joined the WTO in 2001. The US and other imperialist powers and their economic technocrats were glad that every time there was a major global financial and economic crisis the high growth rate of China's GDP served to buffer the stagnant growth rate of the world economy. But when the global financial crash occurred in 2008, the US began to accuse China of unfair economic practices in their relationship.

The crash resulted in a global depression that is still running now and is adversely affecting China's economy. The growth rate has conspicuously slowed down. China experienced in 2015 a stock market crash that wiped out 30 per cent of stock values. Foreign investors have transferred their plants to other countries with cheaper labor in the Asian mainland. The huge mountain of unpaid debts by Chinese local governments and corporations and high ratio of public debt to GDP have become exposed even while China deploys capital for its Belt Road Initiative (BRI).

Trump began in 2018 to accuse China of maintaining a two-tiered



economy of state monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism, stealing US technology, providing state subsidies to economic enterprises, manipulating finance and the currency, adopting Chinese brands on products previously patented by US and other foreign companies and using both imported and self-developed technology to build the military might of China.

Trump has taken special note of the challenge of Made in China 2025 and has countered with protectionist calls in sharp contrast to the long-running US line of neoliberal globalization. He has called for raising US consumer manufacturing and imposing high tariffs on imports from China. The obvious objective is also to cut down the export surpluses from which China has drawn the surplus capital for expanding its domestic economy and external economic relations.

US imperialism has been strained by its own stagnant economy, the loss of competitiveness of US products, the extreme cost of overseas US military bases and endless wars of aggression and the rapid rise of its public debt. The wars of aggression have cost at least USD 6 trillion and failed to expand and stabilize the US economic territory abroad. The US strategic decline has accelerated and become more conspicuous.

Despite its emergence as the winner in the Cold War and as sole superpower in 1991, the US has further declined strategically as a result of the high costs of its military bases overseas and its wars of aggression and its investment, trade and technological concessions to China. Although still the No. 1 imperialist power, the US has become one among several imperialist powers in a multipolar world and has less space for unilateral actions than ever before.

China has become the main economic competitor and political rival of the US. It has become so ambitious as to design and implement the Belt Road Initiative in order to make a radical departure from the pattern of maritime global trade which the Western colonial powers had established since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, it seeks to dominate the Indo-Pacific maritime route. But it has serious economic problems, especially its sitting on a mountain of bad debts by local governments and corporations, the high ratio of public debt to GDP and the onerous terms of Chinese foreign loans which are vulnerable to debtors' default and revolt.

In Southeast Asia, the peoples are confronted with the extraterritorial claims of China over the 90 per cent of the South China Sea in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. But in other regions of the world, certain governments that assert national independence and the socialist cause, have taken advantage of inter-imperialist contradictions and availed of China's cooperation in order to counter sanctions and acts of aggression instigated by the US and its traditional imperialist allies.

***Worsening Crisis of World Capitalist System  
and Intensification of Contradictions***

The crisis of the world capitalist system is rapidly worsening and all major contradictions are intensifying. The contradictions are those between labor and capital in imperialist countries, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, those between the imperialist powers and states that assert national independence and the socialist cause and those among the imperialist powers.

The contradictions between labor and capital within imperialist countries and among imperialist powers are rising as the crisis of overproduction worsens as a result drastically reduced incomes of the working class and the middle class in imperialist countries and in the rest of the world capitalist system. The workers and the shrinking middle class have become restless and rebellious due to unemployment, reduced incomes, rising prices of basic commodities, austerity measures, the curtailment of democratic rights and the rise of chauvinism, racism and fascism.

Among the imperialist powers, the US and China have emerged as the two main contenders in the struggle for a redivision of the world. Each tries to have its own alliance with other imperialist powers. The traditional alliance of the US, Europe and Japan is generally effective in such multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO and in NATO and other military alliances. On the other side, China has maintained closest all-round relations with Russia and they have broadened their alliance in BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS Development Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Fund.

Afraid of mutual destruction through nuclear warfare, the major imperialist powers continue to avoid direct wars of aggression against each other by undertaking proxy wars despite the frequent US wars of aggression against underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They have developed the neocolonial ways and means of shifting the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries. They engage in a struggle for a redivision of the world but so far they have not directly warred on each other to acquire or expand their sources of cheap labor and raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence.

They make the oppressed peoples and nations of the underdeveloped countries suffer the main brunt of the recurrent and worsening economic and financial crisis of the world capitalist system. They make them the main source of superprofits through direct investments and loans and extractive enterprises. The policy of neoliberal globalization has served to accelerate the rate of exploitation and resource-grabbing. To suppress the people's resistance to oppression and exploitation, they provide their client-states with the means of state terrorism and fascist rule by the

bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie. They also use their respective client-states for proxy wars and counterrevolutionary wars for maintaining and expanding economic territory.

Despite shifting the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations, the imperialist powers are driven to extract higher profits from their own working class under the neoliberal policy regime. They suppress the resistance of the proletariat and people to the ever-rising rate of exploitation in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. They have escalated oppression by enacting and enforcing so-called anti-terrorist laws and are wantonly using state terrorism and emboldening fascist organizations and movements to counter the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the people.

In the underdeveloped countries, US imperialism and its puppet regimes are unleashing the worst forms of aggression and state terrorism against the people in order to perpetuate the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed. Since the end of World War II, the wars of aggression and campaigns of terror unleashed by US have resulted in 20 to 30 million killed in Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries. To complement its neoliberal economic policy, US imperialism has adopted and implemented the so-called neoconservative policy of using the full spectrum of violent and suasive means, especially its high-tech military weaponry, to maintain global hegemony in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

But the US, which is now conspicuously in strategic decline economically and politically, cannot have its way as it pleases. Previously powerful socialist countries, such as the Soviet Union and China, have succumbed to capitalism as a result of modern revisionism. But as new imperialist powers, China and Russia are operating to hem in US imperialism, aggravate the crisis of the world capitalist system, sharpen the inter-imperialist contradictions and generate conditions that are more exploitative and oppressive than before but incite and drive the people to wage revolutionary resistance.

Even when it emerged as the strongest imperialist power after World War II, US imperialism suffered outstanding defeats, such as in China, north Korea, Cuba, Vietnam and other Indochinese countries. It has been unable to stop the decolonization of colonies and semi-colonies which is still an ongoing process. The proletariat and people have persevered in protracted people's war in the Philippines, India, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, Peru, Colombia and elsewhere. The spread of arms where US imperialism have unleashed wars of aggression, such as in the Middle East and Africa, can open the way to the rise of more armed revolutionary movements.

There are effective governments like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Venezuela and Syria that assert

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national independence and the socialist cause. They enjoy the support of the people, stand up against US imperialism and take advantage of the contradictions among the imperialist powers in order to counter sanctions, military blockade and aggression. The people and revolutionary forces led by the proletariat can strengthen themselves in the course of anti-imperialist struggles.

### ***Mass Protests Signify Transition to the Resurgence of World Proletarian Revolution***

The unprecedented rise and spread of gigantic anti-imperialist mass protests in both the underdeveloped and developed countries since last year is a consequence of the bankruptcy and grave crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling systems. It manifests the inability of the imperialist powers and their client-states (neocolonies and dependent states) to rule in the old way. It signifies the transition to unprecedentedly greater global anti-imperialist struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution from major setbacks since 1976.

The massive, sustained and concurrent mass protests in many countries of Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and Africa bring to the surface the deep-going hatred of the people for the extreme oppression and exploitation that they are suffering. The proletariat and people of the world are fighting back. We are definitely in transition to a great resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution.

The broad masses of the people are rising up against the worst forms of imperialist oppression and exploitation, such as neoliberalism, austerity measures, gender discrimination, oppression of indigenous peoples, fascism, wars of aggression and environmental destruction. The starting issues and inciting moments for the mass protests may be of wide variability but they always involve the intolerable oppression and exploitation by imperialism and its reactionary agents.

In the last 50 years, we have seen imperialism, neocolonialism, modern revisionism, neoliberalism and neoconservatism attack and put down the proletariat and people of the world. Now, the people are resisting as never before and generating new revolutionary forces, including parties of the proletariat and mass organizations. These will ultimately result in the spread of armed revolutionary movements and the rise of socialist states and people's democracies with a socialist perspective.

The financial crash of 2008 has led to worse crisis of the world capitalist system and to a far bigger fall of the financial and economic system in 2020 at a rate faster than that of the Great Depression of 1929 onward. The neoliberal policy regime has become more bankrupt than ever resulting in unprecedented overaccumulation and inflation of assets of

the financial oligarchy and monopoly bourgeoisie, unsustainable debts of households, corporations and central banks, depression of the economy as the consuming public is impoverished and the escalating contest of the fascist and anti-fascist currents throughout the world.

The bailouts and lower interest rates are designed to favor the monopoly bourgeoisie at the expense of the proletariat and people. In accordance with the neoliberal bias, more capital is being put into the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie by the central banks for stimulating the economy from the top. And yet the economy continues to stagnate and fall. The crisis of overproduction keeps on worsening and making the financial bailouts fail. The so-called middle class in all the developed and underdeveloped countries is dwindling faster. The stage is set for the revolt of the 99 per cent of the people against the filthy 1 per cent.

The current plunge of the world capitalist system coincides with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has resulted in lockdowns and other repressive measures in many countries. It has resulted in the disemployment of working people and further breakdown of production. While suffering economic and social deprivations, the people do not receive adequate health care because the public health systems have been undermined and drastically weakened by the privatization of hospitals and the unbridled profit-making of drug companies. The economic and social crisis, aggravated by the pandemic, has high potential of causing bigger and more widespread protest mass actions.

Since its founding in 2001 the International League of Peoples' Struggle has played a major role in inspiring and generating the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the peoples of the world through mass organizations in so many concerns. We have become the largest and strongest international united front against imperialism and fascism and for national liberation, people's democracy and socialism.

We have made significant contributions to the upsurge of mass protest actions on a global scale. And we are further encouraged by this upsurge to further strengthen our ranks and to engage in consultative and consensual relations with similar international formations in order to expand the united front against imperialism and fascism.

We are confident that we are going to become stronger as the world capitalist system continues to break down and generate more favorable conditions for the rise of revolutionary forces. We are determined to invigorate the subjective forces of the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist mass movement that can bring about the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution and the greater victories of national liberation and socialist movements.

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## **On the International Situation, Covid-19 Pandemic and the People's Response<sup>6</sup> First Series of ILPS Webinars**

**April 9, 2020**

Dear colleagues and fellow activists,

I am highly honored and delighted to be the first speaker in this series of webinars, billed as Teach-Ins or Interviews, online discussions on international events and people's struggles, under the auspices of ILPS Solidarity.

The format is simple. I make the presentation. And the audience can react with observations, questions and further discussions. My task today is to present the international situation, the Covid 19 pandemic and the peoples' response.

Let me state at the outset that the world capitalist system was already in trouble even before the Covid-19 pandemic arose. And the pandemic has unmasked and aggravated the crisis of global capitalism. It is of urgent importance to know how the people are affected and how they are responding.

### ***1. Crisis of the World Capitalist System***

Science has advanced so fast and so far and has provided the technology to raise the productivity of the forces and means of production to such a high degree as to have the capability of eliminating class exploitation, gross inequality and mass poverty and providing a comfortable and fruitful life for at least twice the population of the world today.

The social character of production has risen so high with the adoption of higher technology. But unfortunately, the monopoly bourgeoisie and its financial oligarchy own the means of production, control the relations of production and dictate the terms of employment and the use of the human and material resources for the maximization of private profit and the inflation of the value of private assets.

Abusing bourgeois state power over the toiling masses of workers and peasants and middle social strata, the international bourgeoisie has adopted the neoliberal economic policy in order to accelerate the

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<sup>6</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

accumulation and concentration of productive and finance capital in the hands of the few, the mere 1 per cent of the population to exploit, deprive and oppress the 99 per cent.

The neoliberal economic policy has liberalized trade and investments, provided tax cuts, incentives and bailouts to the monopoly bourgeoisie, pressed down wages and other incomes of the lower classes, privatized public assets, reduced social services, imposed austerity measures, removed social and environmental regulations and denationalized the less developed economies of the world.

The crisis of overproduction has therefore become more frequent and worse every time. The working people have suffered disemployment at so rapid a rate and cannot buy what is produced by the economy. The so-called middle class has dwindled and joined the ranks of the precariat. Yet, the monopoly bourgeoisie has proceeded to make the people suffer and insist on its system of unbridled greed.

Before the financial crisis of 2008 can be solved, another more serious crisis has come on top of it to further prolong and deepen the stagnation and depression of the global economy. All imperialist countries suffer from the crisis of overproduction due to the dwindling incomes of the working people and the underdeveloped countries.

All major contradictions in the world are intensifying: those between capital and labor in the imperialist countries, those among the imperialist powers, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations and those between the imperialist powers and a number of states assertive of their national independence and socialist aspirations.

I mention first the contradiction between capital and labor in the imperialist countries to stress the point that even in their own national bulwarks of monopoly capitalism the imperialist powers have gone so far in exploiting their working class and diminishing the middle class as they have engaged in one round of austerity measures after another to cope with economic and financial crisis.

US imperialism has complemented the neoliberal policy to maximize profits from the production process and financial markets with the neoconservative policy to ensure government expenditures for the acquisition of weapons from the military-industrial complex for the maintenance of more than 800 overseas military bases and for endless wars of aggression, including proxy wars, and military intervention in support of local reactionary regimes.

After China became monopoly capitalist in 1976, it used to be touted as the main partner of the US in neoliberal globalization and as the exemplar of continuous capitalist growth. But since 2015, it has become conspicuously afflicted with unsustainable national, corporate and household debts



and the same economic and financial crises that bedevil the traditional imperialist powers headed by the US.

The inter-imperialist contradictions are sharpening fast, with China having become the main rival of US imperialism. The US regrets and seeks to overcome the consequences of its previous concessions to China in terms of investments, trade and technology transfers. It is resentful that China has used state planning and state-owned enterprises in order to achieve strategic economic and military goals.

But of course, China has its own vulnerabilities, like having to deal with the trade war already started by the US and with the mountains of debt it has accumulated, to cite only a few major problems. The US is trying hard to cut the large export surpluses that China gains in trade with the US and reduce the amount of surplus capital that China uses to expand its own fields of investments, markets and sources of raw materials in various countries.

The US and China try to strengthen their respective positions by alliances with other countries. The US still has the main influence in the UN and controls the multilateral agencies (IMF, World Bank and WTO) and the NATO and other military alliances. China has its all-round alliance with Russia and has tried to broaden this alliance with BRICS, SCO, the BRICS Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Fund and the Belt and Road Initiative.

The imperialist countries continue to shift the burden of crisis to their reactionary client states in the underdeveloped countries and therefore exacerbate the imperialist contradictions with the oppressed peoples and nations. They are detested for aggravating the underdevelopment of entire countries and continents in contrast with the false promises of development.

Such states are always and increasingly in an untenable position. They suffer from widening deficits in trade and balance of payments because their exports consist of raw materials and semi-manufactures. They have mounting difficulties in servicing previous foreign debts and getting new foreign loans to be able to get by.

The broad masses of the people detest the imperialists and their puppets for the state terrorism that they suffer. The conditions are increasingly becoming favorable for the rise of various anti-imperialist and democratic struggles. There are a number of countries where the revolutionary parties of the proletariat and the people persevere in armed revolution for national and social liberation. These serve as example to all the oppressed peoples and nations in the world

There are states of underdeveloped countries that are assertive of national independence and socialist aspirations. These include the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba and Venezuela. They are

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dramatically standing up against US imperialism which is using economic sanctions, military blockades and threats of aggression.

Certain countries in Southeast Asia are also standing up to both the US and China. Vietnam is outstanding in opposing the invalid claim of China over ninety per cent of the South China Sea. It is in this part of the world where China is exposing itself as an aggressive violator of the sovereign rights of other countries in violation of international law and the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea.

But US imperialism still has the worst standing as the aggressor and violator of sovereign rights in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But it is paying dearly for its wars of aggression and military intervention. It is on a course of accelerated strategic decline in an increasingly multipolar world in which the inter-imperialist contradictions which incite the proletariat and people of the world to rise up.

Since last year, there has been an outburst of mass protests all over the world, in both underdeveloped and developed countries. This is a clear manifestation of the people's resistance to all the evil workings of imperialism such as neoliberal exploitation, the rise of state terrorism, fascism, austerity measures, racism, gender discrimination and imperialist plunder and destruction of the environment.

We are now in the midst of the transition to the global resurgence of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

## **2. The Covid-19 Pandemic**

Between the two main imperialist powers of today, the US and China, there are accusations and counter-accusations regarding the origin of Covid-19 and the malicious criminal motive behind it. There are speculations that one imperialist power is using the Covid-19 pandemic in order to weaken and defeat the other. These are manifestations of the growing contradictions between the US and China.

China accuses the US of having created Covid-19 in a bio-warfare laboratory in Fort Detrick in Maryland, USA, and having used the US athletic delegation to the World Military Games in Wuhan in October 2019 to bring into Wuhan the highly contagious virus. In turn, the US accuses China of having created the virus in its virological institute only to leak it to the Wuhan wet market through the sale of laboratory test animals.

There is the third view that the Chinese scientists themselves got the virus from a laboratory operated by the US military and somehow leaked the virus to the Wuhan meat market. Still there is the fourth view that Covid-19 is of purely zoonotic origin and has mutated from a previous virus, generated by an environment extremely devastated and imbalanced

by imperialist plunder.

We let the independent scientists do their investigation and let the experts on international criminal law use the scientific findings and conclusions to prosecute the culprit if possible. But in the meantime, we can discuss the impact and consequences of Covid-19 to the world capitalist system and to the people.

Covid-19 has exposed and aggravated the antisocial character of the world capitalist system, the unpreparedness of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the harsh consequences to the people who have long suffered class exploitation, gross inequality, mass poverty and deprivation of social services in the fields of public health, education and housing.

Under neoliberal economic policy, the broad masses of the people have become extensively and extremely vulnerable to the recurrent and worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, to the imperialist sanctions, threats of war, actual wars of counterrevolution and aggression, natural disasters and pandemics.

The vulnerability of the overwhelming majority of the people consists of having no income and property to tide them over in case of unemployment or being out of work even only for a week for whatever reason of emergency. This is absolutely clear in a lockdown situation in which the people cannot go to work and have no public transport to use in order to obtain medical treatment for Covid-19 or any other illness.

Worst of all, when so many people need testing and treatment in time of a pandemic, the public health system has been eroded by the neoliberal economic policy of privatizing and eroding what remains of the public health system so that there are not enough health personnel, facilities, equipment and medicines. The remaining tokens of the public health system are easily overloaded and break down. And the private hospitals can at will turn away patients because they are not intended to serve the public, they have inadequate facilities or the patients cannot pay for the medical treatment.

We have also seen the tragedy of doctors, nurses and other health workers themselves getting sick and dying from Covid-19 because of the lack of personal protection equipment. The neoliberal state and the hospitals have appreciated the role of private profit but have depreciated the role of the health workers and the social service that they must render to the people.

In quite a number of developed and underdeveloped countries, where neoliberalism has been imposed as a policy, there has been the pseudo-scientific notion that it is enough to do washing of the hands and social distancing and at worst lockdown down on communities or entire regions because after the contagion has run rampant and claimed plenty of victims then the herd immunity develops in the rest of the population.

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Thus, quite a number of governments have not made timely and adequate preparations and action plans to fight the pandemic. There is no mass testing for a long while. Thus, the spread of the contagion has not been measured well. And there is a lack or shortage of health personnel and resources for the treatment of those afflicted by Covid-19. The lack or shortage of ventilators has caused the death of many patients suffering from pneumonia, whether they are elderly or younger.

The ruling bourgeoisie and the entire ruling system have deprived the overwhelming majority of the people of the means of fending for themselves in time of lockdowns. And their political agents can only promise food rations and some compensation for the wages lost. But the promise is not kept in a timely and sufficient manner. The most victimized are those who are the millions of jobless and homeless as well those imprisoned in congested jails.

But ahead of any reasonable concession to the people, the monopoly bourgeoisie is assured of financial bailouts and stimulus packages in order to make up for their business losses. We are well aware of the policies and actions being undertaken by the rulers of imperialist countries to override the breakdown of the production chain and the drastic falls in the stock market.

In the underdeveloped countries, especially where the barefaced repressive regimes exist, the tyrannical and corrupt bureaucrats invoke the Covid-10 to divert public funds to their own pockets instead of providing for the urgent needs of the people. Whatever good or service is provided is ascribed to those in power in order to raise their political stock.

Worst of all, the fascist-minded rulers use the lock downs to tighten their command over the military and police forces of the state to promote further the notion through the exercise of repressive measures that they are the saviors of the people. In the meantime, they use state power to aggrandize the private interests of their families, political cohorts and business cronies.

### ***3. The People's Response to the Covid-19 pandemic***

It is correct for the people to use disinfectants, do social distancing and respect the rules of quarantine and lockdown whenever these are needed in the face of Covid-19. The people must stay safe from the highly contagious virus and avoid prejudicing the health of other people.

But they retain their democratic rights to make demands from the state and health authorities mass testing of the people at the community level and treatment for the sick and the means of survival while they are locked down and deprived of their means of livelihood. They can ventilate their grievances in order to obtain positive results for the common good.

To any positive extent that public officials recognize the urgent needs of the people and try to satisfy them, it is absolutely clear that social needs are being met by policies and actions for the common good and for whoever is in dire need. But it is clear from the beginning that capitalism fails in the face of pandemic. What is needed is the spirit of service to the people and the desire for socialism.

In view of the utter bankruptcy and antisocial character of capitalism in a time of pandemic, the people and their anti-imperialist and democratic forces are justly demanding system change from capitalism to socialism and that everyone must be assured of a basic income in order to subsist and the social services like public health, public education and public housing.

Higher economic and social demands can be made in the developed countries, especially the imperialist countries. The level of economic development allows substantial social reforms and even socialism. But of course, the obstacle is the violence-prone rapacity of the monopoly bourgeoisie which would rather repress the people or aggress other countries than agree readily to the just economic and social demands of the people.

Consider the trillions of dollars wasted by the US on its high-tech armaments, overseas military bases and endless wars of aggression. The US military forces have been far worse than Covid-19 in killing people. They have killed 25 to 30 million people since the end of World War II.

The huge US military expenditures can be redirected towards the expansion and improvement of social services. Best of all, if the American people succeed at system change. They can build a socialist society of plenty, creativity, justice and peace, if the monopoly bourgeoisie ceased to engage in domestic oppression and exploitation and in wars of aggression and mass destruction abroad.

In the case of underdeveloped, especially pre-industrial countries, the tax levied on the exploiting classes can be increased instead of decreased in order to promote economic development through national industrialization and land reform and provide social services in the spheres of education, health, housing and so on.

But substantial reforms can be achieved only if the people have strong patriotic and progressive forces in order to remove from power those who harm the people; and promote those leaders that work for the benefit of the people. Best of all, the people and their revolutionary forces can strive for system change and achieve national and social liberation towards the goal of socialism.

In any kind of crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the best of the people and their organized forces stand out and shine. The people's social activists make the demands in favor of the people and do what they can to

arouse, organize and mobilize them for the common good. They gain the experience and strength for carrying out anti-imperialist and democratic struggle toward the goal of socialism.

At the community level, they create ways for the people to have food, shelter and medical care and to engage in mutual aid. They call for donations from those who can give these. And they do not get paid for the volunteer work that they render. The actions that they can carry out for the common good under the circumstances of fighting the pandemic are a means of gaining public support and strengthening the organized forces.

In certain countries, where the people have revolutionary movements against the ruling system, the leading revolutionary parties have responded to the UN secretary general's call for a global ceasefire in order to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. In these countries, the revolutionary movement have their organizations attending to the economic and health needs of the people.

As a result of the pandemic, the vile character and failings of the world capitalist system are exposed. Even after the pandemic, the systemic crisis will continue and worsen in both imperialist and in nonimperialist countries. And the anti-people regimes and leaders in many countries will be held accountable and hated as enemies of the people not only for mishandling and aggravating the pandemic but for continuing an unjust system.

But wherever they exist, the revolutionary movements of the people will grow further in strength and will make advances. Where they do not exist, they will rise and wage revolutionary struggles. The world capitalist system will continue to be crisis-stricken economically and politically and its crimes will generate more favorable conditions for the rise of the revolutionary movement for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

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# **ILPS as United Front for Anti-Imperialist and Democratic Struggle**

## **Message on the Plan to Establish the ILPS-Europe<sup>7</sup>**

**April 4, 2020**

Dear Colleagues,

The International League of Peoples' Struggle is a united front of mass organizations for anti-imperialist and democratic struggle at various levels. Since its foundation in 2001, it has been international in scope. But to achieve depth, it must build its composite forces at the regional, national and local levels.

It can gain breadth at each level by having more mass organizations as components under every concern. It can also gain further breadth by being able to have alliance with other united front formations at any level. We may call this broadening the alliance for gathering the largest strength possible to isolate and overwhelm the adversary.

To build the ILPS at any level, you must know the situation within its geographic scope and you must bring together the mass organizations that you can at a given time. You must bring together delegations of these organizations in order to exchange views and experiences and to agree on a program of action and to elect the organ to lead the work and struggle consequent to the assembly.

I am glad that in your plan to establish the ILPS-Europe you appreciate its place in the structure of the entire ILPS and that you have made preparations for the establishment of this regional formation by knowing the situation in Europe, bringing together delegations from various countries, formulating a program of action and electing your regional leading organ.

### ***On the Formation of the ILPS-Europe***

By forming the ILPS-Europe, you take into account and take advantage of the charter and program of the entire ILPS and proceed to focus on the conditions, concerns and demands of the people in the region and in the particular countries therein in order to pursue and advance the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle for socialism and solidarity in the interest of the people in Europe.

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<sup>7</sup>Issued as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

You must build ILPS-Europe as a united front of definite mass formations within its fold at the regional and national levels. You can draw to the fold of the ILPS more anti-imperialist and democratic organizations interested in any of the concerns of the ILPS. At the same time, you can have consensual, consultative and practical alliance and cooperation with other organizations that are independent of the ILPS but have a common interest with the ILPS.

As a result of the worsening crisis of the capitalist system in the world and in Europe, there are long-standing and new mass formations that are carrying out anti-imperialist and democratic struggles on a wide range of issues that are economic, social, political, cultural and environmental in character and affect the working class in general, the migrants and refugees, the women, youth, the intelligentsia and other sectors of society.

Monopoly capitalism has aggravated the exploitation of the proletariat and the rest of the people, especially under the policy of neoliberalism. It has inflicted on them unemployment, job insecurity, lower real wages, higher costs of living, erosion of social services, austerity measures, gender discrimination, dwindled opportunities for the youth, environmental degradation and higher taxation on the people (but not on the business corporations) on various pretexts.

At the same time, monopoly capitalism has aggravated the oppression of the people. Old and new laws, policies and practices are being used to curtail basic democratic rights and fundamental freedoms. The dominant means of information and education spread chauvinist, racist and fascist biases. Worst of all, fascist movements have arisen and collaborate with the coercive forces of the state against the people and the democratic forces.

You are building ILPS-Europe at a time that the proletariat and people in the region are rising up, as in other regions of the world, against the escalation of exploitation and oppression because of the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed, state terrorism, the rise of fascism and endless wars of aggression unleashed by US imperialism. Your struggle in Europe is necessarily linked to the struggles of the people on a global scale.

### ***In Harmony with the International United Front***

While building ILPS-Europe, you must also be in harmony with the international commitment and policy of the ILPS in united front with other international formations and individual organizations. At the moment, the ILPS is initiating jointly with the International Coordination for Revolution (ICOR) the formation of the International Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Fascist United Front (AIAIUF), which aims to include other international formations.

In this larger and wider type of international united front, the ILPS expects



to amplify the joint and individual strengths of the participants, to agree by consensus on common tasks and actions and to maintain consultative and consensual relations among equals and mutually respecting participants.

The participants have the right to independence and initiative and are not bound by democratic centralism. They have a common understanding to keep and increase their respective strengths and capabilities, to issue common or similar statements, to undertake united actions and campaigns on certain issues on certain agreed dates or periods of time.

We can expect that the worldwide mass protests that have dramatically burst out since last year will continue to spread and intensify and take higher forms of struggle not only for regime change but also for system change. They signal the transition to greater anti-imperialist struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.

The rise of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles is the consequence of the rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. The crisis of overproduction has been deepened and accelerated by the adoption of higher technology, the deliberate diminution of the real and nominal incomes of the working people, the rapid accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the emergence of new imperialist powers in addition to the traditional ones.

### ***Intensifying Inter-Imperialist Contradictions***

All the imperialist powers, traditional and new, appeared to get along well together under the auspices of neoliberal globalization for so long as they could exploit the working people in all countries and shift the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped and less developed countries. But the crisis of overproduction has worsened too fast as to upset the balance of strength among the imperialist powers to the extent that economic competition and political rivalry have become increasingly pronounced.

The most dramatic change has been the strategic decline of the US from being the sole superpower from 1991 to 2008 to being merely one of the powers in a multipolar world. China has developed its economy to an extent that it is deemed by the US as its chief economic competitor and chief political rival. The European Union itself is being shaken by the exit of Britain and is being strained by prolonged recession since the 2008 financial crisis.

The proletariat and people of Eastern Europe and the Russia are outraged by the far worsened conditions in the shift from revisionist rule to unbridled capitalism. They resent the rise of unemployment, the drastic loss of social services and the repressive measures. They have a strong desire for system change from capitalism to socialism.

The imperialist powers of Western Europe are still aligned mainly with

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the US and Japan in the IMF, World Bank and WTO, G-7, G-20 and the NATO but particular countries have certain needs that require them to have amicable relations with Russia and China. The alliance of the US and Western European powers is being tested and strained by the frequent US demands for sanctions and aggression actions against its enemies.

Except in Southeast Asia where China claims 90 percent of the South China Sea and is aggressive, the US still remains the No. 1 troublemaker in the capitalist world. But it has declined precisely because of imperial overstretch by overspending on overseas military bases and endless wars of aggression, and by having made major economic, trade and technological concessions to China until 2018.

As the inter-imperialist contradictions worsen, we can expect more efforts of the imperialist powers to shift the burden of crisis to the client states as well as to their own working class and middle class. We must pay close attention to how the monopoly bourgeoisie exploits the working class and how it generates chauvinism, racism, and fascism in order to obscure the roots of the crisis and preempt the rise of revolutionary forces.

The crisis of the world capitalist system that has unfolded since the financial crash of 2008 has remained unsolved by the monopoly bourgeoisie and has led to a deeper and graver crisis in this year of 2020. The neoliberal line of imperialist globalization has unravelled after more than 40 years of dominance.

While it runs and alarms most countries, the Covid-19 pandemic is being used by bourgeois governments to tighten social control and apply repressive measures. But it also serves to expose and underscore the anti-social character of monopoly capitalism and the gross depredations that neoliberal policy has wrought. The broad masses of the people are therefore aroused to rebel.

They are outraged that the monopoly bourgeoisie has long used the neoliberal mode of unrestrained exploitation and is using the pandemic as excuse to take financial bailouts and benefit from so-called stimulus packages. They are incensed that they are being subjected to worse conditions of low income, unemployment, homelessness, erosion of social benefits and deprivation of health care and other social services.

### ***Build the Mass Movement through the United Front***

We can expect that in the months and years to come there will be an intensified class struggle between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat and the tug of war between fascist and anti-fascist movements in Europe as well as in other regions of the world. There is urgent need to build the mass movement through the united front of revolutionary forces in anti-imperialist and democratic struggles for national liberation,

democracy and socialism.

In Europe, we must be able to arouse, organize and mobilize the proletariat (including the migrant workers) and the middle class, which is shrinking and living precariously. The neoliberal economic policy has brought out the worst anti-social, anti-proletarian and anti-people character of monopoly capitalism.

Whatever is the rate of growth of the GDP, it signifies the relentless rise of the unsustainable public debt for the benefit of the monopoly bourgeoisie, the maximization of private profit by squeezing the income of the working class, rise of unemployment, austerity measures, the erosion of social benefits and the shrinkage of social services.

In Western Europe, the proletariat and people of all countries suffer from the worsening conditions of economic and financial crisis, with those of certain countries suffering more than those in other countries. In Eastern Europe and in Russia, the proletariat and people are disgusted with the further deterioration of their conditions from the period of revisionist rule to the current period of unbridled capitalism.

As the crisis of the capitalist worsens, every ruling clique of the monopoly bourgeoisie uses the coercive apparatuses of the state to suppress the rise of the revolutionary mass movement and generates the currents of chauvinism, racism and fascism. The proletariat and people are thus challenged to fight back with the anti-imperialist and democratic movement for socialism.

Many issues are arising and crying for action by the broad masses of the people. But the main task is to build the mass movement through the united front of revolutionary forces and to advance the class struggle against the monopoly bourgeoisie and aim for socialism. The revolutionary forces in Europe must carry forward the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles in concert with the peoples of other regions and the entire world. Thank you.

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# **A Comment on Dialectical Materialism, Idealism and Mechanical Materialism**

**April 13, 2020**

Dialectical materialism is a precise expression for the Marxist materialist philosophy as opposed to both idealism (objective and subjective) and to mechanical materialism. Materialist dialectics takes into account the materiality of the universe as well as the contradictory factors in the balances and transformations within nature and society and in the interactions of society and nature.

The dialectical materialist adopts the materialist and scientific outlook and the mode of cognition and practice that gives due attention to the dialectical or interactive relation of human consciousness and material reality, especially in the process of social transformation, and debunks the supernatural as well as the subjectivist as the sole or main determinant of reality and the transformation of social reality.

Dialectical materialism seeks to comprehend both the natural and social sciences, study how materialist dialectics (with its laws of contradiction) applies in any field of scientific knowledge and understand scientific knowledge as both products of social practice and being consequential to social reality and social transformation. Dialectical materialists are ever obliged and ready to learn from social investigation as well as scientific experiment.

Dialectical materialism is ever interested in and enlightened by the entire range of natural sciences. It appreciates the basic laws of motion in various types of natural phenomena as an explanation and confirmation of the materiality of the universe. In the dialectical materialist explanation of Mao, a piece of stone cannot take the place of the egg and bring forth a chicken, no matter the amount of temperature applied and no matter how much praying by the objective idealist and wishing by the subjective idealist.

The fundamental principles of dialectical materialism as laid down and clarified by Marx and Engels, benefited from the rise of humanism against divinism during the Renaissance and the rise of scientific and rational thought from the 16th century onward. Philosophy became increasingly shorn of the superfluous Platonist, idealistic and divinist categories among the most advanced thinkers. It became clear that matter is the object of scientific investigation.

Dialectical materialists appreciate Newtonian physics as a great

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scientific advance in its own time and remains useful in building houses and bridges and in making and operating electro-mechanical processes. But it rejects mechanical materialism and sheer empiricism as much as it rejects objective idealism as philosophy and as the basis of or guide to social science. Thus, dialectical materialists have put forward materialist dialectics as the interaction of human consciousness and material reality.

Dialectical materialists appreciate the advance of scientific knowledge, such as the epochal one from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics. The latter gives us a more intimate knowledge of the atom, the materiality of energy and the realm of astral physics. Pertinent to quantum physics, Einstein demonstrated that the photons in a wave of light strike and disturb the electrons of a targeted object in photography.

Quantum physics verifies that particles are in waves and that the particle and wave are two sides of the same physical phenomenon, in the same way as matter and energy as well as photon and light. It debunks the attempt of some idealist scientists and philosophers to spiritualize the wave and make the particles subordinate to it and make these less essential or less important.

There is double absurdity in the statement that "scientific developments, especially in quantum physics, are increasingly in relative correspondence with the spiritual belief systems of what Engels called primitive communist societies. There is an attempt to misrepresent Engels as having been an idealist and as having asserted the scientific validity of spiritual belief systems where in fact he saw through such unscientific belief systems as reflections of social practice and the given level of speculation in primitive communal societies.

The great Mao made no rupture from dialectical materialism when he answered the question, Where do correct ideas come from? His answer is a brilliant summation and amounts to an enrichment or development of Marxist philosophy, particularly in the epistemology of dialectical materialism. He declares and explains that the source of knowledge is social practice, consisting of production, class struggle and scientific experiment.

The three terms are well sequenced historically: primitive and more advanced societies exist and develop on the basis of production as human activity, class struggle impels and propels the maintenance and change of class-divided societies and scientific experiment enables the scientific and technological development that leads to social development.

In our time the application of quantum physics has generated information technology to accelerate production, communications and distribution of goods to favor the monopoly bourgeoisie and its financial oligarchy, especially during the decades of the neoliberal policy regime. But the adoption of higher technology has made more frequent and worse

the economic crisis (the crisis of overproduction) and the financial crisis (the abuse of credit) of the capitalist system.

Consequently, the deepening and worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system has generated among the proletariat and people the outrage and desire for revolution. The recurrent rounds of crisis have become the opportunity for building the mass movement and revolutionary forces. And the higher technology for maximizing profit and accelerating the private accumulation of capital provides the tools for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses at a faster rate than ever and eventually for building socialism at new and higher technical and cultural level.

Dialectical materialists always seek to learn from the laws of natural science in order to shed light on the materiality of the objective conditions and subjective factors interacting in social reality and social transformation. And in the realm of social science, they learn best and most from the impact on and consequences of the advances in science and technology to society. But they never seek to replace with any notion of dialectical materialism any scientific law or process discovered and proven in the process of scientific experiment or technological innovation.

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# **Lenin at 150: Lenin Lives!<sup>8</sup>**

## **In Celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of V.I. Lenin**

**April 22, 2020**

Dear Comrades and Friends,

I thank the International League of Peoples' Struggle for inviting me to keynote the event titled, "Lenin at 150: Lenin Lives!", to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, or V.I. Lenin in Amsterdam on March 28. But the event has been aborted due to the rule of safe distancing, travel restrictions, and other disruptions and uncertainties consequent to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The soonest and most appropriate alternative for me is to publish my paper on April 22, Lenin's date of birth. I have also proposed to the organizers of the event to publish the other commemorative papers in a timely manner. All the papers can be collected and published as a book and launched in a gathering of the authors and their readers at the appropriate time.

The pandemic is regrettable but serves us well as a subject for study in connection with Lenin's teachings on imperialism and the proletarian revolution. It coincides with, exposes further and aggravates the rapidly worsening crisis of the ruling system. It underscores the total bankruptcy of unbridled private greed under neoliberalism against the public good.

Even before the pandemic occurred, the world capitalist system was already on the path to a big financial and economic crash. The indicators were the unsustainable debts of households, corporations and central banks, the overaccumulation and inflation of assets in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie, the depression of production and wage incomes, and the increasing austerity measures adopted on a world scale.

The pandemic has massively contributed to the worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system. And it has exposed how the neoliberal economic policy has escalated the exploitation of the working people, how it deprived them of sufficient public health systems by eroding these with privatization, and how they have easily become more subject to repressive measures and further loss of income and social services during a severe health crisis.

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<sup>8</sup>Contributed as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

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Fascist forces are also using the pandemic, general lockdowns and business disruptions as pretext to take center stage, push for and impose emergency powers and military takeovers of civilian functions, heighten repressive measures and jostle for diminishing resources, thus creating a more explosive mix that could lead to more violent inter-imperialist rivalries and internal political wrangling among ruling class factions.

But the increasingly intolerable conditions of oppression and exploitation drive the proletariat and the broad masses of the people to wage the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and all reaction. In most countries affected by the pandemic, daily difficulties of the people in coping with the fast-developing health crisis, socioeconomic crisis, government incompetence and repression, and ruling-class rivalries are driving the masses to quickly grasp the basic flaws of the capitalist-imperialist system and embrace the need for systemic alternatives. We can expect more widespread and more intense people's struggles in the months and years to come.

In the midst of this period's historic twists and turns, it is highly appropriate and urgently necessary that we revisit the great Lenin's immense historical legacy regarding: (1) the importance of building a strong working-class movement, (2) the importance of revolutionary theory, and (3) the value of strategy and tactics appropriate to current conditions in each country.

It is of high importance and urgent necessity that we discuss the crucial role, the theory and strategy and tactics of the working class movement at this time when the crisis of the world capitalist system is conspicuously worsening and sharpening all major contradictions in the world.

I refer to such contradictions as those between labor and capital, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, those between the imperialist powers and states that assert national independence and the socialist cause and those among the imperialist powers. The current crisis of the world capitalist system is generating the intolerable conditions of oppression and exploitation and is driving the proletariat and the rest of the people in both imperialist and nonimperialist countries, developed and underdeveloped, to wage various forms of mass resistance.

Since last year, we have seen the upsurge of the mass protests against neoliberalism, state terrorism, wars of aggression and destruction of the environment. The inciting moments of the mass protests are of wide variability but that they are manifestations of the crisis and bankruptcy of imperialism and all reaction.

The ongoing anti-imperialist mass struggles have the potential of bringing about the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. In this regard, we need to review the philosophical and political teachings of the great Lenin to seek guidance in knowing what must be done to ensure the

revolutionary advance of the proletariat and people of the world.

We must comprehend and deepen our understanding of the philosophical framework of dialectical materialism and the proletarian revolutionary standpoint that provided Lenin with the scientific outlook and sharpest tools of analysis and methods of work to advance the revolutionary tasks in his own time.

### **1. The importance of building a strong working-class movement**

In the era of free competition capitalism in the 19th century, Marx and Engels studied and laid bare the laws of motion of capitalism and predicted that the recurrent crisis of overproduction would lead ultimately to the proletariat burying the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and establishing socialism.

It looked like monopoly capitalism or imperialism would prolong the life of capitalism in the 20th century without any serious interruption. But Lenin led the Great October Socialist Revolution to victory in Russia, at the weakest link of the chain of imperialist powers. Thus, he confirmed in theory and practice the conditions that defined the era of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution.

We owe to Lenin the teaching that for the proletarian revolution to win victory the crisis of the ruling system must be so severe as to disable the bourgeoisie from ruling in the old way, the people are desirous of revolutionary change and the revolutionary party of the proletariat must be strong enough to lead the revolution.

There is no debate that a revolutionary mass movement of the workers and the broad masses of the people is necessary. But there must be a strong revolutionary party of the proletariat to lead the revolutionary mass movement. It must be the vanguard party to ensure the defeat of the bourgeoisie and the socialist direction and future of the movement.

Lenin clearly established, in the last decade of the 19th century, that the class consciousness and potential energy of the Russian proletariat were fast-growing and overtaking the influence the liberal bourgeoisie, which was becoming a mere appendage of Tsarism and imperialism, and of the petty-bourgeoisie which tended to romanticize the peasantry. Lenin's early ideological struggles against the Narodniks and "legal Marxists" had a great practical impact in the work of laying the foundations of the revolutionary working-class party and mass movement.

Lenin wrote *What Is to Be Done* in 1902 in order to clarify what is the vanguard party of the proletariat and how to go about building it. It must have a revolutionary theory and political program by which to mentor, lead and guide the revolutionary mass movement. It must consist of the most conscious and most militant individuals from the mass movement,

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who are organized and well-disciplined under the principle of democratic centralism.

Lenin opposed the line that the working class movement would spontaneously move in the direction of socialism and that it was only a matter of coordinating the trade unions. He argued and fought for the line that there should be a vanguard party of the proletariat, dedicated to bring about socialist consciousness among the workers and wage the revolutionary struggle to emancipate the working class and the rest of the people by overthrowing the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin opposed the line of Martov that trade unions should compose the proletarian revolutionary party. He argued that the party cannot arise from the confines of the trade union movement and from the spontaneous economic struggle about wages and hours of work. He stood up for the line that the party must be led by professional revolutionaries, conscious and disciplined under the principle of democratic centralism. Thus, such new type of a party must come from the "outside" of the trade unions and go inside the working class and the entire mass movement.

At the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) in 1903, Lenin was in the minority in the early sessions until the Jewish Social Democrats (the Bund) walked out. He and his followers gained the majority (and the name Bolsheviks) over the minority (Mensheviks) in the split of the party. Especially after the Revolution of 1905, the split widened over the revolutionary role of the proletariat and over how to respond to the mix of repression and limited reforms from the tsarist regime. The split was later finalized at the Prague Conference of the Bolshevik Party in 1912.

Lenin's emphasis on building the party's core of professional revolutionaries, unrestrained by the narrow confines of the trade union movement, did not mean that he belittled the economic and other union-based struggles of the working class and those of non-proletarian toiling masses as well. He warned that the revolutionary party, even the most clandestine, must not be mere conspiratorial work of "a few dozen who can overturn the world" but who are detached from the practical mass movement. From their early St. Petersburg days onward, Lenin and his comrades sought out countless ways of reaching out to the toiling masses in order to gradually build the revolutionary party and its mass base.

At first through secret Marxist study circles and workers' literacy classes—in one of which he met his future wife and life-long comrade Nadezhda—then later through underground newspapers such as *Iskra* and its network of correspondent-agents, Lenin showed the fledgling party how to organize the practical movement through all-Russian propaganda and agitation, effectively bypassing Tsarist police repression and other limitations. Under Bolshevik leadership and Lenin's guidance, the workers'

mass movement grew by leaps and bounds through the unions, through representatives in the Duma, and through such channels for extensive propaganda-agitation as the Bolshevik daily newspaper Pravda, especially from 1912 onward.

We must understand the historical sequence of the industrial workers arising from the need of the bourgeoisie to employ them, put them to work and extract profits from them. Thus, they become a class in itself and consequently for the purpose of economic struggle they become a class for itself by organizing the trade unions. But for the proletariat to achieve the highest level of consciousness and activity for itself, it must have a revolutionary party that does not only make immediate economic and political demands but aims to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism.

Such a party must consist of cadres and members who assume the tasks of studying the objective social conditions and realizing the ideological, political and organizational requirements for building itself. It cannot arise spontaneously from the trade unions or from the spontaneous mass struggle. But of course, if it is indeed the revolutionary party of the proletariat, it must draw the majority of its cadres and members from the working class and the rural proletariat and must carry forward their rights and interests as well as those of the entire people.

The Bolsheviks could not have led the Great October Socialist Revolution to victory had they not differentiated themselves from the Mensheviks in 1903. The bourgeois democrats, the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries had the headstart in constituting the Provisional Government after the overthrow of the Tsar. But the Bolsheviks led by Lenin had the correct line, the resoluteness and militancy to extend their leadership over the soviet of workers and soldiers to the widespread soviets of the peasants in winning the October revolution, Civil War, the war against foreign intervention and all subsequent struggles to expand and consolidate Red political power.

Relative to the ongoing mass protest actions worldwide, there must be a revolutionary party of the proletariat to lead them from one victory to another. Otherwise, they will simply run against the wall of reaction and become dissipated. Before the current mass protest actions, we have seen so-called leaderless movements like the Occupy Movement disintegrate and fade away. In the first place, sections of such "leaderless" movements have been heavily influenced by supra-class notions that belittle the distinct role or even just the continued existence of the proletariat as a class while bloating up the appeal of so-called "intersectional" activism. But of course, the example of mass uprisings and the energy generated can be availed of by the revolutionary party of the proletariat in order to advance the revolution.

We must also guard against anarchist and fake "Maoist" groups that

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have the notion of creating or leading the mass movement by spouting ultra-Left slogans and merely seek to drive spontaneous mass protests into artificial explosions and conspiratorial heroics and which sideline or belittle the long-term and painstaking mass work and other legal-democratic actions and alliances required to sustain and further develop the workers' and allied sectors' mass movements.

As Lenin said in his work "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder:

The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat's revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and—if you wish—merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people—primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, from their own experience, that they are correct. ...On the other hand, these conditions cannot emerge at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by a correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement. (Lenin CW, Vol. 31 pp. 24-25)

### ***2. The importance of revolutionary theory in the revolutionary movement***

Lenin declared that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. Marx and Engels formulated the fundamental principles to lay down the foundation of Marxism and the world proletarian revolution. Thus, the Bolsheviks adhered to Marxism. But to make the proletarian revolution even more effective in his own time and for posterity, Lenin further developed Marxism and made his own theoretical contributions in philosophy, political economy and social science.

He wrote *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* in 1909 to further explain dialectical materialism and contend with subjectivist idealism that is systematically narrowed down and limited to the empirical basis required by science and is presented as the third-party philosophy between materialism and idealism. The philosophical work is important because it debunks the bourgeois subjectivists who invoke empiricism and science to obscure the objective reality and inner contradictions of problematic social phenomena to be solved and deny the conscious capability of the people

to solve the problems and change the status quo.

Lenin advanced our understanding of dialectical materialism by identifying the unity of opposites as the most fundamental among the laws of contradiction at work in society and nature and in the social and natural sciences. The simple expression of this is to divide one into two. One should not be dumbfounded by anything whole that is impressive or sacralized. Anything whole in the real world can be dissected, analyzed and critiqued. At the same time, anything that appears static, or anything that apparently emerges randomly from chaos, can be deeply understood in the movement of opposites that lurk within it. With his consciousness of the unity of opposites, Lenin was sharp and profound in his examination and analysis of events and issues in society and on both revolutionary and counterrevolution sides.

Consequent to reading and studying *Das Kapital*, he proceeded to study the Russian economy and wrote the *Development of Capitalism in Russia* in 1899. He recognized the character of Russia as a military-feudal type of imperialism, with a rising bourgeoisie establishing industrial enclaves and impacting on the rural communes. And he identified the industrial proletariat as the most progressive productive force capable of winning political power with the support of the peasant masses and leading the people to socialism.

He had a comprehensive grasp of the bourgeois democratic and socialist stages of the Russian revolution and the principles of socialist revolution and construction against the capitalist system. He always spelled out socialism as the ultimate goal at every point in the revolutionary advance of the Bolsheviks and the proletariat. It was the objective of achieving socialism that motivated the Bolsheviks to oppose and overthrow the bourgeois Provisional Government of Kerensky and his allies.

Even as he was preoccupied with the demands of leading the Bolsheviks under conditions of imperialist war, he was able to write *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1916 and publish it in 1917. He explained the plundering, aggressive, decadent and moribund character of monopoly finance capitalism and the struggle for a redivision of the world among the imperialist powers. He also pointed out that the socialist parties of the Second International turned social chauvinists in support of the war policy of their respective imperialist countries because said parties represented the labor aristocracy serving as the tail of the big bourgeoisie.

Despite having to lead the Bolsheviks in the intensifying struggle for political power and despite the threats to his life and liberty, Lenin was able to write *State and Revolution* in 1917. It was a timely work to explain the class character of the state and revolution and inspire and guide the Bolsheviks and the proletariat in intensifying the class struggle for socialism against the Kerensky government. It was a master work for

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future generations to learn that the essence of revolutionary struggle of the proletariat is to seize political power and build socialism.

After seizure of political power by the Bolsheviks, Lenin had to confront the inadequacies and difficulties in maintaining "war communism" which involved requisitioning food from the peasants and rationing under war conditions. He had to adopt the New Economic Policy as an expedient measure to respond to the peasant demand for compensation and give concessions even to the rich peasants, the traders and entrepreneurs in order to revive the economy ruined by the inter-imperialist war and the counterrevolutionary war. He adopted such a policy to save the rule of the Bolsheviks and the proletariat, stay on the road to socialism and prepare for advance.

Lenin had an unquenchable thirst to further his theoretical and practical understanding of the proletarian revolution and various contradictions in society, and led the Bolsheviks in raising the party's capacity to combine theory and practice. The sheer volume and scale of his lifelong contributions are reflected in his prolific output of books, pamphlets, articles, party and state documents drafted by him, unpublished manuscripts, extensive commentaries and marginal notes on works by other authors, including statistical yearbooks and other informative materials. Much of his teachings and insights remain resonant and enlightening to current-day revolutionaries.

Our appreciation of Lenin's contributions includes his principled personal conduct, comradely mien, simple lifestyle, and strict work regimen, which are not as easily measured as his written works and official acts as leader of the Bolshevik party and Soviet state but have been unassailable facts in his many biographies, except the worst anti-communist ones. These are integral to his teachings and have inspired the respect and admiration of succeeding generations of revolutionaries.

To be able to lead the socialist revolution and construction effectively, Stalin learned from Lenin the principles and general methods of carrying them out. Lenin always explained in the context of preserving and strengthening the revolutionary forces and preparing the way for a further advance whenever there was the need to adopt a certain policy or course of action that involved a retreat or appeared to delay the advance of socialism.

He had the foresight to found the Third or Communist International against the social-chauvinist Socialist International as early as 1919. It was a necessary step to amplify the victory of the October Revolution, reject the revisionist line of the Second International, encourage the revolutionary movement under the spirit of proletarian internationalism and widen the latitude for the consolidation of Soviet power. But he also had diplomatic flexibility in approving the Brest-Litovsk Treaty to consolidate power and



neutralize further attacks by the imperialist powers.

He exercised profound theoretical leadership in founding and steering the Soviet state through its early years of development, as well as engaging in its most critical tasks and practical policy questions, until his work was cut short by severe illness and death in 1924. The same was true in his exercise of leadership within the Third International.

Relative to the current wave of mass protests against imperialism and reaction on a global scale, we must learn from the history of the Bolsheviks that they could win victory because of the theoretical and practical leadership of Lenin. He applied his own dictum that the revolutionary mass movement can become strong and advance further if there is a revolutionary theory that can guide the masses and there is the revolutionary party of the proletariat that upholds and applies such theory to the revolutionary struggle against the counterrevolutionary state of the bourgeoisie.

### ***3. The value of strategy and tactics appropriate to current conditions in each country***

Ahead of Lenin, Plekhanov held the view that the Russian revolution needed to pass through the bourgeois democratic stage before the socialist stage because the industrial proletariat in Russia was still a small minority class, incapable of carrying out a socialist revolution immediately. The Mensheviks took the line that the bourgeois democratic revolution had to be led by the bourgeoisie which would develop capitalism further and thereby enlarge the industrial proletariat.

Indeed, the industrial proletariat amounted to a small percentage of the Russian population and was in a few enclaves in an ocean of feudalism and medievalism. But Lenin asserted that the proletariat and its revolutionary party could lead the Russian revolution in both the bourgeois democratic revolution and socialist stages by having for its main ally the peasantry, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of contradictions among the reactionaries in order to overthrow Tsarist rule. Thus, he set the revolutionary class line in drawing up the strategy and tactics of the Russian revolution.

In the February revolution of 1917, the leaders of the bourgeois democratic parties, the Mensheviks and the peasant-based Socialist Revolutionary Party had the initiative in taking power and installing the Provisional Government. They were supported by the Petrograd soviets of workers and soldiers which were then led by the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries who bowed to the bourgeois leadership of Kerensky.

Upon his arrival in Petrograd in April 1917, Lenin called for all power to the soviets even as the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers were still

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under the leadership of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. But he persuaded the Bolshevik Party Central Committee to approve his line and program: to withhold support from the Provisional Government and win a majority in the soviets in favor of soviet power.

He proposed that upon its establishment the Soviet government would begin immediate negotiations for a general peace on all fronts and the soviets would confiscate the landlords' estates without compensation, nationalize all land, and divide it among the peasants. And the government would put privately owned industry under strict control for the benefit of labor.

From March to September 1917, the Bolsheviks successfully engaged in propaganda and agitation and eventually gained the majority in the soviets. The Kerensky government became discredited by the breakdown of the economy and deterioration of the living conditions of the workers, peasants, and soldiers and the refusal of Kerensky to withdraw from the war and complete the revolution. He could only feebly promise a freely elected constituent assembly upon the return of order.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks won the support of the soviets and the masses as they demanded peace, land, and bread. By September, the soviets elected a Bolshevik majority in the Petrograd Soviet and in the soviets of the major cities and towns throughout the country. The line and program put forward by Lenin proved to be correct and successful.

The stage was already set for the seizure of political power in October. But Lenin still had to take grave personal risk by slipping into Petrograd in order to attend the secret meeting of the Bolshevik Party Central Committee to persuade his comrades to prepare for the seizure of political power. The plan was to muster the support of soldiers and sailors and to train the Red Guards, the Bolshevik-led workers' militia, for carrying out the October revolution.

After the overthrow of the Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks and their Left Socialist Revolutionary allies became the absolute majority of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Consequently, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to accept full power and elected Lenin as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the new Soviet Government, and approved his Peace Decree and Land Decree.

In forging the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with the Central Powers, the Soviet Government was prepared to fight and defeat the Russian counterrevolutionary armies led by former Tsarist allies and the foreign interventionists from the Allied Powers. The soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers became a bulwark of revolutionary strength as the fighting moved from the cities and trunk lines to the expanse of the countryside. The Leninist line of upholding and respecting the right of the non-Russian nationalities to national self-determination enabled the formation of the

Soviet Union as a multi-national federation.

Lenin founded the Third International in order to unite all workers of the world for the cause of socialism and proletarian internationalism and fight against imperialism, revisionism and all reaction. It aimed to encourage the proletarian parties to wage revolution or at the least counter aggression by the imperialist powers against the Soviet Union. Shortly after the death of Lenin, the Soviet Union was recognized by most governments. In the long run, the Comintern had great success in inspiring the rise of communist parties capable of establishing several socialist countries and leading national liberation movements in colonies and semicolonies.

Relative to the anti-imperialist organizations and movements that are now involved in the worldwide mass protests, we must understand that for the revolutionary movement to win victory against imperialism and establish socialism it must have a revolutionary class line and the correct strategy and tactics in order to build the strength of the basic revolutionary forces led by the proletariat, win over allies and take advantage of the splits among the class adversaries at home and abroad in order to isolate and defeat the enemy.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks applied the theory and practice of Marxism in the concrete conditions of Russia in order to arrive at the correct strategy and tactics and win the revolution in the biggest country of the world. So would the Communist Party of China and other proletarian revolutionary parties apply Marxism-Leninism in their respective countries and win the revolution among one-third of humankind.

Leninism's valuable legacy of universal applicability includes the deepgoing class basis of strategy and tactics in terms of identifying and accurately characterizing the contradictions among classes, how these have changed from one historical stage to the next, how these are expressed in the arena of economic, political and ideological struggles, in the specific roles of party platforms and movements. Lenin's significant contributions to the peasant-agrarian and national-colonial questions have been of immense value to succeeding generations of revolutionaries worldwide.

So many proletarian parties have drawn lessons of strategy and tactics from Lenin and his worthy successors Stalin, Mao and others. They creatively applied these lessons to their own victorious revolutionary movements. The treasury of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, rather than remain static, has thus been tremendously enriched by genuine Marxist-Leninists in the past several decades amidst the changing global conditions, including the setbacks suffered by the world proletarian revolution and despite the global offensives of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Proletarian parties that are seriously preparing for or actually waging armed revolution understand that many other aspects and elements

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of strategy and tactics must be worked out in the context of concrete conditions prevailing in their respective countries, which may vary widely from country to country. These may include questions on agrarian or preindustrial conditions, certain new elements of capitalist development or imperialist control, changing characteristics of the land and people, growing and waning geopolitical factors, and so on—which will impact strategy and tactics and be of wider interest when shared and discussed between or among parties.

We are now in transit to the great resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution. We look forward to the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism by proletarian revolutionary parties in more countries than ever before. We expect these parties to achieve unprecedentedly greater victories for the cause of socialism.

The epochal struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and between socialism and imperialism continues. So long as the proletariat and people of the world are oppressed and exploited, they will rise up time and again in order to liberate themselves from the shackles of oppression and exploitation.

Celebrate Leninism and the 150th birth anniversary of the great Lenin!

Carry out the revolution under the leadership of the proletariat!

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Long live the world proletarian revolution!

Long live proletarian internationalism and the solidarity of all peoples!



# On the Current Character of the Philippine Economy

April 26, 2020

Economists and statisticians of the Philippine reactionary state and the IMF claim that the Philippines is a “newly-industrialized country” or an “emerging market”. The illusion of industrial development is conjured mainly by understating the share of agriculture in production output and employment and overstating the shares of industry and services, especially the latter, which are not founded on Philippine industrial development.

## ***Underdevelopment, Unemployment and Mass Poverty***

In fact, under the neoliberal policy for the last four decades, the underdeveloped pre-industrial and semifeudal character of the Philippine economy has been aggravated and deepened by making it more consumption-oriented and dependent on imported equipment and consumer manufactures, mounting foreign debt, volatile flows of portfolio investments, foreign exchange remittances of migrant workers and the income of call centers.

The GDP for 2019 is USD 376 billion. Divide this with the population of 109 million to get the GDP per capita. The GDP shares by sectors as of 2018 are supposedly as follows: agriculture 7.4 percent, industry 34 percent and services, 58.6 percent. The labor force of 45 million is distributed as follows: services 58.9 percent, agriculture 22.0 percent and industry 19.1 percent. These figures for sector outputs and employment are unreliable to say the least and need to be corrected by further research.

Dividing the GDP by the population to get the GDP per capita and understating the number of poor people at 16.6 percent by using only USD 3.20 per day to set the poverty line are a sneaky way of covering up the gross inequality in which the foreign monopoly corporations take their superprofits and the less than one percent of the population, who are the big compradors and landlords, take most of the pie at the expense of more than 90 percent of the population.

The reactionary government claims that the rate of unemployment is only 4.5 percent. But some of the officials admit that around 10 million of the labor force is unemployed. That's 22 percent of the total labor force of 45 million. Add those 10 to 12 million migrant workers (excluding the undocumented or noncontractual) who have gone abroad to look for jobs.

We can say that nearly 50 percent of the labor force is unemployed.

### ***The Agricultural Sector and the Peasantry***

The share of agriculture at only 7.4 per cent of the estimated GDP for 2020 is too small. The peasants, landlords and the merchants do not declare fully the market value of the agricultural product. Statisticians work mainly on estimates, aerial reconnaissance of farms and limited precise data. It must also be taken into account that most of the food crop does not reach the market because it is consumed by the peasants themselves. Swidden farming, backyard animal husbandry, localized fishing, handicrafts, carpentry, intra-community peddling and other sideline occupations are also not taken into account.

The share of agriculture in employment is supposed to be only 22 per cent of the labor force of 45 million. Even by the official statistics, employment in agriculture still accounts for more than 53 per cent in relation to that in the industry sector as the other basic productive sector. There are supposed to be only 10 million Filipino farmers. It is unclear as to how this figure has been arrived at and whether it refers only to heads of farming households. It is obviously a false figure because it is surpassed even by the number of migrant Filipino workers abroad who are estimated at 10 to 12 million. We know for a fact that peasant households, including children who are 10 years old or even younger, work as a productive unit on the farm.

The average size of the peasant family or household is larger than the national average of 4.4 members per family. There should be at least 44 million peasants. The peasants cannot be counted as if they were workers formally employed individually and then put to assembly line work in factories. It is a matter of necessity that a peasant household works as a collective and attends to farming and some sideline occupations.

Entire peasant households or families fall under the category of a social class on the basis of their means of livelihood and other related criteria. That is also true in the case of families belonging to other classes, unless the individual member leaves the class in a certain way.

This is an important point in the class analysis of the population in view of the systematic attempt to reduce the number of peasants. A member of a peasant family remains in the peasant class even if he or she works as a seasonal farm worker or is labeled as unemployed or underemployed, unless such peasant shifts to another class, such as a peasant who becomes an industrial worker or a rich peasant becomes a small landlord through merchant-usury operations or his son gets high formal education and joins the urban petty bourgeoisie. In big numbers, poor and lower middle peasants double as seasonal farm workers on the land of others

as or seasonal odd jobbers in urban areas to augment their inadequate farm income.

### ***Industry and Service Sectors***

In combination with the big foreign banks and firms, the comprador big bourgeoisie and the bureaucrat capitalists have profited most from construction booms, accelerated mining and semi-manufacturing in the industrial sector. What is passed off as Philippine industry does not produce machine tools and most metals and chemicals of strategic importance. Even semi-manufacturing dependent on imported equipment and components has declined.

All subsectors of Philippine industry are dependent on the importation of equipment, fuel and other components and on the export of mineral ores, some semi-manufactures, fruit crops, rubber and palm oil. Mining has been extremely profitable for the big compradors and their foreign partners because the values of mineral products are extremely underdeclared to reduce tax payments. There are gross disparities between the declared values at the Philippine ports and those at the foreign destinations.

The kind of service sector that exists in the Philippines is not the extension of an industrial economy or so-called post-industrial economy in an overdeveloped country but that of a pre-industrial and semi-feudal economy. The wholesale and retail trade, banks, hotels, tourism, recreation, education, media, communications, computer services, handicraft and repair shops, city, gas and water supply are founded on the subordination of the Philippines as an underdeveloped country to the industrially developed countries.

The big comprador enterprises thrive in the service sector with their big service enterprises. The output values of and the employment in these enterprises are rated to the extent of more than 58 percent, far higher than those of the basic productive sectors amounting together to 42 percent. The service sector is bloated enough by the big enterprises but is further bloated by estimates of the output values and employment in the small and medium service enterprises, petty peddling, oddjobbing and various sorts of self-employment.

### ***Worsening Conditions of Unemployment***

The surplus population or reserve army of labor has rapidly increased in both the urban slums and rural areas. The previous accumulation of unemployed and odd jobbers in slum areas generate their own kind. And continuously the rural areas provide the urban areas with new waves of unemployed and odd jobbers aside from those who choose to remain in

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the countryside to compete for the dwindling odd jobs on allotted farms and plantations or to engage in slash and burn farming in forest regions and on mountain slopes.

Because of the lack of genuine land reform and national industrialization and stagnation and decline of the basic productive sectors of agriculture and industry, the semifeudal and pre-industrial character of the economy has been aggravated and the surplus population or unemployed has increased rapidly from the population growth in both rural and urban areas.

In the wake of the global economic stagnation since the financial crash of 2008, the demand for Philippine exports of the has weakened. The trade and budgetary deficits have grown. Servicing the accumulated foreign debt and getting new loans are becoming more difficult. The conditions of underdevelopment, unemployment and mass poverty are worsening.

In the months previous to Covid-19, the Duterte regime boasted of making the highest rate of economic growth in Asia at 6 to 7 percent and keeping the unemployment rate low at only 4.5 per cent, better than the unemployment rate in a number of more developed countries. But the impact and consequences of the pandemic have unmasked and aggravated the crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines.

### ***Unraveling of Neoliberalism and Probable Consequences***

After four decades of dominance, neoliberalism is unravelling even for the imperialist countries. It has caused more frequent and worse economic and political crisis. This 2020 a crisis worse than the Great Depression has come on top of the prolonged global stagnation since the financial crash of 2008. We can be certain that the basic semifeudal and pre-industrial character of the Philippine economy and the peasant majority of the labor force will become more exposed.

The illusion of the Philippines becoming a newly-industrialized country with a dwindling peasant population will be dispelled by the global depression, the drying up of international credit, the withdrawal of hedge funds and the decreased incomes of OFWs and call center employees.

There will be a dwindling of funds to sustain private construction and some public works; maintain the consumption-oriented and debt-dependent economy; and cover the ever growing trade and budgetary trade deficits and the worsening international balance of payments.

What will happen to the Philippines as the global capitalist economy goes into a worse state of stagnation and depression and the demand for cheap raw materials, cheap semimanufactures and cheap labor from the Philippines goes down, international credit becomes tighter and the problem of maintaining a consumption-oriented and debt-dependent



country worsens?

The Philippine social volcano will erupt more violently than ever before. As the socioeconomic and political crisis worsens, the reactionary government and the ruling classes will become ever more exploitative and oppressive. As a consequence, the broad masses of the people are driven to resist along the line of new democratic revolution through people's war.

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# General View of Lenin's Theory on Modern Imperialism as Indispensable Integral Part of his Revolutionary Legacy<sup>9</sup>

For Online Discussion on Lenin's Legacy and Imperialism,  
Sponsored by ILPS-Australia

May 27, 2020

Dear Comrades and Friends,

By the time that Lenin wrote *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1916, he had already made major contributions to the development of Marxism in the fields of philosophy, political economy and social science.

I wish therefore to present first how Lenin's theory on modern imperialism is related to and interconnected with his previous and prospective works that would together comprise his entire revolutionary legacy. Then, I proceed to focus on this theory, its implications and consequences in the socialist revolution in Russia and in the entire world in the time of Lenin. Thereafter, I discuss the implications and consequences on a world scale since the time of Lenin.

## ***I. Relation to the Entire Legacy of Lenin***

The master work of Lenin in philosophy is *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* which he wrote in 1909 to uphold the materialist-scientific outlook on objectively existing material reality and explain dialectical materialism as a mode of knowing and changing society and nature. He delved into how the general laws of contradiction operated in the particular laws of motion in particular forms of social and natural phenomena.

He identified the law of the unity of opposites as the most fundamental law of contradiction. He further explained that the unity gives character and form to a certain entity and is temporary and relative because such entity is subject ultimately to change because of the permanent and absolute contradictoriness of the opposites. He also pointed to differences in similar entities and stressed the need for analysis of concrete conditions. He further pointed to the variations and uneven development of similar social and natural phenomena.

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<sup>9</sup>Issued as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

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As regards to class struggle in exploitative society, the contradictions between exploiting and exploited classes are irreconcilable even as that society undergoes certain stages of development that seem to preserve indefinitely the character and form of society as dictated by the ruling exploitative class. But the exploited class that needs and demands liberation from the fetters of the old society is the driving force for revolutionary change and this can be accelerated by the rise of the subjective forces of the revolution. In *What Is To Be Done?* which Lenin wrote in 1901 and published in 1992, he stressed the need for a vanguard revolutionary party of the proletariat.

At the age of 19, Lenin read and studied *Das Kapital*. He proceeded to study the Russian economy and eventually wrote the *Development of Capitalism in Russia* in 1899. He noted the emergence of industrial capitalism in Russia with the rising bourgeoisie establishing industrial enclaves and impacting on the rural communes. At the same time, he observed the persistence of a military-feudal type of imperialism represented by the Tsar and the widespread landed nobility.

Tsarism welcomed the rise of industrial capitalism and the capitalist class as well as the service of the intelligentsia and the liberal bourgeoisie to the empire. Lenin identified the industrial proletariat as the most progressive and most productive political force for revolutionary change with the potential for winning political power with the support of the peasant masses and leading the people to socialism. His study of the political economy of Russia was closely linked to his study of state and revolution in connection with his purpose of carrying out a socialist revolution by the proletariat.

Even as the imperialist powers were frenziedly preparing for World War I, the first inter-imperialist war, Kautsky the leader of the Second International put forward in 1914 the theory of ultra-imperialism or super-imperialism, which he presumed as the way for the imperialist powers to override their conflicts and even develop the underdeveloped countries. As the inter-imperialist contradictions heated up, the revisionists of the Second International acted as social chauvinists and social imperialists in supporting the war budgets of their governments even as they posed as social pacifists.

But Lenin was consistent in regarding monopoly capitalism or imperialism as a moribund, decadent, bellicose and aggressive system. He had no illusions about imperialism as a benign and peaceful force. He saw it as the intransigent enemy of the proletariat and peoples of the world and he anticipated the inter-imperialist war to break out. In this connection, he saw the fatal weaknesses of the Russian ruling system in getting involved in the war and called on the proletariat and the people to turn the imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war.

Lenin's study of the political economy of Russia and the role played by his country in the world of imperialist powers and inter-imperialist conflicts provided a sound foundation for the social science of pursuing the class struggle and revolutionary transformation. He was able to formulate the general line and strategy and tactics of pursuing first the bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution under the leadership of the proletariat and immediately proceeding to the stage of socialist revolution.

Ahead of Lenin, Plekhanov projected the bourgeois democratic and socialist stages of the Russian revolution. But he and the Mensheviks thought that the bourgeoisie must lead the bourgeois- democratic revolution and develop capitalism before the proletariat can perform the revolutionary class leadership. Through the February revolution and Kerensky government, the bourgeoisie was able to take power but not to keep it as the government continued to be involved in the inter-imperialist war and could not solve the grave deterioration of the Russian economy.

The Bolsheviks performed the role of the vanguard party of the proletariat armed with the correct revolutionary theory and with the political line demanding peace, bread and freedom. It was able to gain the majority in the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers and was able to overthrow the Kerensky government and replace the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with that of the proletariat. Upon the seizure of political power by the Bolsheviks and the proletariat, the Great October Socialist Revolution began with the establishment of the class dictatorship of the proletariat on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance.

## ***II. Lenin's Theory on Modern Imperialism***

Lenin's theory on imperialism was of crucial importance in sharpening the understanding of monopoly capitalism by the Bolsheviks for the purpose of waging revolution in Russia and turning the imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war as well as for countering the opportunism being spread by the revisionists of the Second International to confuse the people about the nature of imperialism and to justify the social democrats in collaborating with and supporting the monopoly capitalists in their respective countries.

Lenin made it absolutely clear that the Kautskyite social democrats were wrong in supporting imperialism in any way and denounced them for being social imperialists, socialist by word and imperialist by deed. He categorically declared imperialism as the irreconcilable enemy of the proletariat and the people. Most important of all, in putting forward his theory on imperialism, he defined the world era as that of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution and urged the proletariat and peoples of the world to wage revolution in order to defeat and prevail over

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imperialism.

In opposition to Kautsky and the revisionists of the Second International, Lenin stressed that imperialism was the highest and final stage in the development of capitalism as an oppressor and exploiter of the proletariat and people and was not in any way a factor for making peace among the conflicting imperialist powers and for raising the development of the underdeveloped countries. He exposed monopoly capitalism as a decadent, moribund, bellicose and aggressive form of capitalism.

He observed that monopoly capitalists deployed direct and indirect investments in the colonies, semi-colonies and dependent countries. It did so not to develop these countries but to extract higher profits in an uneven and spasmodic way and leaving in the wake of its economic plunder worse levels of devastation and underdevelopment. In his study of imperialism, he showed how the economic and social development of the world became more uneven than before.

At any rate, Lenin defined the five features of imperialism as follows:

1. monopoly capitalism has become dominant in the economy and society of a country,
2. there is a merger of industrial and bank capital to form the finance oligarchy,
3. the export of surplus capital gains importance over the traditional export of surplus goods,
4. monopoly firms combine across imperialist countries in the form of cartels and syndicates and
5. the domination of the world by colonial and imperialist powers has been completed and violent inter-imperialist conflicts keep on arising due to the struggle for a redivision of the world.

In an imperialist country, one or a few monopoly firms have prevailed over competitors and have accumulated capital to the extent of controlling the entirety of every major industry in contrast to the past when there was a multiplicity of smaller companies in the free competition capitalism in most of the 19th century. In pre-imperialist times, the banks used to be mainly an instrument of merchants for trading. But in the advent of imperialism, industrial capital and bank capital have merged in order to muster investments more rapidly and on a larger scale for enlarging the productive and trading capabilities of the monopoly firms.

The export of surplus capital gains importance over the traditional export of surplus goods as greater super-profits are to be gained not only from the expansion of foreign direct investments but even more so from the more parasitic and exploitative loan capital extended to the countries that are ever suffering from trade and budgetary deficits. As the weak and inferior kind of imperialist country, Russia was a prey to the Western creditors and was easily dictated upon against its own interest to plunge into an inter-imperialist war.

Monopoly capitalist firms form alliances among themselves in order to beat the competition within a country or on the scale of several countries

in one global region or in the world at large. They use the states of their respective countries to compete and conflict with other states in the struggle for a redivision of the world in terms of cheap sources of raw materials and labor, fields of investment, markets and spheres of influence. Two blocs of imperialist countries oppose each other, escalate the level of aggression and move towards a situation that led to the World War I and World War II.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution confirmed that the world was not only that of modern imperialism but also that of the world proletarian revolution. It also confirmed that imperialism is the final stage of capitalism and the prelude to socialist revolution, as demonstrated in the Russian revolution and establishment of the Soviet Union by the proletariat led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. A bulwark of the world proletarian revolution arose as a result of the first inter-imperialist war.

It was with far-reaching foresight that Lenin directed the formation of the Third International or Comintern in order to supplant the bankrupt and discredited Second International of social imperialists, social chauvinists and social pacifists and to propagate, carry out the communist and proletarian revolutionary line to fight and defeat imperialism in its home countries, colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries and ensure the rise of socialist countries through the class leadership of the proletariat against imperialism and all reaction.

### ***III. Epoch-Making Consequences and Relevance***

The consequences of Lenin's teachings on modern imperialism and proletarian revolution are epochal and far reaching. Stalin carried forward the socialist revolution and construction in the Soviet Union, proving that socialism is possible in one country and building it as a powerful force against imperialism, fascism and all reaction. The Comintern succeeded in propagating the Marxist-Leninist principles, policies and line in the ideological, political and organizational fields on an international scale.

After a short period of relative peace and stability among the imperialist countries in the 1920s, the world capitalist system was again shaken by a grave economic and social crisis from the Great Depression of 1929 onwards, leading to the rise of the fascist states and the eventual war between Axis Powers and the Allied Powers in World War II. It was mainly an inter-imperialist war but the defeat of the fascist powers was effected mainly by the Soviet Union in Europe and by the armed revolutionary movements led by the Communist Party in China and other Asian countries.

The happy outcome of the second inter-imperialist war was the victory of socialism in several countries in Europe and Asia and the rise of national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. At the peak of the revolutionary wave in the middle of the 1950s, one third of humankind

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was under the leadership and governance of the working class and its revolutionary party in several countries, in contrast to the pre-war situation when the Soviet Union accounted for one-sixth of the surface of the earth.

But unfortunately, the scourge of modern revisionism afflicted the Soviet Union and ultimately caused its collapse in 1991 after decades of undermining socialism and restoring capitalism. Comrade Mao analyzed and explained the phenomenon of modern revisionism and put forward the theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian class dictatorship in order to combat revisionism, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism. But the Dengist counterrevolution in China made a successful coup in 1976.

Because of the revisionist betrayal of socialism in the Soviet Union, China and elsewhere, we are confronted with a world situation in which the imperialist powers appear to reign without serious challenge by the proletariat and the socialist cause. But under these conditions, the teachings of Lenin on imperialism and proletarian revolution are even more valid and relevant than ever before.

The temporary setbacks inflicted to the socialist cause by the modern revisionists and their imperialist masters still place humankind in the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, in contrast to the overoptimistic slogan in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that imperialism was already heading for total collapse and socialism was marching towards world victory. Mao himself cautioned in 1969 that it would take a hundred more years to reach such situation. Indeed, it will take a whole historical epoch for socialism to advance and defeat imperialism in order to reach the threshold of communism.

After the death of Mao and the reversal of his proletarian revolutionary line, China adopted and implemented capitalist reforms and opened up to the US and the world capitalist system for integration. After the mass uprisings against inflation and corruption in Beijing and other cities in 1989, China became more driven to seek collaboration with the US and other capitalist countries, sought to liquidate completely the people's war in Southeast Asia under the slogan of peace and development and became the main partner of US imperialism under the policy of neoliberal globalization, especially after China joined the World Trade Organization.

By maintaining a two-tiered economy of state monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism, China has been able to take advantage of the economic, trade and technical concessions from the US in a big and rapid way by using state planning and mobilizing state financial resources, state corporations and private companies to achieve strategic economic and military goals of production.

On its part, US imperialism has accelerated its strategic decline by financializing its economy, outsourcing mainly to China the production



of consumer products and vital components of capital goods because of cheap labor there, increasing US direct investments there, pampering the military-industrial complex with gilded contracts for the production of high-tech weaponry and wasting huge human and material resources and more than USD six trillion in maintaining overseas military bases and engaging in ceaseless wars of aggression.

Now, the US is stepping back from its close all-round strategic partnership with China, accusing it of manipulating its two-tiered economy against the US and other capitalist countries, stealing technology from the US and other patent owners, creating and spreading Covid-19 and collaborating with Russia, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela and countries to undercut and defeat US sanctions against them. In brief, the US now regards China as its main economic competitor and chief imperialist rival.

The crisis of the world capitalist system has been worsening in an unprecedented way since the financial crisis of 2008. This has resulted in the depression and volatility of the world economy. The causes of the crisis have never been solved even as a new and graver crisis has come about to wreak further havoc on the world economy. The global neoliberal policy regime is unravelling as imperialist powers are increasingly becoming protectionist and prone to unleash state terrorism and wars of aggression. Inter-imperialist contradictions are growing and sharpening.

As the main imperialist rivals, the US and China are trying to lead their respective blocs of imperialist power and preserve as well as expand their respective economic territories in the struggle for a redivision of the world. Wars of aggression and counterrevolution are increasing. We hope that the revolutionary movements of the people led by the proletariat can become strong enough to frustrate and defeat the tendency of the imperialist powers to unleash wars, shift the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations in underdeveloped countries and further plunder and destroy the environment.

### ***Questions and Answers after the Above Presentation***

*1. Why do some activists prefer to use globalization instead of imperialism? They say that imperialism as a term to describe the inequality in this world is no longer relevant?*

JMS: It is more precise to say: Since 1979, imperialism has used the line of neoliberal globalization. Unqualified and abstract "globalization" cannot replace the term imperialism as Lenin has defined. At any rate, the mercantile capitalism of colonialism, the free trade so-called of free competition capitalism and relatively recent jargon of neoliberalism in the last 40 years of imperialism refer to the global scale of colonial and then imperialist operations.

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It is wrong to say that imperialism is no longer useful or relevant to refer to or describe the inequality in the world between overdeveloped imperialist countries and the less developed or underdeveloped nonimperialist countries. Imperialism or its equivalent monopoly capitalism is still a valid and relevant term in relation to colonies, semi-colonies, dependent countries, client-states and oppressed nations and people in history as well as in current circumstances. The five features of imperialism defined by Lenin still exist and are valid.

We are still very much in the world era of imperialism because of the serious setbacks inflicted on the world proletarian revolution and the socialist caused by modern revisionism and imperialism. Capitalism has been fully restored in major former socialist countries. But we are also still in the era of world proletarian revolution because the extremely exploitative and oppressive character of imperialism continues to generate conditions that are favorable to the resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution. We are still in the world era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution as proclaimed by Lenin.

### *2. Why do some activists say that China is not imperialist?*

JMS: Those who say that China is not imperialist are either die-hard revisionists or who do not know any better and ignore the following facts: 1. State monopoly capitalism in combination with private monopoly capitalism is dominant in China. The families of the highest state and party bureaucrat are on both sides of monopoly capitalism. 2. There is a merger of industrial and bank capital to form a finance oligarchy. The Chinese billionaires are finance oligarchs in control of industrial and financial operations. 3. China is not just an exporter of goods but also of surplus capital at very onerous terms, 4. It engages in combinations with foreign monopoly firms in other countries and 5. It is a major player in inter-imperialist contradictions and now in a bitter struggle with the US for a redivision of the capitalist world.

### *3. Do you think Mao's theory of three worlds still has relevance today?*

JMS: The so-called theory of three worlds or the diplomatic line spelled out by Deng Xiaoping at the UN has no relevance especially now, because in the so-called first world of superpowers the Soviet Union has collapsed and has become reduced since 1991 to capitalist Russia, which is a full-fledged part of the world capitalist system even as it has contradictions with the US. Some people might say China has moved into the so-called first world of Deng, especially as it is now increasingly in contention with the US. The so-called second world of lesser capitalist countries may be said to exist but not in the Dengist sense of their possibly becoming an ally of the continuing third world of underdeveloped countries which are oppressed and exploited by imperialist countries.

*4. What are your thoughts on imperialism and Australia as an advanced capitalist country but subservient and beholden to US interests?*

JMS: Indeed, Australia is an advanced capitalist country and can be evaluated and measured as an imperialist country according to Lenin's definition of imperialism and can also be described as subservient and beholden to US interests. Among the imperialist countries, there is a hierarchy of the stronger and less stronger or weaker imperialist powers. Australia and Japan are now the strongest monopoly capitalist allies of the US in the Asia-Pacific region amidst the growing contradictions with the monopoly capitalist tandem of China and Russia.

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# Imperialism in Food and Agriculture and the Emergence of Deadly Pathogens

June 19, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

First of all, I wish to thank Commission No. 6 of the International League of Peoples' Struggle for organizing this webinar on the general theme of Resisting a policy of famines: a struggle against furthering imperialist domination of food and agriculture amid the pandemic.

My specific task is to speak on the topic of "Imperialism in food and agriculture and the emergence of deadly pathogens". I wish to present to you the major facts about imperialism in food and agriculture under the neoliberal economic policy, the consequent emergence of deadly pathogens due to social and environmental degradation and the conclusions and imperative tasks that can be set forth.

Because of time constraint, I shall focus on the relations of the imperialist corporations (whether they are called multinational, transnational or simply monopoly corporations) and the underdeveloped countries with regard to the exploitation of land and other natural resources. All of us can assume that the monopoly agri-corporations realize their superprofits in their home countries and in the world at large by being able to get cheap agricultural and mineral products from the underdeveloped countries.

## ***I. Imperialism in Food and Agriculture***

The Anglican cleric and economist Thomas Malthus wrote in 1798 that an increase in a nation's food production increased the well-being of the people as well as their number but ultimately the population growth would result in a deterioration of the standard of living due to the inability of the economy and natural resources to keep pace with the population growth. He opposed the optimistic view in 18th-century Europe that society could keep on improving and perfecting itself.

He was being pessimistic parochial and carried away by the Christian doctrine of original sin and human imperfectability in contrast to divine perfection. He failed to take fully into account the high potential of science and technology even under capitalism for raising productivity and the fact that the desperate poor of England could be redeployed to the much less populated colonies since the 16th century and of course to the urban factories since the onset of the Industrial Revolution.

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Since the time of Malthus, a great deal of changes have occurred. Science and technology have continued up to now to expand the productivity of the proletariat and other working people but population has increased at a cumulative rate, especially because of the progress in chemistry, pharmaceuticals and the medical science which in the main stopped epidemics of the sort and scale that wiped out large chunks of the population in ancient and medieval times.

But free competition among the capitalists of the 19th century has developed to monopoly capitalism, which accumulates wealth so fast at the expense of so many people. Monopoly capitalism or modern imperialism is the decadent and moribund final stage of capitalist development, prone to ever worsening crises of overproduction and wars of aggression due to the struggle for a redivision of the world among the imperialist powers.

In the 1970s the Malthusian theory enjoyed a big revival when at the World Food Conference in Rome the ideologues and economists of the imperialist powers harped on the limits of growth and called for population control. Officially calling themselves the "Club of Rome" and issuing popular publications, they obfuscated socialism and improving science and technology as the way to avert the so-called Malthusian trap. Recent history especially of socialist countries shows that these can assure the economic well-being and cultural development of a population much larger than that of the 1970s or even now.

But the economists of monopoly capitalism took the neo-Keynesian line of economic development in which the underdeveloped countries must open up to foreign direct investments and foreign loans for infrastructure building to facilitate and enhance the exchange of raw materials from the hinterlands and manufactures from abroad under the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank. By 1991 the Club of Rome, unable to go beyond its narrow supraclass environmentalism, practically threw up its hands with the fatalist conclusion that humanity's "real enemy then is humanity itself."

Concurrently, the US was bogged down by the problem of stagflation from the recurrent economic and financial crisis hastened by the rehabilitation and expanded productive capacities of the major capitalist countries previously ruined by World War II. Starting in 1979, the solution pushed by the US and followed by its allies was the neoliberal economic policy to accelerate profit-taking and capital accumulation supposedly to enable the monopoly bourgeoisie to create more jobs and more social wealth in complete denial of the proletariat as the real creator of social wealth.

The neoliberal policy includes pressing down wages, eroding job security, pensions and social benefits, reducing taxes on corporations and high earners, liberalizing trade and investments, privatizing profitable public assets, doing away with regulations that protect labor, women

and the environment and the denationalizing the economies of the semi-colonies and dependent countries to extend national treatment to foreign monopoly corporations.

For more than four decades, the US and its imperialist allies in the G-7, the OECD and G-20 and the multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO have touted the neoliberal economic policy of imperialist globalization and imposed it on all the client states of the US and its imperialist allies. It has become their new and ever more exploitative way of harmonizing their interests and glossing over inter-imperialist contradictions at the expense of the proletariat and people of the world.

The imperialist powers have easily dictated the neoliberal economic policy to client states, especially in the underdeveloped countries, because their accumulation of foreign debt have made them beggars for the structural adjustment programs. The imperialist pontification is that underdeveloped countries can develop faster by accepting the neoliberalism and availing of comparative advantage by specializing in the production of certain raw materials and semi-manufactures for export. Thus, the underdeveloped countries like the Philippines have continued to be drawn away from the line of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

In this connection, the US and other imperialist corporations have been able to tighten comprehensive control over the economies of the client states through structural adjustment programs and have gained further privileges, national treatment or most-favored-nation treatment for their investments in the acquisition of land and natural resources and operation of all kinds of businesses. They have thus widened their opportunities for the accelerated plunder of the natural resources and degradation of the environment in the underdeveloped countries.

In the same way that they looked for cheap labor, imperialist agrcorporations also looked for cheap lands all over the world. Many took advantage of the low prices and high rents for land in the Global South to buy new lands and rent these out. With the use of huge feed yards and genetic monoculture, this process brought about the globalization of livestock as a commodity.

At breakneck speed, they and their big comprador and bureaucrat capitalist agents have proceeded to expand logging, mining, plantation, ranch and aquaculture operations to increase production for export. These have corresponded to the drive of the imperialist powers to obtain ever greater amounts of superprofits from cheaper raw materials, to counter the persistent tendency of the profit rate to fall in their home economies and to feed China's appetite for raw materials in its frenzy to make itself a new capitalist giant during the last four decades.

The result were the immense land grabs of the 21st century. The accumulation of land in the hands of imperialist agrcorporations was

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hastened by the high prices of basic food stuffs in 2008 and 2011, as well as the finance oligarchs' search for tangible assets following the eruption in 2008 of the global financial and economic crisis. This whole process led to farmers and small food producers being dispossessed of land and their mass migration to cities, while imperialist agricorporations replaced traditional agriculture with monoculture. The resulting urban and urbanizing areas, which serve as markets and trade routes for agricorporations' products, have become the spaces into which certain dynamics of diseases, previously confined in the forests, have spilled over. All the logging, mining, plantation, ranch and aquaculture enterprises for export have reduced the agricultural land for producing food for domestic consumption. Moreover, they have resulted in deforestation, cycles of severe droughts and floods, soil erosion and landslides, the pollution of rivers and streams by acids from mine tailings and pesticides from the large monocrop plantations and the redirection of water flows from farms producing food for the national population.

The ruined lands no longer fit for agriculture and other so-called idle lands (including ancestral lands of indigenous people) not deemed profitable for actual production continue to be subjected to land monopolies. Increasingly, these are converted into ecotourism and agritourism resorts or as residential, commercial and recreation adjuncts of big-business enclaves—essentially to jack up differential land rent and to create new sources of profit in non-industrial services on top of the more traditional landlord-comprador profits. In some countries and global regions such as in Africa, vast lands with yet unexplored and untapped water, mineral and biological resources are controlled by big finance capitalists for speculation purposes.

The global food system is dominated by the imperialist powers especially by the US which is the world's largest food exporter. Neoliberal policies since the 1980s opened up agricultural markets including heavily subsidized agricultural production by the global powers. In the underdeveloped countries, rural economies became even more linked and subordinated to global agribusiness.

Transnational agricorporate giants expanded and entrenched themselves in food systems worldwide. They control farm inputs (e.g., seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals) and make the agricultural equipment and machinery. They are the monopoly traders buying the world's major crops, the world's largest food processors and manufacturers, and the retailers dictating to consumers at the end of the global food supply chain. Underscoring their overwhelming domination, one-third to as much as one-half of global agricultural trade is intra-company trade.

The imperialist agricorporations, with the assistance of big comprador



agents, can control, manipulate, reduce and distort food production and agriculture. They do this within the context of neoliberal policy and the economy of a particular underdeveloped country. But they profit even more from creating food scarcity in one country to compel food importation from another underdeveloped country or even from an imperialist country. They control food production and trade on a scale beyond the ken of national authorities that are supposed to be concerned with food sovereignty and security.

## ***II. Pathogens due to Environmental Degradation***

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread to more than 200 countries, wreaked havoc on their health systems and economies. It is so serious that governments and scientific institutions and experts have called attention to the emergence of highly contagious and lethal pathogens as a result of environmental degradation and increasingly extreme climate and weather changes.

Progressive scientists tell us that deadly pathogens have always existed and have caused diseases and epidemics even before the era of imperialism. Because of their belief in continuous technological and economic progress, however, some scientists in the 1970s believed that infectious disease as a research field was dying. It was ironically during this time that the world economy was restructured according to neoliberalism - in ways that would dramatically change social relations, populations, food patterns, and use of land. While pathogens will always exist, it is the way our societies are arranged or dis-arranged that enable them to cause diseases and even pandemics.

Large-scale deforestation and other capitalist-induced human encroachment into natural biomes have reduced the habitat for wild life and disturbed the ecological balance among organisms, thus creating the conditions for the mutation of microbes to produce more infectious and more harmful pathogens. At the same time, the expanding plantations, ranches, tourist resorts and new residential areas with their own ecology have further encroached on and intertwined with the dwindling forests and other natural biomes.

The increasingly intimate interaction humans and human-dependent organisms (such as livestock, poultry, pets and their pests) with wild species has facilitated the transmission of the pathogens from wild animal species to humans.

The Global Risks Report of the World Economic Forum has for the first time called attention to environmental risks, including climate change and damage to biodiversity. Previous outbreaks of infectious diseases of zoonotic origin and the COVID-19 pandemic are estimated to lead to

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further contagions that are now considered as one of the major threats to humankind. It is widely observed that new pathogens like SARS (2003), the swine flu (2009), MERS (2012) and now COVID-19 are the outcome of environmental degradation and the frequent contact of humans with wild species that carry the pathogens.

This is in the context of the accelerated exploitation of natural resources in response to the growing demand for resource-based products, energy and animal-based foods. Indeed, since the 20th century, more than 50 per cent of infectious diseases have emerged from changes wrought by imperialist corporations and their local agents in land use, agricultural practices and food production. The rapid expansion of logging, mining for fossil fuel and other minerals for industrial use and export-crop plantations has propelled the invasion and degradation of the tropical forests, especially under the neoliberal economic policy regime.

The ideologues and political agents of the monopoly firms acknowledge environmental degradation as a serious threat to humankind and identify the burning of fossil fuels and the destruction of tropical forests as the cause of global warming and now of highly infectious pathogens. But they do not identify the monopoly bourgeoisie as the chief culprit responsible for the plunder and degradation of the environment. In line with the advance of science and technology, there are cleaner and more efficient sources of energy than fossil fuel, such as the sun, wind and the tidal waves.

But the oil monopoly firms have become so heavily invested in fossil fuel and are engrossed with making superprofits from it. There are cheaper and more efficient ways of producing more and better products from less raw materials. But the monopoly capitalists persist in ways damaging and destructive to society and nature. The monopoly corporations are fond of claiming to be innovative and good users of science and technology but they subordinate these to profit-making rather than avail of them to produce goods more efficiently and economically to serve the needs of the people.

Rather than hold the monopoly bourgeoisie accountable for the degradation of the environment and for the consequences detrimental to the people, the ideologues and political agents of monopoly capitalism blame the people who have been deprived of land for trying to eke out a living from the forests as swidden farmers, animal hunters, herdsman, low-level wood cutters, fruit gatherers and the like. The big corporations and landlords keep on grabbing the land and depriving the millions of landless peasants of genuine land reform as well as of job-generating national industrialization.

In various underdeveloped countries, the people are deprived of land by monopoly corporations and their local adjuncts that take ownership or control of the land under various forms of agreements with the state

for the purpose of logging, forest management, mining of various types and agriculture, including monocrop plantations, ranches, orchards and fishponds. Monocrop plantations for the production of food and raw materials for industrial use and ranches for raising various types of herds are the most land-extensive. They usually take over the logged-over areas in the public domain.

In the practice of agro-imperialism, foreign monopoly corporations use the political power of their imperialist states over the client-states and deploy large amounts of finance capital and productive capital in the form of equipment (bulldozers, tractors, seeding machines, harvesters, power generators and the like). They go to the extent of taking over patent rights over certain agricultural crops or processes by engaging in genetic editing or engineering and rob the people of the right to cultivate plants that they have long developed by selecting the best seeds from one planting season to another.

The imperialist agricorporations collaborate with the client-state in carrying out campaigns similar to the Green revolution whereby they monopolize the genetically engineered seeds or animal breed and other required inputs (chemicals, equipment, irrigation and the like) and shut out the landless peasants and small owner cultivators. However, the foreign agricorporations sometimes engage the rich peasants and small and medium landlords in lopsided growers agreements with them.

Favored by the neoliberal economic policy and by their financial prowess, the imperialist agricorporations have gained control over global agricultural production and trade, lording over vast tracts of agricultural land in various underdeveloped countries, depriving millions of people of agricultural land, distorting the agricultural sector and entire economy, bankrupting peasant masses, causing food shortages and famines, depleting the forest resources and serving as a major factor in ruining biodiversity and causing more contagious and lethal pathogens.

### ***III. Conclusions, Prospects and Imperative Tasks***

US imperialism has been the chief instigator of the neoliberal economic policy and has touted it as the most effective policy for imperialist globalization. Despite its recent falling out with China as its main partner in neoliberal globalization and despite its protectionist pronouncements and actions against what it now regards as its main economic competitor and political rival, the US like China still considers the neoliberal economic policy as exceedingly profitable for all imperialist powers in relation to the exploitation of the people and resources in underdeveloped countries, which are made the source of cheap labor and cheap raw materials, a field for investing surplus capital and a market for surplus manufactures.

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But the neoliberal economic policy has outraged the broad masses of the people in both imperialist and underdeveloped countries. The accelerated accumulation and centralization of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie by pressing down the incomes of the working people has resulted in the frequent recurrence and worsening of the crisis of overproduction and consequently financial crisis. The rate of exploitation has run so fast that only a small fraction of 1 per cent of the population, a few hundreds of individuals, own 80 per cent of the global wealth, and 99 per cent of the population have only 20 per cent of it to share.

All the promises of the exponents of neoliberal policy that the growth of the gross domestic product and the rapid accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie would trickle down have proven to be completely false. Unemployment, lack of job security and mass poverty are growing in all types of countries. Even the much-vaunted middle class in developed countries has shrunk and joined the precariat. Underdevelopment, the higher rates of unemployment and the worst forms of poverty and deprivation afflict the overwhelming majority of countries. The world capitalist system is wobbling with the mounting debt of central banks, corporations and households.

The neoliberal liberal policy is unsustainable and is therefore unravelling and has become thoroughly discredited. It has aroused the outrage of the peoples of the world. Since last year, there has been an unprecedented outbreak of mass protests on a global scale against neoliberalism, austerity measures and the escalating use of state terrorism to suppress the complaints and demands of the people for better socioeconomic, political and cultural conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns have slowed down the mass protests for a while in recent months because the people themselves have agreed to fight the pandemic. But this has exposed the anti-people character of the ruling systems and the anti-social consequences of neoliberalism and its inability to provide adequate public health systems that serve the people and protect their health and provide medical services when needed.

In the course of the lockdowns, the ruling systems have failed to provide adequate food assistance and other forms of social relief, causing widespread hunger and diseases. They have taken advantage of the pandemic and the lockdowns to repress the people and make massive transfers of public funds to the private corporations and to pockets of corrupt bureaucrats and military officers in the Philippines and elsewhere.

At any rate, the pandemic and lockouts have broken down production and have aggravated the economic crisis. For sure, the mass protests will again surge on a global scale. They have started to burst out in the US, Hong Kong and elsewhere. By using repressive measures, the ruling

systems are generating political crisis. They are goading the people to rise up and fight the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation. It is widely recognized that the world capitalist system is now in the throes of an economic and financial crisis that is far worse than that in 2008 and comparable to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

In the underdeveloped countries, the people suffer far more oppression and exploitation than the people in the imperialist countries. They can be expected to wage various forms of struggle. The aggravation of the land problem by the imperialist agrcorporations in conjunction with the persistence of feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation generate ever more favorable conditions for people's war along the line of the people's democratic revolution in semicolonial and semifeudal countries like the Philippines.

The pandemic and its attendant health and economic crises present favorable opportunities for people's struggles, as well as huge tasks and challenges for them. Many emerging issues cry out for people's campaigns and struggles. Through social and other media, protests from different parts of the world are giving inspiration to one another. For their part, the financial oligarchs, monopoly capitalists and their comprador allies want to return to businesses as usual, even as they have, in many parts of the world, unleashed and prepared to unleash repression that is more than business as usual. There is a need to seize the moment and heighten efforts to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses in their millions for genuine social change.

It is the imperative and urgent task of all patriotic and progressive forces who seek the national and social liberation of the people to arouse, organize and mobilize them for the struggle to realize full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, the expansion of social services, the development of a national, scientific and pro-people cultural and educational system and international solidarity with all peoples and countries on the basis of equality, cooperation and mutual benefit and for the cause of just peace and development against imperialism and all reaction.





## **Terrorist Regime Vilifies Human Rights Organizations and Victims of Human Right Violations as Terrorist<sup>10</sup>**

July 15, 2020

While it is frenziedly engaged in state terrorism and suppression of democratic rights in the Philippines, the Duterte regime has submitted to the UN Human Rights Office a 137-page report entitled “The Philippine Human Rights Situationer May 2020” to achieve two malicious purposes:

- 1) to make false accusations against the Communist Party of the Philippines, New People’s Army and the National Democratic Front; and
- 2) to slander and vilify the human rights organizations and the victims who have presented well-founded complaints of human rights violations against the regime.

The declared purpose of the malicious report is to accuse the revolutionary forces of committing “crimes and atrocities” against the very people whose support they are relying on and whom they are fighting for. But in fact, the real main purpose of the report is to slander and vilify the human rights organizations and victims of human rights violations as mere instruments of the revolutionary movement that is also glibly accused of being adept at “exploiting human rights and democratic spaces.”

The report carries a wild and wanton witchhunt list of alleged communist-created underground, front organizations, alliances, and networks. The list works on the malicious presumption of guilt by association, which makes the legal democratic forces and human right defenders as guilty of terrorism as the victims of human rights violations whom they defend against state terrorism.

The report goes so far as to accuse the human rights defenders of “weaponizing” human rights and using UN platforms and legal spaces to advance anti-human rights and anti-democratic political agenda, as the result of “communists” using sectoral-organizing work “for political manipulation and agitation, influence operations, and as a tool for launching diplomatic offensives against the state.”

The report lacks credibility because it comes from a regime that is accountable for gross and systematic violations of human rights and for crimes against humanity before the International Criminal Court. This regime has not been honestly responsive to the complaints of human right

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<sup>10</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

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violations and has allowed these to be violated with impunity and without letup. A new law of state terrorism has been adopted by the Duterte regime to realize a full-blown fascist dictatorship.

The main line of attack of the report against the CPP, NPA and NDFP is that they are responsible for the "cost of 60,000 lives and destruction of billions of public infrastructure" in the civil war that has been going on between the revolutionary movement of the people and the reactionary government of big compradors, landlord and bureaucrat capitalists.

In fact, more than 90 percent of the lives lost in the civil war have been snuffed out by the reactionary armed forces and police in campaigns of military suppression waged against the civilian population in areas suspected of being under the people's democratic government, especially after successful tactical offensives by the people's army.

The people's army is carrying out guerrilla warfare and is not destroying any public infrastructure. What is destructive to public interest and economic development is the pork barrel corruption involved in the overpricing of real or imaginary infrastructure projects by the office of the president and his political stooges in Congress.

Since the time of Marcos, the Duterte regime has been the most destructive to economic development because of its extreme corruption, military overspending, cheap sale of natural resources to foreign companies and the mounting foreign debt due to growing trade and budgetary deficits. Superprofits have been taken away from the country through the extreme exploitation of workers and through land seizures from poor peasants and indigenous peoples by logging, mining, plantation and real estate companies.

Duterte has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations despite the landmark Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the substantial advance in the drafting of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms, featuring mainly a program of genuine land reform and national industrialization that would have been financed by income expected from the development of oil and gas resources in the West Philippine Sea (with estimated value of at least USD 26 trillion) if not for Duterte's sell-out of Philippine sovereign rights to China.

But the traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal and corrupt Duterte has been hell-bent on gunning for a fascist dictatorship, on getting US military assistance under the Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines (beyond the human rights oversight of the US Congress, on laying aside the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea and on obtaining graft-laden loans from China at high interest for overpriced infrastructure projects worth USD 24 billion. Thus, he has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations since 2017 by



scapegoating the CPP, NPA and NDFP.

In its report, the Duterte regime boasts of being capable of destroying the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people but is anyway asking for the support from the international community for a scheme of state terrorism and fascist dictatorship, a brutal scheme that is now so notorious and well exposed to the people of the world. In fact, the regime is far more incapable of destroying the armed revolutionary movement than any previous reactionary regime.

Duterte has bankrupted the Philippine economy and his own government. His regime has aggravated the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. It imposes the most intolerable forms of oppression and exploitation on the people. Thus, it has incited the people to join the armed revolution at a time when the revolutionary forces are far stronger nationwide than during the Marcos fascist dictatorship which Duterte emulates in his futile drive to destroy the revolutionary movement.

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# **Building Resistance to the Threat of War and Reaction as US-China Conflict Escalates<sup>11</sup>**

## **Speech at ILPS Australia National Conference**

July 25, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

As Chairperson Emeritus of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to ILPS Chairperson Len Cooper, the entire ILPS Australia, my fellow speakers and other guests on the occasion of the ILPS Australia National Conference. At the outset, I wish the conference utmost success in consolidating and further strengthening ILPS Australia and in electing a new Chairperson and the members of the National Coordinating Committee.

I thank you for the invitation to speak on the global context of "Building resistance to the threat of war and reaction, especially in the Asia Pacific region, as US imperialism desperately tries to re-assert its hegemony."

Let us first try to study and understand the history and circumstances from which the threat of war and reaction arises. Then we can evaluate the threat and clarify what to do in order to build resistance to such a threat.

I daresay from the beginning that the threat arises mainly from the gravely worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, the sharpening contradictions of the imperialist powers (especially of the chief rivals, the US and China) and the tendency of the ruling big bourgeoisie in various types of countries to let loose fascism and other reactionary currents to distract attention from the roots of the crisis under the conditions of a bankrupt and failed neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization.

### ***I. Restoration of Capitalism in Former Socialist Countries***

When the US and China found mutual interest in rapprochement in 1972, they had the common purpose of countering Soviet social imperialism that had arisen from the growth of modern revisionism from the time of Khrushchev to Brezhnev. The US wanted to win the Cold War against the Soviet Union and to gain China as an ally and as a new field of capitalist expansion in order to cope with the crisis of overproduction and the problem of stagflation resulting from the reconstruction and resurgence of the West European and Japanese economies.

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<sup>11</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

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Both Kissinger and Brzezinski, the top US strategists, were pleased with the expressed wishes of China to counter Soviet social imperialism and acquire new technology and modernize its economy. They were beside themselves with glee in welcoming US-China rapprochement during the presidencies of Nixon and Carter. They saw it as a serious blow to the Soviet Union and as an important way to undermine and outflank it.

The proletarian revolutionaries led by Mao wished to continue the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in order to combat modern revisionism within China but thought that it was expedient to have rapprochement with the US in order to counter the deployment of one million Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border. The Rightists led by Deng, who had succeeded in collaborating with the centrists in the Chinese Communist Party and in splitting the Left in 1971, had their own long-term strategy of using the rapprochement with the US as a way of restoring capitalism in China.

After the death of Mao in 1976, the Dengists were able to make a coup against the proletarian revolutionaries. In 1978 they declared the GPCR as a complete catastrophe and proclaimed the policy and line of capitalist reforms and opening up to the West for closer relations with the US and integration into the world capitalist system. In 1979 the US and China established diplomatic relations, with the former conceding to the latter's line of "one country, two systems". In the same year, the US began to shift to and tout the neoliberal economic policy regime for the entire world capitalist system.

For most of the 1980s, Reagan would be known as the champion of neoliberalism. He undertook the measures to undermine the basic rights of the working class and promote the liberalization of investments and trade, privatization of state assets, deregulation and denationalization of foreign economies. He stepped up war production to favor the military-industrial complex in the name of countering the Soviet Union. He carried out the policy of financializing the US economy, concentrating the production of the big items by the military-industrial complex and outsourcing the low-tech production of consumer manufactures to China in order to take advantage of cheap Chinese labor in sweatshops.

In the 1980s, China scored high export surpluses in trade with the US, accumulated a lot of dollar reserves and purchases of US securities and contributed to the decline of the US from No. 1 creditor of the world to No. 1 debtor with mounting trade deficits. But the rapid public and private constructions in China distorted the Chinese economy and resulted in inflation and corruption, which became the main target of the mass protests in Beijing and in scores of other Chinese cities in 1989.

When the Soviet social-imperialist empire was breaking up from 1989 to 1991, especially after the Bush-Gorbachov deal in Malta, the US and other

imperialist powers were harping on the line that the end of the Cold War would result in peace dividends. But in fact, they were already planning the expansion of NATO to the borders of Russia and the takeover of the vacuum left by Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and in several countries in the Middle East.

In the name of human rights and democracy, the US and other imperialist powers decried the brutal suppression of the mass protests in Beijing and other cities in 1989. But they were in fact happy that the Dengists would go pleading to them for more foreign investments. In the 1990s, China received more investments and an increase in the level of technology being brought in by these investments. The US pressured China to further loosen its foreign investment law, privatize state-owned enterprises, embrace further the line of neoliberal globalization and prepare for integration into the World Trade Organization.

## ***II. China as Rising Star and Main Partner of US***

The Asian financial crisis of 1997 turned the so-called tigers of Southeast Asia into kittens. And China became the final platform for assembling the semiconductors and other semimanufactures that formerly came from them before these were exported to the US market. In 2001 China entered the WTO and was celebrated as the main partner of the US in carrying out neoliberal globalization.

It assured the US of privatizing the Chinese economy. It claimed that the state-owned enterprises were reduced to 3 per cent of all corporations but in fact they controlled the most strategic economic sectors which comprised more than 30 per cent of the economy. China built a two-tiered economy of bureaucrat monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism. It continued to use state planning and the state-owned enterprises to achieve strategic economic and security goals, while the US became preoccupied with its endless wars in the Middle East and its so-called war on terror in the aftermath of 9-11.

When the financial crisis of 2007-2008 occurred and thereafter in the so-called Great Recession, the US and other imperialist powers and their multilateral agencies commended China for its high rates of growth because these were lifting the average growth rates in the stagnant world capitalist system. They were also not yet seriously bothered by the growing alliance of China with Russia and by the initiatives of these two rising capitalist powers in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS Bloc, and in other formations and agreements.

It was in 2011 in the time of Obama that the US strategic policy makers began to be openly critical of China's manifestations of economic and military rise, its alliance with Russia and other independent countries

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under US sanctions, its Belt and Road Initiative and its strident claim over 90 per cent of the South China Sea, its dispute with Japan over the Daoyu islands as potentially dangerous to US hegemony. The negative US attitude towards China rose as the strategic decline of the US accelerated as a result of costly endless wars of aggression and the recurrent and worsening economic crisis.

Obama proposed the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement to exclude China. He also proposed the strategic pivot of 60 per cent of US air and naval assets to East Asia and building two lines of defense in the Pacific against the economic and military rise of China. Basing himself on the National Security Strategy of 2017, Trump declared a trade war with China, built high tariff walls against imports from China and made strong charges against China like manipulating its currency for unfair trade advantage, subsidizing its still dominant state-owned enterprises (80 percent of Chinese TNCs in the current Forbes list are SOEs), stealing technology from the purchase of dual-purpose products, from foreign enterprises and from scientific research centers in the US. The US has also hyped the QUAD (short for Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the US, Japan, Australia and India) as an informal alliance to ensure free movement of goods in the Indo-Pacific maritime route amounting to 60 per cent of world trade.

From being the main partners in neoliberal globalization in most of the last 40 years, the US and China have become the main economic competitors and political rivals among the imperialist powers. Many analysts of international relations consider the sharpening contradictions of the US and China as a new kind of Cold War. In his book, *Thucydides Trap*, Graham Allison compares US and China to Athens and Sparta, ever watchful of the other's moves and ever ready to prepare for and wage war.

In discussing the fifth feature of monopoly capitalism or modern imperialism, Lenin pointed that this highest and final stage of capitalist development had been reached towards the end of the 19th century in which the colonial and imperialist powers had completed the domination of the rest of the world as colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries and that the change in the balance of strength among the imperialist powers led to the intensified struggle for a redivision of the world.

There can be periods of relative stability, amicable relations and peace among the imperialist powers but the recurrent crisis of overproduction drives them to compete and form blocs against each other in order to gain cheap sources of labor and raw materials, markets of surplus goods, fields of investment and spheres of influence. And the economic competition can lead to political rivalry and to a geopolitical struggle for hegemony.

There lies the danger of war. The most intense competitions have led to serious economic crises of the world capitalist system and onward toward

world wars, such as World War I and War II. But since the end of World War II, direct wars among the imperialist powers have been avoided due to certain factors like the nuclear stalemate and the fear of mutually assured destruction and the use of the UN and other international formations to make inter-imperialist deals and multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and the WTO to shift the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries.

### ***III. Evaluating the Danger of War Between US and China***

At the moment and in the foreseeable years to come, is there the probability of direct war between the US and China? There is none. They still retain a lot of diplomatic, trade, technological and cultural relations and they are trying to work out a divorce process which is messy but which they try to negotiate. At the highest plane, Trump appears in the press to be aggressive in undoing previous relations and it is China pleading for continuing cooperation for mutual benefit.

The US and other foreign investors aligned with the US cannot just pull out from China in one fell swoop to punish China in advance of its 2025 Made in China goal of putting Chinese brands on products. The Chinese market is still lucrative for foreign brands and Chinese labor power is still relatively cheap. And they need to shift their operations only in stages in other cheap-labor countries in Asia. The US cannot just drastically cut its imports from China without adversely affecting the latter's ability to buy US manufactures and agricultural products.

In the case of China, it cannot just sell off its dollars in such volume and at such rate that the dollars still in its Central Bank would dive in value. It is still in need of certain equipment and components for its industrial production and certain agricultural products to meet the food requirements of the Chinese people. As the US appears to insist on a messy kind of divorce, there are costly upsets that result in mutual damage between the US and China.

In terms of weaponry, the US is comprehensively superior and can destroy China with nuclear weapons in a few hours. But China, as the first nuclear power to adopt a "no first use" policy, is relying on survivability and second-strike capability. Thus, it has enough nuclear weapons and an efficient delivery system also to destroy the US. In addition, China also has the probable ability to match the US in terms of biological weapons hiding behind "dual-use applications", and is catching up in cyber warfare capabilities and weaponizing space. These compensate for China's weaker nuclear capability and reduce the prevailing US full-spectrum dominance. So, there is a balance of mutually assured destruction or a balance of terror between the two imperialist powers as it was the case

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during the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union.

In Southeast Asia, the main source of the danger of war is China's illegal claim to 90 per cent of the South China Sea in blatant violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and which it asserts most aggressively by building several artificial islands within the said area and using them as strategic bases for its military, naval and naval-militia operations. The US, Japan, Australia and India (QUAD) are perfectly correct in asserting their right to free navigation in the high seas of the South China Sea and to keep open the Indo-Pacific maritime route where 60 per cent of the annual volume of world trade by many countries passes thorough. Because of the illegality of its claim over nearly all of the South China Sea, far beyond its own EEZ and ECS, China is being provocative by challenging the passage of vessels and craft on and above the high seas.

To discourage China from undertaking provocative shows of strength and acts of control over the high seas of the South China Sea, the QUAD countries can secure from the appropriate bodies of the UN official resolutions and declarations urging China to conform to the UNCLOS and to relevant international laws pertaining to freedom of navigation, respect for the marine environment and other issues. In the meantime, while China freely performs shows of military strength and acts of control over the aforesaid high seas, the QUAD countries can also make their own shows of strength and assertions of the right to free navigation to counter the illegal claims of China. These effectively challenge China's illegal claim over almost the entire South China Sea and serve to support the Southeast Asian countries with regard to their lawful EEZs and ECSs.

Despite its military superiority vis-à-vis any or all of the Southeast Asia countries, China does not have unlimited latitude to bully or wage aggression against any or all of them. Vietnam has long demonstrated that it can stand up to any Chinese aggressive or bullying act, even engage in tit-for-tat shooting incidents, and yet still maintain diplomatic, trade and other relations with China. Like Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia have also repeatedly apprehended and destroyed Chinese fishing boats that poach on their waters.

It is only the cowardly and servile president of the Philippines, Duterte, who has publicly expressed the fear that if he would stand up for the sovereign and maritime rights of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea all his troops would be wiped out. Thus, soon after the Philippines won its case against China before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague on July 12, 2019, he declared that he would lay aside the favorable judgment because of his fear of China's war potential and most importantly his beggarly and corrupt desire to obtain onerous loans for overpriced infrastructure projects.



Thus, he has emboldened China to build and militarize seven artificial islands and seize the Panatag Shoal in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines. He has conceded the marine resources worth USD 1.5 trillion and the oil and gas resources worth at least USD 26 trillion in the vicinity of the Recto Bank and has even offered to China joint exploitation of the methane gas in the Bentham Rise on the eastern side of northern Luzon. The Philippines is now importing the fish that China sucks from the West Philippine Sea.

In laying aside the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the Duterte regime has practically sabotaged the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations by allowing China to block the Philippines from exploring and exploiting its own oil and gas resources in its own EEZ and from using these to finance a program of genuine land reform and national industrialization which could bring about economic development and a just peace in the Philippines. The treason of Duterte has ruined all chances of negotiating a just peace in the Philippines while he is in power.

The judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration is of high significance and consequence not only to the Philippines but to the other Southeast Asian states in the ASEAN. It upholds the UNCLOS and debunks the “historic claim” of China that it owns 90 per cent of the South China Sea in accordance with the arbitrary nine-dash line drawn on the map by the Guomindang government in 1947. The ASEAN countries, especially Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia, can invoke this judgment as precedent and use it as the basis for asserting their rights in the UN and before the appropriate courts.

Without any danger of war, the US and all other countries can assert their lawful right of free navigation in the high seas to stress to China that it does not own them. The ASEAN countries can go to the UN and to the appropriate courts to demand that China ceases to claim, occupy and encroach in their respective exclusive economic zones and extended continental shelf as well as to oblige China to pay rent for the period of illegal occupation and compensation for damage to the marine environment. Short of war, there are diplomatic and legal actions that can be undertaken against the extraterritorial claims and aggressive acts of China.

#### ***IV. Building the People's Resistance***

The people of the world and all anti-imperialist and democratic forces must remain vigilant and do everything in their power to preempt the outbreak of a direct war between imperialist powers and to ensure that the relatively calibrated wars of aggression and proxy wars on a regional and countrywide scales at the expense of the people in the undeveloped countries do not run out of control. Since the end of the Cold War, the

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US and other imperialist powers often in collaboration with Israeli Zionism have engaged in these indirect wars among imperialist powers mostly in the Middle East.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system keeps on sharpening, the danger of a most devastating direct war among the imperialist powers can never be discounted. And it is terribly bad enough for the people that they suffer escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation. In both imperialist and dominated countries, the danger of fascism is always latent as the big bourgeoisie becomes incapable of solving the basic problems of society and it resorts to the use of state terrorism and fascism.

When there are international laws, conventions and agreements which are beneficial to the country and its people and the government is under obligation to comply with them, the broad masses of the people and their anti-imperialist and democratic forces and movements for economic, social and environmental justice must press upon the government to act in accordance with pertinent laws and for the benefit of the people.

There are conventions on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, international humanitarian law, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the laws for the protection of labor, migrant workers, women, children and the environment and many others. It is not enough for the states or governments concerned to act but the people and their anti-imperialist and democratic forces must propagate them and always fight for their implementation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the anti-social character of the world capitalist system and the inability of the states of the big bourgeoisie to serve the social needs of the people. Repressive measures are easily adopted but the requirements for medical testing and treatment and providing cash and other forms of economic relief for those deprived of livelihood are grossly lacking. Now that many countries have no choice but to reopen their economies after destructive lockdowns, their big-bourgeois states try to forestall collapse by further bleeding the people dry with new impositions. The pandemic has aggravated the crisis of the world capitalist system, discredited the neoliberal policy regime and roused social discontent among the people.

The danger of a direct war among imperialist countries is highest when fascism takes power in any of them as in the run-up to World War II. But the people in imperialist countries can act to oppose fascism and its ascendance by learning lessons from history, from raising an effective antifascist and anti-war movement and making effective use of the highly developed means of communications. Revolutionary mass movements must develop their strength within the imperialist countries to fight the rise of fascist, racist, chauvinist and other reactionary currents.

The people and their organized forces must intensify their anti-imperialist

and democratic struggles for socialism in the imperialist countries and for national and social liberation in countries dominated by the imperialists and the local reactionary classes. In the imperialist countries, people can rightfully arm themselves in order to confront the danger of fascism and eventually win the battle for democracy. And in the imperialist-dominated underdeveloped countries, the people can wage people's democratic revolutions through people's war.

To confront the big bourgeoisie and other reactionary classes, the broad masses people must benefit from the leadership of the working class and its advanced detachment, build the alliance of the industrial workers, peasantry and other working people, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the contradictions among the conservative or reactionary forces in order to isolate and destroy the power of the enemy.

Because of the rapid worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system and the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation, the broad masses of the people are waging anti-imperialist and democratic struggles more resolutely and more vigorously than ever before. Within their own countries, they must be self-reliant in waging revolutionary struggles. At the same time, they can avail of the anti-imperialist and democratic solidarity of all peoples and proletarian internationalism to support them. We can expect the world proletarian revolution to resurge in view of the rapid deterioration of the world capitalist system.





## Point-by-Point Debunking of Duterte's SONA 2020<sup>12</sup>

July 30, 2020

In his 5th State of the Nation Address (SONA), Duterte rattles off as many as 32 points that are either outrightly false, inaccurate, evasive, self-contradictory, repetitious and inane. At a certain point in his speech, he made a mock admission that he himself more than his listeners could not understand what he was reading.

The purpose of what appeared to be a joke was to further confound the audience and use the disjointed character of the speech to draw attention away from the fact that he takes no responsibility for the spread of the COVID-19 contagion, the unduly repressive measures and corruption attending his failed campaign and the lack of a plan to revive the economy and allow the people regain the jobs and other means of livelihood that they have lost during the prolonged lockdown.

Worst of all, the SONA does not manifest any remorse and desire to rectify all the colossal crimes that Duterte and his ruling clique have committed to make his regime not only the worst since the end of the Marcos fascist dictatorship but surpass this in terms of tyranny, treason, mass murder, plunder and chicanery. The SONA proves that the Duterte reign of terror and greed is incorrigible and must be ousted as soon as possible to stop the ruination of the nation.

**1. No Plan and No Accounting.** Duterte stressed curtly the toll the COVID-19 pandemic had taken on the Philippines. But he made no accounting of the hundreds of billions of pesos already spent and the trillions of pesos borrowed supposedly to fund the campaign against the pandemic. He did not explain the gross lack of mass testing and the crippling of medical services as well as the absence of cash and other forms of relief to the people prevented from earning a living. He has no plan but to wait for the vaccine.

**2. The Chief Oligarch Gloats.** He criticized at great length the ABS-CBN and called the Lopez oligarchs. It was his way of gloating over his success at personal vendetta and claiming that his plurality of less than 39 per cent of the vote was a "landslide". Worst of all, by calling the Lopezes oligarchs, he seems to forget that he is the chief oligarch and tyrant at the head of the most powerful section of the big comprador-landlord oligarchy. The dumbo practically slaps his own face in his vain attempt to confuse the people.

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<sup>12</sup>Delivered as Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

3. **Attack on Senator Drilon.** He also attacked at length the opposition senator Drilon for defending press freedom, criticizing the closure of ABS-CBN and saying that political dynasties like those of Duterte and his political allies, ought to be banned to truly dismantle the oligarchy. In fact, Duterte is trying hard to deliver public utilities from one set of oligarchs to his own set of oligarch cronies.

4. **Praise for Bong Go.** He praised his perpetual valet and sweetheart, Bong Go, for continuing to do errands and push pet bills for him in Congress. It is Duterte's way of downgrading Senator Drilon to the level of a fake senator who was "elected" in a seven-hour glitch to reconfigure the actual results of the senatorial elections in 2019.

5. **Praise for a Corrupt Project.** He also praised the 30th Southeast Asian Games to please another valet of his whom he has made the Speaker of the Lower House. This athletic event was characterized by flagrantly corrupt and poor planning. Duterte has the evil character of boasting of and showing off criminal success and his ability to keep the loyalty of his subalterns by condoning their criminal acts.

6. **False Claim about the Economy.** He boasted of the Philippines as being in a strong economic position with the false claim of having positive credit ratings. He lied through his teeth that the Philippines is in a better position to weather the crisis aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. He obscured the rapidly worsening crisis of the Philippine economy and the world capitalist system and his regime's lack of any plan to cope with this crisis which preceded the pandemic.

7. **Praise for Stunted Program.** He boasted of infrastructure projects being completed but could not mention any beyond those planned and initiated by the previous Aquino regime. Neither did he mention that China had fallen too far short of delivering on its promise of USD 24 billion for his dwindled Build Build Build Program. At any rate, he is truly ignorant of economics beyond building roads and bridges for the export of raw materials and distribution of finished manufactures from abroad, suffering from chronic trade and budgetary deficits and covering these with mounting public debt, both local and foreign debt.

8. **Military Mindset in Failure.** Unwittingly, he revealed the cause of his failure to stop the COVID-19 contagion by admitting his militarist mindset in using excessively repressive measures against the people, instead of dealing with the problem as a medical one. Worse, he expressed a determination to go further "with the same fervor" in using Tokhang methods against the people, as in the bogus war on drugs.

9. **Invoking Human Rights to Violate Them.** He justified his gross and systematic violations of human rights by invoking one human right against another. He has always been proud of using the law to commit crimes against the people, especially the poor, by publicly emboldening

his armed minions to make false claims of self-defense, plant evidence and frame up suspects either for illegal arrest or for murder.

**10. Failure to Help the OFWs.** He went through the motion of ordering various agencies to help OFWs who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic and called for the creation of the Department of Overseas Filipinos in an obvious attempt to distract public attention from the inhumane and unhealthy quarantining of returning OFWs in congested enclosures.

**11. Minimizing the Big Failure.** He admitted but minimized as mere “difficulties”, “lapses” or “imperfections” the extreme use of militarist measures and gross failure to do mass testing and distribution of emergency aid during the lockdowns. But he also forgot how the pandemic had spread by forcing the people to go back to their provinces of origin and at the same time depriving them of transport.

**12. One More Bayanihan Scam.** He called on Congress to pass the so-called Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, without any public accounting of the public funds appropriated under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act and without any explanation of why the people did not get any medical attention and emergency aid. Once more a bill is going to be passed as device for corruption from the level of the Duterte cronies downwards in the name of helping small businesses, displaced workers and poor families, online learning and COVID-19 testing. The plunder continues in the name of the pandemic.

**13. Lower Corporate Taxes at the Expense of the Public.** He also called on Congress to do “tax reform” by lowering corporate taxes and provide more financial incentives for investors in the name of economic recovery. From where else but the consumers paying higher excise taxes in higher-priced consumer goods and higher fees for services will the government get the money to pay for the mounting government deficits and debts?

**14. Raising False Hopes Among MSMEs.** He directed the already bankrupt and debt-laden Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to allow loan payment extensions for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises without penalties and charges. But can the already bankrupted enterprises recover in a year or two or walk into a deeper economic crisis?

**15. False Touting of Local Tourism.** He prematurely called on Filipinos to do local tourism in order to boost the economy. But this sort of thing cannot be done so soon because they are still suffering from unprecedented unemployment and travel restrictions and there is the threat of further lockdowns due to the still spreading pandemic.

**16. Begging for Vaccine from China.** He begged China President Xi Jinping to prioritize the Philippines in providing an effective vaccine should a Chinese company produce one. He talks and acts arrogantly as a tyrant

towards the Filipino people but he is extremely beggarly to his Chinese master. His pleading for a vaccine from China takes the place of a definite plan to fight the pandemic.

**17. Online Learning as Pretext for Takeover or Control of Major Networks.** While advocating local tourism, he announced that face-to-face classes would not be allowed until the arrival of the vaccine. He proposed online learning for students although he could have also offered online tourism for the much deprived Filipinos whom he regarded as leisurely. He indicated that his government could carry out only online learning by taking TV frequencies from ABS-CBN and possibly other networks in preparation for takeover or control by Dito CME of his crony Dennis Uy can set up shop fast enough.

**18. Imposing Dennis Uy on Ayala and Pangilinan.** Duterte threatened to have the government take the "first option" to utilize public utilities and use "drastic steps" and expropriate telecommunications giants if they do not improve their services. Duterte pretends to be running against the neoliberal policy and fighting oligarchs of older vintage. But his actual scheme is for the Dito CME of his crony Dennis Uy to either take over PLDT Inc. (Smart) and Globe or take a ride on their existing cell towers and other facilities to achieve the G5 supremacy of China Telecom, Huawei and Dito CME. But the whole world knows that the US is already acting vigorously to ban the Chinese G5 from allied countries, as already done in UK and Brazil. The Ayalas and Pangilins know how to counter the overambitious upstart oligarchs like Duterte and Dennis Uy.

**19. Belated Plans for Next Year.** After submitting himself to and enforcing the neoliberal policy of privatizing health services and leaving the people extremely vulnerable to a pandemic like COVID-19, Duterte pretended to list plans to increase the number of health workers deployed to barangay health stations, rural health units, and other healthcare facilities next year. He also called on Congress to pass a series of bills, like the Nursing Education Act, a law establishing the Medical Reserve Corps, and another law creating a National Disease Prevention and Management Authority to respond to future outbreaks of epidemics. In the meantime, COVID-19 is spreading faster than ever before.

**20. Further Racketeering in the Counterrevolution.** Duterte did not mention the armed revolutionary movement of the Filipino people led by the Communist Party of the Philippines. But he unwittingly indicated the growing strength of the New People's Army by citing the deaths of soldiers in skirmishes as reason for the urgency of implementing the so-called Barangay Development Program, a racketeering scheme for military officers to siphon public funds to their pockets in the name of community development. He touted the Armed Forces as playing "vital role in the one-nation approach". He did not mention the possibility of any peace



negotiations with the NDFP in accordance with his termination of these and with his actual imposition of state terrorism and fascist dictatorship on the people.

**21. Lie about Success of Martial Law in Mindanao.** He dished out a gross and brazen lie that the martial law in Mindanao, extended three times, was successful and ended without abuses. This is contrary to the documentation made by the human rights organization, Karapatan, showing some 800,000 victims of human right violations in more than three years of military rule. To this day, the ruins of Marawi City stand as monument to the Duterte legacy of death and destruction as well as the incompetence, corruption and failure of the regime and its military agents in realizing the promise of prompt rehabilitation and reconstruction.

**22. Threat to Bring Back Death Penalty.** True to form as tyrant ever ready to intimidate the people, he asked Congress to bring back the death penalty by lethal injection for crimes under the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. He noted the lukewarm attitude of the lawyers and yet he could not recall that the Philippine government had signed an international convention against the death penalty. Pending withdrawal from this convention and the enactment of a death penalty law, Duterte has to continue satisfying his lust for blood with his standing orders to his armed minions to kill suspects. He has already achieved the mass murder of more than 30,000 poor people listed as drug users and peddlers. He is now expanding his campaign of mass murder to social activists, critics and political opponents.

**23. More Benefits for Armed Minions.** Ever inclined to buy the loyalty of the military, police and auxiliaries in the fire department and in customs, he called for the passage of the Unified Military and Uniformed Personnel Separation, Retirement, and Pension Bill and calls for the modernization of the Bureau of Fire Protection and the Bureau of Immigration. He has maintained his far lower concern for the public school teachers, public health personnel and social workers despite their increasing work overload and the rising costs of living.

**24. Proposed Law to Enhance Land Grabbing.** He called on Congress to pass the National Land Use Act to facilitate the alienation of public land to foreign monopoly interests, big compradors, landlords and high bureaucrats, the monopolization of the land by a few and the plunder of the environment in the name of economic growth. He ignores completely the need for genuine land reform and national industrialization as the basic program of Philippine economic development.

**25. Proposed Law to Favor Chinese Acquisition of Islands.** He called on Congress to pass a law creating the Boracay Island Development Authority supposedly to sustain results of so-called rehabilitation efforts in the tourist island. The real purpose is to consolidate the intrusion of Chinese

casino and tourist enterprises into the island and have a legal model for realizing the Chinese takeover of Philippine islands as extensions of the Chinese militarized artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea.

**26. Law to Further Enable Theft of Public Funds.** He called for the passage of a law establishing the Coconut Farmers' Trust Fund and a P66-billion agricultural stimulus package through the Rural Agricultural and Fisheries Development Financing System Act. These are schemes to further deprive the coconut farmers of the benefits from the coco levy extorted from them by Marcos and Eduardo Cojuangco and to steal public funds in the name of rural agricultural and fisheries development. More than ever before, the peasants are now suffering the lack of genuine land reform and the rising costs of living. So are the fishermen who are now being driven away from the West Philippine Sea by Chinese naval patrols and militia with the consent of Duterte and military loyalists.

**27. Pretense at Rejecting US in Favor China.** He announced his rejection of a plan for the US to return to Subic through a commercial agreement. His rejection could be no different from his previous fake intent to abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement. He made the announcement in order to please China momentarily and induce it to release some of the promised loans that it is holding back. But Duterte is predeterminedly bound to US imperialism by military treaties and agreements and by his being encircled by military officers who are in the main pro-US and anti-China. In fact, Duterte secretly assures the US and his pro-US military officers that he is merely trying to put one over China, which in turn is holding back its promised loans unless he makes a more brazen surrender of Philippine sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone.

**28. More Show of Treason and Cowardice towards China.** So desperate to get the Chinese loans for his stunted Build Build Build Program, Duterte treasonously and shamelessly with utmost cowardice declared in his SONA that "he cannot assert" the sovereign and maritime rights of the Philippines over the West Philippine Sea out of fear that the assertion could spark war with China. He the tyrant, so arrogant to the Filipino people, cravenly admitted that he was inutile over the issue of said rights being violated by China. The shameless traitor and coward Duterte is openly acting as an agent of China, intimidating the people and throwing away the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and in favor of the Philippines against the false claim of China. By allowing China to have seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea, the Duterte regime has enabled China to threaten and discourage the development of oil and gas resources with an estimated value of USD 26 trillion which would have been several times more than enough to finance genuine land reform and national industrialization and

to pave the way for a just peace in the Philippines.

29. **Demagoguery of Duterte as No. 1 Criminal.** He repeated his worn-out demagogic spiel that he is “the enemy of criminals” and warned that bodies would pile up if they returned to their ways. But he is the No.1 criminal in the Philippines and he is the No. 1 enemy of the Filipino people. He has never reformed and has no remorse whatsoever for grievously harming the people with his traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, plundering and swindling crimes.

30. **Enjoying the Protraction of the COVID-19 Pandemic.** Duterte made it indubitably clear that he could not reopen the economy soon to pre-COVID-19 levels because the supposed gains he had made against the pandemic would be quickly wasted. He admitted the continuing rise of infections but not his own culpability for spreading the pandemic, lack of plan, incompetence, and obsession with using the pandemic to grab more power and more public funds and in the process deprive the people of medical testing, treatment and economic assistance. He has taken advantage of the pandemic to grab emergency power, enact the law of state terrorism, curtail press freedom and rechannel hundreds of billions of pesos of public funds to private accounts.

31. **Asking for Trust Amid Public Distrust.** He went through the motion of asking the Filipino people to trust him and his government and stressed that “worse times loom ahead”. He and his ruling clique do not deserve the trust of the people. He has so grievously and habitually violated that trust. It is high time for the people to oust him from power, together with his gang of butchers and crooks. A traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, plundering and swindling regime cannot be allowed to oppress and exploit the people any further.

32. **Repeated Pretense of the No. 1 Oligarch Against the Oligarchy.** Pretending to be ignorant of himself and his own criminal gangmates, he tried to direct fire repeatedly against the “oligarchs who had controlled public utilities” since the Spanish colonial times. He is the No. 1 oligarch and his clique of oligarchs have presently the most power and the most access to the banks for their economic and political benefit. He vowed to use his political power and the government to transfer the transmission lines and utilities from one set of oligarchs to another set of oligarchs favored by him.

### ***Conclusion***

Let us observe how the contradictions among the oligarchs will play out. This is a major manifestation of the crisis of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system that is worsening rapidly and disabling the ruling class from ruling in the old way. The crisis conditions are inflicting

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intolerable oppression and exploitation of the people but are at the same time favorable for the rapid growth in strength and advance of the revolutionary forces of the people. The broad range of legal democratic forces and revolutionary forces of the people must accelerate all efforts to oust the evil Duterte regime and advance the struggle for full national independence, democracy, social justice, all-round development, progress, prosperity and peace.



## Four Reasons for the Ouster of Duterte<sup>13</sup>

August 15, 2020

Dear Fellow Activists,

Thank you for inviting me to speak on the reasons for ousting Duterte. He has committed so many grave crimes against the Filipino people. Such crimes constitute the reasons for his ouster. To facilitate understanding of what crimes he has committed, let me categorize them as treason, tyranny, mass murder and plunder. As a criminal of the most serious kind, he is a traitor, tyrant, mass murderer and plunderer.

The crimes are interrelated because they are committed by Duterte as the principal criminal and his accomplices. In committing his crimes with impunity, he has turned into his accomplices and corrupted his subordinates in the executive branch, especially his fellow crooks, the military and police. He has also turned both houses of Congress into his subservient tools by rigging the electronic vote count in the 2019 mid-term elections. He controls the Supreme Court his appointees and appointees of previous plundering presidents whose plunder cases the said court has dismissed.

There is no way you can oust Duterte through impeachment by the Lower House and through trial and conviction by the Senate. But there is another constitutional way of ousting Duterte in accordance with the democratic principle of people's sovereignty and the proven historic precedent of ousting the fascist dictator Marcos in 1986. The broad masses of the people can exercise their fundamental right and freedom of speech and assembly and rise up in gigantic mass actions in order to encourage the civil bureaucracy and the military to withdraw support from Duterte for the crimes that he has committed.

### **1. As a Traitor**

Duterte is a big traitor. He has betrayed the national sovereignty of the Filipino people in his relations with imperialist powers, especially with the US and China. Despite his occasional claims of adhering to an independent foreign policy, he has in fact made himself a double puppet to the US and China. This was not problematic for him until the US strategists and Trump took the initiative in 2017 and 2018 to declare China the principal economic competitor and political rival, disrupting more than four decades

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<sup>13</sup>Speech delivered to Anakbayan-UP Diliman as NDFP Chief Political Consultant

of collaboration under the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization.

Duterte has always been a puppet of US imperialism since he became president in 2016. He has kept all the treaties, agreements and arrangements that keep the Philippines captive to the US economically, politically, militarily and culturally. He has always surrounded himself with pro-US economic advisors that carry out the dictates of the US and the US-controlled multilateral agencies under the neoliberal policy. He has likewise surrounded himself with defense and national security advisors who are rabid agents of US imperialism.

As a puppet of US imperialism, the worst crime that he has committed against the Filipino people is to pledge to Trump in 2017 to terminate the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and to destroy by brute force the CPP and NPA, which are the revolutionary forces of the people, as well as to carry out charter change to allow the US and other foreign corporations unlimited right of ownership of land and all other kinds of assets in the Philippines in exchange for unlimited US military support and assistance for an all-out war policy and extreme repressive measures amounting to state terrorism and building a fascist dictatorship.

In being the puppet of Chinese imperialism, Duterte has repeatedly declared his laying aside of the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration that has upheld the sovereign and maritime rights of the Philippines in its exclusive economic zone and extended continental shelf in the West Philippine Sea and rejected the false Chinese claim of owning 90 per cent of the South China Sea in violation of the rights of the Philippines and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Duterte has thereby encouraged China to build and militarize seven artificial islands in the EEZ of the Philippines. These are seven Chinese military bases on Philippine territory in flagrant violation of the GRP Constitution against foreign military bases.

Duterte traitorously deals with China at two levels, meaning to say with the Chinese government and with Chinese criminal triads. He has made agreements with China for onerous loans and for overpriced infrastructure projects and with provisions violative of Philippine sovereignty and he has allowed Chinese corporations to control the national power grid and put up cell towers inside military camps all in pursuit of corruption. With regard to the Chinese criminal syndicates, the Duterte crime family has collaborated with them in the smuggling of drugs and other contraband, in building casinos on a nationwide scale and in selling islands to them.

## **2. As a Tyrant**

Like all modern tyrants in the mould of Hitler, Mussolini, Suharto and

Marcos, Duterte has used the hysterical slogans of anti-communism and anti-terrorism in order to create the political basis for tyranny, the rule of open terror or a fascist dictatorship in the service of the big bourgeoisie, be it industrial or big comprador. The trick of tyrants like Marcos and Duterte is to use demagogic language (what academic pedants euphemistically call “populist”) which takes the initiative to appropriate and misinterpret valid and popular grievances in order to deceive the backward section of the masses and coopt the middle to attack the advanced section.

Duterte came to the presidency of the chronically crisis-stricken semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, without presenting any positive program of upholding national sovereignty, democracy, economic development, cultural progress or the like, except offering federalism as a panacea all to social ills and a pretext for charter change and fascist dictatorship. In vulgar language, he simply presented himself as the strong man determined to restore law and order by using illegal and criminal means to crack down on drug and other criminal syndicates and thus surpass all the previous presidents who were derided as feeble on crime. Thus, he managed to get a plurality vote of 39 per cent to become president.

The first move he made to prove that he was a strong man was to order the mass murder of thousands of poor people, mostly urban slum dwellers, suspected or arbitrarily listed as drug users and peddlers. With the mass murder committed with impunity, he has sought to impress people that he gets things done and he has been able to gain the loyalty of the police forces by corrupting them with cash rewards and promotions for the mass murder and assuring them of presidential protection and impunity. In the process, he has been able to make himself the supreme drug lord and make his crime family become dominant. Most importantly to him, he has been able to spread the message that he can kill anyone who opposes him. He deliberately engages in mass intimidation.

By pretending for some six months from the start of his presidency that he was seriously interested in negotiating peace with the NDFP, he sought to distract public attention from his actual all-war out policy against the revolutionary movement of the people. To gain the loyalty of military officers, he has used the methods of corrupting them with cash rewards and promotions and assurances of presidential protection and impunity in the campaigns of military suppression. It is of essential necessity for him to get the loyalty of the military through corruption and criminal complicity for ensuring the success of his scheme of imposing state terrorism on the people and establishing a fascist dictatorship.

Taking advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic, Duterte has grabbed more power by obtaining the law of state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism and in rechanneling hundred billions of pesos of public funds

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to bank accounts of his family and his cronies under the pretext of doling out cash assistance to the tens of millions of people under lockdown and making imaginary purchases as well as token purchases of overpriced supplies for medical purposes. In the meantime, the political agents of Duterte are busy preparing charter change under the pretext of federalism, which is in fact the centralization of powers in the hands of the fascist dictator, the orchestration of regional dynasties and servility to foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes.

### **3. As Mass Murderer**

Evidence is abundant that while he was on the campaign trail for the presidency in 2016, Duterte announced through all forms and means mass communications that he would wage a war on drugs and that he would kill at least 100,000, including the drug lords, drug pedlars and drug users, that he would use their corpses to fatten the fish in Manila Bay and other bodies of water in the country and that the funeral parlor business would also thrive. As soon as he assumed the presidency, he publicly incited the police and gave out the orders to them to start the mass murder or extrajudicial killings. And to make sure that they would so, he deployed nationwide the experienced Davao death squads to demonstrate and take the lead in killing people.

He also announced the listing of drug suspects by the barangay officers and the execution of those listed by his death squads to be paid in cash from intelligence funds. The poor people who were listed up as drug peddlers and users became the easy targets of the experienced and newly formed anti-drug death squads. In fact, there were no orders to kill any of the drug lords, except a few mayors who tried to be independent of the Duterte drug syndicate. Spared from being murdered were nearly all the mayors and all of the bigger drug lords at the level of governors and generals who immediately recognized and bowed to Duterte as the new supreme drug lord.

In his first two years as president, human rights and religious organizations were able to document and report the extrajudicial killings or mass murder of more than 30,000 victims while the police claimed that only 5000 were killed supposedly as a result of resisting arrest but many more thousands were still being investigated as homicide cases under mysterious circumstances. Even if understated, the number of dead drug suspects was terrible enough. But the police were unafraid of being accused as murderers because no less than Duterte had assured them publicly that they would receive cash and promotions per victim and enjoy impunity and they could legally get away with murder because they could plant evidence to frame up the victims, report them as having resisted



arrest and in any case they would enjoy presidential protection.

Since the beginning of the all-out war against the revolutionary movement, the methods of mass murder under Oplan Tokhang have been applied in the campaign of military suppression against the revolutionary movement but at a slower rate because the Duterte pretended to be for peace negotiations during his first nine months in office, the revolutionary movement had a far higher capacity to expose extrajudicial killings against it as well as to defend itself than the urban poor slum dwellers and the reactionary armed forces had a mix of tactics to intimidate and deceive the people and were assured of cash payments and merits for promotion by crediting themselves with both surrenders and kills, whether real or fake.

But since Duterte terminated the peace negotiations with the NDFP and designated the CPP and NPA as terrorist organizations on November 23, 2017 and December 5, 2017 respectively, the score in the mass murder of social activists, human rights activists and alleged CPP members and NPA fighters has been increasing at a faster rate than ever before. It is estimated that the mass murder of the revolutionary and nonrevolutionary opponents of the Duterte regime will also rise to the level of hundreds to thousands as the implementation of the plan of the National Task Force to kill revolutionaries and social activists will be enhanced by the Duterte's law of state terrorism and as charter change under the pretext of federalism and parliamentarism will be carried out within the next two years to establish a full-blown fascist dictatorship.

#### **4. Plunderer**

To get himself elected to the presidency and to put one over his rivals, Duterte pretended to being clean and honest and being against the oligarchy aside from being against the drug lords. He received the most applause for these demagogic spiels. But in fact, the biggest Filipino funders of the Duterte presidential campaign were the biggest plunderers, including his presidential predecessors, who made a deal with him to have the plunder cases against them dismissed by the courts. The Marcoses, Arroyos, Estradas and their big cronies were the biggest financiers of the Duterte campaign, aside from the Chinese business and criminal groups.

As soon as Duterte became president, he had the plunder cases against his fellow bureaucrat capitalists dismissed before the Sandigangbayan and Supreme Court. And he himself, his family and his Davao group of Filipino and Chinese cronies started to carry out their plundering schemes. They shook down the enterprises of big businessmen whose presidential candidates lost in the 2016 elections and set up their own corporations and projects to engage in infrastructure projects, provide supplies to the civil and military agencies of the government and secure loans from

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government financial institutions and other banks.

Duterte has brought about unprecedentedly larger appropriations for his own presidential office and for various government agencies to which he appointed trusted agents in order to steal public funds or take cuts from projects requiring government permits, franchises or approvals as well state financing or government purchases. The big prize was supposed to be the onerous loans and overpriced infrastructure projects arranged with China, amounting to USD 24 billion, in exchange for the sellout of Philippine sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea and for the building and militarization of artificial islands there.

But only a small part of the aforesaid money has been released because China has been pressing Duterte to make a more brazen surrender of Philippine sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone and the undersea oil and gas resources. China was not satisfied by Duterte merely declaring to lay aside the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favor of the Philippines, allowing China to build and militarize the artificial islands and haggling over joint ownership and joint exploration of the undersea oil and gas resources. Neither has China been satisfied by gaining control over the national power grid and erecting China Telcom-DITO cell towers in military camps in contradiction with US military facilities under the VFA and EDCA.

It is the great misfortune of the Filipino people that every time that there is a president like Marcos or Duterte who wants absolute power his purpose is absolute corruption, the rapid accumulation of ill-gotten wealth. Like Marcos in the past, Duterte wants to have the utmost power as bureaucrat capitalist to make himself the biggest comprador and biggest landlord in the Philippines. The scheme of fascist dictatorship is aimed at plundering the public resources, thus aggravating and deepening the underdevelopment of the economy, unemployment and mass poverty of the people.

Even under current conditions of the COVID-19, Duterte and his gang of crooks and butchers are stealing hundreds of billions of pesos of public funds while the people in their tens of millions are deprived of livelihood, the promised assistance and medical attention. They have fattened their secret bank accounts by bankrupting the government and the economy and sinking them deeper in debt. The law of state terrorism railroaded in Congress and signed by Duterte is intended to protect the ill-gotten wealth of Duterte, family and cronies and to propel the drive for a fascist dictatorship.

I think that the reasons I have given for the ouster of Duterte are more than enough. It is the duty of all Filipinos to decide what needs to be done in order to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for gigantic mass

actions similar to those that encouraged the withdrawal of support from the fascist dictator Marcos by his own bureaucracy and military. The economic and political crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system has become so bad that the traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal and plundering Duterte regime is in deep trouble.

The crisis conditions favor the rapid growth of both the legal democratic mass movement and the armed revolutionary movement. The movement to oust the Duterte ruling clique is rising fast. But if Duterte can somehow remain in power any longer with the use of state terrorism, the revolutionary opportunities will grow not only for the ouster of the Duterte regime but also for the overthrow of the entire ruling system of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrats who are servile to foreign monopoly capitalism. In trying to rule the Philippines beyond 2022, Duterte is unwittingly generating the most favorable conditions for the advance of the people's democratic revolution and the overthrow of the current unjust ruling system.

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## **Top Officials of NTF-ELCAC and ATC are Truly a Bunch of Military Morons**

**August 18, 2020**

Generals Esperon, Lorenzana, Año, Parlade and other top officials of the NTF-ELCAC and the ATC are truly a bunch of military morons.

They keep on harping that I tagged legal democratic organizations as fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The basis of the lie is a video clip of less than three minutes which they spliced and removed a part in which I enumerated the member organizations of the NDFP.

But in fact, even in the spliced video clip, I do not tag the legal democratic organizations as “fronts” or facade of the CPP.

These military morons are the ones who are putting words into my mouth outside of the video clip.

These psywar incompetents do not deserve an appropriation of 19 billion pesos. This is obviously military pork to feed their corruption. Duterte himself has admitted that he feeds them with money.

They claim that they have already finished off the CPP and NPA in the countryside with fake surrenders and fake encounters but real extrajudicial killings and fake community projects.

Now they want to earn bigger money and stay safer in the urban areas by focusing their psywar operations on legal and democratic organizations.

They wish to subject them to a combination of McCarthyism, mass intimidation and butchery in the style of Oplan Tokhang, which has already victimized Randy Malayao, Ben Ramos, Randall Echanis, Jory Porquia and Zara Alvarez.

★ ★ ★



## On the Current Character of Philippine Society<sup>14</sup> *Ang Bayan* interview with Jose Maria Sison

August 31, 2020

*Introduction: The question of the character of Philippine society is a key ideological question for the Party and the revolutionary movement. In recent months, there is marked increase in intellectual and political discourse on the matter especially among the Filipino youth.*

*Such interest is the natural outcome of the rising demand for fundamental solutions to the increasingly conspicuous crisis of the ruling system. At the same time, anti-Party elements including Trotskyites, social democrats and others have begun stepping up their anti-Party discourse to question the basic social analysis of the CPP with the aim of stemming the rising tide of new Party adherents.*

*The people's socioeconomic conditions continue to worsen brought about by more than three decades of neoliberal policies. These have further sharpened recently by the massive destruction of productive forces due to the lockdowns related to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

*To discuss this matter, we have decided to interview Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, the Party's founding chair, and who as Amado Guerrero, authored "Philippine Society and Revolution." In this special issue, *Ang Bayan* puts forward some critical questions surrounding the Party's analysis of the semicolonial and semifeudal social system in the Philippines.*

*We hope that this interview will help our members in further sharpening their grasp of the issues and help in study and research efforts to deepen our understanding of the mode of production. We invite our readers to send their feedback. Additional questions, as well as information, can also be submitted as these may help in future interviews and articles.*

1. When you wrote **Philippine Society and Revolution** in 1969, you described Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal. What did you mean then?

JMS: By semicolonialism, I meant that the Philippines had been nominally independent since the US formally ended its colonial rule and formally granted independence to the Philippines in 1946. Instead of US colonial officials running the government from the national level downwards, politicians serving US monopoly capitalism and representing

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<sup>14</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and Author, Philippine Society and Revolution for *Ang Bayan* Special Issue, August 31, 2020.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class have become responsible for the entire Philippine government.

But the US made sure with the US-RP Treaty of General Relations of 1946 and subsequent treaties, agreements and arrangements, that it would continue to dominate the Philippines economically, socially, politically and militarily. The US retained their property rights, their military bases, control over the economy and military and other means of dominating the Philippines. Semicolonialism means that the Philippines is not fully independent but is subject to the dictates of an imperialist power.

By semifeudalism, I meant that the Philippines was no longer fully feudal and was no longer ruled by the landlord class chiefly but by the comprador big bourgeoisie as the chief trading and financial agent of foreign monopoly capitalism that owns large tracts of land and extractive enterprises to serve as base for exporting raw materials in exchange for equipment and other manufactures from abroad.

The natural economy of feudalism began to be undermined when the commodity system of production and the use of money as medium of exchange began to prevail as the production of export crops developed significantly in the first of the half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially after the Suez Canal opening, and when crop specialization arose with some regions producing export crops and other regions producing food crops for domestic consumption.

But it was during the US colonial period, when the semifeudal economic system became dominant in the Philippines, with the US colonial rulers opening the mines, granting logging concessions and expanding the plantations for the production of raw-material exports in exchange for larger imports of equipment and other manufactures. The comprador big bourgeoisie arose as the native and mestizo ruling class seated in the major cities and became more powerful than the landlord class ruling in the provinces. In the Spanish colonial period, the big compradors were the colonial officials, Spanish merchants and religious orders.

*2. Are the terms semicolonial and semifeudal still valid? Can we not use the term neocolonial for semicolonial and capitalist for semifeudal?*

JMS: The terms semicolonial and semifeudal to describe Philippine society are still valid. Semicolonialism is a distinctly political term that refers to the lack of full national independence of the Philippines and to the continuing control of the Philippines by the US and its imperialist allies. This term has been widely accepted and has not been the target of questioning or objection. It is a longstanding term from Lenin who spoke of colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries being subordinate to the imperialist powers.

Like other people, I sometimes use the term neocolony to refer to the Philippines to express the nuance that the Philippines is under a new form



of political control by economic and financial means rather than by outright bureaucratic and military control by a colonial power. It was Sukarno and Zhou En-lai who were best known for using this term in connection with the Bandung Conference of African and Asian peoples against imperialism, neocolonialism and colonialism. I find nothing wrong with using neocolony as synonym for semicolonism.

Like the term semicolonialism, semifeudalism comes from Marxist-Leninist literature describing the Chinese economy before the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949. It is used to describe economies that have long been dominated by the commodity system of production and no longer by a natural economy of feudalism. But it is a merchant bourgeoisie rather than an industrial bourgeoisie that is the chief ruling class based on land ownership or in partnership with the landlord class.

Semifeudalism is a precise term with a definite content. It is a big comprador type of capitalism that is based on feudal and semifeudal conditions and thrives on a lopsided colonial exchange of raw material exports and manufacture imports. It is a term for a nonindustrial or pre-industrial and agrarian economy in which the comprador big bourgeoisie has arisen as the wealthiest and most powerful exploiting class from feudal haciendas as resource base for exports and in combination with the landlord class. Influenced by bourgeois economists, right wing social democrats and Trotskyites, some people think that it is a term that has never been valid or has outgrown its validity.

They think that an economy has to be exclusively feudal or capitalist. They do not understand that in its world history capitalism grew out of the womb of feudalism, first in the form of the handicraft business, some light manufacturing and the merchants trading between town and country before industrial capitalism surged forth as the dominant form of capitalism with the steam engine and then with the electro-mechanically powered machinery for the mass production and largescale circulation of commodities.

Semifeudalism is a term that refers to a kind of economy that evolved from feudalism and became starkly conspicuous in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Philippines with the rise of the comprador big bourgeoisie as the chief exploiting class in collaboration with the landlord class. Big compradors have long been big landlords because they base themselves on large landed estates and use these to produce crops for export in exchange for the importation of finished products from abroad. Prior to the rise of the native and mestizo comprador big bourgeoisie during the US colonial regime, the Spanish colonial bureaucrats, merchants and religious orders played the role of big compradors in the Manila-Acapulco trade and then in the direct Manila-Europe trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The big comprador Ayala family and related families have owned banks

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and trading companies but have also owned or managed big landed estates in Calatagan and Nasugbu, Batangas and elsewhere since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In recent times in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the recently deceased Eduardo Cojuangco owned the United Coconut Planters Bank and came to own the gigantic big comprador firm San Miguel Corporation but he also owned some twenty haciendas in various provinces in the Philippines (Tarlac, Pangasinan, Isabela, Negros, Palawan, Agusan, Albay and so on).

*3. How do you explain the Philippine economy as semifeudal at the present time?*

JMS: The Philippine economy is still dominated by the comprador big bourgeoisie in combination with the landlord class. It has no industrial foundation of its own. It does not produce the industrial equipment but imports these with income mainly from the export of agricultural products and mineral ores. It does not have an independent steel industry. It has no machine-building industry nor the capacity to produce machine tools, vehicles, computers, basic chemicals, medicines and other capital goods and major manufactures.

Local manufacturing is dependent on imported machines and raw material inputs. So-called export processing zones of multinational firms are detached from the domestic economy and are engaged in semiprocessing and assembly. They are mere appendages or segments of the international assembly line of multinational firms.

The so-called service industries serve as adjuncts, not of an independent industrial capacity for the country, but of comprador-type operations in export and wholesale domestic trade, finance, tourism and travel, and the whole gamut of media, communications and infotech-based businesses that merely skim their share of profit from these basically commercial operations with some globalized character. Such industries may impart a glossy, capitalist-like sheen on the Philippine economy at first glance, but are simply unsustainable outgrowths of the semifeudal economy.

In spite or because of the long running bogus land reform program of the agrarian state, agriculture remains a major base of the economy but it is in the main afflicted by traditional feudal relations of production, by backward, non-mechanized, non-irrigated, and with low output. However, there is the noticeable phenomenon of the scattered use of harvester and thresher combines from China and Japan in small to medium landholdings, displacing farm workers. Large-scale agricultural production with some amount of mechanization and hiring of seasonal farm workers is carried out in foreign-owned and big comprador-owned plantations producing export crops.

*4. Can you explain the impact of the economic policy shifts of the US and world capitalist system on the Philippine economy since the 1950s?*

*Have these policy shifts, which have been followed by the Philippine government, promoted the industrialization of the Philippines?*

JMS: There have been conspicuous and superficial phenomena in the Philippines attendant to shifts in the economic policy of US imperialism and the local reactionaries. Up to the 1950s, US surplus consumer goods poured into the Philippines to exhaust US war damage payments and loans from the US Export-Import Bank. By the 1970s upon the rehabilitation of Japan, the Philippines was being swamped with all sorts of Japanese goods and Marcos went into showy infrastructure projects, using up Japanese reparations and availing of loans from the World Bank.

Some shallow-minded bourgeois economists thought that the Philippines could become a newly-industrializing country when the export-processing zones were launched. But the Filipino rulers proved incapable of overcoming limitations imposed by the Japanese creditors on the Iligan Integrated Steel Mills which were established during the time of Macapagal and would be sold away to Chinese Malaysians in the time of Ramos.

The multilateral consensus among the industrial capitalist countries in IMF, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank was to keep the Philippines nonindustrial and agrarian, a dumping ground of surplus manufactures and cheap source of raw materials, restricted to infrastructure building to enhance the export of raw materials and import finished manufactures.

The share that the Philippines got in the imperialist recycling of petrodollars in construction projects in the Middle East was the desperate shift of Marcos' crony construction companies to this region, the deployment of Filipino construction workers and the start of a significant amount of remittances from migrant workers to keep up the importation of consumer goods under the auspices of the Filipino comprador big bourgeoisie.

But the bigger phenomenon of exporting cheap Filipino labor in far larger numbers has arisen under the neoliberal policy framework to earn foreign exchange and augment foreign loans for covering the growing deficit due to the increased dumping of surplus consumer goods by the imperialist countries and by the neighboring newly-industrialized countries in East Asia.

The US instigated the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization in a futile attempt to override the worsening crisis of overproduction within the US and among its industrialized allies from 1979 onward. This policy has been awesome because it brazenly calls for the unbridled aggrandizement of monopoly capital, the deliberate reduction of the wage income and social services, the denationalization of weaker economies and the abuse of international credit for private construction and the provision of consumer goods.

In the neoliberal framework, the Philippines never had a chance to

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make its own national industrialization, until now when neoliberalism has become bankrupt and the public debt is already in the process of exploding in the face of both industrialized and non-industrialized countries.

Such new facets of the local economy as the significant rise in remittances of overseas Filipino workers since the late 1970s, expansion of so-called free economic zones, large-scale land-use conversion for real-estate, production of new commodity crops, have only served to aggravate and deepen the backward and nonindustrial character of the domestic forces of production in the Philippines.

Significant external changes like the complete restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and China, the rise of China as a manufacturing giant, technological developments in communications, robotics, and so on have only served to aggravate the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system and have not provided the Philippine reactionary government the opportunity to undertake the industrial development of the Philippines, especially because there has been a lack of political will for such purpose.

*5. What is the composition of the Philippine population in terms of socioeconomic class and urban-rural dichotomy?*

JMS: Based on the false statistics of the reactionary government, the employees in the industry sector (19.1 per cent) and those in the service sector (58 per cent) now total 77.1 per cent of the labor force against the measly 22.9 per cent in the agriculture sector. There are two points missed in the understatement of employment in agriculture: first, almost the entire family of peasants and farm workers, including women and children, do farm work and other productive activities in the natural economy; and second, most of the surplus population and the rural odd-jobbers and many of the urban odd-jobbers are still connected to their peasant families.

In considering the class composition of the Philippine population, one must in general count as members of a definite socioeconomic class those family members who are dependent on or assist their parents in work. This is especially in the case of peasants and farm workers because they take part in production and get a definite share of the social product. By this reckoning, the poor and middle peasants are still the overwhelming majority of the people employed in the two basic productive sectors of agriculture and industry. At the least, 60 per cent of the population are still peasant and based in the rural areas.

Even the false statistics of the reactionary government admit that there are still more people employed in agriculture than in industry, although the difference has been made incredibly small. The mechanical and superficial definition of "urban" in these statistics have the overall effect of bloating further the number of non-rural employment, where in fact these are typically members of peasant families engaged in sideline occupations in nearby town centers, such as drivers, haulers, vendors, shop assistants,

and other casual laborers in the informal economy.

There is a noticeable degree of rural semiproletarianization, due to the limits of agricultural land, and widespread land-use conversion for real estate, tourism, energy and infrastructure projects. This results in the increasing number of surplus peasants and farmworkers who are displaced from the land and could no longer be absorbed in agricultural production.

But they have scant opportunity to become productive since there are limited industries in the cities and the labor export market can only absorb so much, large amounts of rural labor are being displaced from the land and forced idle. To feed themselves and their families, they resort to all sorts of productive work from serving as habal-habal transport drivers, engaging in small retail, seasonal swidden farming, collecting firewood for sale, and so on, which are intrinsically tied to the rural economy.

The big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalist families comprise fractions of 1 per cent of the Philippine population, the stunted middle bourgeoisie cannot exceed 2 percent of the population, the urban petty bourgeoisie still ranges from 6 to 8 per cent of the population. The workers and peasants comprise at least 90 per cent of the population, with the nonagricultural workers no more than 30 or 40 per cent. There has been no significant advance of industrial capitalist development to change radically the social pyramid and rural-urban distribution of the population since the writing of "Philippine Society and Revolution."

The Philippines is extremely underdeveloped if we consider the extent of unemployment as an indicator of development. According to 2019 official statistics, 12 million people or more than 26 per cent of the 45 million labor force cannot find work in the Philippines and have to seek jobs abroad. Another 10.6 million or 23 per cent of the labor force remain in the Philippines and are admitted by the reactionary government as unemployed. A total of 22.6 million people or more than 49 per cent of the labor force are unemployed.

The National Statistics Authority of the government admits that of the almost 70 million Filipinos counted as working-age population (as of the 2017 Labor Force Survey), more than 27 million are categorized as "not in the labor force" (NILF). These include overseas workers, who are even excluded in the NSA's labor data collection. Other NILF include those who are "not looking for work" for various reasons. This point alone proves the severity of the country's unemployment problem.

Aside from exporting raw materials for foreign monopoly capitalism, the Philippines has exported huge amounts of cheap labor since 1980. It does this in two ways with huge increases:

1) in overseas Filipinos (with for instance OFW deployment increasing from just 214,590 in 1980 to over two million annually since 2016; the

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stock of overseas Filipinos meanwhile increased from 7.0 million in 1997 [earliest available data] to 10.3 million in 2013 [latest available data, although Migrante estimates at least 12 million today]); and

2) in employment in special economic zones (increasing from 91,860 in 1994 to over 1.5 million today; this is from how the number of economic zones increased from 16 to 395 and of enterprises [mainly foreign TNCs] in them from 331 to 4,341 over that same period). This grossly affirms how our lack of an industrial base means that foreign monopoly capital is able to exploit Filipino raw materials and cheap labor.

6. *In 1983 you and Ka Julie, your wife, analyzed the Philippine mode of production and countered the wrong line that the Philippines was no longer semifeudal but capitalist? What was the basis of that line?*

JMS: Yes, we thought in 1983 that it was our duty to counter the erroneous line that the Philippine economy was no longer semifeudal but capitalist. The implication of the term capitalist was that the Philippines had become industrial capitalist. There would have been no problem if the homegrown capitalism were described as semifeudal capitalism or big comprador capitalism or big comprador-landlord economy.

Certain cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines were quite awed by the Marcos fascist regime's infrastructure projects and propaganda that the Philippines was becoming industrial capitalist because of "eleven industrial projects" connected to the infrastructure projects and the promotion of universal banks so-called, no longer merely commercial banks but banks for industrial investment, as in the merger of bank and industrial capital in the emergence of monopoly capitalism in Europe.

Julie and I thought those CPP cadres I have mentioned were under the influence of bourgeois economists and even of Trotskyism. They were short of knowledge about political economy and were lacking in critical ability. They even claimed that the peasantry in Central Luzon was rapidly disappearing because of industrialization and did not recognize that the number of peasants persisted but the surplus rural population was increasing and desperate even for odd jobs on the farms and in Metro Manila. They were also dazzled by the prospects of export processing zones and semiprocessing enterprises.

They failed to recognize that the bureaucrat capitalist Marcos and his cronies were big compradors who were benefiting from infrastructure projects which were grossly graft-laden and dependent on onerous foreign debt as well as on imported construction equipment and structural steel. The so-called eleven industrial projects and universal banks were all balderdash and were subordinate to the infrastructure projects and export-import trading. The export-processing zones were not at all the cutting edge of industrialization but fringe-processing or assembly of finished components.

The errant comrades were completely unaware that Marcos had already exhausted the Japanese war damage payments and that the neo-Keynesian lending under the auspices of the World Bank for the purpose of enhancing the colonial exchange of raw materials from the hinterlands and finished goods from the metropolis was under strain and severe criticism from 1979 onward. The Marcos fascist regime was already in financial trouble due to the dwindling of international credit from 1979 to 1982.

*7. What were the consequences of the wrong line of those who practically praised Marcos for transforming the Philippines from semifeudal to industrial capitalist?*

JMS: The subjectivist line that Marcos had transformed or was transforming the Philippine economy from semifeudal to industrial capitalist bred Right and "Left" opportunist lines. It reinforced the reformist Right opportunist line of the so-called popular democrats. It also whipped up the Left opportunist and Trotskyite line that the Maoist line of protracted people's war was invalid and that victory in the armed revolution could be accomplished through urban uprisings and/or rapid regularization of the people's army. The Left opportunist line manifested Trotskyite notions and did the most damage to the armed revolution from 1986 until 1992, prompting the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992.

The critique of the wrong subjectivist line about the mode of production in the Philippines in 1983 did not stop the Right opportunists and "Left" opportunists in having their way and inflicting damage to the revolutionary forces at various times in various regions but it reinforced the Marxist-Leninist foundation of the CPP and gathered the support of most cadres and members for the Second Great Rectification Movement. This was an educational movement to repudiate, criticize and rectify the erroneous subjectivist line and the Right and "Left" opportunist errors as well as consequent crimes. It saved the CPP and the revolutionary movement from disintegration.

*8. Now, there are again claims that the Philippines is no longer semifeudal but capitalist. Why? What is the basis for these claims? Has the neoliberal policy really developed beyond what you call the semifeudal economy?*

JMS: As Lenin has taught us a long time ago about the law of uneven development, modern imperialism or monopoly capitalism can make spasmodic investments in colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries but these do not result in an even economic development from one level to a new higher level. The kind of foreign investments that flowed into the Philippines during the time of Marcos did not lift the Philippines from semifeudalism to industrial capitalism but to a worse kind of semifeudalism that resulted in the downfall of Marcos and the stagnation of the economy

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during the time of Cory Aquino.

Then from 1992 onward Ramos as president pushed hard the neoliberal policy, privatised state assets to use the sales income for buoying up the budget and to get neoliberal credit for a private construction boom and larger importation of finished manufactures. The Philippine economy actually degenerated and then was adversely affected in a big way by the Asian financial crisis of 1997. The export-oriented processing enterprises collapsed and became subordinated to China as final assembly platform.

The Estrada regime could not last long because of corruption and depressed conditions of the economy. But despite continuing difficulties, the subsequent Arroyo and Aquino regimes seemed to be able to fix the Philippine economy because of low-interest international credit by way of reviving the world capitalist economy, the inflow of speculative portfolio funds which did not build any productive enterprise, the foreign exchange remittances of overseas contract workers and the shift of business processing operations from the imperialist countries to the Philippines.

Philippine economic "progress" since the 2000s is equated or made to appear with the glossy high-rise buildings due to neoliberal funding and a big amount of import-dependent consumption due to a rising level of foreign debt in combination with the remittances of the OFWs which have not been enough to cover budgetary and trade deficits. Thus, there is now an unsustainable public debt of Php 9 trillion without any solid kind of industrial development. The backward nonindustrial character of the Philippine economy when the public debt bubbles of neoliberalism will be exploding in both industrial capitalist countries and in nonindustrial countries like the Philippines.

But there are those who think that the grotesque distribution of employment and outputs in the agriculture, industry and service sectors spells the rise of the Philippine economy, from semifeudalism to capitalism which is implied to be industrial capitalism. According to latest government statistics, agriculture is supposed to account for 22.9 per cent employment and 7.4 per cent share of the GDP, industry for 19.1 per cent of employment and 34 per cent share of GDP and service sector for 58 per cent of employment and 58.6 of GDP.

These figures are patently false by understating the proportion of those employed in agriculture and disregarding the fact that entire families of peasants and farm workers (including children below the age of 10 years) participate in farm work and overstating employment in the service sector which obviously includes estimates of the big number of odd-jobbers and unemployed. The service sector is not a basic productive sector, unlike agriculture and industry.

Nevertheless, the service sector is highly significant because it is where the comprador bourgeoisie reigns with its big financial, trading



and other service corporations. These determine the semifeudal and big comprador capitalist character of the Philippine economy in line which lacks an industrial foundation. But the statisticians of the reactionary government also crowd the service sector with small and medium service enterprises and the far more numerous income-earners working as jeepney drivers, market stall proprietors, gasoline station attendants, sari-sari store owners, street vendors, cooks, waitresses and others involved in the so-called "informal economy."

That the service sector dominates the economy indicates a grossly disfigured non-industrial state of the economy. The proportions of employment and output ascribed to the industry sector clearly do not make the Philippines industrial capitalist, especially if we consider that the Philippine industry sector is entirely dependent on imported equipment, fuel and other major components and raw materials.

What has been passed off by the reactionary rulers and economists as industrial capitalist development in the Philippines consists of pockets of large-scale industrial capitalist production dependent on imported equipment and components which include electronic parts, electrical wiring production and other export commodities inside the export processing zones. These zones of cheap Filipino labor and tax evasion form part of the international assembly line (now more fashionably called "global value chains") of multinational corporations.

There are also large-scale extractive industries such as mining operations which make use of giant earth moving machines, high explosives, open pits and heavy doses of cyanide and other lethal chemicals, and international shipping vessels which often avoid customs with the complicity of corrupt officials. Large numbers of the Filipino proletariat are concentrated in these areas of economic activity. The question, however, is whether these form part of, or contribute to domestic capitalist development. The processing of the mineral ores is done abroad beyond the primary stage.

Except for the low wages they pay to workers, the mining enterprises, in fact, do not contribute anything fundamental to domestic capitalist development. In fact, they prevent local capitalist factors from developing industrially by sucking in domestic resources, and influencing economic policy to the detriment of the national bourgeoisie. The independent local capitalist sector is limited mainly to small and medium-scale manufacturing, with significant numbers in the local food manufacturing.

*9. What are the possible consequences of not describing Philippine politics and economy in the most precise way possible?*

JMS: If the thinking gains ground that the Philippines has become industrial capitalist from being semifeudal, there would be an obfuscation of the three basic problems of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic

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feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, with the big compradors and bureaucrat capitalists serving as the bridge between foreign monopoly capitalism and feudalism consisting of traditional rent-taking landlords and export crop landlords, and leasehold contract growers (including commercial livestock and poultry growers for niche markets) who combine some amount of mechanization and the use of seasonal farm workers.

Worst of all, there can be again the illusion that the peasantry is a dwindling or even disappearing class through capitalist development, agrarian revolution is no longer the main content of the people's democratic revolution and that the protracted people's war has lost the wide social and physical terrain for maneuver and growth in stages. The subjectivist line can again be whipped up for the Right and Left opportunist lines that arose from 1981 to 1992 and became very damaging to the revolutionary movement from 1985 to 1992.

Those who spread the aforesaid subjectivist line eventually exposed themselves as Trotskyites. They are again loudly attacking the characterization of the Philippine economy as semi-feudal in order to push the long-discredited Trotskyite line that there ought not to be two stages in the Philippine revolution because socialism is already the immediate issue, that there is no need for the people's democratic revolution, that the peasantry and the middle bourgeoisie are reactionary forces that should be kept out of the national united front, that the strategic line of protracted people's war by encircling the cities from the country should be discarded and that the workers must do all the revolutionary struggle and share no power with the peasant masses.

However, the semifeudal character of the Philippines will become even more conspicuous as the crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the domestic ruling system worsen, especially after the aggravation of the crisis and large-scale disruptions of global and domestic supply chains wrought by COVID-19. The liberalized trade and investment policies of the reactionary government have favored foreign monopoly capitalists and smugglers through the ports and free economic zones at the expense of local production.

The Philippine economy remains dependent on imported equipment and many kinds of consumer manufactures, foreign debt and investments. It suffers from a rapidly worsening chronic trade deficit and mounting public debt. The people suffer high rates of unemployment, job insecurity, low wages, rising prices of food and other basic commodities, mass poverty and homelessness.

The export-oriented, import-dependent and heavily indebted economy is already reeling from the global economic slowdown and the aggravation done by the destruction of productive forces due to the Covid-19 lockdowns. The private construction boom, real estate development and

tourist enterprises are likely to suffer a collapse as they did after the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

The GDP growth last year which slowed to 5.9percent, the lowest in eight years, is set to be wiped out with the unprecedented contraction of the economy. Sure to further deteriorate are all sectors of the economy in terms of output and employment. Overseas remittances and BPO operations will slow down. The Philippine economy and government have gone bankrupt and will have no way whatsoever to claim any kind of economic development from the underdeveloped and impoverished conditions of semifeudalism.

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# The Anti-Terrorism Act in the Philippines in Relation to The CPP and The Revolutionary Movement<sup>15</sup>

September 1, 2020

## *Introduction*

Under the Nuremberg Principles, the war of aggression is the worst possible form of violent attack on the civilian population and the social infrastructure and is therefore the worst form of terrorism. Since the judgment against the Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg, US imperialism has been incontestably the No.1 terrorist power in the world. It has been responsible for the mass murder of 25 to 30 million people and the destruction of social infrastructure in several countries and continents.

The US has also been the No. 1 promoter of state terrorism within its own borders and in its client-states. It is the main source of indoctrination, planning, cross-border intelligence, psywar techniques and military and police logistics for building the state apparatuses of coercion and state terrorism in order to maintain US global hegemony and the rule of the exploiting classes on a global scale.

But it is ironical that the US is the imperialist power that hypes most the shibboleth of anti-terrorism in order to carry out endless wars of aggression, to promote state terrorism in various countries and subvert the national sovereignty and the democratic will of the people to form their own governments and to assert their right to rebel against tyrannical and oppressive regimes.

The US is most hostile to revolutionary movements for national and social liberation and tries to misrepresent them as "terrorist." Thus, it has directed and prodded its puppets in the Philippines to enact an anti-terrorism law. The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the revolutionary organizations and the people's democratic government abhor terrorism. They exist precisely in order to oppose the super-terrorism of US imperialism and the state terrorism of the current tyrannical Duterte regime and the big comprador-landlord ruling system.

The overriding reason for existence of the revolutionary movement is to uphold, defend and promote the national and democratic rights and interests of the Filipino people and to oppose the oppression and exploitation of the people by foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic

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<sup>15</sup>Issued as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle and Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. This revolutionary movement is guided and bound by its constitutional Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government; by its declaration of adherence to international law on human rights and humanitarian conduct in armed conflict; and by the GRP-NDFP Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

The deliberate obfuscation of US imperialism as the No.1 terrorist power in the world, as the No.1 promoter of state terrorism and as the No.1 creator of cultist Islamic jihadist groups like the Al Qaida, Salafi, Islamic State and Al Nusra and the lack of critical attention to the irrational and undemocratic complexing of the political offense of rebellion or armed revolution of peoples with common crimes are among the major causes why there are so many confused definitions of terrorism.

Because of the conflicting views and interests of its member-states, the United Nations finds it difficult to arrive at a simple and single definition of the term "terrorism," which ought to focus on the death and destruction rained down on the civilian population by imperialism and state terrorism. All current states, as a matter of course, have a firm conviction that they are duly-constituted and legitimate. They are convinced that they conform to just and fair, democratic domestic and international laws, especially on human rights and humanitarian conduct in armed conflict, and that acts of "terrorism" are perpetrated solely or mainly by what they derisively call "nonstate actors".

The main purpose of the US and its imperialist allies and client states and all their ideologues and propagandists in stressing that the revolutionary movements are "nonstate actors" is to obscure and bury the laws on co-belligerency in civil wars or local armed conflicts that are still carried in the Geneva Conventions, deny the fact that revolutionary movements have the attributes of a belligerent force (people, territory, system of government and army with a unified command) and vilify said movements as mere "terrorists" that must be suppressed by draconian and outrightly fascist laws like the Anti-Terrorism Act.

And yet most, if not all, current states, which are UN members are proud of having a revolutionary tradition in which their peoples have asserted and exercised their sovereign will to constitute a democratic nation-state against a foreign colonial power, a local tyranny or local feuding forces. The people's sovereignty, which is an expression of the right to self-determination, is a principle invoked in common by the constitutions of states and by the proclamations of revolutionary movements and is recognized in international law and in so many UN conventions.

Despite its being the No. 1 terrorist power in the world today, US imperialism is the main propagator of the notion and line that "terrorism" comes solely or mainly from "nonstate actors", such as revolutionary

movements or some cultist or anarchist groups which supposedly combine political, religious or ideological purpose with a criminal propensity to threaten or inflict harm on duly-constituted authority or the civilian population. In fact, the US has whipped up Islamophobia while collaborating with Saudi Arabia and Zionist Israel in forming pseudo-Islamic jihadist groups, deploying them in operations threatening or harmful to civilians and then hyping them as prime examples of “terrorism”.

Paradoxically, the US has never cast away its founding documents which uphold the people’s sovereign right to bear arms, to rebel and to overthrow a tyrannical and oppressive government. It has always been proud to have signed domestic and international documents upholding the democratic principle of people’s sovereignty. Likewise, the Philippines has enshrined in its Malolos Constitution of 1899 and in the 1935 and 1987 constitutions this principle and cannot deny the revolutionary heritage of the Filipino people in fighting foreign domination and establishing their own nation-state.

Terrorism so-called as a phenomenon of threatening or inflicting harm to the lives, limbs and properties of the civilian population and destruction of the social infrastructure has been mainly and almost solely perpetrated by imperialist states in wars of aggression and by states oppressing the peoples that they rule and committing gross and systematic violations of human rights. Revolutionary movements are the consequent resistance to tyranny and oppression.

In the course of political rivalry for global hegemony, the imperialist powers themselves accuse each other of terrorism and expose each other’s acts of terrorism. States are presumed to be responsible for respecting human rights in their own countries. Thus, quite a number of them have in fact been the proper target of criticisms and appeals by UN human rights agencies regarding people’s complaints of systematic human rights violations by state or state-sponsored forces, which amount to state terrorism.

The only instances when the UN comes out strongly against “state terrorism” is when the US and its allies in the UN Security Council succeed in making resolutions against states denounced as “rogue states” chiefly by the US, such as Iraq under Saddam Hussein or Libya under Muammar Qaddafi. Otherwise, the US and its imperialist allies and client-states wish to limit the label of terrorism to revolutionary movements that they oppose. They make it a point to conceal US culpability for creating terrorist groups like Al Qaeda, Salafi, Al Nusra and the Islamic state in the Middle East and the Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines and other Southeast-Asia-based groups like Jemaah Islamiyah that also operate in the Philippines.

### ***1. Principles and Phenomena Relevant to the Term "Terrorism"***

The victory of the bourgeois-liberal democratic revolution in France and in other countries signalled the advent of modern democracy. No longer did the concept of a divine authority to rule, pervasive in ancient feudal and slave societies, hold sway and since then, the sovereign will of the people has been upheld as the supreme principle governing the constitution of the state. Socialist societies have further arisen in history to reaffirm the same democratic principle, with the decisive qualification that it is the proletariat, and no longer the bourgeoisie, that is the leading class in society.

Any constitution that purports to be democratic requires the state to be republican and truly representative of the people and adopts safeguards to ensure that the state does not become tyrannical and oppressive. A democratic constitution carries the Bill of Rights and the guarantees of civil and political liberties for the citizens, groups and communities within the nation-state. It consistently upholds the sovereign will of the people by recognizing the right of the people to rebel and overthrow the state or government that becomes tyrannical or oppressive.

But of course, in the real balance of state power that claims republican validity against a revolutionary movement that denounces it as having become tyrannical or oppressive, the incumbent state or government tries to deny the legitimacy of the revolutionary forces, throws at them all kinds of invectives, derogatory terms such as bandits, outlaws, illegal nonstate actors, subversives and terrorists and rationalizes the use of state violence against them.

To use the law against the revolutionaries, the reactionary government in the Philippines had complexed the charge of rebellion with the common crimes of murder, rape, arson, kidnapping, robbery or theft and illegal possession of firearms or explosive and the like. This contravenes the jurisprudence of all civilized societies which distinguishes political crimes from common crimes. And the Supreme Court set the jurisprudence in 1956 that the charge of simple rebellion could not be complexed with common crimes because the former absorbs the latter. This is now known as the Hernandez doctrine in which all acts in pursuit of one's political beliefs are subsumed in one case of rebellion.

Not only did the Supreme Court rule that it is a violation of the constitutional right against double jeopardy to multiply the charges against the accused for the single political offense of rebellion but it also explained that this charge was bailable and carried a lesser penalty (6 to 12 years) than the common crimes. The rationale is that rebellion is socially rooted and the social grievances need to be addressed whereas common crimes are motivated by selfish interest, personal gain or malice.



The reactionary government can try to address the social grievances by undertaking the needed reforms or by negotiating a just peace with the revolutionary movement, unless those in power seek to take advantage by using the revolution or civil war as a pretext for escalating oppression and exploitation and even establishing a fascist dictatorship. That was what Marcos did and what Duterte is now trying to do.

In many major instances in world history, civil wars have been resolved through peace negotiations and mutual general amnesty of the conflicting forces. Working out a just peace through mutually agreed reforms can be a wiser, more economical and humane choice for the warring parties than for each to try to destroy and punish the other side. There are certain times when two domestic parties decide to agree on a truce in order for them to confront and fight a third party, especially when this is a foreign aggressor.

However, since the Philippine neocolonial state was established in 1946, the reactionary authorities have persisted in the practice of maliciously imposing extremely heavier penalties for rebellious or revolutionary acts to overthrow the government. Despite the fact that the armed revolutionary movement was defeated by the reactionary government in the early 1950s by force of arms because of serious errors of political line and strategy and tactics on the part of the leadership of the revolutionary party, the reactionary authorities enacted the Anti-Subversion Law of 1957 in line with the US-directed Cold War.

The law defined subversion as a conspiracy of the Communist Party to overthrow the state and to deliver it to a foreign power. Apart from instituting the barbaric principle of guilt by association, the law sought to suppress the freedom of speech and assembly of those suspected as communists, and made it easy to convict the accused and impose the death penalty on alleged communist party officers on the basis of the bare testimony of two witnesses. But the threat of death penalty and repeated anti-communist witchhunts did not deter the reemergence of revolutionary currents inspired by Marxism-Leninism among the youth and workers.

The Anti-Subversion Law was a surplusage even to most reactionaries in relation to the lack of any significantly strong communist party and people's army and was often blunted by the critique of the law by progressives and enlightened conservatives alike, such as the Civil Liberties Union. Thus, it was used more as an instrument of anti-communist propaganda than as an instrument for legal punitive action by the authorities. In 1957, the Lava leadership practically liquidated the old communist party. And the military adopted the tactic of planting firearms as evidence against remnants of the old communist party and the old people's army until Marcos used the Anti-Subversion Law as well as the law on rebellion to arrest, detain and charge all his critics and political opponents. Many of those detained were subjected to charges of both subversion and rebellion before military

commissions.

The abuse of the charge of subversion became so notorious during the time of the Marcos fascist dictatorship that when General Fidel V. Ramos became president in 1992 he repealed the Anti-Subversion Law in an effort to entice the revolutionary movement to enter into peace negotiations and the Communist Party of the Philippines to surface. However, he made the charge of rebellion nonbailable by raising the penalty to reclusion perpetua. Yet even then, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) began to engage in peace negotiations with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration as the framework.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and in the development of friendly relations between the US and Dengist China, the US began to depart from the strictly anti-communist line of the 1950 McCarran Internal Security Act. Instead, it started to use the term "terrorism" as the new catch-all term against its opponents on an international scale. It served as a flexible term to differentiate tolerable "communists" from communist "terrorists" still engaged in revolutionary struggles for national and social liberation.

The US officialdom, as well as the duopoly of the Republican and Democratic parties, the national security agencies, the military-industrial complex, the think tanks, the academic institutes and corporate mass media increasingly used the term "terrorism" against all regimes and forces that resisted the wars of aggression unleashed by the US under its neoconservative security policy so as to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of the Soviet Union in the Middle East and to reinforce the position of Israeli Zionism against the Palestinian and Arab peoples.

After the events of September 11, 2001, the US declared the "war on terror" on a global scale and enacted the USA PATRIOT Act on October 21, 2001 to fight terrorism in the US and abroad. When President Gloria M. Arroyo went to Washington for a working visit from November 15 to 20, 2001, she requested the US to designate the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the CPP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison as "foreign terrorists," rendering them subject to political and financial sanctions. The Bush regime complied with the request in August 9, 2002 and certain US allies followed suit.

The false charge of terrorism against the CPP founding Chairman was used to undermine his status as a recognized political refugee under the Refugee Convention. However, he succeeded in having his name removed from the EU list of terrorists on December 10, 2009 by proving the violation of his basic rights before the European Court of Justice. It must be pointed out at this point that the mere allegation of "terrorism" has been used to foul up applications for political asylum and defeat the provisions of the

Refugee Convention.

Although those who committed 9-11 came from Saudi Arabia under the direction of Al Qaida, Iraq became the main target of US aggression in 2003. Iraq was accused of being a breeding ground for “terrorism” and a base for weapons of mass destruction. The US hypocritically accused the Saddam regime of having used the US-supplied chemical weapons during the Iraq-Iran war against the Kurdish people. The Philippines became a part of the “second front” of the “war on terror” with the Muslim areas of Mindanao regarded as belonging to the hub of countries whose population is predominantly Islamic and therefore presumed by US propaganda to be most prone to terrorism.

## ***II. The Previous and New Acts of State Terrorism***

The Philippines enacted Republic Act No. 9372 as its first anti-terrorism law on March 6, 2007. It bore the euphemistic title “Human Security Act” (HSA). It contained an overly broad definition of terrorism. It included as acts of terrorism certain predicate crimes, like murder, piracy, kidnapping, arson, and the destruction of property, if supposedly intended or aimed at “sowing and creating a condition of widespread and extraordinary fear and panic among the populace, in order to coerce the government to give in to an unlawful demand.”

The HSA set the penalty for terrorism at 40 years of imprisonment without parole. It also prescribed harsh penalties even for relatively minor violations. For example, it allowed the detention of “terrorism” suspects without adequate procedural protections. It allowed authorities to engage in spurious prosecutions. It likewise permitted persons apprehended in the Philippines to be rendered or extradited to countries that commit torture, on the flimsy assurance that the receiving government would extend “fair treatment” to the extradited person.

The HSA allowed the government authorities to construe less serious offenses such as vandalism or even legitimate acts of protest as crimes punishable by a mandatory 40-year sentence. For example, a political activist who protests and demands or calls for the ouster of the president from the presidency, who sets fire to an effigy (reinterpreted as committing arson or destruction of property), could be falsely charged with terrorism and, if convicted, sent to prison for 40 years.

The HSA set a penalty of 40 years’ imprisonment for conspiracy in cases where “two or more persons come to an agreement concerning the commission of the crime of terrorism... and decide to commit the same.” It allowed prosecutions even where no overt criminal act has occurred. This could have a chilling effect on critics of the government legally and peacefully seeking to hold political protests and make petitions.

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The HSA allowed regional trial courts to declare a group of persons to be a “terrorist and outlawed organization, association, or group,” and seize its assets and search its financial records, among other actions. Such a declaration could be made not just in cases where it is shown that a group has engaged in “terrorism” but also in cases in which the government asserts that the group is “organized for the purpose of engaging in terrorism.” The organization concerned was supposed to be given due notice and opportunity to be heard, but it and its members could lose their rights without the guarantee of a full and fair judicial process.

The HSA also allowed the police to double the period of detention of persons without judicial supervision, allowing up to three days of custody before the detainees must be brought before a judge. This provision allowed for the likelihood of further abuse in a country where maltreatment or torture is the standard practice to humiliate and extract self-incriminating statements from suspects during detention without access to legal counsel of their choice.

In supposed cases of “actual or imminent terrorist attack,” the HSA sanctioned detention beyond three days if the police obtained the written approval of a court or a “municipal, city, provincial or regional official” and set no express limit to the allowable period of detention. Considering that in the Philippines, where authorities are notorious for holding suspects for extended periods without arraignment or trial, this provision could be used to justify indefinite detention.

Deplorably, the HSA allowed the practice of rendition whereby a person may be given to the custody of another state, even without a formal extradition proceeding, if the detainee’s testimony is supposedly needed for a terrorism-related trial or police investigation. All the receiving state needs to do is merely give an official assurance of fair treatment to detainees. Experience has shown, however, that such assurances or diplomatic promises have been ineffective safeguards against torture and other human rights abuses.

Eventually, though, the Philippine reactionary authorities have considered the HSA as ineffective and decided to replace it with Republic Act No. 11479, the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) of 2020. The ATA gives an even more vague and overboard definition of terrorism and related concepts like “recruitment,” “material support” and “inciting to commit terrorism”; and requires a subjective criterion for the exercise of speech, expression and assembly.

The ATA creates an executive body of presidential appointees called the Anti-Terrorism Council which can decide to designate an individual or organization as terrorist on the basis of mere suspicion or any other arbitrary consideration; empowers it to authorize the military and the police to take into custody anyone suspected to be a terrorist; renders

unnecessary any judicial process for the proscription of any organization like the CPP and NPA; and allows ex-parte preliminary proscription within three days.

The ATA extends the duration of detention before arraignment of the suspect before a court is done; extends its application beyond the territory of the Philippines; violates the right to bail and against incommunicado detention; controls humanitarian aid; authorize interception of communications and freezing of bank accounts; and frees the military and police from the liability imposed by the HSA for illegal arrests and detention, among many others.

The ATA violates even further the basic democratic rights and fundamental freedoms set by the international instruments on human rights and international humanitarian law and the liberal-democratic Bill of Rights in the 1987 Constitution, which incorporates the rights under the Miranda doctrine and guarantees due process and the freedom of speech and assembly. This anti-terrorism law is actually a fascist law of state terrorism which considers any criticism of the government as an act of terrorism, subject to immediate punitive measures.

The ATA redefines as acts of terrorism crimes already defined and deemed punishable under the legal system preceding the devious use of “terrorism” as a legal term. These are merely made to appear more odious by attaching them to the supposed “terrorist” purposes, such as to “intimidate the general public, create an atmosphere or spread a message of fear, provoke or influence by intimidation the government or any international organization, or seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, economic, or social structures of the country, or create a public emergency or seriously undermine public safety”.

The crime of “terrorism” includes engaging in acts intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person or endanger a person’s life; engaging in acts intended to cause extensive damage or destruction to a government or public facility, public place, or private property; engaging in acts intended to cause extensive interference with, damage, or destruction to critical infrastructure; developing, manufacturing, possessing, acquiring, transporting, supplying, or using weapons; and releasing dangerous substances or causing fire, floods or explosions.

Under the ATA, persons who propose, incite, conspire, and participate in the planning, training, and facilitation an offence under the act, as well as those who provide support to “terrorists” as defined under the act, or recruit members of a “terrorist organization”, could face life imprisonment without parole. The act also punishes the following offenses with 12 years’ imprisonment: threatening to commit “terrorism”, inciting others or proposing to commit “terrorism”, voluntarily and knowingly joining any “terrorist group”, and acting as an accessory in the commission of

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“terrorism”.

The ATA allows suspects to be detained without a judicial warrant of arrest for 14 days which can be extended by 10 more days, and be placed under surveillance for 60 days which can also be extended by up to 30 days, by the police or military. These give the authorities unlimited latitude in framing up suspects, in torturing detainees and forcing confessions and in killing detainees and disposing of the corpus delicti.

Legal acts in the exercise of the freedom of speech and assembly can be considered as terrorism in its overreaching and vague meaning. The authorities can freely interpret one's intention or purpose behind anyone's act as terrorist. You can be considered a terrorist even if only one person is allegedly affected by your act despite the repeated reference to terrorism as an act against the government and community.

The ATA discourages, restrains and threatens with punishment the legal exercise of free speech, press and association. Anyone can be easily listed, arrested and detained as a “terrorist” by mere allegation of inciting terrorism “by means of speeches, proclamations, writings, emblems, banners or other representations...without taking any direct part in the commission of terrorism.”

Criticism, airing grievances or even petitioning the government can be misconstrued as “inciting to terrorism” and make you liable for imprisonment. A rally, protest or strike can be considered an act of “terrorism” to “create a serious risk to public safety”. Anyone can be accused of being a terrorist by providing expert advice or legal assistance to any organization of individual suspected of “terrorism”.

The authorities can arrest anyone on the basis of mere suspicion. Under the so-called Anti-Terrorism Council, non-judges usurp judicial authority and can authorize the police and military to arrest and detain people on the basis of a mere list of suspects, as in the “war on drugs” (Oplan Tokhang). Anyone can be detained for 24 days – which can be compounded in practice - without charges and without access to counsel and family, and placed on house arrest without any cellphone or other means of communication with counsel and family.

While you are designated or suspected as a “terrorist”, your money and property can be taken away and your family can become prey to extortion by the authorities. Your bank records can be opened and examined. Your calls, messages, social media posts and other forms of contacts with colleagues, relatives and friends can be surveilled.

In addition to executive authorities usurping judicial authority, they can let the courts brand your organization as “terrorist” even without a hearing. And thus, you can be considered “terrorist” for being a member of a “terrorist” organization. Humanitarian aid can be tagged as involved in “financing terrorism” and hence restrained and controlled. Overseas

Filipino workers and migrants can be made liable while abroad and the authorities can intercept their remittances to their families.

The authorities can act with impunity because the ATA assures them of far lesser penalty for abusing its provisions than the penalty of maximum life imprisonment for supposed acts of terrorism. Besides, as in Oplan Tokhang, the commander-in-chief no less publicly assures his armed agents of impunity and brazenly advises them to frame up their victims. In the first place, the ATA is a brazen violation of the 1987 Constitution and international law and the standards of human rights.

The opposition of the Filipino people to the ATA is overwhelming. There is a broad united front of the patriotic and democratic forces and the most respected personages, institutions and organizations resolutely and actively calling for the repeal of this law of state terrorism. To this date, there is an unprecedented 27 separate petitions of former Supreme Court justices, constitutionalists, former government officials, parliamentarians, civil libertarians, lawyers, law deans and professors, artists, media and bloggers, professionals, students, trade unionists, religious, women, indigenous peoples, mass organizations and human rights activists petitioning the Supreme Court to strike the ATA down as unconstitutional.

The petitioners share their just and lawful position with the broad masses of the people and expect the court to be self-respecting and to nullify a law that is unconstitutional and illegal, violates the right to due process and the fundamental freedom, castrates the judiciary with the provision endowing the Anti-Terrorism Council with judicial powers and poses a chilling effect on speech, expression and assembly. But then the judiciary has been rated as the weakest of the three branches of government.

The current Supreme Court has the reputation of being servile to the tyrant and being corrupt as shown by its brazen dismissal of the plunder cases against the allies of Duterte and the judicial ratification of overreaching state power like martial law. It can vacillate and shamelessly accept the castration of the judiciary under the cover of letting the law take its course and passively waiting for complaints of abuses to be filed with the lower courts. As in the time of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the Supreme Court can find the devious language and disingenuous rationalization to harmonize with the executive and legislative branches of the tyrannical government at the expense of the Filipino people.

### ***III. State Terrorism in Relation to the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army***

Before he became president, Duterte spouted a lot of big lies like wishing to become the first Left and socialist president of the Philippines

and promising to release all political prisoners by general amnesty, negotiate a just peace with the revolutionary movement and form a coalition government. But immediately after assuming the presidency, he surrounded himself with pro-US retired and active military officers and launched an all-out war against the revolutionary movement under the pretext of continuing the Oplan Bayanihan of his predecessor Benigno Aquino III.

Then he sought to trick the Communist Party of the Philippines into agreeing to a prolonged indefinite ceasefire without any substantial progress in peace negotiations as the basis worth considering and to the appointment of four of its party representatives as members of his cabinet. The NDFP told Duterte to fulfil his promise to free all the political prisoners by general amnesty, to accelerate the peace negotiations and forge the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms and appoint to his Cabinet on their own individual merits patriotic and progressive competent people who were not direct representatives of the CPP.

In January 2017, Duterte launched his own Oplan Kapayapaan to carry on the all-out war against the revolutionary movement. In August 2016 he released only 19 political prisoners on bail and then in July 2017 threatened them with rearrest after he failed to obtain from the NDFP a prolonged indefinite ceasefire without a substantive basis for the benefit of the people. In fact, he had rejected the offer of the NDFP to agree on a program of genuine land reform and national industrialization as the basis for economic development and just peace, to be realized self-reliantly and to be assured of funding from the development of the oil and gas resources in the West Philippine Sea with foreign technology provided by neither the US nor China.

But the narrow-minded and short-sighted Duterte was obviously more interested in making money for himself and his cronies by seeking onerous loans from China for overpriced infrastructure building contracts and other forms of tied aid and by making himself the supreme crime lord of the Philippines in collaboration with Chinese criminal triad syndicates engaged in the smuggling of drugs, rice and other goods. In trying to please China, he went so far as to sell out to this upstart imperialist power the sovereign rights of the Philippines in its exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea, laid aside the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favor of the Philippines and allowed China to build and militarize seven artificial islands. The traitor practically allowed China to build seven military bases within the sovereign ambit of the Philippines.

Trying to serve two imperialist masters, Duterte promised to Trump on November 10, 2017 that he would terminate the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, designate the CPP and NPA as "terrorists", wipe out the revolutionary movement and deliver to US corporations unlimited



ownership of Philippine land, natural resources, public utilities and businesses—all these in exchange for US military assistance under the Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines and US support for his scheme of fascist dictatorship through charter change under the pretext of shifting to federal and parliamentary form of government.

Duterte terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations on November 23, 2017 and designated the CPP and NPA as “terrorist” organizations on December 5, 2017. But under the Human Security Act of 2007, the proscription of the CPP and NPA must go through a judicial process. At first, more than 600 alleged CPP officers and members were listed as respondents but these were reduced eventually to only two after the spurious list was challenged by a barrage of rightful denials and condemnation from many quarters, including UN special rapporteurs and international human rights agencies. But the case is now overtaken by the repeal of the Human Security Act of 2007. At any rate, there has been no let-up in the Duterte regime’s all-out war against the revolutionary forces and the people.

Everyday the military, police and other propaganda mills of the Duterte regime churn out reports which are then echoed verbatim by compliant mass media and the corporate mass media, that CPP cadres and members and NPA commanders and fighters are either being killed or surrendering in numbers already exceeding by several times the estimated full strength of the CPP and NPA. One would logically expect that there is no more need for the Anti-Terrorist Act if the regime believes its own propaganda.

But Duterte has publicly boasted that, because he says so, the Anti-Terrorism Act is directed mainly against the CPP and the NPA, which he labels as “communist terrorists”. In response to Duterte, former Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio has answered that the CPP and NPA can neither be declared terrorists under the new Anti-Terror Act (ATA) nor proscribed by judicial process under the now repealed Human Security Act.

Carpio pointed out that under the ATA, “rebels are not terrorists and cannot be declared as terrorists.” He further pointed out that rebellion is not considered a “predicate crime” by the ATA. This is different from the Human Security Act which states that rebellion, if qualified, is absorbed under terrorism. The ATA has replaced the HSA.

Carpio pointed out that the intent of rebellion “is to remove any territory or military force of the Philippines from allegiance to the Government or its laws” and is different from the ATA’s definition of terrorism. “CPP-NPA rebels, whose intent is clearly rebellion, are not terrorists under the ATA, and consequently they, individually or as a group, cannot be proscribed as terrorists under the ATA,” he said further.

Regardless of the legal question whether the CPP and NPA can be held

liable for “terrorism” under ATA, the tyrant Duterte and his armed minions will continue to vilify the CPP and NPA as “terrorists” and will continue to use and escalate all forms of violence and deception in order to attack them and try vainly to wipe them out. It is absolutely necessary for the Duterte regime to vilify and attack the CPP and NPA as “terrorists” in order to carry out state terrorism and pursue his scheme of fascist dictatorship.

Nevertheless, regardless of the overweening arrogance and fascist ambitions of the tyrant and traitor Duterte, he is like Marcos unwittingly generating the most favorable conditions for the growth in strength and accelerated advance of the revolutionary movement by escalating and sharpening the conditions of oppression and exploitation and driving the people to wage armed resistance. The people abhor the many high crimes that have characterized the Duterte regime as a tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal, plundering and swindling monstrosity. Increasingly, the people now see through behind the bluff and bluster a desperate and bungling coward.

Contrary to the calculations of the Duterte regime, the ATA has failed to intimidate the people even in the urban areas. They are intensifying all legal forms of resistance along the line of the broad united front of relying mainly on the toiling masses, winning over the middle social strata and emboldening the anti-fascist conservative forces to fight, isolate and oust the Duterte clique of oligarchs. If this broad united front succeeds in raising gigantic mass actions, this will encourage the patriotic and democratic-minded officers and even the pro-US but anti-China military officers to withdraw support from Duterte and allow a constitutional successor to replace him.

The armed revolutionary movement is not yet in a position to seize political power from the reactionaries in Metro Manila and other cities in the Philippines. But it can contribute to the weakening and isolation of the Duterte regime as what happened when the Marcos fascist dictatorship was overthrown in 1986. The Duterte regime's crimes and the resistance of the people have served to generate favorable conditions for strengthening the forces of the people's democratic revolution. The longer the Duterte reign of greed and terror persists, the more favorable are the conditions for the development of the people's revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation.

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# **Importance of the National Democratic Revolution in Relation to the Global Anti-Imperialist Movement <sup>16</sup>**

## **Presentation for Webinar #2 in Philippine Series, ILPS Asia Pacific**

September 11, 2020

Dear Webinar Participants,

First of all, I thank ILPS Asia Pacific for inviting me to speak on the importance of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines in the global anti-imperialist movement and in the context of the raging contradictions among the imperialists, especially the US and China.

In my presentation, I wish to present first the context of the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the raging conflicts among the imperialist powers, especially the US and China. Then I shall present the historical and current importance of the national democratic revolution not only to the Filipino people but to all the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, with the aggravation by COVID-19 and by the sharpening conflicts between the US and China, there is an urgent need for all peoples of the world to understand the situation in our respective countries, in the Asia-Pacific region and entire world. In this regard, let us learn from each other and help each other in waging anti-imperialist and democratic struggles.

### ***I. Context of Raging US-China Conflicts Amidst the Rapidly Worsening Crisis of the World Capitalist System***

After enjoying three decades of prosperity from 1945 to 1975, the US began to be afflicted by stagflation. This was due to the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system because of the reconstruction and revival of the competitive economies of capitalist countries, especially Germany and Japan, which had suffered devastation from World War II.

The US adopted the neoliberal economic policy in 1979 in a futile attempt to overcome the crisis of overproduction at the expense of the working class and the peoples of the world. The logic of the policy is to maximize by all means the amount of capital in the hands of the

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<sup>16</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

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monopoly bourgeoisie so that it can re-invest this to grow the economy and supposedly create more jobs. The neoliberal policy would actually aggravate the crisis of overproduction, bringing about more frequent and ever worse cycles of boom and bust.

Maximizing capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie has been done through tax cuts, wage freeze, limits on job tenure, cutbacks on social benefits and services, privatization of public assets, deregulation of restraints on the abuse of labor, women, children and the environment, liberalization of investment and trade and denationalization of underdeveloped and dependent economies. The imperialist powers used their multilateral agencies to make multilateral arrangements to harmonize their economic and trade relations and shift the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries.

Emerging from its costly wars of aggression in Indochina, the US hoped to make profits from military sales to the oil producing countries and expand production with the use of petrodollars deposited in Western banks. At the same time, the US succeeded in engaging the Soviet Union in an arms race in order to undermine and debilitate its economy while the Soviet social imperialists were making big mistakes in their foreign adventures, especially in Afghanistan.

The revisionist betrayal of socialism and capitalist restoration ran ahead in the Soviet Union but subsequently the Chinese revisionists headed by Deng Xiaoping were able to defeat the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in 1976 with a counterrevolutionary coup after the death of Mao Zedong.

The US had started rapprochement with China in 1972 in order to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet dispute but from 1978 onward the US saw its far greater opportunity to cultivate China as a capitalist partner upon the declaration of the GPCR as a complete catastrophe and upon the adoption of the Dengist policy of capitalist reforms and opening up for integration into the world capitalist system.

In the entire 1980s, the US outsourced consumer manufacturing to China's sweatshops. And after the 1989 uprisings in Tiananmen and elsewhere in China, the US acceded to the pleas of China's Dengist leaders to bring in more investments and technology to China. In the 1990s, China became the main US partner in the promotion of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization and more so after China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001.

The US was so happy and jubilant over the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and over the partnership with China that it overlooked the potential of two more imperialist powers, China and Russia, joining the world capitalist system, to aggravate the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system. As sole superpower in hubris in a supposedly



unipolar world, the US could not see clearly the possible aggravation of the crisis of overproduction and its continued strategic decline.

With the single message that socialism was dead and so was anti-imperialism, the US carried out an ideological and political offensive in combination with the neoliberal economic offensive and the military offensives in the Middle East and other regions where in combination with Zionist Israel they acted to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet Union. The heavy costs of military expenditures and the aggravated crisis of overproduction accelerated the strategic decline of the US and caused the loss of its sole superpower status in a multilateral world.

In the years after the 2008 financial crisis, which resulted in an unprecedented global recession, the US strategic planners noticed the economic and military rise of China as a potential US economic and political rival. At the same time, it was becoming starkly clear that the US was on an accelerated decline because of the outsourcing of manufacturing, the financialization of the US economy, the leap in public debt and the extreme costs of overseas military bases and the endless of wars of aggression mainly in Central Asia, Middle East and Africa.

Under the Obama presidency, the US took notice that it had not paid enough attention to the rise of China in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, it declared a strategic pivot to East Asia in order to contain China in 2011 and pushed the Trans Pacific Partnership Arrangement without China in 2015. Under the Trump presidency, the US strategic planners issued the National Security Strategy in 2017 to target China as the US chief economic competitor and chief political rival. Subsequently Trump began in 2018 to denounce China as taking advantage of a two-tiered economy (state and private capitalism), using unfair economic, trade and financial practices and stealing technology from US companies and research laboratories.

Since then, there has been a sharpening of US-China contradictions over economic, trade, technology and security issues. The US wants to cut down China's export surpluses in trade with the US and weaken the Chinese economy and deprive it of the surplus capital to invest globally and dominate the countries covered by the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific maritime route through which some 60 percent of world trade passes.

The US expects to benefit from a new Cold War, this time with China. But it has huge problems in decoupling from China and recovering the concessions and advantages it had given away. And China has the size and the experience in using state planning to counter the US and to hold its ground. But it is sitting on a mountain of bad debts and has been dependent on the trade surplus with the US for a long time. It is more likely that the two imperialist powers would weaken each other, while surely aggravating further the crisis of overproduction and the danger of

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more wars due to increasing confrontations in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere. At any rate, it is important to consider the consequences of the US-China conflicts to the Philippines and other countries of the world.

The US used to claim that with China abandoning the socialist cause and proletarian internationalism and withdrawing support from the revolutionary movements the anti-imperialist, democratic and socialist struggles of the people would wither away. They have not withered away but have resurged at every worsening of the global capitalist crisis. We can learn one major thing from developments since the defeat of the GPCR in 1976 that the increase in number of rival imperialist powers has aggravated the crisis of overproduction and has generated favorable conditions for anti-imperialist struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

### ***II. Importance of the National Democratic Revolution in the Philippines and Relevance to the Global Anti-imperialist Movement***

Now let us focus on the historic and current importance of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines. In the whole of Asia, the Filipino people led by the Katipunan were pioneers in waging the national democratic revolution of the bourgeois liberal type in 1896 and in winning national independence against Spanish colonialism in 1898. We achieved the great historic feat of defeating one Western colonial power impelled by mercantile capitalism but came another Western power to colonize us on the impulse of monopoly capitalism or imperialism.

We valiantly resisted the war of aggression launched by US imperialism, which engaged in the mass murder of at least 250,000 Filipinos to consolidate its positions in Manila and other major cities by 1902 and proceeded to kill more people up to 1.5 million by 1913. It was through bloody conquest that the US was able to establish a colonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines.

Since 1946, when the US granted nominal independence, the Philippines has become its semicolony run by the political representatives of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords at the national and lower levels of a puppet government, still under the economic, political, military and cultural dominance of US imperialism.

In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, the national democratic revolution in the Philippines has taken a new character, with the proletariat rather than the liberal bourgeoisie taking the lead in the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses of the people against foreign and feudal domination. It seeks the national and social liberation of the people from imperialism and the local exploiting classes and looks

forwards to a socialist future.

The immediate demands of the national democratic revolution include the following: full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture; and international solidarity with all peoples for peace and development.

The most powerful forces of the Filipino people in today's national democratic revolution are the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the millions of people in the revolutionary mass organizations of workers, peasants, indigenous communities, women, youth, professionals and other social sectors (which are in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines) and the greater millions of people under the local organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government now challenging the reactionary government of big compradors and landlords.

The CPP is guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and adheres to the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. From a few scores of members in 1968, it now has tens of thousands of members who are spread nationwide and are deeply rooted among the oppressed and exploited masses of workers and peasants.

The CPP has created and led the New People's Army (NPA), which has thousands of Red fighters in more than 110 guerrilla fronts in 73 out of 81 Philippine provinces. The people's army is augmented by tens of thousands of people's militia members and hundreds of thousands of people in self-defense units of the revolutionary mass organizations, which are different from the legal democratic forces now being red-tagged by the state terrorists and their special agents, like the clerico-fascists and Trotskyites.

The people's army is invincible because it is the weapon of the Filipino people in their just struggle for full national independence, democracy and social justice against the extremely oppressive and exploitative ruling system. Thus, all the strategic operational plans of the US and its puppets have failed to destroy the NPA and the revolutionary mass movement from the time of Marcos to Duterte or from one tyrant to another.

The revolutionary perseverance, resilience and achievements of the Filipino proletariat and people in the national democratic revolution of the new type can be evaluated not only in terms of Philippine history and current circumstances but also in terms of how this revolution has withstood the revisionist betrayal of socialism and restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and China and the consequent huge ideological, political and economic offensives of the US and all its imperialist and reactionary allies.

With the strategic economic and political partnership of the US and

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China breaking up, the current Duterte puppet regime tries to serve two conflicting imperialist masters for its selfish benefit. The regime still keeps the treaties, agreements and arrangements that make the US the No. 1 imperialist power dominating the Philippines as its semicolony. The US has condoned the regime's gross and systematic violations of human rights because of its pledge to use all foul means to destroy the armed revolutionary movement of the people and to cause charter change for granting to US corporations unlimited ownership of land, natural resources, public utilities and all types of businesses in the Philippines.

At the same time, the regime receives bribes in connection with high interest loans for overpriced infrastructure projects to be undertaken by Chinese contractors as well as from Chinese criminal syndicates smuggling illegal drugs and other contraband and operating casinos in the Philippines. In exchange, the regime has laid aside the 2016 final judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea which uphold the sovereign and maritime rights of the Filipino people over the West Philippine Sea. It abets China in building and militarizing artificial islands in the Philippine exclusive economic zone and in illegally claiming the marine and mineral resources of the Filipino people.

An absurd situation has arisen in the camps of the reactionary armed forces. The US maintains its military personnel, stockpiles and facilities in these camps under certain military agreements with the reactionary government. At the same time, the regime has allowed China Telcom-DITO to erect cell towers within the same camps. China has also delivered stockpiles of firearms and explosives, which most soldiers in the pro-US military do not like to use and which are being sold to private security agencies and gun runners by corrupt military officers.

It is an interesting question how long and how far can the Duterte regime serve two conflicting imperialist masters without getting squeezed and squashed. The US still considers the Philippines as its reliable base and unsinkable aircraft carrier. But China has now spy towers eavesdropping on US military facilities and it has seven island military bases in the Philippine exclusive economic zone. The US assures the Philippines and other littoral states of Southeast Asia of protection from China's illegal claim of owning 90 percent of the South China Sea. But in this regard Duterte joins China against the ASEAN colleagues of the Philippines.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system now worsens, the national democratic revolution in the Philippines stands out as one of the major torch bearers of the global anti-imperialist movement and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. It is a source of light and lessons for all peoples of the world in developing the various forms of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles, especially revolutionary struggle. Thus, US

imperialism has licensed the Duterte regime to use every foul means to suppress it.

Long before the spread of COVID-19 spread, the crisis of the world capitalist system has worsened to the point of generating militant anti-imperialist and democratic mass actions of unprecedented magnitude and scale in so many countries, including the industrial capitalist and underdeveloped ones. The people have been agitated by the devastation wrought by the neoliberal policy on their lives, the austerity measures at their expense, the state terrorism and wars of aggression unleashed by the imperialist powers.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions being undertaken, the people have found ways of waging mass resistance through street actions and the use of the electronic media. In many instances, because of the extreme policies and actions taken by imperialist and reactionary governments, the people have made responses similar to those made by them in pre-pandemic times.

The Filipino people find powerful inspiration and abundant support for their national democratic revolution in the upsurges of anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles abroad and they are doing their best to carry out their own mass struggles not only on Philippine issues but also on issues of concern to other peoples. They have engaged in global days of action as well as forums of various kinds and scales on issues of common concern against imperialism and all reaction.

While the imperialists and the reactionaries persist, they are capable of all sorts of violence and deception. Thus, aside from brazenly using the coercive apparatuses of the state to suppress the people, they launch ultra-reactionary currents and movements in order to cover up the root causes of the basic ills of society and try to mislead some sections of the people against the people. Such currents and movements are those of fascism, racism, chauvinism, communalism, gender discrimination and Islamophobia. These have produced some effect in the election of the despotic type of leader through the electoral system controlled by the exploitative ruling class.

The global anti-imperialist movement must always be alert to the full range of barbarities that the imperialist powers and their puppets commit in the violation of the basic national and democratic rights and fundamental freedoms of the people and in the suppression of the demands, complaints and protests of the people. The crimes against the people range in kind from brutal frontal attacks of state terrorism or aggression to tactics of turning people against each other through methods of deception.

In continuing the national democratic revolution against tremendous odds, including the most brutal forms of suppression, the Filipino people demonstrate their determination, courage and capabilities to fight the

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imperialists and reactionaries. At the same time, they find common cause with the peoples of the world and seek international solidarity and support from them against imperialism and all reaction.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system is rapidly worsening, there is an urgent need for the people of the world to fight the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation and to stop the plunder and degradation of the environment by monopoly capitalism. The revolutionary strength of the people is also needed to counter and stop the danger of direct world war among the imperialist powers and the attendant danger of a nuclear war of annihilation. The imperialist powers can be defeated and disarmed by the people in their homelands if their revolutionary mass movement is strong enough to confront and overcome them.



## **Dissecting the Marcos and Duterte Regimes**

### **Webinar by the Youth Movement Against Tyranny-Metro Manila<sup>17</sup>**

**September 20, 2020**

Dear Fellow Activists,

Let me congratulate the Youth Movement Against Tyranny-Metro Manila for having arisen as an alliance of student councils, student publications, and youth formations in Metro Manila that aim to unite all freedom-loving Filipinos to fight tyranny and fascism, exemplified by the Marcos fascist dictatorship and now recurrent under the Duterte tyrannical regime.

Thank you for having invited me to be one of the speakers for the event, “Martial Law Noon at Ngayon: Dissecting the Marcos and Duterte Regimes”. I appreciate Paaralang Joma Sison, YMAT Metro Manila, and UPM USC for spearheading this event, which is a major part of Kontra Agos: Sa Paglaban at Paglaya, the week-long commemoration of the 48th anniversary of the Marcos Martial Law declaration.

This is a time to remember the extreme suffering of the Filipino people under the Marcos fascist dictatorship and the heroic resistance of the people and their patriotic and democratic forces aboveground as well as the armed revolutionary movement in the underground and in the guerrilla fronts in the countryside. We must be inspired by the people’s resistance that ultimately overthrew the Marcos fascist dictatorship. We can be highly confident that the Duterte scheme of fascist dictatorship will have a short life span.

Our commemoration is highly significant and purposive because today the people are again being confronted and subjected to an undeclared but real fascist dictatorship under Duterte. The open rule of terror has been a creeping reality in the Philippines since Duterte became the president in 2016 and has become full-blown, even without the formal declaration of martial law, since the enactment of Duterte’s law of state terrorism.

We must understand why the fascist dictatorship occurred in the time of Marcos and is now recurrent in the time of Duterte. I propose to discuss the common ground of counterrevolution and revolution in the Philippines, the essential similarities and circumstantial differences between the fascist dictatorship of Marcos and Duterte and the prospects of the people’s resistance.

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<sup>17</sup>Issued as Chairperson Emeritus International League of Peoples’ Struggle.

***The Common Ground for Counterrevolution and Revolution***

The semicolonial and semifeudal society is the common ground for counterrevolution and revolution in the Philippines. It is a society in chronic crisis because the broad masses of the people are subjected to extreme forms of oppression and exploitation by the foreign monopoly capitalism of the US and its imperialist allies as well as by the local exploiting classes of the comprador big bourgeois, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

These oppressors and exploiters are collectively responsible for keeping the Philippines underdeveloped and impoverished and for profiting most from an economy that is a cheap source of mineral ores, export crops and labor in exchange for manufactures from abroad in the form of some depreciable capital goods and consumer goods. The chronic trade deficits as well as budgetary deficits keep the Philippines always in need of local and foreign loans.

In their rise to power, the political representatives of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class, acquire the distinctive character of being bureaucrat capitalists by having the opportunity to use their public offices for personal enrichment through corrupt practices. These bureaucrat capitalists may priorly belong to big comprador and landlord classes or they acquire the character of these classes if they are bright boys and girls from the middle class.

The chronic economic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system tends to generate political crisis as it intensifies the contradictions among political parties or groups representing factions of the exploiting classes. Under conditions of worsening economic and political crisis, the president or chief bureaucrat capitalist can be tempted to take advantage of the crisis and use executive powers, especially martial law powers, in order to take over the entirety of the reactionary government and use this in a bid to break into the topmost level of the comprador big bourgeoisie.

You must recall that Marcos took advantage of the chronic economic and political crisis by orating that the social volcano was about to erupt in the country, that extraordinary measures would have to be adopted and that he would be the savior to make the Philippines great again. When he declared martial law on September 21, 1972, he said that he was saving the republic and building a new society and demanded that the people submit themselves to the discipline of his fascist dictatorship. He invoked anti-communism and exaggerated the number of the Red fighters of the New People's Army to rationalize his fascist rule.

What was the real objective of Marcos in becoming a fascist dictator? It was to rob the people of USD 10 to 15 billion and stash this away in various banks and investment houses abroad, to get bribes from overpriced infrastructure projects and onerous foreign loans guaranteed by the



Philippine state, to take over well-established big compradors firms like San Miguel Brewery Corporation, PLDT, Meralco and other corporations, to close down ABS-CBN and put up his own Kanlaon Broadcasting Network and to buy expensive properties abroad.

What did Marcos do to serve notice that he can do anything to anyone who opposed his despotism and plunder of the country's national patrimony and social wealth? He caused the arrest and detention of at least 70,000 people and the torture of at least 35,000. Nearly 10,000 victims of human rights violations won their case against Marcos in the US after his overthrow. At least 3,257 activists, critics and political opponents were documented as disappeared, tortured and murdered.

Millions of people, especially workers and poor peasants, indigenous people and Moro people, were forced out of their land and homes. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, three million people were displaced in Mindanao, especially among the Moro people. All over the country, properties and businesses were confiscated to enrich the Marcos family, his business cronies, his political and military agents.

Duterte brazenly praises and emulates Marcos as his hero and idol. He is cruder than Marcos in openly admitting the mass murder of people and boasting of presidential protection and immunity for his armed minions who carry out the grave and systematic human rights violations. Like Marcos, his real objective in ruling with mailed fists is also to enrich himself from overpriced infrastructure projects and onerous loans., from other kinds of programs and projects that channel public funds to himself and his cronies and even from the smuggling of drugs and other contraband and casino operations of Chinese criminal syndicates.

While such political monsters of the ruling system as Marcos and Duterte can take advantage of the chronic crisis of the ruling system and abuse their presidential powers to engage in graft and corruption and wage counterrevolution, the same chronic crisis is aggravated by their crimes of plunder and mass murder and their escalation of the conditions of oppression and exploitation and drives the broad masses of the people to wage various forms of resistance.

The highest form of resistance, the people's war along the general line of people's democratic revolution, has grown in strength and advanced precisely because of the tyranny and fascism of rulers like Marcos and Duterte. The recurrence of the open rule of terror, despite thirty years of pseudo-democratic regimes from Aquino the mother to Aquino the son, shows that the chronic crisis has kept on worsening and that the ruling class cannot rule in a way to deceive the people effectively. The ruling system is completely rotten and the people's revolutionary struggle against one regime after another result in the accumulation of the people's strength against the entire ruling system.

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The same semicolonial and semifeudal conditions and chronic crisis that breed despotic regimes, such as those of Marcos and Duterte, also provide the objective conditions for the development of the subjective forces of the revolution. The proletariat as class leader of the Philippine revolution can find the peasantry in the countryside as its most numerous and most reliable ally. In the countryside and among the peasants, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the revolutionary mass organizations and the people's democratic government have grown from small and weak to big and strong nationwide.

### ***Comparison of Marcos and Duterte as Traitors and Tyrants***

Before he became president, Marcos hired so-called nationalist speech writers like Blas Ople and the like, spread the word that he was supportive of the Supreme Court decisions restricting the privileges of foreign investors and actually spoke against the sending of Filipino troops to Vietnam to join the US war of aggression against the Vietnamese people. But secretly he was soliciting campaign funds from the US corporations and assuring them of charter change for their benefit.

As soon as he became president, he did not make any significant move to change the semicolonial relationship of the Philippines with US imperialism, except to plead for the reduction of the 99-year lease of military bases under US Military Bases Agreement to 25 years. Early on in 1965 the Kabataang Makabayan and other patriotic and democratic forces launched demonstrations to demand the abrogation of all treaties, agreements and arrangements binding the Philippines as a semicolony to the US economically, politically, culturally and militarily.

Contrary to his pre-election position against sending the Philcag to Vietnam, he agreed with US President Johnson to send the Filipino troops to Vietnam. And the puppet Marcos was happy that Johnson called him his right-hand man in Asia. When Johnson held his Manila Summit to round up support from his Asian puppets for the US war of aggression in Vietnam, Marcos used the police and military to arrest leaders of Kabataang Makabayan on October 23, 1966 (including myself as the KM chairman) and brutally disperse the demonstration of thousands of students at the Manila Hotel on October 24, 1966.

The brutal attack became the stimulus for the launching of the October 24th Movement to arouse, organize and mobilize the student youth for social investigation and integration with the youth and masses in factory sites, urban poor communities and peasant communities in the Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog regions. The protest mass actions and the campaigns of integration with the urban and rural poor raised the membership of Kabataang Makabayan from a few scores at its founding

in 1964 to a few thousands in its first two years of existence.

Prior to his election as president, Duterte took the same demagogic path of Marcos, pretending to be a sympathizer and ally of the patriotic and democratic forces and even of the revolutionary movement even as he became increasingly notorious for engaging in the extrajudicial killing of suspected common criminals and drug users and pushers. He stood out in honoring the late Ka Parago, facilitating the release of prisoners of war captured by the NPA and promising to amnesty and release all political prisoners and to engage in serious peace negotiations with the NDFP.

Soon after becoming president, Duterte began his all-out war against the revolutionary movement under the pretext of letting his military continue Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan. It soon became clear that he was reneging on his promise to amnesty and release all political prisoners and that his objective in peace negotiations was merely to seek the capitulation of the revolutionary forces through a protracted ceasefire agreement. Even then, it was necessary for all patriotic and democratic forces, the peace advocates of various types and the NDFP to make just demands and propagate these, test Duterte and let him unfold his own character.

Within the period of June 2016 to June 2017, it became absolutely clear to the public that the Duterte regime was traitorous in trying to serve two imperialist masters, the US and China, for his personal gain; tyrannical and genocidal with a penchant for the mass murder of poor people and his opponents; plundering the public coffers and the economy in league with the big plunderers of previous regimes who had supported his electoral campaign; and swindling for personal and dynastic benefit. The peace negotiations could not go beyond the fourth round in April 2017. Then in May 2017 Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao not only against the jihadist groups in Mindanao but also against the CPP and NPA in the larger parts of Mindanao.

It has become absolutely clear that Duterte has been like Marcos, obsessed with gaining absolute power through brute force in order to enrich himself and his family. His mass murder of 30,000 people who have been arbitrarily listed as drug users and drug peddlers has been for the purpose of mass intimidation, corrupting the police with rewards and giving the message to everyone that he is capable of killing anyone opposed to his rule.

In escalating his military campaign of suppression against the people and the revolutionary movement, Duterte is applying the same methods that he applied in Oplan Tokhang. He turns into his criminal accomplices his loyal military officers by ordering them to murder suspected revolutionaries and feeding them money for every suspect killed as well as for fake surrenders and imaginary community development projects.

But Duterte cannot stay in power as a fascist dictator for as long as

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Marcos did, who totalled 14 years of fascist dictatorship. Duterte came to the presidency much older than Marcos and sickly with multiple serious ailments. He has bankrupted his own government and the entire Philippine economy through unbridled corruption and extreme overspending for the military and police, especially during the last six months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He is liable to be squeezed out or squashed by trying to serve two conflicting imperialist powers, the US and China. The bureaucrats and military officers surrounding Duterte know that he cannot stay long in power and they are now engaged in an unprecedented plunder of public funds and the economy. The majority of military officers and personnel are disgusted with Duterte as a puppet of China. They frown at the corruption of the retired and active military officers close to Duterte and are sick and tired of military operations that are futile against the NPA but extremely abusive of the people.

The movement against tyranny or the broad united front against tyranny which took shape in the second half of 2017 has gained further strength and the capability of carrying out large protest mass actions. And it is appreciative of the readiness of the vice president to succeed the president upon his incapacitation or resignation. The colossal crimes of the Duterte regime are bound to cause its ignominious downfall if it uses fascist dictatorship to rule the people beyond 2022.

Having signed into law his license for unlimited state terrorism, Duterte is poised to make a series of moves to arrest and kill en masse his critics and opponents and push the ratification of a fascist constitution that pretends to shift the country to federalism and parliamentarism. Remember that Marcos made his decisive moves for formally declaring martial law and imposing fascist dictatorship on the people in 1972, the year before his second four-year term ended in 1973. So be ready for probable surprise moves that Duterte will be making within the next year or so.

### ***Prospects of the People's Resistance Against the Duterte Fascist Regime***

The legal democratic forces as well as the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people are far stronger and are more experienced and tested than they were when Marcos planned and carried out his scheme of fascist dictatorship from 1969 to 1972. For Duterte to impose a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino within the next year or so is practically lifting a big rock only to let it fall on his feet.

It is instructive to review the years of 1969 to 1972. As early as 1969 to 1970, when the legal democratic forces were small and the revolutionary forces were even far smaller, it became clear that Marcos

was determined to impose a fascist dictatorship on the people because of his pronouncements about the social volcano on the brink of eruption and his role as savior and also because of the off-the-record boasting of the propagandists and military loyalists of Marcos that he was serious with his plan to save the republic and build a new society.

What did the legal democratic forces do? They hastened their work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people. Militant mass actions arose not only in Metro Manila but also in various parts of the country. The First Quarter Storm of 1970 erupted and further mass actions occurred up to 1972. At the same time, the most advanced mass activists were already mentally prepared to go underground and have their own firearms in case of crackdown.

Thus, when the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus occurred in 1971, hundreds of mass activists went underground and thousands were prepared to do likewise if martial law would be declared. When martial law was declared on September 21, 1972, thousands of mass activists went underground. By 1974, they were deployed nationwide to strengthen the revolutionary forces in the countryside.

Parallel to the readiness of the legal democratic forces to go underground in case of crackdown, without giving up the legal and defensive political struggle in the urban areas, the revolutionary forces of the people carried out in earnest their ideological, political and organizational work in the countryside. The Communist Party of the Philippines had the foresight to reestablish itself on December 26, 1968 under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and proceeded to found the New People's Army on March 29, 1969.

The CPP and all other revolutionary forces pursued the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. The experienced guerrilla fighters from the old revolutionary movement were combined with the mass activists from the urban areas, who came from the ranks of trade unionists and educated youth. They learned to integrate the revolutionary armed struggle, land reform and mass-base building. They further built and strengthened the CPP, NPA, the revolutionary mass organizations, the alliances and the local organs political power that constitute the people's democratic government.

From one regime to another, these revolutionary forces have overcome all counterrevolutionary campaigns of suppression and have grown in strength through revolutionary struggle. The CPP has now tens of thousands of members. The NPA has thousands of Red fighters plus tens of thousands of members in the people's militia and hundreds of thousands in self-defense units of the revolutionary mass organizations. The members of the revolutionary mass organizations are in the millions. And so many more people are governed by the local organs of political

power.

According to revolutionary strategists, the nationwide base of the revolutionary forces in 110 guerrilla fronts in 73 out of the 81 Philippine provinces is an ample launching base for tactical offensives for destroying and disintegrating the reactionary military, police and paramilitary forces and accumulating the armed strength to knock out the concentrations of armed power of the state in areas close to or inside the major cities in the future strategic offensive against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The NPA is steadily engaged in bringing about the maturation of the strategic defensive from the middle phase to the advanced phase with the rapid multiplication of squads and platoons as combat units that can be easily combined as companies upon need. The stage of strategic stalemate will be characterised by frequent company-size and battalion-size operations and will be much shorter in time than the stage of the strategic defensive. The strategic offensive will be facilitated by the ever-worsening crisis of both domestic ruling system and the world capitalist system. Such crisis is discernible even now.

According to Ang Bayan, the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines has only 140 maneuver battalions, of which, 35 are deployed in Luzon; 19 in the Visayas; and 83 in Mindanao (19 battalions in Moro areas, and 64 in NPA areas). Thus, close to 85% or 118 battalions are deployed against the NPA. Close to 55% of AFP units deployed against the NPA are in Mindanao, mainly in the eastern regions. Combined AFP and PNP troop deployment are highest in Southern Mindanao, followed by Southern Tagalog, Eastern Visayas, North Central Mindanao, Far South Mindanao and Negros.

The balance of strength between the revolutionary side and the enemy side is now far more favorable to the revolutionary side than during the time of Marcos dictatorship. The enemy side is still militarily superior but is on the losing side because it fights for US imperialism and the local exploiting classes, eats up a lot of public money and commits atrocities against the people. Even if it is still superior to the NPA in purely military terms, it is blind and deaf in its search and destroy operations because it lacks the support of the people and it is extremely vulnerable to the strategy and tactics of guerrilla warfare.

Based on the publications of the CPP, NPA and NDFP that I have read, the armed revolutionary movement of the people is determined and expects to inflict more casualties on the enemy side and seize more arms from it. The morale of the enemy side is running low because it is fighting for US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and for a regime that is notorious for treason, tyranny, mass murder plunder and swindling and is getting fatigued by too many fruitless operations and being exposed to the

tactical offensives of the NPA.

It is a matter of historical truth that before a certain exploitative ruling system is overthrown, it does its worst in armed counterrevolution because it does not volunteer to surrender its power and wealth to the oppressed and exploited toiling masses of workers and peasants. But it is precisely because of extreme brutality and greed that the ruling system becomes more rotten and compels the people to wage armed revolution until they win total victory.

Long live the Youth Movement Against Tyranny-Metro Manila!  
Oust the traitor, tyrant, butcher, plunderer and swindler Duterte!  
Advance the national democratic movement!  
Long live the Filipino people!

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## **Duterte Avoids Vulgarities in Speech Before the UN General Assembly but Dishes Out Lies and Slander against Filipinos<sup>18</sup>**

September 24, 2020

Duterte kept to his ghost-written speech and was able to spare the UN General Assembly from his usual vulgarities before Philippine audiences. But he could not avoid dishing a number of lies and slanderous remarks against his own compatriots who are victims of his maladministration and human right violations.

He sounded most impressive by saying that his own passing regime could not undo the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines in accordance with the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea, pertaining to the West Philippine Sea. Obviously, he bent to the resounding declarations of the US and other powerful governments that China should not insist on its baseless claim of ownership over more than 90 per cent of the South China Sea.

But Duterte lied in failing to mention that in the last four years of his rule he had laid aside the aforesaid 2016 judgment and the UNCLOS and allowed China to violate the sovereign rights of the Philippines and to build seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of his country in his expectation of bribes from high-interest loans for overpriced infrastructure projects undertaken by Chinese contractors.

Another big lie that Duterte dished out was his claim that his regime had always respected human rights and that he welcomed UN cooperation in this regard. He was in fact countering the demands and efforts of UN human rights agencies and the European Union for the investigation of the human rights situation in the Philippines. Worst of all, he used his speech to accuse the victims of human rights violations and their human rights defenders of weaponizing human rights against his blood-soaked tyrannical regime.

He made a big spiel for his law of state terrorism as a necessary weapon and did not mention the real purpose of imposing a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. He did not explain that the Marawi siege was the product of a deal between himself and the Maute brothers (according to their father) to lay the ground for martial law in Mindanao. Also, he did not bother to reconcile the aforesaid law with his propaganda that the people's

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<sup>18</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

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army had been decimated several times over its estimated size.

To sugarcoat his crimes, Duterte referred to the Covid-19 pandemic and clamored that the vaccine should be considered a public good to be made available to all countries. But he expressed no remorse for letting the pandemic spread in the Philippines by allowing more than 500,000 tourists from China to enter the Philippines from January to March and then failing to adopt the necessary health measures to protect the people in the lockdowns since March.

The world knows that he has taken advantage of the lockdowns to escalate the repressive measures against the people with the conspicuous use of the military, police and paramilitary, facilitate extrajudicial killings, deprive the people of the promised economic assistance and medical services, enact the law of state terrorism, steal hundreds of billions of pesos of public money under the cover of emergency powers and sink the Philippine further in foreign debt.

In his UNGA speech, Duterte also paid lip service to the desirability of peace. But the world knows that he has allowed China to build seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in violation of the 1987 Constitution and has terminated the peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines since 2017. He further paid lip service to minding the climate crisis. But the world knows that he allows the foreign monopoly corporations to plunder and destroy the Philippine environment at the expense of the Filipino people, especially the indigenous communities and poor peasants.

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## **Semifeudalism in the Philippines**

**The semifeudal mode of production in the Philippines in the light of international and national developments in the past three decades**

**Co-sponsored by the Congress of Teachers and Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND) and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)**

**October 3, 2020**

Dear Fellow Educators, Peasant Activists and All Webinar Participants, Warmest greetings of solidarity to all of you! Thank you for inviting me to speak in this webinar on the semifeudal mode of production in the Philippines in the light of national and international developments. I appreciate most highly the Congress of Teachers and Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND) and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (Philippine Peasant Movement) for co-sponsoring this webinar and inviting me as speaker.

It is timely and fitting to discuss the subject of semifeudalism and focus on the major role of the peasant masses and agriculture in the Philippine economy and society within the Peasant Month. The peasant masses are still the most numerous class in the Philippines and they work on the country's principal means of production, the more than 13.5 million hectares of agricultural land. They are a decisive factor in the economic development and fundamental social transformation of the Philippines. The main democratic content of the new democratic revolution is the solution of the land problem, the satisfaction of the peasant hunger for land.

I propose to describe the semifeudal mode of production in the Philippines, the national and international factors that have caused this basic character of the Philippine economy, the crucial importance and consequence of describing this economy and the prospect of changing it through social and economic reforms or the revolutionary overthrow of the ruling system.

The question of semifeudalism is not a new one. Filipino national-democratic activists have been seriously studying the country's basic problems of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism since the late 1950s and early 1960s. Inspired and guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, particularly by Mao's works on Chinese society and revolution, and being mindful of the Philippines' own history and current circumstances, many

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of us undertook in-depth research and published essays on the country's long-standing agrarian problem and its links with neocolonialism.

These were reflected in my essays compiled into the book *Struggle for National Democracy*, and later in *Philippine Society and Revolution*, which helped activists grasp the crucial role of semifeudalism and the peasantry as the main force in the people's democratic revolution. Throughout the 1970s, this understanding was further validated and deepened through regional and rural social investigation reports, and thus served to guide the national-democratic movement in expanding and consolidating nationwide, especially among the peasantry.

But as the Philippines entered the decade of the 1980s, there emerged the erroneous line among certain CPP cadres that the Philippine economy was no longer semifeudal but industrial capitalist. Thus, although I was still in Marcos prison Julie and I collaborated to update our knowledge of the Philippine economy, debunk the Marcos-inspired and Trotskyite-driven notions about the country being already industrial capitalist, and reaffirm the basic conclusions about the semifeudal mode of production.

### ***1. The Semifeudal Mode of Production in the Philippines***

We call the economy or mode of production in the Philippines semifeudal because it consists of certain forces and relations of production. The forces of production include the people in production and their means of production. The relations pertain to the ownership of the means of production, the organization of production and the distribution of the product.

As used by Marxists in the materialist study of history and political economy, these are precise terms and categories that describe the level of socioeconomic development of particular societies. But as these are verifiable and measurable by social science, I am confident that many historians and political economists in the bourgeois academic milieu have also become familiar with these, and use them to some degree to better understand the Philippines' historical and current conditions.

The agriculture, industry and service sectors of the Philippines are all dependent on the importation of capital goods as well as intermediate goods in varying degrees in order to operate. These include mechanical, electro-mechanical and electronic equipment, fuels, chemicals and agricultural inputs. They are required to optimize production in the semifeudal economy.

The importation of these capital goods is paid for by the exportation of certain agricultural crops, mineral ores, semi-manufactures and cheap labor in the form of live men and women. These exports are however never enough and there is a perennial and growing trade deficit which

is paid for with mounting foreign debt and direct investments which only entrench and worsen the problem.

So long as the aforesaid capital goods at the core of the Philippine forces of production are not reconstituted and harnessed to produce capital equipment, do not regenerate themselves and build a robust domestic capital goods industry, then there could be no genuine industrialization that will emerge from the present neocolonial pattern of trade.

The Philippines lacks an industrial foundation and cannot be considered industrial capitalist, despite the baseless claim of bourgeois economists that it has become a newly-industrialized country. It has rich mineral resources but these are merely extracted and exported to industrial capitalist economies. It has not developed metallurgy beyond the stage of primary processing or the mere extraction of mineral ores and it has no capacity for producing steel and other basic metals, machine tools, precision instruments and other basic means of industrial production.

All subsectors of the industry sector (mining and quarrying, construction, refining of imported crude oil, assembly of cars and ships, electronic assembly, production of cement, chemicals and fertilizers, garments, industrial food and beverage processing, reshaping of imported plates, tubes and rods of steel and other metals, and so on) are grossly dependent on imported electro-mechanical equipment, fuel and components prefabricated abroad. In recent decades, imported industrial inputs began to include digital-tech tools dependent on expensive software and other heavily protected "intellectual property" such as patents, which are controlled by imperialist firms to prevent unauthorized technology transfer.

What is passed off as manufacturing in electronics and transport equipment (cars, trucks, motorcycles and ships) is merely assembly of finished parts and components from abroad. What is passed off as shipbuilding is mainly welding of parts prefabricated abroad. What is passed off as steel industry is merely the reshaping of imported metal plates, tubes and rods.

All these kinds of semi-manufacturing or processing are run by foreign monopoly firms. These are privileged to have export processing or special economic zones, which are used for tax evasion and for smuggling not only knockdowns but also complete products, especially cars and motorcycles. The tax privileges are granted to foreign investors as incentives for them to reexport their products and sell a certain amount of seconds to the local market.

The imperialists, their puppets and other apologists of neoliberal policy also make the superficial and false claim that globalization is opening up alternative paths to industrialization by allowing backward countries to jump-start economic growth by leveraging their local advantages in labor, services, strategic natural resources and location, and even as tourist and

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tax havens—all in partnership with imperialist countries.

Since the Asian financial crisis of 1997, there has been a sharp reduction in the assembly of semiconductors for reexport. Recently the so-called shipbuilding by Hanjin in Subic has been closed down. The reassembly of Japanese cars and motorcycles has also been drastically reduced. The crisis of overproduction in the entire world capitalist system is relentlessly assaulting this floating kind of industrial enterprises that have their foundation outside of the Philippines.

The imperialists have increasingly relied on digital speed-ups in product redesign, rapid retooling, and use of robotics in automated handling and containerization in endless attempts to reconfigure their “global supply chains”. But with the use of the digital equipment from the most developed countries the crisis of overproduction becomes worse on a global scale, further discouraging the Filipino puppet leaders to take the path of national industrialization.

But to conjure the illusion of the Philippines as a newly-industrialized country, the World Bank statistics for 2019 understate the GDP share of agriculture at 7.4 percent and its employment share at 22.9 percent, overstate the share of industry at 34 percent and its share of employment at 19.1 percent; and the share of the service sector at 58.6 percent and its employment share at 58 percent.

However, the GDP share of the industry sector has supposedly declined despite its rise relative to the GDP share of agriculture. This decline is due to the reduction of semimanufacturing of semiconductors and assembly of vehicles as a result of global overproduction and stagnation, the rampant smuggling out of mineral ores and logs, and the smuggling of all kinds of manufactures through the export processing zones, customs and the Philippines' long coastline.

The shares of GDP and employment of what are the basic productive sectors of agriculture and industry are supposed to have declined since 1980. But the shares of GDP and employment of the service sector are supposed to have grown rapidly due to increased activity in trading and finance, business processing operations, tourism, the export of cheap labor amounting to 12 million or 26 percent of the total labor force of 45 million and the “employment” or oddjobbing of 40 percent of the labor force in the informal sector of the economy.

The extremely bloated service sector of the Philippine economy is not the outcome of an industrial capitalist economy. Rather, it is the extension of an agriculture-based comprador capitalism exporting some commercial crops, mineral ores, prettified handicrafts and cheap labor by the millions; and always begging for foreign loans to cover the deficits in trade and balance of payments due to the inadequate income from raw-material exports and the foreign exchange remittances of the documented and

undocumented Filipino migrant workers.

In the other direction, the same comprador capitalism extends its import operations into consumer-driven local commercial and real estate operations, including tourism and travel. What we see is the grotesque image of an agriculture-based and big comprador-oriented economy with an extremely bloated service sector induced by imported consumer goods, neoliberal credit and public debt. This pattern of a semifeudal economy is not peculiar to the Philippines but is seen in many other backward countries as confirmed by UN statistics.

The share of agriculture is easily understated by the bourgeois economists and statisticians because the reactionary government does not take into account what the peasants and farm workers consume from their own labor and what they produce in handicrafts, forestry, swidden farming, hunting, backyard animal husbandry, fishing and other sideline occupations to augment their incomes from tilling the soil. The peasant products remain within the household or within informal local markets, and thus circulate beneath the radar of bourgeois statistics.

The number of peasants is also understated. Only the family heads and the children of 15 years and above are merely estimated, disregarding the fact that the entire family (except the toddlers) work as a productive force. In the statistics of the reactionary government, family members other than the family head are lumped together under the supra-class category of “unpaid family workers.” In fact, the traditional seasonal farm workers who are not attached to any degree of farm mechanization are still members of poor and lower middle peasant households even as they are discounted as peasants in the estimates of the reactionary government’s statisticians.

Despite the misrepresentation of the Philippines as a newly industrialized country and the deliberate understatement of the peasant population, the reactionary government’s bourgeois economists and statisticians admit that the rural population is more than 60 percent of the total Philippine population and that the Philippine economy is still agriculture-based but in the process of becoming newly-industrialized. The urban areas of Manila-Rizal, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon swell with most of the country’s oddjobbers either dwelling in urban slums or commuting daily from nearby rural villages.

This official estimate of the Philippine Statistics Authority that the rural population is 54.7 percent of the total population is most questionable and requires ground-level validation and recomputation, because the Philippine Statistics Authority uses a mechanical definition and superficial criteria for classifying barangays as “urban.” According to government guidelines, for example, a barangay with at least five establishments employing at least 10 employees each—say, a rice mill, two agricultural supply stores, and two poultry farms—and at least five facilities (e.g. a trading post, a plaza,

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a chapel, a school, and cellphone signal) two kilometers or less from the barangay hall is already considered an "urban barangay."

The gravity of the underdeveloped, agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal character of the Philippine economy is well manifested by the chronic severity of unemployment, underemployment, and overseas work as shown by official government statistics. Based on 2019 annual labor and employment estimates, 72.9 million of Filipinos are considered "of working age" (15 years old and over), but only 44.7 million is counted as the labor force. Thus, over 28 million are of working age but "not in the labor force".

Among those excluded from the labor force are an estimated 9 million of these who are at school and another 19 million of working age and fully unemployed, including those working overseas, officially estimated at only 2.2 million. Most are out of school youth, housekeepers (mostly women), and others who have stopped looking for work for various reasons. In the formal labor force, some 2.23 million are fully unemployed, and another 5.9 million are underemployed (defined as "employed but looking for more hours of work").

Thus, the total unemployment, including underemployment, reached more than 27 million as of 2019. This is 60.4 percent of the total labor force of 44.7 million. This is even worse than the other internationally circulated official figures of 10 million or 22 percent of the total labor force of 45 million are unemployed and another 12 million of documented and undocumented migrant workers or 26 percent, amounting to 48 percent. All types of unemployment have further spiked to higher levels this year due to the Covid-19 lockdowns.

The gravity of the underdeveloped and semifeudal character of the Philippine economy is underscored by the fact that a huge chunk of the labor force have to separate from their families to seek jobs abroad. It can be assumed that those who seek and take jobs abroad do so because of job scarcity in the Philippines. They are as much unemployed by the Philippine economy like those many employables who take odd jobs in the so-called informal economy or who have given up looking for a job in their own country.

If the Philippines were truly a newly-industrialized country, as South Korea and Taiwan and some Southeast Asian countries had been in the 1970s and 1980s, there would even be a labor shortage in the Philippines. It is not possible for the Philippines to have become industrial capitalist or newly-industrialized economy because never has the reactionary government implemented genuine land reform and national industrialization in any period, be it in the period of foreign exchange controls and acclaimed promotion of import-substitution industries in the 1950s or in any later period in which the economic policy would become



even more adverse to national industrialization in the Philippines.

As the basic productive sectors, agriculture and industry, decline and the population grows, the reserve army of labor (the unemployed) grows and struggles for odd jobs in both rural and urban areas and those who can speak English hanker for jobs abroad. Frustrated with failure to get adequate employment, the growing mass of unemployed can also be an abundant source of revolutionary activists and Red fighters. The revolutionary movement can never run short of recruits in the face of the worsening crisis of the domestic ruling system and the world capitalist system and the declining opportunities for employment.

The relations of production describe best the semifeudal character of the Philippine mode of production. The chief ruling class is no longer the traditional rent-collecting landlord class of feudal times. It is the comprador big bourgeoisie, which is the chief financial and trading agent of foreign monopoly capitalism and owns the big banks, export-import companies, shopping malls, construction, real estate companies and the like. At the same time, it owns the largest haciendas and related agribusinesses, including livestock and poultry farms, fishing fleets, agriforestry schemes and stocks in mining companies to assure itself of primary commodities for export in exchange for the manufactures that it imports.

The comprador big bourgeoisie is often called the big comprador-landlord class to emphasize its semifeudal character, its hybrid character as merchant capitalist and feudal owner of haciendas. It engages in manufacturing but it imports the majority of its means of production, the fuel and most major components of the total product. It uses some amount of mechanization in its haciendas but continues to use the cheap labor of seasonal farm workers and collects from the widespread traditional rent-collecting landlords a large amount of agricultural surplus for local processing, domestic trade and export. It has the biggest amount of bribe money to determine the big comprador character of the high bureaucrat capitalists as well as the results of elections at the national, regional, provincial and city levels.

According to the latest figures, the 30 biggest of the comprador big bourgeois in the Philippines are as follows with their corresponding amounts of wealth in billions of US dollars: 1) Sy siblings with 13.9, 2) Manuel Villar with 5, 3) Enrique Razon Jr. with 4.3, 4) Lance Gokongwei & Siblings with 4.1, 5) Jaime Zobel de Ayala with 3.6, 6) Andrew Tan with 2.3, 7) Lucio Tan with 2.2, 8) Ramon Ang with 2, 9) Tony Tan Caktiong with 1.9, 10) Lucio and Susan Co with 1.7, 11) Mercedes Gotianun with 1.5, 12) Ty Siblings with 1.4, 13) Vivian Que Azcona & Siblings with 1.34, 14) Isidro Consunji & Siblings with 1.3, 15) Roberto Ongpin with 1.2, 16) Soledad Oppen-Cojuangco with 1.15, 17) Ricardo Po, Sr. with 1, 18) Iñigo Zobel with 990 M, 19) William Belo with 900 M, 20) Robert Coyiuto, Jr. with 890

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M, 21) Edgar Sia II with 700 M, 22) Dennis Uy with 650 M, 23) Campos Siblings with 600 M, 24) Dean Lao with 500 M, 25) Jacinto Ng with 490 M, 26) Tan, Jr. with 350 M, 27) Delfin J. Wenceslao, Jr. with 340 M, 28) Tomas Alcantara with 300 M, 29) Manuel Zamora with 280 M and 30) Carlos Chan with 260 M. As individuals, the biggest compradors show only the tip of the immense wealth accumulated by their families and family-based business blocs. They have interlocking interests and interlocking directorates in the biggest comprador firms. They engage in syndicates, mergers, swaps and intermarriages.

The biggest of the comprador firms are as follows: 1) SM Investments Corp. and Subsidiaries, 2) Ayala Corp. and Subsidiaries, 3) Top Frontier Investment Holdings, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 4) San Miguel Corp. and Subsidiaries, 5) Ayala Land, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 6) SM Prime Holdings, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 7) BDO Unibank, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 8) Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 9) San Miguel Food and Beverage, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 10) JG Summit Holdings, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 11) Aboitiz Power Corp. and Subsidiaries, 12) Alliance Global Group, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 13) Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. and Subsidiaries, 14) Bank of the Philippines Islands and Subsidiaries, 15) Manila Electric Corp. and Subsidiaries, 16) Metro Pacific Investments Corp. and Subsidiaries, 17) Lopez Holdings Corp. and Subsidiaries, 18) Tangent Holdings Corp. and Subsidiaries, 19) LT Group, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 20) First Philippine Holdings Corp. and Subsidiaries, 21) DMCI Holdings, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 22) PLDT Inc. and Subsidiaries, 23) Globe Telecom, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 24) GT Capital Holdings, Inc. and Subsidiaries, 25) First Gen Corp. and Subsidiaries, 26) Land Bank of the Philippines and Subsidiaries, 27) Megaworld Corp. and Subsidiaries, 28) Filinvest Development Corp. and Subsidiaries, 29) International Container Terminal Services, Inc. and Subsidiaries and 30) Semirara Mining and Power Corp. and Subsidiaries.

While the big compradors are based in Metro Manila and other major cities, the far more numerous rent-collecting traditional landlords and related merchant-usurers, land speculators and promoters of contract growing are based in the countryside, including the minor cities and less urbanized poblaciones. The traditional landlords retain their dominance in the localities with their ownership of most of the agricultural land and related agrobased assets (e.g. rice mills, warehouses, trucking and the like), their command over the votes of their tenants, farmworkers, other employees and their dependents and consequently their preeminence in the local reactionary governments. They are the base of most of the dynasties at the regional, provincial and municipal levels.

All land reform programs undertaken by the US colonial regime and by the Philippine semicolony or neocolony have proven to be bogus because of loopholes in the law for landlords to evade expropriation and because

the redistribution price for the expropriated lands is unaffordable to the tenants because the reactionary government officials connive with the landlords to raise the expropriation price for their corrupt mutual benefit at the expense of the tenants. Eventually, the expropriated land falls into the hands of old-running or newly-rising landlords (from the ranks of bureaucrats, rich peasants, merchant-usurers and professionals) when the land is auctioned off.

At any rate, any kind of bourgeois land reform goes back to renewed land accumulation by a few in the absence of national industrialization as outlet for investing the landlord income from the agricultural surplus. In semifeudalism, there is a vicious cycle of comprador capitalism and feudalism in the absence of a determined and systematic policy of implementing genuine land reform and national industrialization in combination and coordination.

## ***II. Factors against Industrial Capitalism in the Philippines***

The natural economy of feudalism characterized by local or regional self-sufficiency was eroded in the 19th century, especially in the transition from the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade to the more expanded Philippine-European trade after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The capitalist commodity system of production and exchange within the use money spread as result of crop specialization in either export crops (hemp, tobacco, sugarcane, coconut and the like) or food staples (rice and corn) for domestic consumption and the accelerated growth of towns and inter-island trade.

In the period of its direct colonial rule and with such devices as the Payne-Aldrich Act, the US made sure that the Philippines paid taxes for its colonial status and remained a profitable source of raw materials and market for surplus manufactures. It developed further the semifeudal character of the Philippine economy by expanding agricultural production for export, opening the mines, building more roads and bridges and establishing the public school system. It carried out land reform to break up the large Spanish friar estates but the poor tenants could not afford the redistribution price and these estates passed on to the native and mestizo big comprador-landlords and to the many more traditional landlords.

In the transition from feudalism to semifeudalism since the 19th century. It was inevitable for handicrafts and pre-industrial manufacturing based on the processing of local raw materials with the use of hand tools to develop further under the stimulus of inter-island trade. In the US colonial period, machinery for large scale production in food and beverages, textile and shoe manufacturing, cordage, paper and others were imported and inspired the small national bourgeoisie and its advocates to aspire for

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national industrialization and nationalization of the economy.

Up to the Commonwealth period, Quezon did not engage in genuine land reform but promoted the resettlement of the landless as well as the land speculators from the land-scarce regions to the frontier regions, especially Mindanao and the Cagayan Valley. There were merely token land expropriations where landlord-tenant conflicts were intense. Palliative laws against usury and excessive rents in tenancy on rice land were also enacted but carried loopholes or impossible requirements (e.g. the landlord-dominated municipal councils had to approve local application of the law) that prevented implementation and were easily circumvented.

Never has there been any serious plan or effort by the US colonial regime nor the semicolonial puppet Filipino regime, from Roxas to Duterte, to build the industrial foundation of the Philippines and complement it with genuine land reform. There has never been any plan to develop metallurgy, especially of iron and steel, beyond the level of extracting the mineral ores of the Philippines for export or to build the machine tool industry for the industrialization of the Philippines beyond the level of repairs, reconditioning and producing minor parts of imported machines. There has also been extremely limited processing of locally available materials to produce construction materials (aside from cement, logs and bricks), industrial chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

After World War II, the Philippines became a semicolony. The US made sure to grant nominal independence only if the Filipino puppet leaders headed by Roxas signed the US-RP Treaty of General Relations making the Philippines subservient to the US economically, politically, culturally and militarily. US corporations and citizens retained their property rights and were guaranteed so-called parity rights or equality with Filipinos in the exploitation of natural resources and in the operation of public utilities and all types of businesses. The US made the overt threat that it would not pay for war damage compensation if it did not get its so-called parity rights.

The reactionary government officials, academics and press pundits hoped that the Philippines would be rehabilitated and developed with the use of US and Japanese war damage payments. They spoke of building new and necessary industries especially under the auspices of the Rehabilitation Finance Corp. (RFC), other state banks, and the National Development Corporation. But the larger fact was that the US companies became the main beneficiaries of war damage payments and loans from the US Export-Import Bank which were used to rebuild their trading firms and their subsidiaries manufacturing household consumables from locally available raw materials.

The US monopoly firms swamped the country with its surplus goods and pushed the national bourgeoisie to the margins. When the rehabilitation funds were depleted by paying for the reconstruction of US firms and

for imported consumption goods by 1949, the US allowed the Philippine puppet government to adopt a policy of foreign exchange controls within the framework and control of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the US Export-Import Bank.

The foreign exchange control was later prettified at best by President Garcia as an instrument for favoring Filipino businessmen in the name of developing the Philippine economy with “import-substitution” industries under the so-called “Filipino First” policy. He renamed the RFC the Development Bank of the Philippines in 1959. He had economic nationalists in his cabinet. However, the declared good intentions of Garcia did not result in the industrialization of the Philippines.

At best, the efforts of nationalist economists and business groups created some space for certain light and intermediate local industries to supply some domestic needs but were still dependent on imported machinery and subject to licenses and patent rights held by foreign companies. Even beyond the Garcia regime, the “Filipino First” policy also inspired the Filipino big comprador takeover of the Meralco in 1962 and the PLDT in 1967 from their American owners. But of course, the equipment and fuel for generating power would continue to come from US companies.

Soon enough the US scrapped the foreign exchange controls by having Macapagal elected President in 1961 and using him to adopt the decontrol policy, reaffirm the Laurel- Langley Agreement and promote “free enterprise”. At the same time, Macapagal still wanted to present himself as being interested in the industrial development of the Philippines. Thus, he launched his land reform program and the showpiece Iligan Integrated Steel Mills Inc. (IISMI) in northern Mindanao with funding mainly from Japanese banks and steel monopoly firms.

The Agricultural Land Reform Code of Macapagal was touted as surpassing the land resettlement programs and token expropriation of feudal estates undertaken by all previous regimes supposedly for the purpose of land reform. It was even hyped as the final death blow to feudalism. Despite the brave words of declaring land tenancy as anathema to public policy and economic development and formally abolishing land tenancy, the land reform program proved to be bogus as it carried loopholes, limited to rice and corn land, was underfunded by Congress and required the land reform beneficiaries to pay the redistribution price that they could not afford, especially when crop failure occurs due to natural disaster or serious illness hits the peasant family.

The Macapagal promoted the entry of foreign investments, especially in mining, logging and plantations for the purpose of export. The IISMI flopped eventually as the Japanese creditors and steel makers made the firm import finished steel plates, rods and tubes from Japan for mere

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reshaping. The Iligan project became known eventually as a beauty parlor that merely curled metal plates to make galvanized iron sheets for the roofs of Philippine buildings and homes.

The economic technocrats of Macapagal echoed the US economist Walt Rostow and boasted that the Philippines was already on the "take-off stage" of economic development. They were most enthusiastic about the designs and feasibility studies for infrastructure projects under the auspices of the World Bank. With Macapagal failing to win a second term, it would be Marcos taking advantage of the said designs and feasibility studies.

By the 1960s, Japan had recovered from the devastation of its industries and was enjoying an industrial boom. It was brimming over with surplus goods to dump on the Philippines, which received these, together with the surplus goods from the US. The reactionary wisdom then was not to industrialize the Philippines because its so-called comparative advantage was in selling mineral ores, logs and bananas to Japan. The same anti-industrial thinking persisted even when the US and Japan agreed in the 1970s to allow capitalist-style land reform and on that basis industrialize Taiwan and South Korea as front-liners and show windows against the socialist industrialization of China and North Korea.

The Marcos regime showed no interest in land reform but allowed the so-called reform program of Macapagal to run on until he put forward his own bogus agrarian reform program to replace it in 1971. Marcos made it appear that his program would also sweepingly transfer all the rice and corn land of the landlords to the tenants with the simple formula of determining the average production of the previous three years and letting the tenants pay by instalment to the Land Bank 25 per cent of such average production for a number of years to acquire the land. But as in the Macapagal land reform program, the government bureaucrat and landlord connived in the computation of production values against the tenants.

The Marcos regime was blatantly against land reform and national industrialization. It was mainly interested in pork barrel corruption of unprecedented colossal proportions. It seized on the neo-Keynesian line of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to build roads, bridges and ports to enhance the infrastructure for exporting mineral ores, logs and plantation crops and importing construction equipment and materials and consumer goods. The infrastructure projects were overpriced and were contracted to Marcos crony corporations. The war damage payments from Japan were exhausted and huge amounts of foreign loans were incurred from Japan, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

The Marcos regime touted the infrastructure projects and some eleven corporations supplying financial and engineering services and some local

construction materials like cement, rocks, wood products and the like as instruments and outcomes of national industrialization. Major banks were hyped as universal banks providing not only commercial credit but also loans for industrialization. In the late 1970s, the export processing zones for reassembly and fringe processing were also celebrated as the “cutting edge” of industrialization.

The Marcos regime started to fall into financial trouble in 1979 because of excessive spending and borrowing for infrastructure projects and tourist facilities. His crony construction companies were also scrambling for a share of contracts in the construction projects fueled by petro-dollars in the Middle East. Exactly at this time, when Marcos was in trouble with his pork barrel economics, some elements headed by Ricardo Reyes within the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) concurred with the Marcos propaganda misrepresenting the Philippine economy as industrial capitalist and spread the subjectivist line that the Philippine economy was no longer semifeudal.

This subjectivist line resulted in undermining the general line of people’s democratic revolution through protracted people’s war and in bringing about Right opportunism in the so-called New Katipunan program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and much worse in several Left opportunist lines which were pushed by Trotskyite elements in Metro Manila and Mindanao and touted urban insurrectionism as the lead factor in the armed revolution, without the necessity of protracted people’s war.

Where the biggest damage to the revolution occurred, the line of people’s strikes in urban areas and intensified city partisan warfare was pushed in combination with the premature formation of larger New People’s Army (NPA) units to serve as mere adjuncts of the urban actions in certain regions. The line prematurely and unnecessarily exposed the urban underground of the revolutionary movement and pushed the people’s army to create too many military companies and to neglect the deployment of enough platoons and squads for keeping and expanding the mass base.

After the downfall of Marcos in 1986, the Cory Aquino regime (1986-1992) was overburdened by the foreign debts that had been incurred by Marcos. And yet, following US and IMF diktat, it preserved the dictator’s onerous Presidential Decree 1177 imposing automatic appropriation for debt service payments and adopted the policy of paying for odious foreign debts, like those incurred for the showy but ill-conceived Bataan nuclear power plant that had been cancelled for gross anomalies in financial, technical and environmental calculations.

The Aquino regime shifted to increased domestic public borrowing. It also complied with the neoliberal policy of the US by adopting the

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policy of import liberalization; meaning to say, expanded importation of foreign manufactures. With much less foreign loans to finance grandiose infrastructure projects and conjure the illusion of development, the semifeudal character of the Philippine economy became more exposed than ever under the presidency of Cory Aquino.

Despite the strong clamor from an unprecedented alliance of peasant organizations with strong support from middle forces, the haciendera Cory Aquino preserved the reactionary tradition of imposing a bogus land reform law. The constitutional commission that she created put into the 1987 Constitution the provisions making expropriation of land subject to the prior voluntariness of the landlord and offering stock options to farm workers in incorporated export-crop haciendas like her Hacienda Luisita.

And of course, as in the case of all reactionary regimes, the reactionary Congress of big landlords and comprador bourgeois, limited the appropriation of funds for land reform and worsened the exploitation of the masses of peasants and farm workers. Since the end of the Cory Aquino regime, there has been no substantially different land reform program initiated by any of her successors. Landgrabbing by agri-corporations, bureaucrat landlords and traditional landlords has become worse from year to year at the expense of the indigenous communities and poor peasants.

It was during the term of Ramos (1992 to 1998) when the US and its imperialist allies, especially Japan decided to loosen up commercial credit for financing private construction in an unprecedented way in the whole of Asia, including the Philippines. In the same period, the US further ensured the hostaging of the Philippine central bank to the US-dominated global private central banking cartel via Republic Act No. 7653, the New Central Bank Act in 1993.

The money flowed to the construction of high-rise office and residential buildings and tourist facilities from 1994 onward until the Asian financial crisis of 1997. In conformity with neoliberalism and with the supposed comparative advantage of the Philippines in raw-material production, the Ramos regime did not undertake any basic or heavy industrial project that had any semblance of building the industrial foundation of the Philippine economy.

Instead, in line with privatization under the neoliberal policy, he sold off the productive assets of state corporations, including the already decrepit Iligan Integrated Steel Mills to a Malaysian-Chinese company, just to finance housekeeping operations of his government, increase military appropriations in the name of "modernization" and reduce the budgetary deficit. Public assets like the former US military bases (Clark, Subic and John Hay), the Fort Bonifacio reservation, and the Manila Bay reclamation projects were also thrown wide open to real-estate development for tourist



and other non-industrial business facilities.

The Asian financial crisis of 1997 devastated not only the erstwhile private construction boom but even the semi-manufacturing of semiconductors and garments. These would be revived after a few years later but this time subordinated to China as the final platform of reassembly prior to the export of the products to the US and other Western markets. The “economic tigers” of Southeast Asia became emaciated kittens. The succeeding Estrada regime (1998-2001) was unstable for lack of public funds and was overthrown for raiding the social insurance systems for government and private employees in corrupt lending schemes to his cronies.

China became the main partner of US imperialism in promoting and taking advantage of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization. Once more there was a rising industrial capitalist country, a gigantic one at that, which made it easy for the reactionary policy makers and economists in the Philippines to invoke so-called comparative advantage as a reason to stay underdeveloped and semifeudal and to shun national industrialization. Sure enough Chinese manufacturing firms as well as US, Japanese and other foreign companies in China would enjoy dumping their manufactures in the Philippines.

The Arroyo (2001-2010) and Noynoy Aquino (2010-2016) regimes were bound by the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization. They did not undertake any project for the industrialization of the Philippine economy. But they “improved” the financial standing of their administrations by benefiting from quantitative easing of credit by the US Federal Reserve System and the consequent flow of portfolio investments or speculative capital from the US and other foreign hedge funds, raising the value-added tax, by taking more foreign loans and of course by taking advantage of the growing foreign exchange earnings from overseas contract workers and call centers.

Since Duterte became president in 2016, the Philippine economy has deteriorated from year to year. And certainly, no genuine land reform and national industrialization have been undertaken. Duterte has boasted that he can distribute land to the landless peasants all by himself but in fact landgrabbing by agri-corporations and landlords has worsened under his regime. Worse, the victims of landgrabbing are subjected to bombardments and violent eviction. At the same time, neither the US nor any other imperialist power has offered anything to the tyrant that would result in industrialization of the Philippines as was done decades ago in Taiwan and South Korea.

Duterte himself admits that he knows best how to kill people to solve problems and that he knows nothing about economics except the pork barrel kind of economics of which his idol Marcos had a mastery for

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plundering the economy. Thus, the center piece of Duterte's economic plan is to beg China for high-interest loans for overpriced infrastructure projects to be undertaken by Chinese contractors, Filipino-Chinese subcontractors and a predominantly Chinese work force.

But now, wonder of wonders, there is a new campaign by counterrevolutionary elements, including Trotskyites and pseudo-socialist clerico-fascists, to claim that the Philippines is industrial capitalist rather than semifeudal or big comprador capitalist. Their ulterior motive shows when they claim that the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war is a futile exercise and might as well be liquidated.

But the CPP and the entire revolutionary movement assure them that easily more than 60 percent of the Philippine population is still in the countryside. This is a far cry from the less than ten percent peasant population of a definitely industrial capitalist country. The poor and middle peasant masses as the big ally of the working class are still there to provide the widest possible social and physical terrain for maneuver in a protracted people's war.

### ***III. The People's Democratic Revolution or Reforms through Peace Negotiations***

Since its founding on December 26, 1968, the CPP has put forward the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution on the basis of the critique of the Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal. The US granted nominal independence to the Philippines in 1946 but retained it as a semicolony through the US-RP Treaty of General Relations and subsequent treaties, agreements and arrangements subordinating the Philippines to US hegemony economically, politically, culturally and militarily.

The Philippine economy remains semifeudal, dominated by US monopoly capitalism and its major allies and subordinated to the world capitalist system but run directly by the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalist class. The comprador big bourgeoisie is the chief financial and trading agent of the foreign monopolies but has its own landed, mining and manufacturing interests, keeps an alliance with the traditional rent-collecting landlords and casts its influence on bureaucrat capitalists that have never decided at any time to carry out genuine land reform and national industrialization.

The national bourgeoisie has weakened from its relatively stronger position before World War II. This is because of the flood of surplus consumer products from the US, dependence on US trade policies and the depletion of foreign exchange by 1949, the neo-Keynesian policy of foreign borrowing for infrastructure projects, the flood of surplus manufactures

from Japan and the newly-industrialized countries elsewhere in East Asia, the neoliberal economic policy and another flood of surplus manufactures from China. The national industrialization of the Philippines has been effectively stopped within the framework of the IMF, World Bank, WTO, ADB, Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The Philippine Chamber of Industry (previously formed to promote the goal of industrialization) has been dominated by big compradors. The spokesmen of the national bourgeoisie in the Philippine Senate (like Senators Lorenzo Tanada and Jose W. Diokno) have disappeared. Both Houses of Congress have become entirely pork barrel-minded, limited to thinking of economic development only in terms of graft-laden infrastructure projects. With the enactment of laws favoring foreign investments since the late 1960s, the enterprises of the national bourgeoisie were squeezed out. They persevere to a limited extent in the processing of food, tobacco, cotton, plant fibers, wood, leather and other locally available materials.

On behalf of the Filipino working class, in basic alliance with the peasantry, the CPP has taken the lead in advocating agrarian revolution and national industrialization within the context of the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. This revolution seeks to break the grip of foreign monopoly capitalism on the Philippine economy and to deprive the exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists of the power to control the economy.

It is timely and of decisive importance that the CPP and the revolutionary movement are underscoring the need for genuine land reform and national industrialization because the neoliberal policy of the imperialist powers and client states is unravelling. This policy has let loose the unbridled greed of the monopoly bourgeoisie of the imperialist powers and has subjected the proletariat and peoples of the world to the worst forms of exploitation and oppression and wars of aggression in certain parts of the world. This is generating one crisis of overproduction after another on a worsening scale.

The imperialist powers, their magnates and wizards have failed to solve the ever-worsening crisis of overproduction and the prolonged stagnation of the world capitalist system that followed the global financial crash 2007-2008. Before they can solve this crisis, another one that is worse has come on top of it. It has been further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This health crisis has triggered lockdowns and social panic across the world. It has devastated economies and has thrown people out of their jobs and other means of livelihood. And worst of all, counterrevolutionary states have taken advantage of the crisis to repress the people and the monopoly bourgeoisie to take multi-billion-dollar giveaways from central banks, couched as "bail out loans" and "stimulus packages", and evade

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responsibilities to their mass of employees.

The crisis of the world capitalist system has become so severe that the US and China, who were main partners in the implementation of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization, are increasingly at odds with each other. The US accuses China of having cheated it with its two-tiered economy of state capitalism and private capitalism, use of state planning to achieve strategic economic and military goals. The US also decries China's use of state subsidies and currency manipulation to favor Chinese enterprises and the theft of US technology from US companies and research laboratories. The two biggest imperialist powers are in a process of decoupling and entering a new Cold War.

In all imperialist countries, the monopoly bourgeoisie is shaken by the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. It is worried to death by its own inability to overcome the crisis and its fear of the rise of revolutionary mass movements among the workers and the people against escalating austerity measures and repression. Desperately, it is encouraging and supporting ultra-reactionary movements of fascist, chauvinist, racist, anti-migrant, misogynist, militarist and anti-environmentalist character. It is actively trying to coopt people's initiatives and movements and even fleshing out a strategy of tension and distraction through its long-leash sleeper assets among the Al-Qaeda /Abu Sayyaf/Daesh/ISIS-type terrorist cells to outflank, hijack, deflect and emasculate the growing revolutionary outrage of the world's peoples.

Millions of Filipino migrant workers in more than 100 countries are now threatened by the worsening crisis of global capitalism and by the rising ultra-reactionary movements, especially in the imperialist countries. Many of them have already been thrown out of their jobs because of the tightening of rules by host governments against them and by the lockdowns and shutdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is now a drastic reduction in the foreign exchange earnings of the migrant workers and their repatriation in increasing numbers is becoming a major problem.

Meanwhile in the Philippines, the semifeudal economy is reeling from the decline of both the agriculture and industry sectors and the unsustainable bloating of the service sector and the public debt. The service sector and public debt bubbles are already in the process of implosion. The tyrannical Duterte regime aggravates the situation by mishandling its response to the COVID-19 pandemic and by taking advantage of it to grab more powers. Duterte and his fellow crooks in the top echelon of the bureaucracy and military engage in the most brazen and outrageous forms of plunder. Thus, the crisis of the ruling system has worsened rapidly and is generating the most favorable conditions for mass protests and the people's war for national and social liberation.

As the inter-imperialist contradictions of the US and China are

sharpening, the Duterte regime is desperately trying to serve two conflicting imperialist masters. It is still keeping the treaties, agreements and arrangements that make the US the most dominant imperialist power in the Philippines in an all-round way. In return, the US is relying on the Duterte regime to carry out an anti-communist military campaign of suppression against the revolutionary movement and to make a charter change to allow US corporations unlimited ownership of Philippine land, natural resources, public utilities and all types of businesses.

At the same time, Duterte has allowed China to build seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea in violation of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and the 2016 final judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines against China. It has allowed China to own a number of Philippine islands through Chinese casino operators, control the national power grid, erect cell towers in Philippine military camps and assist the reactionary armed services (AFP and PNP) in developing its communications system.

Duterte commits all these acts of treason in exchange for bribes for taking out high interest China loans for overpriced infrastructure projects to be undertaken by Chinese contractors and their own work force. He tries to benefit not only from official transactions with China and its state banks and corporations but also from shady relations with Chinese criminal syndicates engaged in the smuggling of illegal drugs and other contraband, in online gaming and casino operations and in illegal Chinese immigration under the cover of casino employment and tourism. Corrupt Chinese officials are also using these criminal operations of Chinese triads for laundering and stashing their bureaucratic loot abroad.

In the face of two conflicting imperialist powers trying to dominate the Philippines, with the collaboration of the exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists, the CPP and the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people expect the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system to worsen at an accelerated rate. They are therefore more than ever determined to carry out the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. They are resolved that the people's democratic revolution can be completed and the socialist revolution can be started only upon the overthrow of the imperialist-supported big comprador-landlord class dictatorship.

In the course of the people's war, agrarian revolution can be carried out in substantial areas in the country. But the agrarian revolution and other socioeconomic transition measures can be completed and the socialist transformation of the economy can be carried out in earnest only after the nationwide seizure of political power by the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry and other democratic social strata.

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By wielding state power, the proletariat shall be able to take over the commanding heights of the economy; meaning to say, take out the Philippine central bank from the global private central banking cartel of the big banksters and transform it into a genuine public central bank, control the existing industries, the sources of raw materials and the communications and transport lines, carry out socialist industrialization and complete the agrarian revolution in conjunction with the collectivization and mechanization of agriculture.

But while the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war is still in progress, the CPP has agreed with its revolutionary allies within the NDFP and with further allies and peace advocates outside of the NDFP frame to engage, whenever possible and advantageous to the people, in peace negotiations with the reactionary government to address the roots of the civil war with basic social, economic and political reforms in order to lay the basis for a just and lasting peace.

The main purpose of peace negotiations, the substantive agenda and the methods of negotiating and agreeing have been set forth in The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992. More than ten agreements have been mutually approved, including the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees, the Joint Agreement on Reciprocal Working Committees and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). Even the GRP and NDFP versions of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) have been fully drafted and have led to substantial tentative agreements by the Reciprocal Working Committees of both sides.

But the US imperialist officials and the most reactionary economic and military interests have been behind the scenes prompting the Philippine president to use the demand for indefinitely prolonged ceasefire in order to block the progress of the peace negotiations, to paralyze the revolutionary movement and to stop the negotiations altogether. It is now obvious that every president has used the peace negotiations to consolidate his or her political position within the first year of rule and to try to wangle an indefinitely prolonged ceasefire to paralyze the revolutionary movement and steer the wider public discourse away from addressing substantive issues.

But why do the CPP and NDFP continue to entertain the offer of peace negotiations by every incoming president of the reactionary government? Were the CPP and the NDFP to rebuff such offer they would appear as the bellicose party in the eyes of a great number of people and the broad range of peace advocates. They would be playing the role of the ultra-Leftist, infantile communist or the crazy Trotskyite who poses as pure and perfect proletarian revolutionary, isolated from the masses and helping the enemy appear as the lover of peace. It is the wise policy of the CPP and NDFP to

avail of the peace negotiations as a way of presenting the program for a people's democratic revolution, urging all patriotic and democratic forces to explore the paths to a just and lasting peace, and letting the enemy side unfold its anti-national, anti-democratic and anti-people character.

But is it entirely impossible for the adversaries in a civil war to negotiate and agree on a truce? It is not impossible. It has been demonstrated twice in the history of the Chinese revolution that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Guomindang (GMD) could negotiate and agree on a truce in order to fight a third party, first against the northern warlords and then against the Japanese invaders. The CCP and the GMD even tried to negotiate in order to avert the resumption of the civil war after the defeat of Japan. But goaded and backed by the US, the GMD reactionaries decided to carry out a civil war which they lost in 1949.

Is it possible for the Philippine reactionary government to be led by a president or party that is patriotic and progressive enough to engage in serious peace negotiations with the NDFP to address the roots of the armed conflict, agree on social, economic and political reforms and thereby lay the basis for a just and lasting peace? Such a possibility depends on the objective conditions (especially certain domestic and international factors that would hinder or enhance the peace process) and on the character and ability of said president to persuade the big compradors and landlords to take the chance of carrying out land reform and national industrialization as done previously in certain countries.

Among the presidents of the reactionary governments, Duterte was the most loud-mouthed about seeking a just peace with the revolutionary movement. But he was merely pretending. If not for his small-mindedness and short-sightedness, if not for his sheer stupidity and cowardice to stand his ground against a rabidly pro-US and anti-people AFP, he could have proceeded with the NDFP in forging the CASER in order to carry out land reform and national industrialization on a self-reliant basis with the further assurance of income from the oil and gas resources, with an estimated value of USD 26 trillion, in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea.

But he has preferred to "lay aside" in his own words the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. His recent posturing at the UN General Assembly does not change this fact. Instead of playing his cards well to advance national sovereignty, he has acted as a traitor by letting China violate the sovereign rights of the Philippines and build seven artificial islands to serve as military bases, destroy the marine environment and claim the marine and mineral resources that belong to the Filipino people. He is still hoping to get huge amounts of bribes from the overpriced infrastructure projects and high-interest loans amounting to

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USD 24 billion, that were promised by China.

There are ultra-reactionaries, especially those with a militarist mindset, who say that they do not need any peace negotiations with the NDFP to achieve peace and to develop the Philippine economy through genuine land reform and national industrialization. But indeed, if left to themselves, they will continue to follow the dictates of their imperialist masters and the local reactionary interests and they will only drive the broad masses of the Filipino people to wage armed revolution and overthrow the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The CPP and the NDFP have always given a fair chance to every reactionary government from that of Cory Aquino to that of Duterte to prove that the revolutionary movement is seriously interested in peace negotiations for the benefit of the Filipino people. Peace negotiations have always been broken because US imperialism and the local ultra-reactionaries have always wanted to turn these into surrender negotiations at the expense of the revolutionary movement and the people or at least to cause confusion among the ranks of the revolutionary movement and the people.

But they cannot break the revolutionary will of the CPP and the NDFP and the Filipino people. This will is well expressed in the Program of the People's Democratic Revolution and is further applied in the documents and drafts already made in the interest of the Filipino people in the course of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. The CPP and NDFP are always open to joint agreements with any force so long as these do not violate revolutionary principles and they spell out mutually agreeable policies for basic social, economic and political reforms that improve the situation and lives of the Filipino people and lead to the goal of a just and lasting peace in a Philippines that is independent, democratic, socially just, developing in an all-round way, prosperous and in solidarity with the people of the world against imperialism and all reaction.

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# **Socialism and Capitalist Restoration in China**

## **Book Review of Rethinking Socialism**

### **by Deng-Yuan Hsu and Pao-Yu Ching**

**November 7, 2020**

I thank the East and Southeast Asian Studies section of the University of the Philippines-Center for International Studies for inviting me to do a review of *Rethinking Socialism* by Deng-Yuan Hsu and Pao-Yu Ching. I convey warmest greetings to Prof. Pao-yu Ching, Christophe Kistler of the Foreign Languages Press, the organizers and all participants in this event to review the aforementioned book and the book *From Victory to Defeat: China's Socialist Road and Capitalist Reversal* under the sole authorship of Prof. Ching.

It is appropriate that this event coincides with the 103rd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. To understand the rise of socialism, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the defeat of socialism in China, we need a lot of interrelating the two greatest revolutions of the 20th century, the Russian revolution of 1917 and the Chinese revolution of 1949.

In the 2017 edition of *Rethinking Socialism*, Prof. Ching makes an introduction to withdraw the proposition, which was stated by the co-authors some two decades ago in their earliest edition of the book, that the Chinese socialist revolution had failed, and to replace it with the proposition that it had been defeated in a contest between socialist and capitalist projects that arose in what was supposed to be a socialist transition to communism.

Indeed, socialism in China did not fail because of inherent invalidity in theoretical and practical terms but because it was defeated in a two-line class struggle between the socialist line of Comrade Mao and the bourgeois line of the capitalist roaders headed by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, former President of the People's Republic of China and former General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, respectively. The book provides important facts, insights and analysis regarding this struggle. The main concern of the book is about the conflicting socialist and capitalist projects but it also relates the economic issues to the political and cultural issues.

### **Basic Principles and Requirements for Building Socialism**

*I concur with Prof. Pao-Yu Ching on the following point: "To begin, I again quote Lenin: We do not claim that Marx or the Marxists know the road to socialism in all its completeness. That is nonsense. We know the direction of this road, we know what class forces lead along it, but concretely and practically it will be learned from the experiences of the millions who take up the task."*

*And may I add that before the Great October Socialist Revolution occurred, only the basic principles and the basic political and economic requirements for building socialism were laid down by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto, such as the revolutionary overthrow of the class dictatorship or state power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the class dictatorship of the proletariat or the socialist state and the replacement of the private ownership of the means of production by public ownership.*

*Marx considered and studied the Paris Commune of 1871 as the prototype of the proletarian class dictatorship in the Civil War in France. But with regard to the matter of building the socialist economy, he could only project in the Critique of the Gotha Programme how the liberation of the forces of production from the fetters of capitalist relations of production would accelerate the expansion of production to serve the needs of the people and how the total value created by the workers would be divided in just and reasonable proportions as funds for wages, accumulation or reinvestment, social welfare, administration and defense.*

*Lenin demonstrated how to establish the class dictatorship of the proletariat with the support of the broad masses of the people, seize the commanding heights of the economy and adopt transitory measures for the quickest possible recovery of the economy from the damages wrought by war. Even in his time, he prognosticated that it would take a whole historical epoch to build socialism as a stage towards the ultimate goal of communism. After the death of Lenin, Stalin continued the work of Lenin by building socialist industry and collectivizing and mechanizing agriculture in a series of five-year plans.*

*Mao benefited from the Soviet experience in socialist revolution and construction. He learned from both the positive and negative lessons. He went so far as to learn the root causes of the phenomenon of modern revisionism in terms of the continued existence and potentiality of classes and class struggle in socialist society. He aspired to improve on the Soviet experience of socialist revolution through the correct handling of contradictions and through a series of cultural revolutions as well as on the experience of socialist construction through a proper correlation of heavy industry, light industry and agriculture and relying on the mass movement*

*to realize economic plans in connection with other revolutionary processes. In this regard, he wrote "On the Ten Major Relationships" and the Critique of Soviet Economics.*

### ***The Soviet Experience in Socialist Revolution and Construction***

The Russian revolution of 1917 and the Chinese revolution of 1949 were both guided by Marxism-Leninism and led to the building of socialism. They were both encompassed by the epoch of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution. Being the first to occur, the Russian revolution manifested and defined the essential conditions and requirements for establishing and building socialism.

In Russia, the industrial bourgeoisie and proletariat had arisen but the enclaves of industrial capitalism were still surrounded by the vast ocean of feudalism and medievalism. Thus, the need for a bourgeois-democratic revolution to get rid of Tsarism and solve the agrarian problem. But the great Lenin pointed out that the proletariat was the leading class in the democratic revolution and no longer the liberal bourgeoisie as in previous bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

In fact, the bourgeois democratic revolution of February 1917 that had brought about the Kerensky government could not be completed until the October revolution came about to complete the democratic tasks basically and at the same time begin the socialist revolution by virtue of the proletariat overthrowing the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, nationalizing the land of the landlords and availing of the worker-peasant alliance through the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers and the masses that these represented.

Thus, the October revolution is known as the Great October Socialist Revolution. It meant fulfilling the very first requirement of socialism, the emergence and effective authority of the worker state, the class dictatorship of the proletariat, to make a fundamental transformation of society. The worker state enabled the issuance and implementation of the proclamations taking over the commanding heights of the economy, such as the banks and strategic industries, principal means of transport and communications, the sources of raw materials and nationalization of the land for the purpose of land reform and collectivization.

Due to the conditions of civil war on a widened scale and the foreign interventions, the Soviet Union could not go on a straight line to developing the socialist economy. Even after the defeat of its armed enemies, it had to adopt the New Economic Policy from 1922 to 1927 in order to revive the war-devastated economy in the quickest possible way by giving concessions to private entrepreneurs, traders and rich peasants.

It became the task of the great Stalin to launch in 1928 in the first of the

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series of Five-Year Plans (FYP) to develop socialist industry, collectivize and mechanize agriculture, expand the system of education and raise the political and cultural level of the socialist society. He took decisive steps to stop the Right Opposition and "Left" Opposition in opposing and sabotaging the building of socialism. The first FYP was so successful that Stalin thought classes and class struggle no longer existed in the Soviet Union and this misconception was written into the 1935 Soviet Constitution, paving the way for the mishandling of contradictions in society and for revisionism to arise.

The Soviet Union became strong enough economically, politically and culturally to defend itself against any overt counterrevolution and to defeat the Nazi invasion, defeat the forces of fascism in Europe, rebuild the socialist industry severely damaged by the German aggressors and develop it further from 1945 onwards. But after the death of Stalin in 1953, Khrushchov was able to split the leading cadres of the Left, rise to power with a coup and fully instituted modern revisionism in 1956. He proclaimed pretentiously that he was going to build the material and cultural foundation of communism by using material incentives and competition among economic units and working personnel to increase production.

The economic ministries were decentralized. The factories and collective farms were autonomized and made responsible for their cost-and-profit accounting. The workers were urged to compete with each other to show individual productivity but the managers were also given hire-and-fire power. All the aforementioned measures were undertaken in order to undermine and disintegrate the socialist and communist spirit of collectivity and the class dictatorship of the proletariat, completely negate the achievements of Stalin and promote bourgeois ideas and values in the guise of supraclass humanism, pacifism, economism and using material incentives to raise production.

Despite the calls for peaceful coexistence and detente by Khrushchov, the US relentlessly pursued its Cold War against the Soviet Union and hot wars of aggression against the oppressed peoples and nations. Brezhnev took the reins of power from Khrushchov and used the failed policies of Khrushchov and the growing threats of the US as pretext to recentralize the economic ministries in order to gain more funds for the costly acts of Soviet social imperialism and the arms race. State monopoly capitalism became more consolidated, while it pushed capitalist-oriented reforms further. Bureaucratic corruption flourished as the free markets and other means of self-enrichment expanded and a Mafia-type criminal bourgeoisie arose to redirect social resources to private appropriation.

### ***Chinese Experience in Socialist Revolution and Construction***

*Rethinking Socialism* describes correctly the years of 1949 to 1952 in China as a period of rehabilitation and consolidation consequent to the overthrow of the joint dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class, which had been run by the Guomindang Party and centered on the bureaucrat capitalists with a big comprador character. The newly born socialist state in the form of the people's democratic republic confiscated bureaucrat capital and foreign capital which amounted to 80 percent of the fixed assets of industry and transport. It nationalized the banks, manufacturing, large-scale trading, mining, construction, transportation and communications were nationalized. It completed the confiscation of land from the landlords and redistribution of the land to the landless peasants.

As in the earliest period of the Soviet Union, the Chinese socialist state reorganized and reconstituted the system of government and took over the commanding heights of the economy. The tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution were basically completed but transitory measures of a bourgeois-democratic character were still to be undertaken. Land reform was undertaken in order to pave the way for the development of agricultural cooperation in three stages. State-private enterprises were established to accommodate and absorb national capital. Workers' cooperatives were organized as the embryo of bigger enterprises.

The general run of the employees of the overthrown government and confiscated enterprises were retained and were provided with socialist education. Campaigns against corruption, waste and bureaucracy were launched in 1951 and so were campaigns against bribery, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing state economic intelligence.

By 1952 China was able to solve the problems in the transition period by ensuring adequate supply of necessities, controlling inflation, stopping corruption within the bureaucracy and in its relations with private entrepreneurs, fighting an anti-imperialist war in Korea, suppressing counterrevolutionaries and securing the borders of the huge country.

By late 1952 China was ready to carry out the first of its Five-Year Plans to develop the socialist economy. There was a high tide of enthusiasm in socialist construction. The Soviet Union was able to provide economic and technical assistance to augment self-reliant efforts of the Chinese people. The basic socialist transformation of the economy was accomplished during the First Five-year Economic Plan.

In keeping with the socialist character of the economy and society, public ownership of the means of production became predominant, with state ownership of industries and collective ownership in agriculture. But

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in 1956 the struggle between the socialist line represented by Mao and the bourgeois line represented by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping emerged. *Rethinking Socialism* gives us a clear account of this two-line struggle in terms of conflicting socialist and capitalist projects.

Mao delivered his address "On the Ten Major Relationships" and made it his first point to stress that China's path of socialist economic development would have heavy industry as the leading factor, agriculture as the base and light industry as the bridge between the two and that it would avoid the overconcentration of investments on heavy industry as in the Soviet experience. He paid close attention to the reports and recommendations of various economic ministries and agencies in preparation for the making the Second Five Economic Plan.

In the first session of the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1956, Liu Shaoqi and the Deng Xiaoping exaggerated the negative side of the situation. They did not see the contradictions within and between the state and collective sectors of the economy as opportunities for solving them and advancing the socialist economy. They advocated the prolongation of concessions to the national bourgeoisie, the small entrepreneurs and the rich peasants. They wanted the factories and communes to become autonomized and responsible for cost and profit accounting and the working people to compete with each other on a piece-rate basis.

The state-private corporations persisted and gained influence within the CPC and the state. The reform done was only to reduce the income of private capitalists to a fixed interest rate, amounting to 25 percent of corporate profit. They were inspired by the rise of modern revisionism and the capitalist-oriented reforms in the Soviet Union. They sent study teams to the Soviet Union to learn such reforms for application in China.

They harped on the line that the socialist system was advanced but that the forces of production were backward and needed to be developed first by contravening the character of the socialist system. They took inspiration from the *Soviet Union's Political Economy: A Textbook*, which said that the nature of China's revolution right after the establishment of the People's Republic was democratic. And they advocated the further development of a "new democratic" economy. Mao rejected the assertion of the textbook and argued that the main tasks of the democratic revolution had been completed and that the socialist revolution and construction had to proceed.

The adoption of the Second Five-Year Plan under the banner of the Great Leap Forward in 1958 essentially blocked the bourgeois line and capitalist projects of Liu and Deng. It was a well-proportioned and well-balanced plan of building the heavy and basic industries as the leading factor, developing agriculture and the communes as the base of the

economy and light industry to serve immediately the consumer and production needs of the masses and to hasten accumulation. It was a plan of walking self-reliantly on two legs. It was carried out to overcome the imperialist blockade, the withdrawal of Soviet assistance and natural disasters. By 1962 industry was developed in the coastal and interior areas. The communes produced a bumper crop.

Tremendous odds were overcome, including the Soviet revisionist tearing up of contracts and blueprints and abandonment of ongoing projects and the persistent attempts of the capitalist roaders to sabotage the Great Leap Forward. Following their Soviet revisionist mentors, the capitalist roaders preached that the communes would fail because it was not preceded by mechanization. To counter the communes, they pushed the “three freedoms “: 1) to enlarge private plots, 2) to promote free markets, and 3) for each individual household to be responsible for its own profit or loss; and “one contract” to have each individual household sign a contract with the State for the production of a pre-set amount of crops. When the capitalist roaders were foiled, they resorted to an ultra-Left line, the “ill communist wind” to discredit and sabotage the communes.

While the general trend in the Great Leap Forward spelled a great victory for the socialist revolution and construction, adverse circumstances and mistakes were exaggerated to misrepresent it and ridicule the leadership of Mao. But the problems and difficulties were overcome. After the first bumper crop of the communes came in 1962, Mao launched the Socialist Education Movement in 1963. This coincided with the rapid economic growth and rise in the standard of living in China, the high prestige of China in the third world and the intensification of the contradictions between the Soviet Union and China.

### ***The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution***

The capitalist roaders kept on harping that the Chinese people should maintain stability, enjoy the initial prosperity and enliven the market to develop the forces of production. And they systematically undermined and sabotaged the Socialist Education Movement. Thus, it became necessary to launch the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in 1966 because of the growing manifestations of revisionism within the Party and the state and the deleterious influence and blatant threats of Soviet social imperialism. I had the good fortune to be in China when the GPCR started.

The Central Committee of the CPC issued the 16-Point Circular to guide the GPCR in 1966. The signal mass event was the rise up of the Red Guards among the student youth who rebelled against the work teams deployed by Liu Shaoqi. Mao hailed the Red Guards as revolutionary successors and called on them to bombard the bourgeois

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headquarters in the Communist Party. At the same time, he called on the People's Liberation Army to support the Left. In January 1967 the workers established the Shanghai Commune to overthrow the Shanghai Municipal Committee but the instruction later came from the Party to form Revolutionary Committees to consist of the representatives of the Party, the PLA and workers.

The main objective of the GPCR was to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of modern capitalism and consolidate socialism and to revolutionize the superstructure to further promote the development of the socialist mode of production. Instead of merely using top-down directives, the CPC under Mao's leadership aimed to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses to advance socialist politics, economy and culture, to press demands on the officials of the CPC and the state, criticize those who were errant and overthrow the incorrigibles. The right of the workers to strike was upheld. The broad masses of the people engaged in the most extensive democratic actions never before seen in the history of mankind.

The Revolutionary Committees were established as the new organs of political power. They were composed of the elected representatives of the cadres, the masses and the experts. Cadres were rotated to perform functions of leadership and to do low-level work among the masses. The Charter of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company became a model. For the mobilization of the masses and material resources to achieve greater success, with revolutionary politics in command of production, the Taching model was used for industry and the Tachai model for agriculture.

With revolutionary politics in command of production and the mass movements stirring the entire country, the annual rates of economic growth went up beyond 10 per cent in the entire course of the GPCR. Inspired by the GPCR, the most experienced cadres, scientists, engineers and the educated youth fanned out from their urban concentration in order to serve and assist in the building of industries, development of communes and cultural upliftment of the people in the less developed and backward areas of China.

In art and literature, Mao's Talks at the Yanan Forum became the guide. Theatrical models in the form of the opera were created and staged widely. All other literary and artistic forms were availed of to spread the line of the proletarian cultural revolution and to honor the workers, peasants and soldiers as heroes. The Red Book of quotations from Comrade Mao was read by hundreds of millions of people and reproduced far beyond the number of copies of the Bible circulated in so many centuries.

The youth were rallied to go to the factories and the communes to integrate and work with the masses. The students were required to do a period of mass work and were subject to evaluation by the masses. In the course of the GPCR, mass movements were generated not only to



mobilize the people but also serve the people better by providing better and more effective social services. Rural clinics became widespread. Barefoot doctors were trained and became available to provide health and medical services to the masses in far-flung areas.

In terms of delegates and elected officers of the Central Committee, the Ninth Congress of the CPC reflected the objectives of the GPCR and the main forces and cadres that became prominent in the years of 1966 to 1969. The leadership of Mao was upheld and so was Lin Biao as his closest comrade in arms. The Shanghai Group of Four (Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyan, and Zhang Chunqiao) was also on the rise. But there would be ensuing events indicating that those who were overthrown from their positions as capitalist roaders could still maneuver within and between the CPC and the state. There were domestic issues as well as international issues. And there were interactions of Left, Middle and Right positions concerning these issues.

Soon after the Ninth Party Congress in 1969, Lin Biao was accused of being overeager to take over the office of President vacated by Liu and displace the office of Chairman Mao and being imprudent and reckless with such lines as imperialism was moving towards total collapse and socialism was moving towards total victory and that China was the Yanan or central base of the revolutionary forces based in the countryside of the world which encircled the counterrevolutionary forces in the cities of the world. Worst of all, he was subsequently accused of plotting a coup against Mao, with his son having allegedly tried to assassinate him.

There were also reported incidents of clashes in certain garrisons of the PLA, which Chou Enlai referred to in persuading Mao to favor the middle course and rehabilitate some of those overthrown by the Left. Finally, Lin Biao and other top defense and military close to him were reported to be trying to escape to the Soviet Union on a plane without sufficient fuel. And quite a surprise to outsiders, Deng Xiaoping who was supposed to be one of the two biggest capitalist roaders was rehabilitated and returned to power no less than as Vice Premier and Chief of the General Staff of the PLA upon the recommendation of Zhou Enlai to Mao.

The downfall of Lin Piao signified a severe split among those previously considered Left at the beginning of the GPCR and the ascendance of a Middle-Right combination. And the Group of Four from Shanghai also kept their positions and increased their criticism of the late Lin Biao as well as Zhou Enlai who was referred to as Confucius and then as Chou in the novel *Water Margin*. But Zhou Enlai maintained his close comradeship with Mao. Twists and turns would occur in the GPCR, including the removal of Deng from his high office after the death of Zhou in February 1976 for spreading his "four modernizations" as comprador bourgeois ideology to his success after the death of Mao in September 1976 in making a

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counterrevolutionary coup against the GPCR in collaboration with the CPC Chairman Hua Guofeng.

Because it is focused on the contest between socialist and capitalist projects, Rethinking Socialism cites only a few personalities and groups in conflict in the twists and turns in the GPCR. Enough indicators are given for further research and discussion in order to know more about the identity and roles of the political actors in the zigzag of developments due to the two-line struggle within the CPC and the Chinese socialist state, the continuing influence of those who were overthrown, the susceptibility of the leading organs and the mass movement to factionalism, volatility or manipulation, the domestic and internal issues that generated Left, Middle and Right positions, the initiatives taken by the political actors and the consequences.

While still in office in the CPC and/or the state, the capitalist roaders could do a lot of mischief against the GPCR even after their bourgeois line and capitalist projects were rejected and they were held to account. They could fake repentance and beg for rehabilitation, sow intrigues in the ranks of the Left or raise the Red flag to run it down by taking ultra-left positions and actions. In certain areas at different times, they could turn one organ of the CPC, the PLA and government agency against the other. The capitalist roaders systematically used factionalism and even criminal acts to disrupt and discredit the mass movement and the entire cultural revolution. Mao had wished the mass movement to settle issues but there were certain issues that the central leaders had to debate and decide on promptly.

In foreign policy, China took a significant step in rapprochement and normalization of relations with the US in 1972, both to counter the threat of Soviet social-imperialism and to gain access to higher technology, foreign investments and wider market. Deng Xiaoping was able to replace the previous picture of the world as consisting of the first world of capitalist powers, a second world of socialist countries and a third world of oppressed nations and peoples with the picture of a first world of two superpowers, second world of less developed capitalist countries and the third world of countries and peoples in Asia, African and Latin America. Also set aside or played down was the picture of the world in which the oppressed peoples and nations were in the countryside of the world waging a people's war against imperialism in the urban bastions of the world.

Deng's new picture of the world was one of countries in diplomatic relations with the first world of two superpowers opening the opportunity for China to play off one against the other and draw advantages in the process. Soviet social imperialism was a major adversary of China in view of one million Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border. The US was also a major adversary and for a much a longer period of time previously. But

this time Deng welcomed the offers of rapprochement from the US, which were done through bilateral talks of US and Chinese representatives in Poland and Pakistan, to pave the way for the Nixon visit to China in 1972 and start the process of engaging with the US and advancing the line of capitalist-oriented “reforms and opening up” to the US and world capitalist system and develop the forces of production through the “four modernizations”.

As a consequence of the 1976 Dengist coup, the socialist worker state or the class dictatorship of the proletariat was overthrown by the bourgeoisie. The counterrevolutionary plotters arrested and detained not just the so-called “Gang of Four” but tens of thousands of cadres aligned with the GPCR. And millions of CPC members were expelled and replaced by those hostile to the GPCR. Consequently, the Dengists declared the GPCR as a complete catastrophe and that Mao was 100 per cent in error for it. They blared out the brazen lies that the mass movement was complete chaos, destroyed cultural treasures and ruined the economy despite high annual rates of growth of more than 10 per cent, scaled down by the Dengists to an average 9 percent annual growth which was still high.

To destroy the base of the socialist economy and separate the peasantry from its alliance with the proletariat, they dismantled the commune system, derided collectivity as a system of irresponsibility in which idlers coup dip their hands into the common pot. They adopted the retrogressive “household responsibility system” and glorified the rich peasants to immediately pull the rug from under the socialist economy. The rural industries were privatized. The old big compradors bounced back as economic advisers, got one more round of war bond payments, gained access to the state banks and quickly became construction magnates in collaboration with Hongkong and Shanghai Chinese construction moguls.

The capitalist-oriented economic reforms and the opening up to the US and the world capitalist system encouraged the US to outsource manufacturing to China at the level of technology suitable for sweatshop operations. These yielded enough export surplus to stimulate the Chinese economy but not enough to put aside popular complaints against misallocation of resources, corruption and inflation, which caused mass protests and the uprisings in Beijing and scores of other cities in 1989. The Dengists quelled the uprisings, consolidated their power and fully restored capitalism in China, with the two tiers of state monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism.

China begged the US to make more investments in China and increase Chinese exports to the US. The US agreed and they became the main partners in promoting the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization. They benefited mutually from the exploitation of cheap Chinese labor and

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from the global supply chain so-called. They became the best of partners, especially after China entered the WTO in 2001. But the US policy makers took notice of China's economic and military rise as a threat to the US interests as early as during the time of Obama, especially in East Asia and the South China Sea and East Sea.

And now during the time of Trump, the US is more than ever hard-pressed by the recurrent and worsening crisis of global capitalism to accuse China of using the state-owned enterprises and state planning to realize strategic economic and military goals, manipulating economic, trade and financial policies and stealing technology from US subsidiaries and US research laboratories.

With the dictatorship of the proletariat having been overthrown and replaced by the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the state-owned enterprises and expanded private enterprises have become the properties of state monopoly capitalism and private monopoly capitalism, respectively. China has all the five features of imperialism, as defined by Lenin.

Monopoly capitalism is dominant in the Chinese economy and society. Bank capital and industrial capital are merged and have brought about a financial oligarchy. The export of surplus capital has grown in importance over the export surplus commodities. The state and private monopolies of China have engaged in combinations with foreign monopolies.

With the increase in the number of imperialist powers, as a result of the capitalist restoration in the biggest former socialist countries, the world has relatively become a smaller space for inter-imperialist competition and rivalry and is the landscape of intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions resulting from the adoption of ever higher technology and ever bigger crises of overaccumulation of capital and the overproduction of civil and military goods.

Now, the inter-imperialist contradictions between the US and China are at the center stage of the crisis of the world capitalist system. The intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions have resulted in severe rounds of the crisis of overaccumulation and overproduction, the escalation of neoliberal exploitation, state terrorism and wars of aggression on the one hand and the rise of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and the foreseeable resurgence of the world proletarian revolution on the other hand.

## **Conclusions**

The victories of the GPCR from 1966 onwards proved the necessity and validity of waging it against the capitalist roaders within the CPC and the erstwhile socialist state. The defeat of the GPCR in 1976 proved further with the full and blatant restoration of capitalism that the waging

of the GPCR was necessary and valid against the bourgeois line and capitalist projects of the likes of Liu and Deng. The GPCR was defeated. But it has left to us the principles and methods by which to uphold, defend and advance socialism.

Rethinking Socialism is an excellent summary and analysis of the victory of socialism and subsequent defeat in China. It is important to know and understand the causes and processes of achieving victory and suffering defeat so that in the future the proletariat and the people will know the basic principles and methods to apply and develop to win in the struggle for socialism as the transition to communism.

It was earlier demonstrated in the case of the Soviet Union, that the forces of socialism could win against powerful reactionary and imperialist armies and build socialism under the most difficult conditions but they could be defeated through peaceful evolution due to the loss of proletarian class stand and vigilance, lack of attention to or mishandling of classes and class contradictions, the persistence of reactionary ideas, degeneration of Party cadres and members, the rise of the petty mode of thinking and bureaucratic corruption.

In the case of China, Mao recognized the growing problem of modern revisionism and was able to put forward the theory and practice of cultural revolution to combat revisionism, restore capitalism and consolidate socialism. But the forces of modern revisionism and capitalist restoration prevailed over the GPCR. Like the Paris Commune, the GPCR was defeated but it has bequeathed to us the theory and practice and the positive and negative lessons for us to learn and improve on in order to understand and explain the process of capitalist restoration in both the Soviet Union and China and to frustrate the bourgeoisie and win greater and more lasting victories in future socialist societies and in the socialist transition to communism.

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# **Fight State Terrorism and Oust Duterte Tyranny Message of Solidarity to Anakbayan-National<sup>19</sup>**

**November 30, 2020**

Dear Fellow Activists,

As the founding chairman of Kabataang Makabayan, I am happy that you are celebrating your 22nd anniversary on this day. This is a day of great significance. It was the day when Kabataang Makabayan was founded in 1964 and when the great leader of the Philippine Revolution of 1896 and the Katipunan, Andres Bonifacio, was born.

I wish ardently that you sum up your experience in arousing, organising and mobilizing the Filipino youth since 1998. Learn well your positive and negative lessons, enhance your strength and overcome weaknesses, face the challenges and set forth the tasks for winning ever greater victories along the line of the new democratic revolution against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the era of modern imperialism and the proletarian-socialist revolution.

What is evil, anti-national and anti-democratic is now concentrated in the Duterte regime which is tyrannical, traitorous, murderous, extremely corrupt and deceptive. Since the downfall the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986, the current regime has been the most servile to imperialist powers (especially the US and China) and the most brutal and most greedy chief representative of the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

It knows no bounds for cutting into contracts involving government appropriations and franchises, especially in programs and projects involving imports and exports, public utilities, infrastructure and local and foreign purchases of supplies and equipment for the bureaucracy and the armed services. The Duterte family has become the supreme crime lord by taking over the smuggling and distribution of illegal drugs and other contraband and by killing tens of thousands of people to grab crime territory from competitors.

After killing the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations since 2017, the Duterte regime has brought the worst aspect of its evil character by accelerating its drive for fascist dictatorship. Aside from stealing hundreds of billions of pesos from the national treasury, the regime has taken advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic by enacting the Anti-Terror Law in order to carry out

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<sup>19</sup>Delivered as Founding Chairman of Kabataang Makabayan

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state terrorism in the name of anti-communism and terrorism.

Even before the formal declaration of nationwide martial law, the regime has acquired the means to impose fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people and suppress the patriotic and democratic forces. Oplan Tokhang methods are now being unleashed against the people as in the bogus war on drugs. People are arbitrarily tagged, listed and vilified as “communist terrorists” for the purpose of arrests, indefinite detention without judicial warrant, extortion and torture and extrajudicial killings with utter impunity.

It is the urgent duty of the Filipino youth and people to fight and oust the monstrous Duterte regime which is ruining the Filipino nation in an all-round way, economically, politically and culturally. It is trying to keep the monster in power even beyond 2022, despite the fact that he is physically, mentally and morally sick. His alternative is to use the military and his control of the Comelec vote count in order to install a presidential proxy.

The Anakbayan has the experience of overthrowing the Estrada regime which was extremely corrupt and brutish in ruling the country. You should be inspired your own success in making a major contribution to the ouster of Estrada from 1998 to January 2001. I am confident that you can muster the political will and carry out the mass actions for getting rid of the Duterte regime which is far more monstrous than the Estrada regime.

I urge you to link yourselves with the broad masses of the people and the broad united front in the rapidly growing movement for the ouster of Duterte. You must contribute your resolute will, your irrepressible efforts, your militancy and mass strength to the multi-class and multisectoral movement for ousting the Duterte regime.

The rapidly worsening crisis of the Philippine ruling system and the world capitalist system is bound to generate mass uprisings in the forthcoming weeks, months and years in the Philippines and the world. Take advantage of the crisis conditions and follow the desire of the people for revolutionary change.

Fight and oust the Duterte regime in order to advance the just cause of full national independence, democracy, social development, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, provision of social services, the progress of patriotic, scientific and pro-people culture and just peace.

Long live Anakbayan and the Filipino youth!  
Fight state terrorism and oust the Duterte tyranny  
Be inspired by the Philippine Revolution of 1896!  
Advance the new democratic revolution!  
Long live the Filipino people!





# **Peace in the Time of Pandemic: Prospects for Social Justice and Reforms**

## **Address to the Movement Against Tyranny (MAT) Cebu**

December 5, 2020

Beloved Compatriots,

First of all, let me thank the Movement Against Tyranny Cebu for inviting me to speak on the theme of peace and the prospects for justice and reforms and to express warmest greetings of solidarity in the struggle for democracy against the tyranny of the Duterte regime.

I admire you and salute you for your firm commitment. I congratulate you for all the successes that you have achieved in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the broad masses of the people to fight for national and social liberation against tyranny.

### ***1. Struggle for Peace as Key Role of the United Front Against Tyranny***

As a broad united front, the Movement Against Tyranny seeks to fight for the national and democratic rights and interests of the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the middle strata such as the urban petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie and the anti-fascist sections and elements of the upper classes.

The MAT bases itself on the consensus of the various patriotic and democratic forces that strive to stop the anti-national and anti-democratic policies and actions of the Duterte tyranny and to end the reign of terror and greed that seeks to perpetuate imperialist domination and the ruling system of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

The Duterte regime has sought to justify its tyranny, its ever-worsening use of state terrorism, as something necessary to end the armed revolution of the people, which it maligns as “communist terrorist”. On this false ground, it has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and has proclaimed the nullification of all the agreements that have been made in these negotiations.

It completely obscures the fact that millions of the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces, including the CPP and NPA and other formations allied within the NDFFP, have invoked the sovereign right of the people to rise up against the intolerable ruling system of exploitation and oppression

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and yet have agreed with the reactionary Government of Republic of the Philippines to engage in peace negotiations.

The GRP and NDFP mutually signed and approved The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 as the framework agreement for peace negotiations. It declares the aim of the peace negotiations, which is to address the roots of the armed conflict and arrive at comprehensive agreements on social, economic and political reforms. It spells out national sovereignty, democracy and social justice as the basic guiding principles of the negotiations.

It sets forth the substantive agenda in the following sequence: respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, social and economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms and end of hostilities and disposition of forces. It provides the methods of arriving at comprehensive and related agreements through reciprocal working committees under the direction of the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels, respectively.

Since 1992, the Filipino people have nurtured the hope that the civil war between the revolutionary forces of the NDFP and the counterrevolutionary forces of the GRP be resolved through peace negotiations and that solutions of the social, economic and political problems that have caused the civil war be agreed upon in order to lay the basis for a just and lasting peace.

But there are forces behind and within the GRP that oppose serious peace negotiations with the NDFP in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration and consent to such negotiations only as a means of outwitting and steering the NDFP towards capitulation or at least paralyzing the armed revolution or even splitting it over time through protracted indefinite ceasefire agreements.

Because of disruptive actions and extremely prolonged delays by the GRP, less than two years have actually been devoted to peace negotiations since 1992. It is a lie for the Duterte regime to claim that more than 25 years of peace negotiations have passed and yet these have not resulted in a final peace agreement. To make the length of time for peace negotiations sound more ridiculous, the regime claims that the peace negotiations had run for 30 years since the ceasefire negotiations of 1986 during the time of Aquino.

We must recall that on the very first day after the signing of The Hague Joint Declaration on September 1, 1992, GRP President Ramos proclaimed the formation of the National Unification Commission (NUC) for the purpose of "localized peace negotiations" under the auspices of the commission and peace and order councils of the GRP between the reactionary military officers and their own military assets and a few renegades masquerading as "independent revolutionary" armed groups.

For two years, they tried to conjure the illusion that the revolutionary

forces could be bought with paltry amounts and promises and were breaking up and surrendering in great number. Ramos agreed to allow the GRP representatives to engage in exploratory talks with the NDFP representatives only after he realized that the revolutionary forces have become more consolidated and stronger through the Second Great Rectification Movement.

The formal opening of the peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels could be held only on June 26, 1995. On this occasion the Joint Agreement on the Formation, Sequence and Operationalization of the Reciprocal Working Committees was signed. But after the formal opening, the peace negotiations were disrupted for one whole year because of the GRP refusal to release the NDFP consultant Sotero Llamas.

There were still many more disruptions and delays which the GRP side was responsible for from 1996 to the end of the Ramos term in 1998. During their meetings, however, the GRP and NDFP panels were able to forge several important agreements. The most important of these agreements was the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) in compliance with the first item of the substantive agenda.

The CARHRIHL was forged by the negotiating panels in six months of concentrated work and was signed by the panels on March 16, 1998. The NDFP Chairman signed it promptly. But GRP President Ramos failed to sign it. The newly-elected GRP President Estrada signed it on August 7, 1998. But on May 31, 1999 the GRP issued its formal notice of termination of peace negotiations. The termination took effect on July 1, 1999 and did not resume while Estrada was in power up to January 2001.

The peace negotiations resumed on April 27, 2001 during the Arroyo regime. Both parties affirmed as valid and binding all bilateral agreements entered into since the 1992 Hague Joint Declaration. The Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) was accepted by both parties as Third Party Facilitator in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. But the second round of formal talks in Oslo, Norway from June 10 to 13, 2001 was recessed by the GRP by citing as cause the death of a notorious Marcos-period torturer who resisted arrest by the NPA.

From then on, the Arroyo regime sought to make peace negotiations impossible by requesting the US government to designate as terrorist the CPP, NPA and myself as "terrorist", use such designation as lever demanding the capitulation of the revolutionary movement of the people, and reduce negotiations to disarming and demobilizing the revolutionary forces while keeping the indefinite suspension of the peace negotiations until the surrender of the NDFP. For more than nine years, there were no peace negotiations while Arroyo was in power.

One year after assuming the GRP presidency, Benigno Aquino III agreed to the resumption of the peace negotiations in Oslo on June 18, 2011. No substantial agreement of any kind was made. The GRP side showed no interest in negotiating the substantive agenda. It focused on seeking to nullify The Hague Joint Declaration and described it as a document of perpetual division. It had the illusion that it could defeat the armed revolution through military operations or mere palliatives.

It also refused to allow the release of the NDFP consultants who remained in prison in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees. Despite the progressive background of some of its members, the GRP negotiating panel was controlled by clerico-fascists and pro-US military officers, especially at the level of the Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process.

If together with the US military officers the “soc-dem” Norberto Gonzales poisoned the peace negotiations during the time of Arroyo, so did the “soc-dem” Teresita Deles together with the pro-US military officers during the time of Aquino II. But the worst in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations would still come when someone like Duterte, who at first proclaimed himself as Left and socialist, shortly thereafter would undertake the most vicious and most violent actions intended to kill the peace negotiations once and for all time.

### ***2. Why and How the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations Have Been Terminated***

Before Duterte became president, he boasted of being close to the CPP, NPA and NDFP. He shouted “Long live the CPP and NPA!” every time he went to a guerrilla front in Mindanao to ingratiate himself with the revolutionary movement. And he wanted to be an NDFP consultant in peace negotiations. He was publicly advising the business entrepreneurs to pay their taxes to the people’s revolutionary government. He proposed to release all political prisoners even before the resumption of peace negotiations. He pledged to make peace with the revolutionary movement of the people.

As soon as he visited the first military camp after he became president in 2016, he began to differentiate his past as mayor of Davao City, whose political life depended on alliance with the revolutionary movement, from his current office as chief executive of the entire ruling system, in charge of all its coercive apparatuses and all the opportunities for plunder. At the exploratory talks in June 2016 to prepare for the first round of formal talks, it was already clear that he would not release all the political prisoners before the first round of formal talks in August 2016.

Surreptitiously he started his all-out war against the revolutionary

movement under the guise of his military minions continuing the Oplan Bayanihan of his predecessor Aquino. Like Estrada, Arroyo and Aquino, he gave himself six months to one year to pretend to be for serious peace negotiations in order to consolidate his position within the reactionary government and at the same time try to hoodwink the revolutionary movement. Despite these stumbling blocks, however, the NDFP negotiating panel persevered in pushing for the release of political prisoners in definite batches to facilitate the peace talks.

The GRP and NDFP negotiating panels held the first and second rounds of formal talks in Oslo in August and October 2016. These were devoted mainly to the issue of realizing the promise of Duterte to release all political prisoners and to holding the initial meetings of the reciprocal working committees. In the first formal talks, an agreement was made to carry out reciprocal unilateral ceasefire to demonstrate goodwill and promote the peace negotiations. This ran for almost five months from late September 2016 to the first week of February 2017. The revolutionary forces upheld this ceasefire, the longest in the history of the peace talks, despite continued military operations by the GRP. The Duterte regime however mistook the NDFP's principled desire to push the peace talks as a sign of weakness.

In the third round of talks in Rome in January-February 2017 and in the fourth round of talks in Noordwijk aan Zee in April 2017, Duterte demanded protracted indefinite ceasefire and in effect the end of the people's revolutionary government by giving up vital functions of governance in exchange for a renewed promise of releasing all the political prisoners. The NDFP was firm with its stand that all the political prisoners must be released and the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) must be forged before there can be any agreement on any extended mutual ceasefire.

To make credible his pretense at being serious in pursuing the substantive agenda of the peace negotiations, Duterte had appointed to the GRP negotiating panel persons respected by the NDFP as having an understanding of the national and democratic demands of the people. Thus, despite the maneuvers of Duterte and his pro-US security cluster to push the NDFP to a position of capitulation, there was substantial progress made in the negotiations of social and economic reforms. But the fifth round of formal talks, already poised to commence in May 2017, was aborted because the GRP demanded that the CPP Central Committee withdraw its call for intensifying the armed resistance in response to Duterte's proclamation of martial law to cover the entirety of Mindanao despite the fact that those whom he assailed as Muslim terrorists, who launched a military operation in Marawi City, were located in just a few definite and limited areas.

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The proclamation, which invoked the Marawi siege only as pretext, was directed mainly against the revolutionary movement led by the CPP. The NDFP negotiating panel stood firm that it would not recommend the withdrawal of the call of the CPP Central Committee unless Duterte would first amend his martial law proclamation. Duterte refused to make the necessary amendment of his proclamation even as GRP Defense Secretary Lorenzana made a press statement that the proclamation did not target the CPP and the NPA.

Despite the impasse in the holding of the formal peace talks, due mainly to “war hawks” in the security cluster of the Duterte Cabinet, the GRP negotiating panel was able to get permission from Duterte to engage in backchannel talks so that the negotiation and drafting of the CASER would proceed. Indeed, most of the CASER mutual draft, especially the most important sections on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and National Industrialization and Economic Development were done by the reciprocal working committees and were ready for negotiation at the level of the negotiating panels.

The proposed reforms in the CASER draft agreed upon by the GRP and NDFP reciprocal working committees would have delivered immediate and concrete gains for the people. The Duterte regime however revealed its insincerity when militarist hawks Esperon and Galvez disowned this draft including the work of their own economic policy officials who helped produce this. Brazenly sabotaging the peace talks, they declared that a CASER would be “treasonous”.

Ultimately, Duterte and the pro-US retired and active military officers around him had their way. To discredit the peace negotiations in press statements, they harped on various lines like the peace negotiations had taken too long without any result, that the NPA was violating CARHRIHL as if there were no Joint Monitoring Committee to receive complaints, and that it was best to conduct “localized peace talks” ala NUC and at the same time escalate the all-out war against the CPP and NPA.

Withdrawal from the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations suited Duterte's constant posture and image of being a strongman, ever willing to engage in extrajudicial killings as in the bogus war on drugs. Most important of all, it was consonant with the more cold-blooded aim of realizing his scheme of fascist dictatorship. The death of the peace negotiations was finally sealed on November 13, 2017 when Duterte pledged to US President Trump to annihilate the CPP and NPA.

Ten days after, on November 23, 2017, Duterte issued Proclamation 360 to terminate the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. And on December 3, 2017 he issued Proclamation 374 to designate the CPP and NPA as terrorist organizations. These proclamations were intended to end the peace negotiations once and for all. They were the preparation for the issuance

of Memorandum Order 32 on November 22, 2018 which placed the Bicol region, and the Negros and Samar islands under a “state of emergency,” the formation of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) on December 4, 2018 and the enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Law on July 3, 2020 which has realized Duterte’s ambition of fascist dictatorship even without its formal proclamation.

I think that I have given you a full presentation of how Duterte has done more than enough to prove to all reasonable and peace-loving people that he premeditated the killing of the peace negotiations and that he has done more than enough to ensure that there can be no peace negotiations while he is in power. We cannot expect that the worsening crisis of the Philippine ruling system would persuade him to resume peace negotiations.

Duterte takes the one-sided view that the worsening crisis is his opportunity and justification to grab despotic power and the unlimited privilege of plunder in the style of his idol Marcos. He does not even know that by his own aggravation of the crisis with his reign of terror and greed, he has inflicted intolerable suffering on the people from the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation and that the people and various patriotic and democratic forces are eager to oust him from power.

The only limitation to his power that Duterte seems to be aware of is his bad health condition which now limits his personal appearances before the public. But it is still important for him to project the image of being able to rule beyond 2022 through a fascist dictatorship and to keep in reserve his ability to rig the Comelec vote count, as he did in the 2019 mid-term elections, in order to install his daughter or some other stooge as his presidential proxy.

It is the duty of the Filipino people to assert their own sovereign power to catalyze the process of the disintegration and overthrow of the Duterte ruling clique. In this regard, it is important for the broad united front to rely mainly on the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the splits among the reactionary upper classes. The last two years of every incumbent president in the Philippines are normally his lameduck years, when centrifugal forces arise even within the ranks of the regime.

Duterte is in the worst situation as the public gets to know how much his crimes have devastated the Philippine economy and all other aspects of Philippine society, how extreme has been his greed for power and plunder, and how after all he is now physically debilitated and is mentally and morally deranged. The broad united front of the patriotic and democratic forces of the people have all the facts and all the political and moral advantage and resources to spotlight the reality that emperor is naked and has the ashen face of a dying tyrant—as was the situation in the waning years of Marcos’ dictatorial rule.

### ***3. The Significance of Peace as the Reign of Justice and Reforms in Relation to the Pandemic***

The persistent character of the Philippines as a semicolonial and semifeudal country puts it in chronic crisis. As the continuing dominant economic power, US imperialism has kept it underdeveloped and limited to being a cheap source of raw materials, semimanufactures and cheap labor and an importer of finished products of higher value from industrial capitalist countries. Thus, the Philippines has suffered widening trade deficits and has been made more dependent on foreign direct investments and loans that are designed to keep it underdeveloped.

The rich natural resources of the country can be considered a boon to the Filipino people but it has been turned into their bane by foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and their political agents who play the role of bureaucrat comprador capitalists. These anti-national and anti-democratic forces are averse even to such bourgeois democratic reforms as genuine land reform and national industrialization.

Since the US nominal grant of national independence in 1946, the Philippines has been kept as a cheap source of mineral ores, timber and certain export crops, as Japan reconstructed and expanded its industry and then the East Asian tigers arose. In the international division of labor, the most that the Philippines could get as concession since the late 1970s has been a share in the semi-manufacture of garments and semiconductors and export of working men and women in addition to the production of raw materials for export.

Upon the ascendance of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization since the 1980s, the more the Filipino puppet leaders and technocrats have accepted as the comparative advantage of the Philippines the role of provider of raw materials and cheap labor and the status of underdevelopment in the Philippines. Their idea of development has not gone beyond giving priority to private construction, infrastructure building and the opportunities for pork barrel corruption and the perpetuation of the colonial pattern of production, consumption and trade and ever-increasing dependence on consumer imports, foreign investments and loans for the purpose.

Coming as the latest of the Filipino puppet presidents, Duterte has admitted since the beginning that he knew nothing about economics and has always depended on technocrats who follow the dictates of foreign monopoly capitalism and have disdain for the self-reliant development of the Philippines. Playing the role of the strongman, the cowardly weakling Duterte has poured increasing amounts of tax money to military overspending and to the corruption of the military officers on top of the



ever-growing bureaucratic corruption.

The broad masses of the Filipino people have been deeply disappointed by Duterte's termination of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and the abortion of the CASER exactly at the time that this was in an advanced stage of mutual drafting and negotiation. The abortion coincided with Duterte's stepped-up drive for fascist dictatorship and the escalating opposition of his pro-US technocrats and military and ex-military officials to genuine land reform and national industrialization, describing these as running counter to the neoliberal economic policy and allowing communists to gain credit for the reforms.

By the time that the Covid-19 pandemic came, the chronic crisis of the ruling system had become very serious, further aggravated by the crisis of overproduction and stagnation in the world capitalist economy and the misuse of public funds by the Duterte regime. At first, Duterte underestimated the potential of the pandemic as he allowed more than half a million Chinese tourists to flow into the Philippines even after the WHO gave the warning about the pandemic in January 2020.

But since adopting the lockdown policy in March 2020, Duterte has considered it as one big opportunity for plunder and grabbing and exercising emergency powers on a broad range of social concerns. He promised medical testing, sufficient health personnel and facilities and economic assistance for those losing their jobs and means of livelihood. But the promise has not been fulfilled and instead Duterte and his gang have pocketed public funds and shared these with their fast-rising crony business allies, while up to now there is no clear accounting of Php 590 billion.

Aside from the big plunder perpetrated by the Duterte clique, even just in accounting for the massive Bayanihan I funds reallocated for Covid-19 response, he has used the prolonged lockdown (the longest continuous lockdown in the world from March 16 to the present) to intimidate the people with the sweeping coercive measures and excessive display of force by the military and police, the escalation of the bogus war on drugs and the so-called focused operations in the countryside, the enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Law which practically realizes Duterte's scheme of fascist dictatorship, and tighter control over such institutions as mass media and churches. This is far worse than the Marcos fascist regime because it combines the undeclared martial rule with the methods of mass murder and mass arrests similar to those of Oplan Tokhang, which are justified by a combination of pretexts such as fighting terrorism, fighting drugs and criminality, and fighting Covid-19.

In the name of fighting terrorism, the Anti-Terrorism Law enables widespread state terrorism or fascism. Under the direction of the Anti-Terrorism Council and the NTF-ELCAC, social activists, critics and political

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opponents of the regime are arbitrarily listed or tagged as “communist terrorists” or “enemies of the state”; publicly slandered and vilified; threatened with confiscation of bank accounts and property; and arrested and detained incommunicado without judicial warrant for a long period of time to allow the fascist criminals to torture and murder their victims and destroy the corpus delicti in the notorious style of the Duterte death squads.

By all indications, Duterte and his fascist gang have the illusion that, thanks to the pandemic and resulting lockdowns, they have further tightened their control over the people and have gained so much more power and wealth. They overlook the fact that the pandemic and lockdowns have exposed the rotten anti-people character of the ruling system; that they have further bankrupted the economy and their own government; and that they have further generated the conditions for the people to wage all forms of resistance.

As if the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns were not enough to expose the rottenness of the ruling system and rouse the people to resistance, a series of typhoons have struck the Philippines, causing landslides and massive floods that have destroyed food crops, homes and infrastructure, and paralyzing power, communications, transport and other essential services for many days. These have exposed the gross lack of resources for rescue, relief and rehabilitation and the criminal neglect of disaster preparations because of military overspending, bureaucratic corruption, and other mispriorities.

They have likewise exposed the serious damage to the environment by the logging interests (many now masquerading as agroforestry-based IFMAs), mining and quarrying and plantation corporations favored by foreign monopoly capitalists, the Filipino puppet leaders and the big compradors. The pointless construction of large dams has caused the inundation of farms, communities and nearby cities and yet the Duterte regime continues to promote the construction of these huge dams under its graft-laden infrastructure program.

The people are enraged by the heaps of abuse inflicted on them for a long period of time and by the immediate prospect of food scarcity, mass hunger, long-term loss of jobs and livelihood, and inflation. The understated negative growth rate of 11 per cent was recorded at the end of the third quarter of 2020 due mainly to the pandemic lockdown. This negative growth rate is certain to worsen as a consequence of the typhoons and floods, not to speak yet of the droughts, pestilence and disease outbreaks that will follow.

In view of the overwhelming crisis of the ruling system, aggravated by the pandemic lockdown and the floods, the Duterte regime if smart should now be playing once more the peace card if only to try appeasing

and countering the rising wave of mass indignation and resistance. Instead, it continues to go berserk in unleashing state terrorism because of sheer arrogance and hubris as well as the realization that it has no more maneuver time, credibility and resources to make its peace pretense credible and effective to any extent. It is now in its lameduck period of less than two years and is unwilling to give up the act and instruments of state terrorism that it has already acquired.

In sharp contrast to the intransigent position of the Duterte regime against the resumption of peace negotiations, there are those within the broad united front of patriotic and democratic forces who advocate the resumption of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations—not to persuade Duterte to negotiate peace but to expose and condemn him as the enemy of peace and to rally the people to the call for peace against the state terrorism of his regime and to offer the prospect of resuming said negotiations after his ouster.

The newly-elected US President Biden has declared in a recent statement that he is critical of the trends of authoritarianism in Turkey, Hungary and the Philippines and that he is interested in the promotion of human rights and democracy in the countries which the US supports. This statement has perked up the conservative opposition, which has been nearly decimated and temporarily paralyzed by Duterte's demagoguery and patronage during the last four years but which is now hoping that the Duterte regime will start to self-disintegrate in its lameduck period of less than two years.

The conservative opposition is also banking on the Washington bipartisan consensus against Duterte's sell-out of Philippine sovereign rights over the West Philippine Sea to China. It remains to be seen, however, whether the US can restrain Duterte from realizing his ambition of ruling beyond 2022 or from rigging the 2022 presidential elections to install his proxy. And yet as it is, the US is already greatly increasing its support to the regime's counterinsurgency program with military aid tripling from US\$76 million in 2017 to US\$216 million in 2019.

The US has the power to restrain Duterte and even to prevent him from carrying out false flag operations and other preemptive measures which are calculated to damage the broad united front and yet put the blame on any of the opposition forces. But the US would probably embolden both the Duterte regime and the conservative opposition to stick to the line of suppressing the national democratic movement of the Filipino people under the guise of rabid anti-communism.

The broad masses of the Filipino people and the armed revolutionary movement have no choice but to be vigilant, stand firm in pursuing the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and avail of the favorable conditions generated by the rapidly worsening crisis of the

world capitalist ruling system and the Philippine ruling system. At the same time, they are for a broad united front committed to the general line of struggle for national liberation, democracy, peace, justice and basic social, economic and political reforms.

#### ***4. The Advancement of the Principles of Human Rights by the Peace Negotiations***

The tyrannical Duterte regime is arrogantly overconfident that like the Marcos fascist regime it can impose a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people by vilifying the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people as “communist terrorists” and unleashing state terrorism not only against suspected revolutionaries but also against all social activists, critics and opponents of the Duterte regime.

We are witnessing now the license provided by the Anti-Terrorism Law for red-tagging, threatening, arresting, detaining and killing an increasing number of people who exercise their civil and political rights to uphold, defend and promote their legitimate interests and who make lawful criticism and demands. Among the victims are leaders and mass activists of workers and peasants, national minorities, women, professionals, religious people and others.

It is of crucial importance to expose and oppose the Anti-Terrorism Law, the termination of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and the misrepresentation of the revolutionary forces, the legal democratic forces and all critics and opponents of the Duterte regime as “communist terrorists” and as “guilty by association” as they are arbitrarily listed by the NTF-ELCAC and the Anti-Terrorism Council.

It must be stressed first of all that the Hernandez political offense doctrine—that the charge of rebellion is political and cannot be complexed with common crimes or transmuted into the most heinous crime of terrorism—has not been overturned and therefore still applies. It must be likewise stressed that the Anti-Subversion Law of 1957 was repealed in 1992 because it was finally deemed a bill of attainder criminalizing the Communist Party, its officers and members without the benefit of trial and because legalization of the CPP was intended to create favorable conditions and atmosphere for the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

It must finally be stressed that the CPP and NPA cannot be misrepresented as terrorist, attacking the very people whose participation and support they seek for the revolution, and their officers and members can be held legally liable and chargeable for simple rebellion and cannot be subjected to the charge of terrorism in substitution of or in addition to rebellion. It has become even more unjust to make the charge of rebellion a nonbailable capital offense, discouraging the political solution of the

ongoing civil war between the reactionary government and the people's revolutionary government.

Focusing further on the issue whether the CPP and NPA are terrorist or not, it is absolutely clear legally and politically that they uphold, defend and advance the rights and interests of the people, have absolutely no interest in harming the people whose support and participation they seek. They have committed themselves to the international law on human rights and humanitarian conduct in the armed conflict. They adhere to the international conventions on human rights and the Geneva Conventions.

In 1996 the NDFP promulgated its Declaration of Undertaking to Apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977 and submitted it to the Swiss Federal Council as the responsible depository. This new declaration, in addition to the 1991 NDFP declaration of accession to Protocol II, further commits the NDFP, the CPP, NPA and other allied revolutionary organizations as well as the organs of political power to adhere to human rights and humanitarian conduct in war. Subsequently, the NDFP and the GRP mutually approved the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) in 1998. This agreement is of great historic and current significance.

Since the founding of the New People's Army on March 29, 1969 by the CPP, the Basic Rules of the NPA has bound all its commands, units, officers and fighters to follow the Three Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points of Attention. These have ensured respect for human rights and humanitarian conduct. The political, economic, social, educational and cultural mass work of the CPP, the NPA and the revolutionary mass organizations have endeared themselves to the people in all the guerrilla fronts and areas governed by the people's revolutionary government.

The broad masses of the people and the broad united front must condemn the Duterte regime for making the false charge of terrorism against the CPP and NPA, for terminating the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and for trying to impose state terrorism or fascist dictatorship on the people. For these negotiations to resume in the future, the GRP must nullify the false charge of terrorism against the revolutionary movement and reaffirm all the agreements that have been mutually approved by the GRP and NDFP.

The conservative opposition should be advised that it improves its position and chances by joining the consensus and struggle to render justice for all the victims of Duterte's reign of terror and greed and against all those who have committed crimes against them. Even right now, they are morally and politically obliged to join the people in demanding justice for all the victims of human rights violations, especially the victims of extrajudicial killings, and the immediate release of all political prisoners.

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It is highly probable that Biden and the US imperialist “deep state” will promise to the conservative opposition to restrain Duterte and extract a pledge to continue the brutal anticommunist, antipeople military campaign but will still use the Duterte terrorist regime to the hilt and allow it to control and rig the 2022 presidential elections if held. The regime has an overwhelming advantage over the conservative opposition because of its control of the Supreme Court and the Comelec through the Duterte appointees and its success in rigging the 2019 mid-term elections and having overwhelming control over the Senate and the Lower House.

It is obvious that Duterte has already acquired enough power to use the Comelec voting process either to ratify charter change to make him fascist dictator or allow him to install a stooge as his presidential successor as well as to suppress all his critics and opponents with the use of the Anti-Terrorism Act. However, the factors against the perpetuation of Duterte's power is the certain worsening of the crisis of the ruling system, the further rise of the armed revolutionary movement and the legal democratic movement, the growing US-China conflict and the conservative opposition to Duterte's serving two conflicting imperialist powers for his selfish interest.

The broad masses of the people and the broad united front must call for international solidarity for the struggle to end the Duterte regime of tyranny, treason, butchery, plunder and mass deception. This regime must be held accountable for its crimes, and overseas bank deposits of its gang leaders must be traced and returned to the Filipino people. Duterte himself and his criminal accomplices must be brought before the International Criminal Court or before a Philippine court of the GRP or the people's revolutionary government for prosecution and trial.

While Duterte is still in power with the contradictory support of two conflicting imperialist powers, the US and China, the Filipino people and their patriotic organizations abroad must cooperate with the host people and other minority peoples to condemn the crimes of the Duterte regime, isolate it and work for moral, political and economic sanctions.

They must call on the US, European Union and New Zealand governments to end their listing of the CPP and NPA as terrorist because this listing is baseless and unjust. Before and after the listing, the CPP and NPA have never engaged in any act of terrorism in any foreign country. This listing by foreign governments has been invoked by Duterte's regime to make its own terrorist listing and emboldened him to engage in state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism.

The Filipino people and all forces of the Movement Against Tyranny must be thankful for all the successes of the Filipino compatriots abroad and the international solidarity movement in exposing, condemning and making demands to stop the Duterte regime from committing gross and systematic human rights violations. All these achievements inspire

the Filipino people to fight ever more resolutely and militantly to fight for their national and social liberation against the Duterte regime and the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system that this regime seeks to perpetuate.

Long live the Movement Against Tyranny Cebu!

Advance the struggle for national independence and democracy!

Long live the Filipino people!

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# Unite and Fight for National Independence and Democracy Against the Duterte Fascist Regime and Its Imperialist Masters

## Keynote Speech at the Founding Assembly of BAYAN-EUROPE<sup>20</sup>

December 12, 2020

Dear Fellow Activists,

Thank you for inviting me to keynote the founding assembly of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Europe (BAYAN-Europe). I congratulate you, especially your elected officials, for this signal event which is based on the prior existence of a leading collective in charge of the prior development of several types of BAYAN organizations in Europe, like the Migrante, Gabriela and Anakbayan.

I salute all of you as the best possible assembly of patriotic and progressive Filipino organizations in Europe, with the most resolute and militant activists who are committed to carry forward the Filipino people's struggle against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism and for national liberation and democracy in the Philippines.

### ***Guiding Principles of BAYAN-Europe***

As an overseas regional chapter of BAYAN-Philippines, you are constitutionally mandated to take up the issues and struggles of Filipinos in Europe on the basis of the struggle for national democracy in the Philippines and you are guided by a clear declaration of principles in order to unite and act in unison on the concrete situation among various sectors of the Filipino community and take up their social concerns in relation to their motherland and to their stay in Europe.

You must uphold the national sovereignty of the Filipino people by asserting national independence and opposing imperialist domination and to unite the people and build their collective strength, anchored on the basic alliance of the workers and peasants as the foundation for establishing the people's democratic state which shall uphold civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

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<sup>20</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

You must contribute what you can in order to build a self-reliant and progressive Philippine economy in repudiation of the imperialist and feudal stranglehold of the economy, carry out national industrialization and genuine land reform and to ensure the people's economic and social well-being and thus liberate the people from poverty, raise their standard of living, attain full employment, guarantee adequate and humane working and social conditions and better standards for health, education and housing.

You must stand for a patriotic, scientific and mass-oriented people's culture which seeks to break the colonial, feudal, patriarchal and bourgeois decadent culture that impedes social progress and people's participation in the movement for national and social liberation, to uphold the right to self-determination of the Moro people, the Cordillera people and other national minorities, and support their struggle against national oppression and their right to own and utilize their ancestral lands and other natural resources.

You must fight for women's liberation by destroying the basis of national, class and gender oppression and you must promote the participation of women, principally worker and peasant women, in a women's liberation movement that is vital, distinct and integral to the entire national democratic struggle. You must engage the young men and women and avail of their openness to revolutionary change and their energy to advance the national democratic movement.

You must participate actively in building international solidarity that is anti-imperialist and democratic, develop the closest relations with the workers and other oppressed peoples and with their organizations and movements and engage in mutual support and cooperation in the common struggle against imperialism and all forms of reaction and for just peace and all-round development of all peoples.

### ***High Importance and Urgency of Theme***

The theme of your assembly is highly important and urgent: "Magkaisa! Labanan ang Pasistang Rehimeng US/China-Duterte! Makibaka Para sa Pambansang Kalayaan at Demokrasya!" This in consonance with your guiding principles and is responsive to the current intolerable suffering and outcry of the broad masses of the Filipino people for national freedom, justice and democracy against the traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, plundering and swindling Duterte regime.

The Duterte regime is traitorous as it continues to serve the over-all dominance of US imperialism over the Philippines economically, militarily, politically and culturally. The US tolerates the gross and systematic human rights violations in the Philippines and supplies all the software

and hardware for the military suppression of the people's movement for national freedom and democracy in the name of anti-communism and anti-terrorism. It is doubtful whether the presidency of Biden will be different from that of Trump who has openly supported Duterte.

While the US provides crucial support for the state terrorism carried out by Duterte, he has been able to tighten his grip on political power and engage in plunder. At the same time, he also gains privately from selling out to China the sovereign rights of the Filipino people in the West Philippines Sea. He has allowed China to build seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines, gain control over the national power grid and establish cell towers in the camps of the reactionary armed forces. In addition, he benefits from the illegal drug trade, casinos and other operations of Chinese criminal syndicates.

In running a tyrannical and genocidal regime, Duterte is applying the methods of extrajudicially killing tens of thousands of poor people in Oplan Tokhang to the current fascist campaign of rabid anti-communism and state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism. Social activists, critics, human rights defenders and legal political opponents of the regime are arbitrarily listed as "communist terrorists", publicly tagged, condemned and framed up for arbitrary arrest, torture, extortion and murder with planted firearms and explosives as fake evidence.

Under conditions of the lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he promised mass testing, adequate health services and economic assistance to the people who would lose their means of livelihood. He has not fulfilled his promise but instead he and his Mafia-like gang have pocketed more than 500 billion pesos. Worst of all, he has railroaded the enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Law in order to realize his scheme of fascist dictatorship even before carrying out charter change and the proclamation of nationwide martial law as Marcos did in 1972.

Even before the pandemic, the crisis of the ruling system, like that of the world capitalist system, had worsened as to generate favorable conditions for anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles. The pandemic has aggravated the crisis. At the end of the third quarter of this year, the growth rate of the Philippines was a negative 11.5 per cent. It is expected to go down further by negative 6 per cent. The Duterte regime has used the emergency powers given to him by the servile Congress to realign government appropriations in order to favor corruption by the high bureaucrats and military officers and funnel more funds for graft-laden military purchases and operations.

But Duterte is overconfident that if his poor health permits he can continue as fascist dictator beyond 2022 or if he is too sick he can pick and install a presidential proxy because he controls Congress, the Supreme Court and the Commission on Elections. Under the current circumstances

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in the Philippines, the oppression and exploitation of the people will escalate rapidly. And all forms of popular mass struggles will surge up, including legal democratic mass actions and the armed revolutionary movement. There are excellent prospects for the ouster of the Duterte reign of terror and greed, as exemplified by the previous ousters of Marcos and Estrada. And in this regard, BAYAN can play a major role in the broad united front against fascist tyranny.

However, to any extent that Duterte or his proxy can stay in power beyond 2022, the armed revolutionary movement of the people will grow in strength and will play an increasingly important role in the process of overthrowing not only the Duterte regime or its proxy regime but also the entire semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. The struggle of the Filipino people against the Duterte regime coincides with the rising anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles on a global scale against imperialism and all forms of reaction. These provide favorable conditions for the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation.

### ***What BAYAN-Europe Can Do***

The Filipinos in Europe have their own problems to face in Europe because of the worsening of the world capitalist system and the rise of chauvinist, anti-immigrant, racist and fascist movements. Because of deteriorating economic conditions abroad, hundreds of thousands of Filipino migrant workers have already lost their jobs have returned home, without any support from the reactionary government for their repatriation despite the fact it had fleeced them with all kinds of burdensome fees. The drastic reduction in the foreign exchange remittances of overseas Filipino workers has become a major factor in the negative growth of the Philippine economy.

But while you have problems to face in Europe, these are somehow related with the prior problems of massive unemployment and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions in the Philippines. There is no way we can escape our responsibilities to the Filipino people and our motherland. BAYAN-Europe is correct in describing itself in its own Constitution that that it is an integral part of the national democratic movement of the Philippines and its mission and purpose is to gather the broadest possible moral, political and material support for BAYAN-Philippines and the national democratic struggle of the Filipino people.

You must serve as the regional information and campaign center in Europe for responding to the calls of BAYAN-Philippines and initiating campaigns and activities according to your own conditions and circumstances. You must fight not only for the rights and demands of Filipinos in Europe but also for those of our people in the motherland. You

must do what you can to help them overcome their suffering and to help them bring to a new and higher level their movement to oust the Duterte regime and carry forward their national democratic struggle against the unjust ruling system.

In this regard, you must develop solidarity relations among peoples and organizations in Europe. You must make calls for, initiate or join campaigns, alliances and other formations on the basis of international solidarity guided by the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual support. You must share experiences and lessons with the host people and other guest peoples in whichever country you are in Europe. In doing so, you must uphold and exercise your fundamental freedoms and democratic rights even as you stay within the bounds of law and democracy in whichever host country you are.

You must pay special attention to the fact that the European Union is one of the few state formations that have followed in 2002 the unjust and unlawful initiative of US imperialism in designating the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and myself as "terrorists" and placing our names in the so-called terrorist list of the EU, despite the fact that the CPP, NPA and I have never engaged in any act of terrorism in any European country or any part of the world. It took me more than seven years of legal struggle before the European Court of Justice in order to have my name removed from the said list.

The names of the CPP and NPA have stayed in the list despite the fact that these are co-belligerents of the Philippine revolutionary government in a civil war under the laws of war and have never engaged in any act of terrorism anywhere in the world. Now, the Duterte fascist regime is using this unjust and unlawful "terrorist" listing to justify state terrorism in the Philippines and to extend his fascist methods of red-tagging, slandering, intimidating and threatening social activists, critics and human rights defenders abroad. You must be vigilant and be ready to frustrate the continuous attempts of the Duterte regime to extend its dirty fascist tactics against Filipinos in Europe.

You must find ways of persuading the European Union through the most respected statesmen, parliamentarians, human rights and peace organizations, parties and other organizations and movements to remove the names of the CPP and NPA from its so-called terrorist list in order to prevent its use in violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms and in order to promote conditions for respecting human rights in the Philippines and resuming the peace process between the GRP and NDFP in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and the principles and policies of the EU and the UN.

Since 1992, the NDFP has solemnly and mutually agreed with the GRP

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to engage in peace negotiations in order to address the roots of the armed conflict in the Philippines through comprehensive and profound social, economic and political reforms. But Duterte has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations since November 23, 2017 in order to scapegoat the CPP and NPA, concentrate on all-out war and pursue his scheme of fascist dictatorship. Conditions must be promoted and realized for him to stay within the bounds of the constitutional limit of his presidential term and for peace negotiations to be resumed by the NDFP and a new administration of the GRP that respects The Hague Joint Declaration and CARHRIHL.

Mabuhay ang BAYAN-Europe at lahat ng kababayan sa Europa!

Mabuhay ang pambansa-demokratikong kilusan sa Pilipinas!

Mabuhay ang BAYAN-Philippines at sambayanang Pilipino!



# **The Armed Revolution Will Continue to Grow in Strength as Imperialism, Feudalism and Bureaucrat Capitalism Persist<sup>21</sup>**

December 26, 2020

When the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army were still small and weak from 1968 to 1972, Marcos exaggerated their size and strength and referred to them as his pretext for imposing fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. He was supposed to nip them in the bud. But instead, the fascist dictatorship became the biggest stimulus for the armed revolution to gain strength and spread nationwide.

All successors of the Marcos regime have boasted of being able to destroy the armed revolution with campaigns of military suppression and deception. All have failed miserably. Now the Duterte regime is trying hard to surpass the state terrorism and brutality of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. He will continue to fail in his futile attempt to destroy the armed revolution and will continue to drive more people to take the road of armed revolution.

## ***The Armed Revolution Continues to Grow in Strength***

As long as the root causes persist, the conditions for the growth of the armed revolution will be fertile and the reactionary government and its imperialist masters will fail to destroy it. The root causes are imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They are accountable for the gross underdevelopment, high unemployment and mass poverty. They determine the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the ruling system and are responsible for the brutal and corrupt government that tries to preserve the status quo.

The people and their revolutionary forces are determined to fight for national and social liberation. They will continue to carry out the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war until they achieve total victory. The revolutionary movement is the direct opposite to the tyrannical, traitorous, mass-murdering, plundering and swindling Duterte regime. The crimes of this regime drive the people to take the road of armed revolution.

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<sup>21</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

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The people can never accept suffering forever the worsening chronic crisis of the ruling system and the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation. The armed revolutionary movement has been tempered by thousands of battles and has already spread nationwide and taken deep roots among the people, especially the workers and peasants. The reactionary armed forces have admitted that the New People's Army has wiped out more than 13,000 of their troops, while they have killed more than 40,000 civilians in blind actions of reprisal since 1969.

According to the publications of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the point now is to develop the guerrilla fronts in every region to become revolutionary base areas, bring about the maturation of the strategic defensive and enter the stage of the strategic stalemate in due course. The frequent tactical offensives by NPA platoons and companies in the strategic defensive will pass to frequent tactical offensives by NPA companies and battalions in the strategic stalemate. The time will surely come when NPA battalions and regiments will accomplish the strategic offensive on a nationwide scale.

In every guerrilla front today, the Communist Party, the New People's Army, the revolutionary mass organizations, alliances, the National Democratic Front and the people's democratic government are thriving. There is no way that the brutal and corrupt Duterte regime and its armed minions can destroy the armed revolution for so long as the people condemn them as instruments of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the universal theory of the revolutionary proletariat, the CPP has correctly set the program and general line of the people's democratic revolution through the strategic line of protracted people's war. It started with only some 80 Party members and candidate-members on December 26, 1960 with an urban mass following of some 10,000 workers and youth with political education in the new democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. Now, it has tens of thousands of Party members and a mass following in the millions.

Everyday the CPP recruits and develops a large number of new cadres and members through theoretical and political education, mass work in various classes and sectors, armed struggle and establishing Party branches and groups in localities and various types of organizations. It is simply impossible for the Duterte regime and its armed minions to stop the growth of the CPP. Their military, police and paramilitary operatives are too limited to spy on the accelerated and widespread recruitment, education and training of CPP candidate-members.

In fact, they are goading more mass activists in the urban and rural areas to join the CPP and the armed revolution, especially because of the red-tagging, arbitrary arrests, torture and murder, which are being



perpetrated with impunity. Reminiscent of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, there is an upsurge of mass activists who wish to join the New People's Army. The Red commanders and fighters are striving to launch more tactical offensives in order to provide arms to the increasing NPA recruits.

The CPP has absolute leadership over the NPA. It has set the strategic line of the protracted people's war, which is to encircle the cities from the countryside and accumulate strength until conditions become ripe for the seizure of the cities. The NPA has grown self-reliantly through tactical offensives from a force of only 60 Red fighters with only 9 automatic rifles and 26 inferior firearms to nearly 10,000, augmented by tens of thousands of members of the people's militia and hundreds of thousands of self-defense units of mass organizations.

The CPP leads millions of people in the countryside because the revolutionary armed struggle is integrated with agrarian revolution and with mass base-building through the mass organizations and the local organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government. There are more than 110 guerrilla fronts in the rural areas of 17 regions and in 73 provinces. The people's democratic government being developed in the countryside aims to overthrow the reactionary state in due time in the strategic offensive.

The CPP is determined to solve the problem of conservatism by having two-thirds of the NPA devoted to mass work and one third devoted to armed tactical offensives with short rest periods. The Red commanders and fighters are rotated to carry out mass work and armed tactical offensives. But all the time the entire NPA is alert to adopt the correct defensive and counter-offensive measures. Whenever advantageous, without the risk of decisive engagement at the expense of any guerrilla front, the highest possible concentration of the NPA strength in a guerrilla front can be used in a planned series of tactical offensives against the enemy.

The flexible tactics necessary for a people's war of fluid movement are made possible by knowing the strong points and most vulnerable points of the revolutionary and enemy side and by using concentration, dispersal and shifting the strength of the NPA in order to frustrate and defeat the enemy. The constant surveillance of the enemy by the NPA and the people provides the knowledge of the limits of enemy strength and capabilities on varying scales and allows the CPP and NPA to take the initiative in carrying out tactical offensives. The strength and capabilities of the enemy are not limitless. In fact, they have become extremely limited by the nationwide development of the revolutionary movement in the last 52 years.

When the enemy attacks in superior force, the NPA can retreat to deprive him of a target but he is given a fair share of land mines, sniper fire and even a lightning ambush on any column of his that is isolated. While in retreat from any guerrilla front, the NPA and the people observe

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the weak points of the enemy for the purpose of soonest possible tactical counter-offensives. Elsewhere, NPA units can take full initiative to launch tactical offensives against the most vulnerable points of the enemy, which include small-unit detachments of the military, police stations, paramilitary units, and the security guards of plantations, logging sites and mines.

The leading organs of the CPP and the commands of the NPA are well aware of the continuous US military support for the Duterte tyranny and the total strength and deployment of the reactionary armed forces, police and paramilitary forces. They are determined to avoid decisive engagements which put at risk the entire strength of any guerrilla front. But they are well determined to seize the initiative in launching counter-offensives against the weakest points of the enemy. The NPA has learned positive and lessons in the course of overcoming and frustrating the various scales and sizes of enemy operations (intelligence, psywar and combat) and the use of drones and bombings.

Around 124 battalions or 40 brigades of the reactionary armed forces are deployed in the eight priority regions of Southern Tagalog, Southern Mindanao, Eastern Visayas, North Central Mindanao, Bicol, Northeast Mindanao, Negros and Far South Mindanao. Around 23 battalions have been spread thinly in Western Mindanao, Cagayan Valley, Ilocos-Cordillera, Central Luzon, Panay and Central Visayas. While they fail to destroy the armed revolution, the fascists are out to enrich themselves and beat themselves in the civil war by wasting public money on military overspending. The military budget for 2020 is more than Php 200 billion, overshadowing the budget for any of the vital social services, especially education, health, public housing, disaster relief and so on.

The main foundation of the revolutionary united front is being developed by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, with its comprehensive range of 18 allied organizations. This is the united front for armed struggle. At the same time, there is the broad united front of the legal democratic forces of the basic toiling masses, the middle social strata and the conservative opposition that are not engaged in armed struggle. The conservative opposition continues to be weak because of the tendency of the traditional reactionary politicians to join whoever is the new president until this move into his lameduck years and it becomes increasing isolated and weak.

The Duterte regime is going crazy by using anti-communist witchhunts, spreading guilt by association and equating the CPP with the NDFP as the revolutionary united front as well as with the broad united front of legal democratic forces of the toiling masses, middle strata and the conservative opposition. Any individual, organization or institution can be accused of being "communist" and therefore "terrorist".

The regime is engaged in blind red-tagging, slander, extortion, arbitrary

arrests, torture and murder. All these are being done to realize state terrorism and fascist dictatorship under the so-called Anti-Terrorism Act. But they grievously offend the people and drive them in general to engage in various forms of struggle and the most threatened young militants to join the NPA.

### ***On the Enemy's Rejection of Peace Negotiations***

To the disgust of the social activists, peace advocates, human rights defenders and the broad masses of the people, the Duterte regime has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and designated the CPP and NPA as "terrorist" organizations since 2017. It has nullified all previous agreements and engaged in a rampage of brutal murders directed against NDFP consultants and against the CPP and NPA with the clear objective of ending the peace negotiations once and for all time and allowing Duterte to become fascist dictator.

Since then, the Duterte regime has engaged in "localized peace talks" for the purpose of psywar and intelligence against those known as close relatives and friends of suspected revolutionaries, has compelled local units of the reactionary government to issue persona non grata declarations against the CPP and NPA, stage fake surrender ceremonies and fake military encounters with those killed extrajudicially and issue press releases about payments to the fake surrenderers and fake community development projects. But in fact, public money is openly being pocketed by the corrupt military officers.

Duterte no less has put to shame the retired and active military and police officers by declaring publicly that he maintains their loyalty to him because he literally feeds them with money. To ingratiate himself with them, he has engaged in unprecedented military overspending, militarized his cabinet and allowed the active military and police officers to engage in corrupt practices in the acquisition of local and foreign officers and in the implementation of the bogus war on drugs and the so-called counterinsurgency plans.

For as long as the tyrant Duterte and his loyalist military and police officers are hell-bent on continuing the civil war between the reactionary state and the broad masses of the people, there will be no more peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP. The CPP, NPA and the NDFP have no choice but to continue the armed revolution as the sovereign right of the people to fight tyranny and state terrorism.

The CPP, NPA and the NDFP are not terrorists because they adhere to the international law on human rights and humanitarian conduct in the civil war and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. And they have always been willing

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to engage in peace negotiations in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992. They are willing to negotiate with a future regime that will reject state terrorism and seek peace negotiations.

For as long as it is clear to the people that it is the reactionary government which rejects the peace negotiations with the NDFP, it is just and advantageous for the armed revolutionary movement to continue and intensify the people's war against the reactionary ruling clique and the entire ruling system. The armed revolutionary movement has grown in strength in long periods of intensified people's war, with no distraction and with no exposure of cadres and their connections by peace negotiations, such as in the long period of no negotiations with the Marcos regime from 1969 to 1986 and during long breakdowns of peace negotiations with the post-Marcos regimes.

The rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and of the Philippine ruling system are exceedingly favorable for the armed revolution of the Filipino people. The global economic depression that has beset the world since the financial meltdown of 2008 has resulted in less demand for the raw materials and semi-manufactures produced by the Philippines, in less foreign exchange income for paying the manufactured imports, in rising trade and budgetary deficits and in a rapidly rising public debt.

The Covid-19 pandemic has aggravated the crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the Philippine ruling system. The lockdowns have drastically brought down the demand for the raw material and semi-manufacture exports of the Philippines as well as the demand for the cheap labor of Filipino men and women. Millions of overseas Filipino workers have returned home, greatly reducing the foreign exchange remittances to pay for the import of consumer imports and servicing the foreign debt.

Worst of all the Duterte regime has taken advantage of the pandemic to engage in massive corruption, escalate focused military operations and enact the law of state terrorism. The tyrant Duterte took emergency powers supposedly to realign this year's budget and next year's. He promised to provide mass testing, adequate medical services and economic assistance to those who have lost their jobs and other means of livelihood.

But more than 590,000 billion pesos for such purposes are unaccounted for and have been pocketed by Duterte and his gangster clique. He has increased the budget of the military and police for the purpose of repression and the enactment of the law of state terrorism to realize his scheme of fascist dictatorship even before expected charter change and proclamation of national martial law.

The tyranny and thievery of the Duterte regime have combined to bankrupt the Philippine economy and the reactionary government. The conditions for the armed revolution have become far more favorable than before the pandemic lockdowns. The broad masses of the people detest

the regime for bringing about far worse conditions of mass poverty and misery and for scandalously imposing on them state terrorism and wasting huge amounts of public funds on military overspending.

The Duterte ruling clique has undermined its own economic and political position and has dug its own grave by engaging in flagrant plunder and repression. The broad masses of the people are now on the verge of coming out to the streets in gigantic numbers to condemn and oust the fascist tyrant. Even within the reactionary armed forces and police, there is a rapidly increasing number of groups of officers who have long resented the sell-out of sovereign rights over the West Philippine Sea to China and the favoritism bestowed by Duterte on the so-called Davao boys who have engaged in all kinds of criminality and corruption.

It is widespread within the reactionary armed forces and police that Duterte is physically and mentally sick and that he keeps himself most of the time in Davao for his dialysis after every few days. But he still pretends to be physically and politically strong enough to take all powers and become a fascist dictator or else to handpick a presidential stooge by using his power to rig the Comelec vote count as he did in the 2019 mid-elections to gain overwhelming control over both houses of Congress.

At the same time, it is well known that he bought a presidential jet to be able to escape to China at any time. He knows that his end is coming near with every month that passes. He has only one year and six months left of his six-year term. And several judicial systems are after him. If the International Criminal Court fails to arrest him, the people's court of the people's democratic government is expected to run after him and all his principal accomplices in gross and systematic violations of human rights.

We know exactly the broad range of forces that converged against the fascist dictatorship from the assassination of Benigno Aquino, Jr. in 1983 to the downfall of Marcos in February 1986. The Duterte ruling clique is trying desperately to manipulate the rabid anti-communist and militarist elements in the conservative opposition to disrupt the broad anti-fascist united front by red-tagging the legal patriotic and democratic forces and slandering them as having "enabled" Duterte to become president and consolidate his presidency.

In fact, the biggest enablers of Duterte have been the traditional politicians who made an exodus to his regime as soon as he became president and turned overnight the previous ruling party into an emaciated and weak minority. The armed revolutionary movement has never stopped, despite short periods of ceasefires on grounds of promoting peace negotiations. And the legal patriotic and democratic forces have condemned the Duterte regime as soon as it terminated the peace negotiations in 2017. The regime is now angling that it can retain power by separating the entire conservative opposition from the impending gigantic

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mass actions.

Whether Duterte will succeed to rule the people beyond 2022 as a fascist dictator or to handpick his successor by rigging the 2022 presidential elections, there will be a highly explosive political situation from day to day. The broad masses of the people and the broad united front against the tyrant Duterte will be outraged and angered by the brazen violation of their sovereign will and by the rapid worsening of the socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system. As of now, the broad masses of the people are already seething with just anger over the rapidly deteriorating conditions of oppression and exploitation.

In order to ensure the realization of the gigantic mass actions on a nationwide scale for the ouster of the Duterte fascist regime or its successor regime, the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the middle social strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie and the allies in the conservative opposition must be aroused, organized and mobilized to protest against the rapidly deteriorating socioeconomic and political conditions and the intolerable conditions of escalating oppression and exploitation.

They must protest and condemn the puppetry, brutality and corruption of the Duterte fascist regime and demand respect for the sovereign rights of the people, justice for the victims of human rights violations, return of the stolen public funds, economic and social assistance to all who have lost their jobs and means of livelihood and who have been victimized by the regime during the pandemic and aggravated crisis of the ruling system.

In the meantime, the armed revolution will continue. The CPP will continue to wage the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and will aim for the bright future of socialism. The struggle for national and social liberation coincides with the worldwide anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and the foreseeable resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. The advance of the revolutionary mass movement has a direct bearing on the prospects of realizing a just peace in the Philippines.

That there is once more a brazenly brutal and corrupt regime reminiscent of the Marcos fascist regime proves that the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system continues to rot and has never been fixed by the pseudo-democratic regimes preceding the fascist regime of Duterte to remove the root causes of the armed revolution. Once more the worst of the ruling system comes out in the form of the traitorous, fascist, genocidal and plundering Duterte regime and generates the conditions and opportunities for accelerating the advance of the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

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## **II. Statements and Interviews**



# Trump Commits Murder in Line with US Imperialist Terrorism

January 4, 2020

By ordering the assassination of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the Iranian and Iraqi officials accompanying him at the Baghdad airport, US President Trump has blatantly committed multiple murder as well as aggression against the sovereignty of Iraq and Iran in violation of international law as well as US law which prohibits such aggressive act without the prior declaration of war by authorization of the US Congress.

Trump himself has boastfully and arrogantly admitted the criminal act that he ordered the assassination of Soleimani and his Iranian and Iraqi companions in two cars. His crime of multiple murder is in line with the aggressive and terrorist character of US imperialism. As the No. 1 terrorist in world history and contemporary times, US imperialism has committed acts of aggression, destroying the lives and properties of millions of people, even without the formal declaration of war. Imperialist aggression is the worst kind of terrorism which the people suffer and abhor.

Those who support the terrorist act of Trump try to depict Soleimani as a terrorist. But in fact, the latter is well known as a master strategist against terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State, Al Nusra and the Al Qa'ida, which US imperialism has employed at one time or another. Soleimani and his Iranian and Iraqi companions are well known to have fought the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, starting from the time the US and Israel had just created and deployed Islamic State as a weapon for invading Iraq, Iran and Syria.

In committing his criminal act, Trump is short-sightedly motivated by his selfish desire to overcome his current impeachment and to win the next presidential elections by warmongering and arousing the jingoistic sentiments that favor US imperialism. But the criminal act has serious consequences. The oppressed peoples and self-respecting countries in the Middle East are justly outraged, aroused and mobilized to fight against US imperialism. So are the people of the world, including the American people, who are against the aggressive and terrorist acts of US imperialism.

In accordance with its own original intent, US imperialism will commit further terrorist acts of aggression in the Middle East. It will continue to lose trillions of dollars in military expenditures without being able to expand stable economic territory. The US public debt will increase at an

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accelerated rate even as the US military industrial complex gains profits.

But in the Middle East, the combination of Iran, Iraq, Syria and other countries will further isolate the US and will avail of the support of China and Russia. Thanks to Trump, he is further accelerating the strategic decline and downfall of US imperialism.

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## **Fascism and Neoliberalism against the Filipino People**

**January 5, 2020**

The de facto fascist dictatorship is “legally” based on the persistence of Proclamation No. 55 declaring a state of national emergency and Executive Order No. 70 aimed at militarizing government and society and making them fascist.

Under the pretext of federalizing the state, charter change is being pushed in order to constitutionalize the fascist dictatorship and remove the restrictions on foreign ownership of land and all businesses.

The Duterte regime rigged the May 2019 mid-term elections to produce a supermajority in the Senate to ensure the constitutionalization of fascist dictatorship and the removal of restrictions on foreign ownership of land and all businesses.

The reign of unbridled terror and greed, the combination of fascism and neoliberalism, will inflict more intolerable suffering on the Filipino people and will surely drive them to intensify the new democratic revolution.

The anti-national and anti-democratic scheme of the Duterte regime casts doubts on its avowed interest in peace negotiations with the NDFP for the purpose of making agreements on social, economic and political reforms to lay the basis for a just peace in a truly independent and democratic Philippines.

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## On the Current Ceasefire and Further Steps Forward

January 5, 2020

The current reciprocal ceasefire agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which was supposed to have started last December 23, 2010, will soon end on January 7, 2020.

By and large, the two parties have complied with the ceasefire agreement and allowed it to serve as a goodwill and confidence building measure for enhancing the environment for the resumption of the GRP-NDFP negotiations.

Since last December 26 when the GRP provided the NDFP with copies of the SOMO and SOMO, there has been no incident in which one side fired at the other side. The few allegations of ceasefire violations have not disrupted the nationwide implementation of the reciprocal unilateral ceasefire agreement.

Such allegations can be threshed out by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels and the Joint Monitoring Committee under the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

It is widely expected that in connection with the ceasefire agreement, the GRP ought to release on humanitarian grounds sickly and elderly political prisoners, especially eleven NDFP consultants who were previously arrested and detained in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees.

The release of the aforementioned political prisoners on humanitarian grounds will ensure the success of the formal meeting to resume the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations within January. As regards to the rest of the political prisoners, they can look forward to the general amnesty that is already slated for proclamation upon the approval of the Interim Peace Agreement.

The formal meeting to resume the peace negotiations has the task of reaffirming all previous joint agreements since The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, causing the presidential issuances terminating and preventing peace negotiations to be superseded and setting the agenda for negotiating and approving the Interim Peace Agreement (IPA).

The IPA has three components: 1. the general amnesty and release of all political prisoners; 2. approval of the articles of CASER on land reform

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

and national industrialization; and 3. coordinated unilateral ceasefires.

I am happy about the recent press statement of Secretary Bello expressing considerateness to the general position of the NDFP and to the specific matter of political, legal and security requisites for my travels outside the Netherlands.

Indeed, it is highly desirable for me to meet President Duterte in order to accelerate the progress of the peace negotiations. I continue to agree that I meet him in a country near the Philippines after the approval and signing of the IPA; and that I return to the Philippines in connection with the mutual approval of the CASER.

The CASER will benefit the entire Filipino people, including families of adherents to the GRP and NDFP, through land reform and the generation of jobs under the program of national industrialization. These provide the economic and social substance for a just peace.

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# Itanong Mo Kay Prof

## Topic: The US War against Iran

January 9, 2020

*Sarah: Intro*

JMS: Warm patriotic greetings to you Prof. Sarah Raymundo and all who are suffering and fighting the Duterte regime!

Questions:

*SR1. Our interview today is on a hot issue. The content of foreign newspapers are events occurring outside the country. This is the US war against Iran. As a starter. Prof Sison, let's know who is Major General Qassem Soleimani.*

JMS: Major General Qassem Soleimani is head of the International Special Operations of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran. He gained popularity both in Iran and Iraq as well as around the world for effectively fighting against the terrorist forces of Al Qaida, Al Nusra and the Islamic State. He united the Kurds and the Shia against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. And the Islamic State was defeated in these countries.

*SR2. Maj. Gen. Soleimani was killed along with senior officers of the Iraqi militias. An American drone hit and destroyed Maj. Gen. Soleimani's vehicle outside Baghdad International Airport. In your view Prof Sison, is the said general's killing justified with the approval of the president of the USA?*

JMS: General Soleimani's US killing upon the order of President Trump is not justified. He was on a diplomatic peace mission following Trump's own request to Iraq's Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi to mediate between Iran, particularly General Soleimani, to reduce the conflict and tensions among Iran, the US and Saudi Arabia.

Based on the testimony of Iraq's Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi, Trump appears to have set a trap by pretending to seek the mediation of Iran, particularly General Soleimani. After being slain, he was made out to be a terrorist even as he was the key strategist and commander in suppressing terrorist groups formerly created and used by the Number One terrorist, US imperialism.

*SR3. US President Donald Trump says they made the airstrike to stop the war and not make war. What do you think of Trump's remarks, Prof Sison?*

JMS: What Trump said is a lie. US newspapers and Congress are asking

for Trump's evidence. He could present nothing. It is clear that Trump is the one who wants to ignite the flames of war to divert the attention of the American people from his impeachment.

He perpetrated the crimes of multiple murders and violations of the sovereignty of Iraq and Iran as well as violations of US law requiring US Congress authorization for the President to commit violent actions abroad.

*SR4. In your analysis of what is happening now in Iran, will the anger of their people really stop. Television shows millions of Iranians shouting "Death to America!" while delivering home Maj Gen Soleimani's remains.*

JMS: Iranian people's anger is very intense and very deep over General Soleimani's killing. This comes on top of their long-standing anger over US-imposed aggression and sanctions on Iran. Their anger cannot be simply stopped. It is rooted in so many US crimes against Iran.

But now there are countries interceding that the US and Iran do not jump into a full-blown war. This includes allies on both sides. But now and for a long time the people and some governments of the Middle East will fight to eliminate US military bases, US control and US-dollar control on oil as well as US violations of the sovereignty of Middle Eastern countries.

The Iraqi parliament has made a resolution to kick out the US military bases in Iraq due to the assassination of General Soleimani and his Iranian and Iraqi comrades on Iraqi territory. The people and the governments of the Middle East can take advantage of interimperialist contradictions to limit and restrain US capabilities.

*SR5. For the information of our listeners, Iran has retaliated and launched missiles on Baghdad targeting US bases and housing facilities. According to the report, no one was hurt but was a big "slap" on the US' face, according to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a supreme leader of Iran. What can you say about this action by Iranians, Prof Sison?*

JMS: Following General Soleimani's funeral, Iran launched some missiles against the US military bases in Al-Assad (near Baghdad) and in Erbil near the Syria-Iraq border. Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei himself said that the slap was intended only as a retaliation and as a prevention of war. His foreign minister also said the missile attack was limited and proportional in line with the UN Charter and because Iran did not want war.

Iran refrained but relished the anger of peoples of the world over US crimes. Some countries also interceded and prevailed upon the US and Iran will not go to war. But now and for a long time the peoples and some Middle Eastern governments are fighting to eliminate US military bases and US control of oil in some of the countries under its control.

*SR6. The Iran issue is not over yet. And now it is heating up. What is your message to peoples of the world, Prof Sison?*

JMS: The struggle between the US and its allies on the one hand; and Iran and the Middle Eastern countries on the other is not over yet. The

level of the rivalry has risen and its scope has widened. It only temporary that all-out war seems to be suppressed although the anger against US imperialism in the Middle East is spreading.

The Filipino people must be vigilant. There will be more intense conflicts in the Middle East in the immediate and long term. These have big impact on the Philippines because millions of Filipinos work in the Middle East and the Philippines is dependent on the income of Filipino migrants and on oil supplies from the Middle East.

*Sarah: Extro*

JMS: Thank you so much Prof. Sarah Raymundo and all the listeners of this interview about the crucial issue concerning the US and Iran. Long live you all!

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## Duterte's Highest Military Subordinates Oppose Resumption of GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations

January 9, 2020

The highest military subordinates of Duterte (national security adviser Esperon, defense secretary Lorenzana, DILG secretary Año, OPAPP secretary Galvez and AFP chief of staff Santos) are opposed to the resumption of peace negotiations between duly-authorized panels of the GRP and NDFP and have made the following declarations:

1. They can destroy the CPP and NPA before the end of the Duterte regime despite the failure of all previous regimes to destroy the people's revolutionary movement and the repeated failure of the current Duterte regime to comply with its deadlines for destroying said movement.

2. They oppose peace negotiations in a neutral venue abroad but favor negotiations for the surrender of the CPP, the NPA and entire revolutionary movement in a Philippine venue under the control and manipulation of the regime and its armed minions.

3. They can stage fake localized peace talks despite the glaring fact that all organs of the CPP and commands of the NPA at all levels have publicly rejected and condemned such fakery.

4. They are happy with, and enjoy the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation under the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats who are servile to the imperialist powers, their banks and monopoly firms.

5. They shun social, economic and political reforms to realize full independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development and they are most vehemently against genuine land reform and national industrialization.

In view of the foregoing, the Filipino people should not be surprised if the GRP-NDFP will not be resumed in the twilight years of the Duterte regime. Either Duterte has been pretending to be for peace negotiations all along or he fails as commander-in-chief to put in line his military subordinates for the resumption of the peace negotiations.

Even before the end of the reciprocal unilateral ceasefire agreement last January 7, the Duterte regime's military and police minions have been calling for war and blood and have been making offensive deployments against the Filipino people and revolutionary forces throughout the archipelago.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary movement are compelled by

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

their enemy to defend themselves and carry out counter-offensives. Their enemy is fully responsible for sabotaging and preventing the resumption of the peace negotiations. They are justified to wage the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war.



# Political and Constitutional Reforms are in Substantive Agenda of Peace Negotiations

January 18, 2020

Political and constitutional reforms are part of the substantive agenda of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. This has long been established in The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 which set forth the framework for the peace negotiations.

Any constitution that purports to be democratic is amendable and carries a provision for amendability. This democratic principle has long been agreed upon by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels and their principals.

For instance, the militarists in OPAPP cannot consider Duterte as an outlaw and violator of the 1987 constitution of the GRP by proposing a shift to federalism by constitutional amendment. What is unlawful and unconstitutional is for Duterte and his political agents to use federalism as a cover for a highly centralized fascist dictatorship and for the benefit of selected dynasties in the various regions.

It is not true that a constitution is immutable and averse to amendments and reforms once it is written down at a certain time by the political agents of the exploiting classes. It accords with democratic principle and practice that amendments can be proposed and adopted and then finally ratified by the sovereign people in accordance with their fundamental rights and principles.

When two warring parties, like the GRP and NDFP, with their respective constitutions, decide to negotiate peace, they must be ready to amend these in order to allow the needed social, economic, political and constitutional reforms.

The GRP has its amendable 1987 constitution and the NDFP has its own amendable Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government. For the information of the public as well as the OPAPP secretary, the CPP, NPA, NDFP and the revolutionary mass organizations have established organs of political power or self-government in hundreds of municipalities and thousands of villages in the Philippines.

Duterte is merely joking or making dope-head talk whenever he claims that the revolutionary movement does not have a single barangay as its own territory. In 73 provinces of the Philippines, there are more than 100 guerrilla fronts, with its guerrilla bases and zones, in which the people's democratic government exists. Despite the extremely violent and deceptive

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

campaigns of the reactionary armed forces, they have not succeeded in destroying a single guerrilla front.

Of course, reactionary military officers often have the illusion that they own the whole country when in big superior force they invade a certain guerrilla front simply because the NPA as guerrilla army retreats and trades space for time to observe the enemy deployment and prepare for tactical counteroffensives. In fact, the ratio of the reactionary military and police forces to the population can never be enough against the people in the process of armed revolution.

By this time, all reactionaries should recognize that the armed revolutionary movement has preserved and enlarged its forces nationwide because they are fighting for the just cause of the people against oppression and exploitation by the imperialists and their puppets and have mastered the strategy and tactics of protracted people war, which involves a fluid war of movement that uses concentration, shifting and dispersal as the need arises.

The generals who control OPAPP are militarists and commandists. They think narrowly that peace negotiations are only a matter of preconditioning the negotiations with the surrender of the NDFP to the GRP or requiring the NDFP to surrender to their ready-made constitution and ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats and military officers servile to US imperialism.

These militarists and commandists are now spreading the lie that the GRP and NDFP and their respective negotiating panels have been engaged in something unconstitutional and unlawful by negotiating and making agreements without the GRP first obtaining the surrender of the NDFP and laying aside the prior need to agree on social, economic and political reforms in order to address the roots of the armed conflict.

This is the latest lie of the OPAPP under the militarists, coming in the wake of its earlier lie that the level of consensus and agreement reached by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels on CASER are merely the sole handiwork of the NDFP. They try to make the public believe that both the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels have not been holding meetings to discuss and draft provisions of the CASER.

Whatever has been achieved in the drafting of CASER is the result of hard work by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels, reciprocal working committees and bilateral teams doing policy studies, research and formulating mutually acceptable provisions on social and economic reforms in order to uphold and realize national independence, economic sovereignty, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, social justice and expansion of social services.

The provisions already agreed upon by the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels are the result of negotiating and resolving contradictions between



*Political and Constitutional Reforms are in Substantive Agenda of Peace Negotiations*

drafts of the GRP and NDFP. This is a process entirely different from generals giving orders to their subordinates. Generals who think that peace negotiations are a process of GRP dictating to the NDFP or vice versa are unfit for assignment to the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

These militarists and commandists are now in fact sabotaging and preventing the resumption of peace negotiations between the duly authorized negotiating panels of the GRP and NDFP. They are violently opposed to social, economic, political and constitutional reforms. They are benefiting privately and materially from the termination of the peace negotiations under Proclamation 360 and from the militarization and fascisation of government and society under Executive Order 70.

They are taking over civilian positions and are pocketing a lot of public money by faking NPA surrenders, encounters and all kinds of anti-people projects. Duterte has enlarged the intelligence and discretionary funds under his office and other agencies in order to bribe and corrupt military and police officers and embolden them to engage in criminal acts. This is Duterte's way of keeping their loyalty and allowing him to use the military and police forces as his private army for the benefit of his ruling clique and dynasty.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces are forewarned by their own enemies in power to prepare themselves for self-defense against the further escalation of armed counterrevolution and to intensify their struggle for just peace through the people's democratic revolution. The revolutionary slogan is now resounding: people's war for people's peace.

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# Will Duterte Scrap All Military Agreements with the US?

February 15, 2020

Will Duterte scrap all military agreements with the US? It is difficult or even impossible to believe that Duterte would scrap all military agreements with the US, including the Mutual Defense Treaty, Mutual Logistics and Support Agreement and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

It still remains to be seen whether he would stick to the termination of the VFA all the way.

Just by giving the US a notice of terminating VFA, he has aroused quite a number of pro-US military officers to talk against him and curse him for prejudicing hundreds of projects under the VFA. Some of these officers have been talking about a coup.

It would be laudable if Duterte would scrap all the military agreements with the US. For him to do so and counter any coup threat from pro-US military officers, he would need to invoke national sovereignty and at the same time complement this with highly patriotic and progressive social, economic and political reforms to get solid support from the people as in Cuba, Vietnam and Venezuela.

Thus, he would be able to get the support of the truly patriotic military officers and the enlisted personnel in the military whose families would be benefited by such reforms, especially land reform and national industrialization.

With the said reforms, he can make a lasting peace with the revolutionary movement. Instead of wasting public funds for heavy military expenditures and corruption, he would be able to redirect the resources to industrial development and rural development.

Scrapping all the military agreements with the US would truly assert national sovereignty and territorial integrity. But this must be complemented by national industrialization and genuine land reform in order to ensure the support of the Filipino people and their revolutionary movement.

If Duterte is capable of asserting national sovereignty against US imperialism, he should also be able to assert the same against Chinese imperialism and demand its withdrawal from the artificial and militarized islands built in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea and demand from China compliance with international law, especially the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the decision of the International Arbitral Tribunal in favor of the Philippines against China.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

He can make diplomatic demands and strengthen alliance with the ASEAN countries which are aggrieved by the aggressive extraterritorial claims of China and with the overwhelming majority of states in the world, including the US without going into unequal treaties with it. Otherwise, the scrapping of the military agreements with the US would be considered as favoring Chinese imperialism and the surrender of the West Philippine Sea to China.

If Duterte would adopt all the necessary measures to assert and exercise national sovereignty against both US and Chinese imperialism, then he would deserve commendation as the president fundamentally different from and superior to all his predecessors in terms of patriotism. The problem is that the line of least resistance for him is to remain a puppet of imperialism and tyrant to his own people.

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# Is Duterte Truly Popular?

February 23, 2020

There are those who either naively or slavishly say or echo the line that the Duterte is “popular” and that there is nothing you can do to topple him from his pedestal. Instead of his being called a demagogue, vulgar ruffian or even a fascist, preying on the uniformed biases of the politically backward section of the masses and characteristically doing the opposite of what he says, some academics and journalists call him a “populist”, an ameliorative term.

There must be an explanation why Duterte is supposedly maintains a high “popularity” rating by the poll survey firms despite the blatant failures and gross crimes of his regime and the general historical pattern of presidents’ rating steeply declining after their mid-term and their support for an anointed successor being a kiss of political death. In seeking an explanation, the following facts should be considered:

1. Duterte was elected by a 39 per cent minority of the electorate. Since he was acclaimed as the winner, he has neither fulfilled his electoral promises nor performed in any significant positive way to increase the mass following signified by his electoral vote of 16 million.

2. But what he has done is to project the image of a strong man who can at will kill or imprison any opponent and has created a climate of fear for the purpose of mass intimidation, first by using the bogus war on drugs to murder thousands of poor people and then applying the methods of Oplan Tokhang to Oplans Kapayapaan and Kapanatagan in campaigns of suppression against the revolutionary movement of the people.

3. He has issued EO 70 to create the National Task Force-ELCAC in order to use anti-communism as the pretext for militarizing and fascisticizing the reactionary government and society and systematically red tag, vilify, detain or kill any opponent or critic of the de facto fascist dictatorship. As in the time of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, it is fine that the democratic forces and armed revolutionary movement of the people are fighting back.

4. He has monopolized the use of the opinion poll survey firms, Social Weather Station and Pulse, Asia, which ask those few people polled only questions focused on satisfaction and trustworthiness in general and avoid sharp questions that make him responsible for extrajudicial killings, drug smuggling, corruption, soaring prices of basic commodities, political persecution, subservience to foreign powers and other phenomena that the people detest.

5. The opposition, including the progressive forces, has defaulted in

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

letting Duterte monopolize the use of poll surveys in his favor and has failed even only to expose and oppose with sufficient persistence and effectiveness the slanted use of the opinion poll surveys. It amazes me that no one in the opposition has been able to organize poll surveys to counter the poll surveyors obviously paid by Duterte and his propaganda agents.

6. Since the electoral campaign of 2016, Duterte has also nearly monopolized the use of troll armies in the social media to glorify himself and to put down his opponents and critics with personal insults, threats and punitive actions, including extrajudicial killings. His troll armies are in alliance with those of the Marcos family which specializes in glorifying the late fascist dictator Marcos and seeking to revise history about him.

7. The legal democratic forces can effectively counter the Duterte and Marcos troll armies. But so far, their full potential of mobilizing counter-troll teams per chapter per mass organization has not yet been realized. The Duterte propaganda machinery succeeds to a large extent by a failure or inadequacy to counter it on a daily basis.

8. The legal democratic forces and even the Church, which have often been offended by the Duterte regime have also failed to mobilize mass actions comparable to the those in the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and the anti-fascist mass actions of 1983-86 with the use of noise barrages, pre-rally meetings and converging marches from many assembly points. Duterte himself has so far failed to hold gigantic rallies of his own in the style of Hitlerite fascism but he benefits from no more than small and anemic mass protests.

9. For rabble rousing, aside from the use of social media, Duterte has paid radio and TV broadcasters to glorify him, keep quiet about his crimes and attack his opponents and critics on a daily basis. Even in the print media, the fascist regime overshadows the opposition by the high frequency of issuing press releases, holding press conferences and circulating fake news or disinformation.

10. Duterte has a heavy-handed control of the Comelec and his crony Dennis Uy has owned since 2018 the TIM, the Filipino counterpart firm of Smartmatic. Thus, Duterte has been able to rig the May 2019 mid-term elections in favor of his candidates, especially at the national level, and to confirm his 'popularity' manufactured by the poll survey firms. The legal democratic forces and the opposition in general have seemed to overlook how Duterte rigged the 2019 elections probably for fear of being called sore losers.

11. With his presidential power over Comelec and use of the Dennis Uy electronic firm, Duterte can win any vote count either in a referendum to change the constitution or in elections to elect his successor or stand-in. The conservative opposition cannot expect to use the elections to

disempower Duterte. As in the overthrow of Marcos, only the combination of gigantic mass protests and the armed revolution can overthrow Duterte.

12. Duterte connives with the pork-barrel fed members of Congress to get the funds for plunder by his family and cronies, to increase the military budget and bribe the military and police officers and to feed bureaucratic and military corruption. The budget of the reactionary government has been more lopsided then ever before in favor of the military, intelligence and discretionary, funds and graft-laden infrastructure projects at the expense of social services and for economic development.

13. Duterte has appointed judges who are incompetent and corrupt but are loyal to him at all levels of the judiciary, especially the Supreme Court. The corruption of the Supreme Court is most manifested in the dismissal of the plunder cases against the Marcoses, Arroyos, Estradas and other political crooks that financed and supported Duterte with bailiwick votes in the 2016 elections.

14. The Duterte regime can persist in power to the extent that the opposition forces cannot build a broad united front that is strong enough to launch gigantic mass protest actions similar to those of 1983 to 1986 which overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Those gigantic mass actions complemented the tactical offensives launched by the armed revolutionary movement . The people's war convinced Reagan that the US-dominated Philippine ruling system was endangered by the persistence of Marcos in power.

In view of all the above, however long he or his dynasty can stay in power, Duterte will ultimately fall because of the rapidly worsening crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system and the world capitalist system. The more he seeks to overstretch his rule, the harder Duterte and his clique of crooks and butchers will fall. He guarantees his own hard fall with his traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and mendacious policies and acts.

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## Comment on the Unlawful Arrest of Rodolfo Salas<sup>22</sup>

February 25, 2020

The arrest of Rodolfo Salas on the baseless charge against him and others, including me, shows that those military officials who oppose the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations will do anything to discourage and prevent these.

As pointed out by his lawyers from FLAG before the Supreme Court, Salas served out his sentence for simple rebellion from 1986 to 1992 and it was guaranteed under the Hernandez political offense doctrine that he could not be held liable for common crimes. It would be double jeopardy to hold him liable for the baseless charge about an alleged incident in the rebellion case in 1985.

The same jurisprudence (Hernandez doctrine) is also in my favor inasmuch as the rebellion and subversion cases against me from 1977 onward were nullified in 1986 upon the invalidation of the Marcos fiats that brought about martial law and the military commissions under which I was arraigned and tried but failed to convict me until the fall of Marcos.

Most of important of all in my particular case, the charge is patently false because I was under maximum military detention at Fort Bonifacio when the alleged crime occurred in Leyte in 1985.

Going back to the possibility of peace negotiations, the arrest of Salas shows that the military and police under the Duterte regime cannot be trusted to respect the rights of people who have a record of rebellion but have decided to live within the ruling system.

Salas is victimized the same way that the NDFP consultants have been arbitrarily arrested and illegally detained, with the additional use of planted firearm and ammunition. He should be released immediately.

The message is clear that I cannot go to the Philippines without considering sufficient progress in the peace negotiations if any and without the necessary legal, political and security precautions and guarantees.

The revolutionary movement is also forewarned that it cannot trust the Duterte regime, especially while the military and police are on a rampage under Executive Order No. 70 and National Task Force-ELCAC.

The engage in red-tagging, arresting and killing rebel suspects, social activists, human rights defenders and other people in the name of anti-communism and in the most blatant style of fascist terrorism.

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<sup>22</sup>Salas was CPP chairman from 1977 to 1987.



## Views of Patriotic Elements Among AFP and PNP Officers<sup>23</sup>

February 26, 2020

I have had comrades and friends among military and police officers of the reactionary government since we in the Kabataang Makabayan decided in 1964 to form patriotic groups among cadets at the Philippine Military Academy and the Reserve Officers Training Corps and among young military and police officers.

I had the privilege of being a guest speaker at the Philippine Military Academy and I had the opportunity to criticize the mercenary tradition of the reactionary military since it was established by the US upon the conquest of the Philippines and to propose to the faculty and cadets to uphold the patriotic and revolutionary tradition of the Katipunan in the service of the people.

I also happened to have relatives, former classmates and friends from my Ilocos hometown, province and region who have served as military and police officers at various levels, including the highest level. Thus, it is not surprising if to this day that I have friendly contacts with some police and military and police officers.

In recent weeks, I have had conversations with recently retired military and police officers who maintain close relations with their former subordinates who are active officers under the Duterte regime. In the course of family tours in Europe, they have visited me in Utrecht.

I have learned from them that to a great extent, Duterte has been able to maintain the loyalty and obedience of officers and enlisted personnel by raising their basic compensation, extra benefits and opportunities for making big money through corruption in the handling of public funds and in criminal acts involving extrajudicial killings, extortion and drug trade.

They decry Duterte's favoritism in promotions and assignments, mainly in favor of officers previously based in Davao. Together with their side-kicks, these officers engage in criminal and corrupt activities, such as extrajudicial killings and faking surrenders in order to collect reward money, and in inventing intelligence projects in order to pocket the money.

The honest and patriotic officers that I have talked to are strongly critical and even condemnatory of Duterte for systematically making his personally chosen officers to engage in criminal acts and thereby corrupting them in

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<sup>23</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the process in order to keep their personal loyalty to himself.

They admit that as a matter of survival and camaraderie they have kept quiet about Duterte's favoritism for his flunkies in terms of promotions, lucrative assignments and the license for criminality and corruption. But they notice that only recently many officers talk openly among themselves against Duterte's termination of the Visiting Forces Agreement and even against anomalies involving promotions and criminal acts.

They aver that Duterte himself has unwittingly handed down to the anti-Duterte and pro-US officers an issue like the termination of the VFA that has provoked them to question the integrity of Duterte as commander-in-chief and hold him accountable for violations of national sovereignty and the professional standards of the military and police services.

The notice of terminating the VFA has been most shocking to many military and police officers on the presumption that Duterte is going against public interest and is encouraging China to continue encroaching on the exclusive economic zone and extended continental shelf of the Philippines and violating Philippine sovereign rights.

I have asked the retired military and police officers who have visited me how soon or how fast would those who are opposed to Duterte organize themselves and come out to express themselves to the public. They say that no group of officers would dare to come out to denounce Duterte publicly unless conditions such as those in 1983 to 1986 arise and make the US consider junking Duterte.

They estimate that the US will not go beyond slapping the wrist of Duterte for human rights violations if they can still haggle with him over the VFA and other military treaties and believe his pledge to destroy the armed revolution and remove national restrictions on foreign investments.

They acknowledge that in 1983 to 1986, after the assassination of Benigno Aquino, the legal opposition, the Church, the civic associations and the forces of the Left united to oppose the Marcos regime and worked hard to launch increasingly big mass actions until these inspired the anti-Marcos groups in the military to make a coup against Marcos. Though the coup failed, it ignited the people's uprising on EDSA and around the presidential palace.

They also acknowledge that the long-term armed resistance of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army served to keep up the spirit of defiance and undermined the Marcos regime and led finally to frequent tactical offensives of the NPA from 1983 to 1986.

They think the anti-Duterte groups in the military and police will not act against Duterte unless they see protest mass actions with hundreds of thousands of participants in the national capital region.

They also believe that the super-majority of Duterte in Congress will

easily break up upon the rise of gigantic mass actions because the alliance with Duterte is based on pork barrel corruption. Thus, the US will become convinced to embolden the pro-US officers in the military to turn against Duterte and have him replaced on the basis of constitutional succession by his vice president.

The friendly officers who have visited me have wondered why the legal democratic forces on their own or in a broad united front with other anti-Duterte forces have so far not succeeded to launch mass of actions in the hundreds of thousands despite the rich experience in mass protests in the First Quarter Storm of 1970, in the period of 1983 to 1986 when Marcos was overthrown and in 2000 to 2001 when Estrada was also overthrown.

They also wonder why the NPA with its supposedly more than 100 guerrilla fronts has not launched tactical offensives on a national scale and at such a frequency to belie the claim of the National Task Force- ELCAC that the AFP and PNP have either killed or forced the surrender of 11,000 NPA personnel, which is several times more than the officially estimated number of NPA fighters at 2000 to 4000. They laugh at the absurdity and corruption in the faking of NPA casualties and surrenderers.

Still they speculate that if the NPA has truly more than 100 guerrilla fronts, why have not the CPP leadership and NPA national operational command issue a national guideline to launch tactical offensives that would inflict a minimum of 5 to 10 casualties on their military and police opponents per guerrilla front per month. They calculate that the US would certainly junk Duterte if the AFP and the PNP were to suffer a monthly casualty rate of 500 to 1000.

They recall the tactical offensives of the NPA from 1983 to 1986 which worried military and police officers and prompted the US to consider Marcos as a failure at suppressing the armed resistance. They venture to say that the CPP and NPA can learn from their own past and accumulated experience in launching tactical offensives, including ambushes, raids, arrest operations, sparrow and zipper operations.

However, they qualify their estimates and speculations on the potential of the NPA with the hope that the armed conflict will be solved someday by addressing the roots of the armed conflict by negotiating and agreeing on social, economic and political reforms. They say that there are better chances for achieving a just peace after Duterte ceases to be president and his cabal of anti-peace military hawks are out of office.





## State Terrorism on the Pretext of Anti-Terrorism

February 27, 2020

The Philippine Senate, now dominated by an overwhelming number of pro-Duterte senators as a result of the rigging of the 2019 mid-term elections, has approved Senate Bill 1083, otherwise known as the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020, seeking to amend the Human Security Act of 2007.

The bill aims to legalize and aggravate the already rampant state terrorism of red tagging, arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings on the pretext of anti-terrorism. It is meant to further entrench the de facto fascist dictatorship of Duterte without need of any formal declaration of martial law as Marcos did in 1972.

Like the term subversion during the Cold War and martial rule under Marcos, terrorism is vaguely defined to make it a catch-all term for any concerted action or any common crime and for taking punitive measures against the broadest range of opposition, critics and social activists in violation of basic democratic rights and fundamental freedoms.

The bill seeks to penalize those presumed by the authorities to propose, incite, conspire, participate in the planning, training, preparation, and facilitation of a “terrorist” act; as well as those presumed to provide material support to “terrorists”, and recruit members for a “terrorist” organization.

It enables the police or military personnel to arbitrarily place individuals and organizations under surveillance; compel telcos to divulge calls and messages; arrest these people without warrant, and detain them for an extended period up to 14 days.

It allows the preliminary proscription of suspected “terrorist” organizations prior to their being given an opportunity to be informed of the charge and avail of counsel and judicial review. It lowers the standard for warrantless arrest and detention.

It removes from the Human Security Act of 2007 the compensation for persons wrongfully detained. Without any liability, the hounds of the state will violate human rights with impunity and on a wider scale than ever before.

Regional trial courts can outlaw individuals and organizations as “terrorists” on the mere say so of the regime, the police or military as well as upon the request of foreign or supra-national agencies. The imperialist masters will also benefit from the state terrorism of the Duterte puppet regime.

We can be certain that the regime and its military and police agents will

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

engage in surveillance, warrantless arrests and arbitrary detention, cruel and disproportionate punishments, and violations of the right to freedom of association, free expression, right to privacy, mobility, and to due process.

The Lower House of Congress, also dominated by the pro-Duterte supermajority united by pork barrel corruption, is also in the process of passing a so-called anti-terrorism bill like that of the Senate. Such bill is synchronized with bills for changing the charter and extending the terms of elective government officials.

The Duterte regime and its followers know no limits in their escalation of the oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people. They are closing every possibility for peace negotiations with the NDFP. They are inciting the people to wage all forms of resistance in defense of their national and democratic rights.

As did the Anti-Subversion law in the past, the current "anti-terrorist" legislation by the running dogs of Duterte in Congress will not deter the people's revolutionary movement but will persuade more millions of Filipinos to take the road of armed revolution in order to achieve their national and social liberation from the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions that have been made more intolerable than ever by the tyranny of the Duterte regime.

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## **Welcoming Duterte's Willingness to Talk Peace and Allow Backchannel Talks for Laying the Ground<sup>24</sup>**

**March 6, 2020**

I welcome the report that in his recent cabinet meeting President Duterte expressed his willingness to talk peace with me, depending on back channel or informal talks between representatives of his government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

My position is in accordance with the policy of the NDFP to be open to peace negotiations with the GRP on the basis of the joint agreements that have been accumulated and on the basis of drafts that have been previously worked out by the GRP and NDFP panels, reciprocal working committees and bilateral teams.

I think that formal peace talks can be resumed by reaffirming the aforesaid joint agreements, removing those obstacles that terminate and prejudice serious peace negotiations and setting forth the agenda, to include first of all the negotiation of the Interim Peace Agreement (IPA).

The IPA is a package of agreements: 1. general amnesty and the release of all political prisoners, 2. the articles on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and National Industrialization and Economic Development in the Comprehensive Agreement of Social and Economic Reforms (CASER), and 3. coordinated unilateral ceasefires.

After the IPA is accomplished, then the rest of CASER can be negotiated easily. In quick succession, the negotiations on political and constitutional reforms and the end of hostilities and disposition of forces can follow.

At a certain point in the progress of the peace negotiations, I shall meet President Duterte face to face for the purpose of accelerating the progress of the peace negotiations and ensuring that the Filipino people will enjoy full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development and cultural progress under conditions of a just peace.

The backchannel team of the NDFP negotiating panel is authorized to explore and recommend what are the legal, political and security requirements for my meeting with President Duterte. It is obvious that at the moment there are obstacles which prejudice and put at grave risk not only my personal safety but more importantly the safety and continuity of the entire peace process if I were to go immediately to the Philippines without the necessary precautions.

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<sup>24</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

According to the NDFP negotiators and my lawyers, it would be legal, political and physical suicide for me to jump into a pit in which Proclamation Nos. 360 (terminating the peace negotiations) and 374 (designating the CPP and NPA as terrorist), EO No. 70 (militarizing government and society), the Anti-Terrorism Act, the case of walking skeletons, the false charge of terrorism before the Manila RTC and so many death squads are waiting for me. Thus, the war hawks would be successful in killing any hope of peace negotiations.

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# **Duterte Regime Is Culpable for Allowing Covid-19 to Spread for more than Two Months in the Philippines**

**March 15, 2020**

Since the public report on the outbreak of Covid-19 in China in early January this year, the Duterte regime has downplayed it for more than two months and allowed more than half a million of travelers from China, including thousands from Wuhan to enter the Philippines. Until now, travelers from China can freely enter the Philippines as tourists and POGO employees.

It is unbelievable that only a few scores have been afflicted by Covid-19 in the Philippines. The number is probably much higher. As admitted by Department of Health (DOH) officials, no systematic testing and counting have been made due to lack of personnel and resources. The virus has spread nationwide, as reports come from various provinces about fatalities due to the virus.

The Duterte regime is totally unprepared to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic and to safeguard the health of the Filipino people because it has cut the meager DOH budget by Php 16.6 billion for 2020 in order to favor the regime's military overspending and other graft-laden programs and projects.

There is gross absence of public health personnel and resources over wide areas. This abets the further spread of the pandemic. There is no testing for Covid-19 infection at the community level. In more than 95 percent of communities at the barangay level, there are definitely no testing kits for use by health workers.

Provisions are absent for bed spaces in hospitals, clinics and improvised places for patients. There is a scarce supply of masks, thermal scanners, disinfectants, medicines and oxygen tanks. Those already infected with pneumonia due to Covid-19 are certain to die in most cases.

In his recent press conference concerning the pandemic, Duterte exposed his utter lack of serious concern for the health and livelihood of the people by concentrating on the deployment of armed 40,000 soldiers and police at so many check points in order to enforce lock-down on Metro Manila, which he euphemistically called community quarantine.

He failed to mention how a sufficient number of health workers are to be deployed at the community level in order to check symptoms, test and treat those infected with Covid-19. In fact, his sole or main consideration is

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

to use his armed minions to intimidate the people, deprive them of medical attention, prevent people from earning their daily bread and hamper the production and distribution of basic goods.

The Duterte regime is weaponizing the Covid-19 pandemic to intimidate and coerce the people to submit to the scheme of fascist dictatorship and perpetuation of the Duterte dynasty beyond 2022 despite the tyrant's deteriorating health, which is conspicuously indicated by his ashen face and incoherent speech.

Duterte is completely out of his mind by failing to see the far-reaching consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic in relation to the rapidly worsening crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system due to his own anti-national, anti-democratic and anti-people policies and actions as well as due to the rapid deterioration of the world capitalist system.

The Covid-19 pandemic is threatening the public health and national economy and is exposing how foul and inimical the Duterte policies and actions have been to public interest. The broad masses of the people are outraged and desirous of ousting Duterte from power.

The Duterte regime has aggravated the conditions of underdevelopment, unemployment and mass poverty by militarizing and making the government fascist in the name of anticommunism and by having no sense of development but to obtain onerous foreign loans in order to maintain the infrastructure for exporting raw materials and importing manufactures.

But abroad, Covid-19 has also some major damaging effect on the world capitalist system in terms of disrupting production and causing a financial crash and is exposing fundamental weaknesses of the system like over-accumulation by one percent of the population, inflation of assets, the crisis of overproduction, the aggravation of the prolonged depression since 2008 and the onset of a deeper round of depression.

The Duterte regime is now confronted by a situation similar to that faced by the Marcos fascist dictatorship from 1979 to 1986. The bankruptcy of the ruling system and the tightening of international credit due to the worsening crisis of global capitalism will drastically reduce the ability of the regime to buoy itself up by obtaining foreign loans and enlarging the entire public debt.

The rapidly worsening economic, social and political crisis is further debilitating and discrediting the Duterte regime and is outraging the people and making them desire revolutionary change. As a result, the revolutionary movement of the people is growing stronger than ever before. The persistence of the tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal and corrupt regime can only serve to generate favorable conditions for the advance of the new democratic revolution.



## Duterte on the Deployment of Military and Police Forces in Urban Areas

March 16, 2020

As Duterte admits, it is true that the redeployment of his military and police to urban areas would leave a vacuum and will allow the New People's Army to increase its tactical offensives in the countryside.

But the NDFP has gotten reports that the concentration of Duterte's military and police forces are meant not to help in the fight against Covid-19 but to suppress the people's democratic movement in the urban areas.

In fact, Duterte himself gave recently the order to his armed minions to finish off the entire revolutionary movement before 2022.

But if he were really serious with his offer to have a ceasefire with the NDFP he must make a formal offer through the GRP negotiating panel to the NDFP negotiating panel.

The NDFP and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) will seriously study the offer and relate it not only to the common fight against Covid-19 but also to the resumption of the peace negotiations.

In my view, the NDFP will certainly demand that the GRP realign government spending from excessive military spending and from rampant corruption to the pursuit of genuine land reform and national industrialization and the expansion of social services, especially public health and education.

The NDFP will demand that public funds be poured into the effort to fight Covid-19 so that there will be adequate health workers, facilities, equipment and medicines for the purpose.

In the meantime, the revolutionary forces and the people themselves have to undertake collective efforts to the fight Covid-19 pandemic and at the same time defend themselves against the continuing military assaults under NTF-ELCAC and various operational plans of the Duterte regime.

Duterte has the obligation to rein in his armed minions immediately because they are the ones invading and assaulting the guerrilla fronts which are the territory of the people's democratic government of workers and peasants in the countryside.

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## **Itanong Mo Kay Prof**

### **Topic: Covid-19**

**March 16, 2020**

*SR- Intro: Greetings to our audience. May we remain safe and well-disposed amidst the health crisis brought about by the new corona virus disease that appeared in 2019 or Covid-19. In recent days, we have witnessed and experienced the declaration of Covid-19 as a global pandemic, meaning it is spreading to many countries around the entire world. One of the more immediate concerns is the response of the Duterte government to this. Many are not reached by government aid or almost no aid and information about Covid-19.*

*We deem it necessary here at Itanong Mo kay Prof (Ask the Prof) especially to have with us again, especially our beloved listeners in the rural areas and urban-poor areas who have to remain at work in the face of Covid-19. For isn't it that if we did not venture out and work, there is no Duterte government that supports us amidst the disaster we face?*

*We will talk about and understand what is happening around us and around the whole world, including some steps we can take to help each other. As always, we have here with us on Ask the Prof the Chairperson Emeritus of the International League of Peoples' Struggle and National Democratic Front of the Philippines Chief Political Consultant, Prof. Jose Maria Sison. How are you, Prof?*

JMS: Militant patriotic greetings to you, Prof. Sarah Raymundo and to all our compatriots.

*SR1: Prof. Sison, can you explain to our listeners what is this corona virus or Covid-19.*

JMS: The Covid-19 is a kind of virus that causes illness that manifested itself in Wuhan, China in December 2019. This was published as an epidemic in Wuhan in January 2020. The major symptoms are: fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath. This leads to pneumonia which could then lead to death for two to five percent of those sick with Covid-19.

This virus is very contagious to people through physical contact and touching things touched by those who are infected. The most vulnerable are the elderly and those with prior illness of the lungs. The epidemic spreads easily in a country as in China. And because of travelers who carry the disease, the virus has spread to many countries and it has now become a pandemic or an epidemic in many countries.

Among the countries with the pandemic Covid-19 are China, Italy, Iran,

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

South Korea, Spain and others. In the Philippines, people became aware of the virus in January when the man of an elderly Chinese tourist couple died from the virus. Some Filipino doctors who treated them got infected.

*SR2: A number of countries are affected by the spread of Covid-19. Even now as we discuss this virus in our program, 12 have already died and 140 are infected in the Philippines. The response of the Duterte government is lockdown. He ordered an Enhanced Community Quarantine to all residents, not only in the National Capital Region, but throughout Luzon. What is meant by Enhanced Community Quarantine? And what can you say about this, Prof. Sison?*

JMS: It is the fault of Duterte and his whole regime that Covid-19 has spread throughout the Philippines above the reported official number. In the second week of January, the World Health Organization had already issued an alert on the Covid-19 epidemic in Wuhan, China. But Duterte still allowed the entry into the Philippines of travelers from China: more than 14,000 from Wuhan and 500,000 from the whole of China. His reasoning was the need for income from the Chinese tourists and from the so-called POGOs or Chinese casinos.

The lockdown on the national capital region imposed by Duterte is a militarist and fascist madness. A large number of military and police personnel are being deployed to intercept people at many checkpoints. They harass each one to present an ID and some pretend to use a thermal scanner on a person's forehead. What is worst is that they gather together both the healthy and those possibly infected. People's livelihood is disrupted and Covid-19 spread further because those carrying the disease are mixed with those who are not sick.

More terrible is the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) that covers the whole of Luzon. Train, bus, jeepney, taxi, SUV, P2P bus, motorcycle and taxis are not allowed to operate. Thus, the people are prevented from going to their work. The economy, factories and services are dead. The worst is that those sick with Covid-19 or any serious ailments can't reach the hospitals and clinics. Even doctors, nurses and medical supply find difficulty in reaching the hospitals, clinics or health centers.

The interception by Duterte's armed lackeys of healthy people, health professionals and sick people is utter stupidity. They use Covid-19 as an excuse to harass and intimidate the people. Worse than the Covid-19 is the Duterte virus. In fact, the Duterte virus has killed more than 30,000 since 2016. In comparison to the Duterte virus, Covid-19 has killed only a few.

*SR 3: In the first day of checkpoints earlier put up by police and soldiers, there was a long queue and traffic. Many were angered because many commuters were late for work. What is the right thing for those many coming from neighboring provinces but working in Metro Manila, Prof.*



*Sison?*

JMS: The solution to Covid-19 should be medical, not military. At the very start, doctors, nurses, health assistants, face masks, personal protection equipment, thermal scanner, testing kits, oxygen tanks, medicines and bed space for the patients in serious conditions in quarantine centers should have been deployed from the level of communities. Testing and treatment should be free. This was done in China, Vietnam, South Korea and other countries.

Thus, the sick is separated and the healthy can travel freely to get to their places of work. Forbidding healthy people to travel is wrong. They suffer from hunger because they have no income. And the economy will collapse. It is most unfortunate for sick people not to be able to go to a hospital, clinic or health center. Or put them together in military and police checkpoints with people who are not sick.

*SR4: According to the Alliance of Health Workers or AHW, health workers and doctors lack the proper equipment for monitoring patients with Covid-19. Face masks are almost nonexistent or used for three days instead of just a few hours a day. Because of the budget cuts to health, the health workers' situation is getting worse. What can you say about this, Prof. Sison?*

JMS: What the Alliance of Health Workers or AHW says is true: health workers and doctors lack the proper equipment for the monitoring and testing of patients possibly infected with Covid-19. Even face masks are scarce and if available, these are used for days instead of just hours. Worse still is that there are not enough public health workers and medical equipment available to attend to those found positive with the COVID-19.

The root cause of the lack of preparation and adequate public health personnel and equipment is military overspending and corruption. The Department of Health budget was cut by 14 billion pesos, as were those for public education and other social services to boost the budgets for the president's office, the military and their equipment, intelligence and discretionary funds and the pork barrel to feed the greed of the Duterte's family, cronies and congressmen.

*SR5: In the speech of President Duterte earlier today, Prof. Sison, he asked for a ceasefire with the New People's Army. A ceasefire from both sides while we are facing this situation. What is your opinion on this request of Duterte, Prof. Sison?*

JMS: It's hard to believe he was sincere or serious in asking for a ceasefire with the New People's Army. Just recently he ordered his military to kill off the NPA and revolutionary movement before the end of his term in 2022. And his deployment of military and police in the cities is not just to solve the Covid-19 issue but to suppress the legal democratic movement and to strengthen his tyranny and so he could choose his successor if ever

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he became very ill.

The NDFP would only believe that he is truly interested in a ceasefire, with which it can agree once he stops his attack and suppression of the legal democratic forces and the guerrilla fronts of the democratic government of workers and peasants. And if he were to free all political prisoners through general amnesty on humanitarian grounds like the release by the Iranian government of the tens of thousands of political prisoners to avoid being infected by the Covid-19.

*SR6: President Duterte also said the police can arrest anyone who violates the law during checkpoint. But according to Atty. Chel Diokno, any person wanting to enter NCR to be able to go work cannot be arrested. What can you say about this?*

JMS: Atty. Chel Diokno is correct to say that a person who wants to enter NCR to go to work or anyone sick who should go to the doctor for medical treatment could not be arrested. The order of Duterte to arrest anyone violating the law in checkpoints is threatening and abusive. Ordinary people are naturally respectful. It is malice on Duterte's part to accuse people they are troublemakers like him.

*SR7: Covid-19 erupted in China in December 2019. But it was only in March that the government got alarmed after the victims of Covid-19 were listed. Does the government still have a responsibility in the delay of preparing the Philippines for the entry of Covid-19 in the country?*

JMS: As I said before, Duterte and his cohorts in the regime are responsible for the spread of Covid-19 in the Philippines since January. They did not do anything to provide health personnel, resources and equipment to immediately act and prevent the spread of Covid-19. The priority of those in power and corrupt are the negligence of health needs and violation of rights and interests of the people.

*SR8: What is your message to our listeners, Prof. Sison? Many of our compatriots are restless as they are concerned not only with the Covid-19 but also with their daily meal.*

JMS: The Duterte regime should be held accountable for the entry and spread of Covid-19 in the Philippines and the lack of appropriate policies and mobilizations of health personnel and the people to fight the Covid-19. It is criminal negligence of Duterte. Directly connected to this are the principal interests of Duterte in his being a traitor, tyrant, butcher, thief and swindler.

JMS: The Filipino people must further strengthen their unity and resolve to end the Duterte regime. They should act with more militancy to isolate and shake this regime from root to rafters. The patriotic and democratic movement must be strengthened to overthrow this regime as soon as possible. And to advance the force for full independence, democracy, social justice, all-rounded development and just peace.

Goodbye to Prof. Sarah Raymundo and to all the listeners. I look forward to being with you again in our coming interviews. In these critical conditions in our country, there is always a big issue that we should think about, discuss and act on. Rest assured that I am ready to talk with you on any important issue. Thank you. Long live!

SARAH: Thank you Prof. Joma, we really need more than ever the information of critical analysis of the situation, instead of “just follow” the Duterte routine. More important, is the message of common action based on our analysis and unity.

Organize, trust comrades, achieve what is most necessary through our church groups, associations, federations, unions and other forms of organizations. Many believe that lockdown or control of people’s movements is one of the solutions to minimize the spread of infection and death from Covid-19.

But if we had a system deploying its full resources on public health, with sufficient and free testing kits, hospital beds and also hospitals, if public services and government budget were prioritized from the taxes we pay, the government would be able to satisfy the needs of the people simultaneous with protecting the frontliners, we can also think of more honorable, human, reasonable, effective solutions, other than lockdown.

Who would create such a system but us? Thus, being critical of the government at this time aims at contributing to the new system that answers the needs of people, unlike this that nips the freedom and lives of the people amidst a serious crisis.

Thank you for your attention! Heighten your vigilance, take care of our community against Covid-19 and the Duterte fascist regime.

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## Why NDFP Does Not Trust Duterte's Ceasefire Declaration

March 21, 2020

The NDFP does not trust Duterte's unilateral ceasefire declaration and cannot instantly reciprocate it. It is obviously a malicious ploy of psychological warfare and is intended to cover up the continuing offensive operations of the AFP and PNP against the people and revolutionary forces in the guerrilla fronts of the people's democratic government and against the legal democratic forces and individuals considered as enemies of the regime in the urban areas.

The offensive operations of the AFP and PNP are continuing without any stop and include red-tagging, abductions and extrajudicial killings, compelling people to attend fake surrender meetings, staging fake encounters that kill and victimize ordinary peasants, bombing rural communities in certain regions and forcing the evacuation of the poor peasants and indigenous people and delivering the land and other natural resources to foreign and big comprador corporations.

Duterte has referred to Covid-19 as his motivation for declaring his bogus and malicious unilateral ceasefire but he is in fact criminally responsible for the following:

1. He let into the Philippines more than 500,000 travellers from China, including more than 14,000 from Wuhan, since January while the Covid-19 contagion was raging in China. As a result, Covid-19 has spread nationwide for more than two months.

2. He slashed the budget for the Department of Health by more than Php 10 billion in order to favor military overspending and corruption in his own office and other departments. And he made no efforts to prevent the spread of the highly contagious virus despite the strong admonitions of international health authorities and experts.

3. In his belated reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic, he has prioritized the setting up of military and police checkpoints in the national capital region and then in the whole of Luzon and the imposition of a lockdown by banning public transport and intimidating the people. He has thereby prevented the people from going to their places of work and even those in need of testing and treatment for Covid-19 and other illnesses from going to health centers, clinics and hospitals.

4. Until now, there are no provisions for free mass testing for Covid-19 at the community level and for treatment of people already afflicted by

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the virus at the public hospitals. The hospitals under the DOH have grossly inadequate health personnel, bed space, facilities, equipment, disinfectants and medicine for the rapidly growing number of Covid-19 patients. There are yet no hospitals dedicated to the testing and treatment of said patients.

5. Having become nationwide and communicable in communities, the Covid-19 plague has gone far beyond the stage of containment, thanks to the criminal negligence and incompetence of the Duterte regime. But the regime stubbornly insists on lockdowns, banning public transport, depriving the people of their means of livelihood and preventing even the sick from getting the necessary medical treatment.

6. Despite the clamor of the people, the NDFP and human rights advocates, Duterte refuses to release promptly the political prisoners and other prisoners who are vulnerable to mass infection by Covid-19 under the congested conditions of prison. Instead, the armed minions of Duterte have been rapidly increasing the number of prisoners through arbitrary arrests and planting of evidence.

7. Duterte has promised to provide food and compensation for those who are prevented by the lockdowns from going to work. He has also promised to provide the health personnel and resources for the free mass testing and treatment of people for Covid-19. But the promises have proven to be lies.

On their own account and to their credit, the health workers, the private hospitals, mass organizations, churches, charitable institutions and other nongovernmental entities have been the most active in looking after the health and welfare of the people, especially the impoverished ones, assisting them and fighting the Covid-19 pandemic and overcoming the harsh militarist impositions and damaging actions of the anti-people Duterte regime.

In the guerrilla fronts of the people's democratic government, the organs and units in charge of health work are based in the local communities and are embedded in the New People's Army and the revolutionary mass organizations. They are in the frontline fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. They provide to the people testing and treatment for this as well as other illnesses, despite the frequent offensive operations of the enemy.

In view of the foregoing, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines is constrained from reciprocating the ill-motivated and ill-founded unilateral ceasefire declaration of the Duterte regime. With or without NDFP reciprocation, the Duterte regime should at least recognize its criminal responsibilities for the entry, spread and aggravation of the Covid-19 plague in the Philippines and rectify immediately the wrongs and crimes it has committed against the people.

While the Duterte regime acts in the extreme against the Filipino

*Why NDFP Does Not Trust Duterte's Ceasefire Declaration*

people, the NDFP refrains from any action which would be construed as condoning and covering up the criminal acts and responsibilities of the regime and would run counter to the mounting outrage of the people and the rapid growth of the broad united front of patriotic and democratic forces now seeking the soonest possible end of the traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and deceptive regime.

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## **NDFP Negotiating Panel Can Recommend Ceasefire to its Principal as a Response to the UN Secretary General's Call for Global Ceasefire<sup>25</sup>**

**March 25, 2020**

I am advising the Negotiating Panel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to recommend to its principal, the NDFP National Council, the issuance of a unilateral ceasefire declaration by the Communist Party of the Philippines to the New People's Army in order to respond 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 NDFP and the broad masses of the people themselves need to refrain from launching tactical offensives to gain more time and opportunity to fight the Covid-19 pandemic and to look after the health and overall welfare of the people in both urban and rural areas. The world must know that long before the belated quarantine declarations and repressive measures of the GRP, the NDFP and the revolutionary forces have been informing, training and mobilizing the people on how to fight the pandemic.

While the New People's Army can cease and desist from launching tactical offensives against the military, police and paramilitary forces of the GRP, it must be vigilant and be ready to act in self-defense against any tactical offensive launched by any enemy force against the people and revolutionary forces in the guerrilla fronts of the people's democratic government.

Said enemy forces have persisted in launching tactical offensives and bombing of communities in the countryside as well as campaigns of red tagging, abductions and murder in the urban areas. It is therefore understandable why the NDFP has desisted from reciprocating the false unilateral ceasefire declared by the GRP last March 15, 2020.

The NDFP has also refused to reciprocate the bogus unilateral ceasefire declaration of the GRP in order to avoid appearing as directly condoning and becoming complicit in the criminal culpabilities of the Duterte regime for allowing the Covid-19 to spread nationwide since January, for making no preparations against the pandemic and for making lockdowns on communities and yet failing to provide mass testing and treatment of the sick, food assistance and compensation for those prevented from work.

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<sup>25</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

Most recently the tyrant Duterte has used the pandemic as an excuse for grabbing unnecessary emergency powers and huge amounts of public money to carry out repressive measures and feed bureaucratic and military corruption. While committed to their unilateral ceasefire declaration, the NPA and revolutionary forces can remain vigilant and militant in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people not only against the Covid-19 pandemic and the far deadlier Duterte virus of tyranny and corruption.

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## Some Questions on Dialectical Materialism Interview by Prof. Regletto Aldrich D. Imbong (RADI)

April 5, 2020

With reference to a previous article of Prof. Jose Maria Sison's "A Comment on Dialectical Materialism, Idealism, and Mechanical Materialism"

*RADI 1. I would like to start by asking you the relation between objective matter and subjective consciousness. You also emphasized this in your commentary when you mentioned the "interactive relation of human consciousness and material reality." Dialectical materialism (DM) – a term which was introduced by a successor of Marx and Engels, Joseph Dietzgen, and was first used by Georgi Plekhanov – argues the priority of matter over consciousness. It was Friedrich Engels later on who developed the distinction between "those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature" as belonging to the camp of idealism and "the others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism." Georg Lukács, in his History as Class Consciousness, charged that Engels ignored the idealistic dimensions of Marx's notion of practice, referring to Marx's first thesis to Ludwig Feuerbach. Here, it is said, is how Marx sees the object-constituting function of the subject (and its consciousness). Can you give a comment on this?*

JMS: Let me quote the first of the eleven Theses on Feuerbach by Marx: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism – that of Feuerbach included – is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object or of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the active side was developed abstractly by idealism – which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such.

Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from the thought objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as objective activity. Hence, in *The Essence of Christianity*, he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and fixed only in its dirty-judaical manifestation. Hence, he does not grasp the significance of 'revolutionary', of 'practical-critical', activity."

Feuerbach does not go beyond mechanical materialism even by affirming human sensuousness and remains confined to conceiving the material thing, the reality and sensuousness as mere object of contemplation. Marx points out the significance of objective practical-

critical revolutionary human activity beyond recognizing human activity in terms of sensuous or even thought objects. Thus, Feuerbach remains entrapped by the idealist depictions of human activity as a subordinate to the Christian deity or to the Platonic Idea. Of all objectively existing things, conscious human activity is capable of understanding things and changing them through analysis, class struggle and social revolution and through scientific discoveries and technological advances that raise the level of production. The materiality of nature or the universe, existing objectively and independently of human consciousness, came far ahead of the evolution of humankind and its consciousness. Thus, from the materialist philosophical position, we can speak of the primacy or priority of matter over consciousness. But we are dialectical materialists precisely because conscious human activity has been able to maintain and develop in stages social formations and scientific knowledge about nature and society. The fullness of Marxist philosophy in dialectical materialism rests on the recognition of the objective reality and the conscious human activity acting upon to effect social transformations and scientific advances. Dialectical materialism deals not only with the interaction of matter and consciousness but also seeks to understand the inner laws of motion in various general categories and specific forms of natural and social phenomena.

RADI 2. I want to raise this time a question related to Alain Badiou's and Slavoj Žižek's notions of dialectics or contradiction. These will have to do with the concept of negation of negation, a topic which was rather not elaborated in your recent article. I will start with Badiou. In his "Affirmative Dialectics: From Logic to Anthropology," Badiou explained his aim of proposing "a new dialectical framework which is not a return to the young Karl Marx or Georg W. F. Hegel, but is neither the negative dialectics of [Theodor] Adorno..." Badiou thought that the "problem today is to find a way of reversing the classical dialectical logic inside itself so that the affirmation, or the positive proposition, comes before the negation instead of after it." Hence, his concept of the event is the radical opening of a new possibility (not yet the new itself) which needs to be affirmed by a subjective body. This subjective body develops the consequences of the event and forms of negation – revolt, struggle, destruction – naturally happen. The negation is a result of the new subjectivity (affirmation) and not the other way around. Is the priority of the subjective over the negative a distortion of the basic tenets of DM? What are the practical implications of Badiou's view?

JMS: It is good that your first question gave me the opportunity to stress the point of Marx that human activity ranges up to the critique of a certain kind of society, the conscious practical struggle against it and the revolutionary founding of a new kind of society. These entail certain positive assumptions about a new leading class, revolutionary theory,

political program, development of subjective forces and mass movement in order to negate a certain social order, change the balance of forces and overthrow the existing ruling system. It is wrong to ascribe to Marx some simple and shallow kind of negation. In *Das Kapital*, he engaged in a massive and profound critique of the capitalist political economy, expose the laws of motion in capitalism and advocate socialism.

Marx and Engels were critical of Hegel as an idealist but appreciated him as the best among the idealist philosophers for using dialectics to account for change in the material world. But they did two things to the Hegelian negation of the negation. First, they turned it upside down and put it on a materialist basis and did away with the idealism and metaphysics of the Hegelian notion that there is self-development of thought before its realization in history. Second, they also junked the Hegelian notion that negation of the negation leads to a permanent synthesis in the Prussian state as the highest of social and political development. They have bequeathed to us the dictum that there is nothing but change.

In our understanding of historical materialism, which is the application of dialectical materialism on social development, we know that the unity of opposites exists in every social formation that humankind has developed. While the given balance of the opposites obtains for a certain period in order to maintain a certain form of society, the struggle of opposites grows and moves in the direction of a new kind of social formation because the balance of the opposites and the conditions change and make the persistence of the old social formation untenable. Thus, humankind has moved forward through primitive communes, feudalism, capitalism and socialism.

*RADI3. Zizek, in his introduction to his book Mao: On Practice and Contradiction, criticized Mao's notion of dialectics. Mao rejected Hegel's notion of the negation of negation in his Talk on Questions of Philosophy. He explained that "Engels talked about the three categories, but as for me I don't believe in two of those categories." He only believed in the unity of opposites as the most basic law while the "transformation of quality and quantity into one another is the unity of opposites quality and quantity." Mao argued that "the negation of negation does not exist at all." Because of this, Zizek charged that Mao committed a theoretical mistake by not recognizing that the negation of the negation is not merely a compromise but the only true negation. Hence, Zizek further charged that this serious mistake of Mao led him to a "bad infinity" where he remained in "fixed notional oppositions" whereby he is "unable to formulate the properly dialectical self-relating or notional determinations." Zizek argued that this practically led Mao to open up the field even to the enemy, referring to the same Talk of Mao mentioned above where he let some elements to "go in for capitalism." Here Mao expressed how "society is very complex."*

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*He then rhetorically asked "if one only goes in for socialism and not for capitalism, isn't that too simple?" and "wouldn't we then lack the unity of opposites?" What do you think was the theoretical and practical reasons why Mao rejected the negation of negation? What is your comment on this critique of Mao's notion of dialectics? What are the practical implications of Zizek's critiques?*

JMS: Certainly, as a Marxist-Leninist, Mao rejected the Hegelian notion of negation of negation because of its idealist basis and its direction towards a permanent synthesis. But contrary to the wrong ascription to Mao that he rejected even the Marxist materialist concept of the law of negation of negation, he is well known to have declared that everything runs towards its opposite and even communism is not the end of social development. Even when classless society is achieved, there will be a continuing struggle between the new and the old to advance social development.

It was Lenin who first spelled out the unity of opposites as the main and most essential law of contradiction in his Materialism and Empirio-Criticism but did not reject the two other laws declared by Engels (negation of the negation and transformation of quantity to quality). Mao elaborated on the law of unity of opposites by referring to it and applying it in his works On Contradiction, On Practice, On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People and "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?" I daresay that Marx used thoroughly the law of unity of opposites in his critique of capitalism and in the Communist Manifesto as he dealt with the contradictions of the forces and relations of production and the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and prognosticated the revolutionary direction towards socialism.

It was not wrong for Mao to talk about the complexity of realizing and advancing socialism. Like Lenin, who adopted the New Economic Policy to revive the Soviet economy, overcome the consequences of civil war and foreign intervention and the limitations of "war communism" (rationing), Mao had first to complete the bourgeois democratic reforms (especially land reform), allow joint state-private companies and use the commanding heights of the economy to realize the basic socialist transformation of society. Even as the socialist revolution and construction advanced, the imperialists imposed economic and military blockade on China and Soviet modern revisionism seeped into Chinese society via the huge number of Chinese students and workers who went to the Soviet Union before the Sino-Soviet split.

But of course, there ought to be an explanation why diehard capitalist roaders like Deng Xiaoping could be rehabilitated and even returned to the highest level of power instead of being retired and pensioned off. The Rightist Dengists and the Centrists collaborated to have their way in

adopting the policy of capitalist-oriented reforms and opening up to and reintegrating in the world capitalist system. It would take a long discussion on how socialist How China became capitalist would take a long discussion. But in response to your question, it is enough for me to say that no one can blame Mao for the systematic capitalist restoration in China just because he rejected the Hegelian notion of negation of the negation.

*RADI4. In your article, you discussed the implications of DM with quantum physics and the latter's role in the advancement of technology in general. There are philosophers of technology influenced by critical theory, like Andrew Feenberg, who argued for a democratic intervention in technology as a response to the crises technology has brought alongside with itself. Here, rather than operating the transformation on the economic level, what Marx called as the structure of reality, Feenberg proposed an intervention on the level of design, development, and engineering of technologies. Some proposed value-sensitive designs (VSD) in the engineering of things. What is your comment on this kind of intervention in relation to the dialectics between materialism and idealism?*

JMS: The capitalist ruling class will always use the state, the private corporations, academic institutions and specialized research agencies and institutes to favor the kind of scientific research and technological development that is profitable and that serves to protect and expand capitalist interests in the name of national security. It is easy to make statements about making an intervention for “value-sensitive designs” in the engineering and social production of things. But it is certainly far more difficult to push the adoption and realize such designs in capitalist society.

The progressive pro-people scientists, technologists and engineers can in their own work places and professional associations propose better technology and better products that are beneficial to the people and friendly to the environment. But they need to make their demands in concert with the organizations and movements of the toiling masses and the middle social strata to have better chances of success in achieving any significant result. Best of all, while working for immediate reforms, they must struggle for socialism. It is only in a socialist society where scientific research, technological development and social production can be directed and used for the benefit of the people and the environment.

*RADI5. I have read many of your works since I was still an undergraduate philosophy student. What rather struck my attention is the relatively rare discussion or elaboration on topics concerning the abstract or philosophical issues of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Your latest commentary, on dialectical materialism, idealism, and mechanical materialism, for me, is a rather unusual twist given your track record in publications. Can you share the rationale behind this inclination with the philosophical this time?*

JMS: I have done a bit of writing on philosophical issues of Marxism-

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Leninism-Maoism. I have written a book-length primer on the basic principles of this theory in philosophy, political economy and social science. I plan to publish a book on philosophy which is a compilation of occasional articles. I have read and lectured a lot more than I have written on philosophy. I have much experience in discussing philosophy in Marxist study groups since 1958 and of course in the advanced course of the Communist Party of the Philippines. I have always tried to apply Marxist philosophy in my analysis of social, economic, political and cultural conditions and the need for revolutionary social transformation.

*RADI 6. In his eleventh thesis to Feuerbach, Marx said that philosophy has interpreted the world in various ways, the point, however, is to change it. Engels, likewise, in the Anti-Dühring, argued how "the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions... are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch." I am a vice-president of a philosophical association in the Philippines and I have been steadfastly challenging my colleagues to speak up especially in these dark times of our history (I was able to publish a related commentary in The Inquirer entitled Wanted Philosophers). I am inspired by other professional organizations in sociology and anthropology, for example, who have released relevant statements concerning the pressing issues that the people and the country face. What should be the role of philosophy and philosophers today? Can dialectical materialism be a helpful method in doing philosophy today? How? Or should philosophy and philosophizing be altogether abandoned as it seems to be an irrelevant discipline today?*

JMS: The eleventh thesis of Marx is valid and compelling: that "philosophy has interpreted the world in various ways, the point, however, is to change it". Philosophy is at best a guide to revolutionary practice. The statement of Engels that ""the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions... are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch" is likewise valid and compelling. It is only by understanding the contradictions at the economic base or mode of production in a certain society that we come to know the exploiting and exploited classes and the conditions that generate social changes and political revolution.

The role of philosophy and philosophers is to propagate among the people the outlook that the revolutionary solution is to be found in the problematic social reality, lay bare the basic contradictions in society and provide the method of thinking and acting to arouse, organize and mobilize the revolutionary forces against the counterrevolutionary forces not only at the economic base of society but also in its superstructure of politics, ideology, culture and morality.

Certainly, dialectical materialism is always needed to explain how a current society has come from the past and how it will be transformed to



a new and better society. Marxist philosophy must be the guide to social analysis and social action for the purpose of revolutionary transformation. Otherwise, contrary philosophies, idealist or subjectivist, will fill the vacuum and mislead the revolutionary leadership and the people.

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# Interview with Jose Maria Sison On the Frankfurt School

By Jerry D. Imbong

April 21, 2020

*I am Jerry D. Imbong, a faculty member of the Visayas State University (VSU), Baybay City, Leyte. I teach Social Science subjects. I am also a member of CONTEND and a core group member of the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP). At present, I am doing research about your ideas on Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism as they are applied in the concrete Philippine conditions.*

*Your numerous published works (including articles available online) have significantly helped me in my research. However, there are some topics which I failed to find from available sources I mentioned above, specifically, with regards to your views on Critical Theory (CT). Hence, I would greatly appreciate it if you can share with me your insights on the following questions:*

*1. JDI: What are your views on the ideas of the leading representatives of the Frankfurt School? You don't have to discuss their ideas one by one but you can just give your insights on the founding of the Frankfurt School, its goals and its influence on the Leftist politics.*

JMS: The Frankfurt School is described as a school of social theory and critical theory associated with the Institute for Social Research at Goethe University Frankfurt. The institute was founded in 1918 and was funded by the wealthy doctoral student Felix Weil who wished to solve the problems of implementing socialism.

The reputation of the institute as Marxist was enhanced by the participation of Georg Lukacs and Karl Korsch in the early years of the institute. But from the beginning to the present, we can describe the school as homogeneously a school of idealist subjectivism, which involves at the same time the heterogeneity of its leading representatives.

The school proclaims as its goal: to make an academic and public critique of society in an interdisciplinary way and to change society by proposing ways of social development and promoting rational institutions. It is opposed to both capitalism and Marxism-Leninism. Both are supposed to hold ideologies incapable of solving the problems of the 20th century. It is eclectic by seeking philosophically to critique and learn from Marx and so many more idealist philosophers, including Kant and Hegel.

Like the social democratic party of Germany, the leading representatives

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of the Frankfurt School are petty bourgeois subjectivists and bourgeois liberals using as garbs anti-capitalism and socialism with a mix of positive and negative references to Marx and Marxism. Germany is country that is unique for having the proletarian revolutionaries, the petty bourgeois liberals and fascists competing to appropriate the name of socialism.

*2. JDI: Which ideas or themes of the Frankfurt School and Critical Theory do you support? Which do you oppose? Why?*

I appreciate any school seeking to critique and change society. In the first place, Marx has taught us that we must engage in revolutionary critical-practical activity to change society and that there are various philosophies to interpret the world but the point is to change the world. He made a critique of the German idealist ideology and the capitalist political economy and produced dialectical materialism, laid bare the laws of motion of capitalism and paved the way for scientific socialism.

But in its long existence of more than 102 years, the Frankfurt School has done much of critiquing at the philosophical level from an idealist and subjectivist viewpoint and has not been a factor or party to the changing of society. Contrary to its proclaimed purpose of making a new society out of the morass of the Weimar Republic, the school has been at the most an intellectual gadfly to the movements led by communist, social democratic and fascist parties in Germany.

Some major representatives of the Frankfurt School make interesting reading when they critique capitalism. They provide good insights in literary criticism and sociological analysis as they face up to the bitter facts of capitalist reality. They make a good critique of the culture industry in the capitalist system. There is nothing new in this critique, however, because Marx has long pointed out that the dominant cultural activity in the superstructure reflects the economic and political dominance of the ruling class.

Despite its avowed purpose of critiquing and changing society, the various stalwarts of the Frankfurt School stand aloof from social conditions by generating their own subjectivist philosophical jargon and then debating these abstract terms among themselves in texts after texts. They have no sure footing in materialist-scientific philosophy, especially when they exaggerate individual psychology and linguistics and play down the importance of economics and politics in social analysis. And they avoid the reality of classes and class struggle and have disdain for the subjective forces (party, mass organizations and the like) that take advantage of the objective crisis conditions to make social revolution.

*3. JDI: What are your criticisms of the Frankfurt School and CT?*

The stalwarts of the Frankfurt School render a special service to the capitalist system of oppression and exploitation by misinterpreting or taking out of context the terms of Marxism and its further developments

in revolutionary theory and practice. They perform the role of trying to confuse and outflank the Marxists. And in a puerile way, they seem to forget that they adhere to their own philosophy or ideology when they redefine the term ideology to make it a pejorative expression beyond its simple meaning of being a system of ideas and the study thereof.

Erich Fromm has the distinct achievement of applying dialectics by trying to split the young Marx from the more mature Marx. The notion is spread that the young Marx was more humane by being a Hegelian idealist in dealing with the issue of alienation. But the discussion by Marx in his early philosophical and economic manuscripts is all about how the capitalist class alienates the surplus value from the working class, makes congealed or dead labor dominate living labor and proceeds to dominate the process of oppression and exploitation in an all-round way.

There are times when the Frankfurt school is in an embarrassing position, such as when in its early years, Herbert Marcuse proposed "Heideggerian Marxism" as the guiding thought for the school. But before Marcuse could drop his newly-minted ideology, Heidegger declared his loyalty to Hitler and joined the Nazi Party in 1933. Adorno debated with Marcuse and opposed "Heidegger Marxism" but the debate was all about the esoteric terms of individuality and identity as cloning from an abstract category, not about Heidegger's irrationality of joining the Nazi Party.

The Frankfurt School loves to present itself as distinctively anti-authoritarian. But associates of the school like Hannah Arendt have been useful tools of US imperialism in the Cold War. By drawing an ideological and political spectrum, with fascism at one end and communism at the other end, implying that monopoly capitalism is the golden mean at the center on a sham Aristotelian plane.

The anti-authoritarianism of the Frankfurt School is no different from the anti-radicalism of Seymour Martin Lipset who puts US imperialism at the "democratic" center between the Radical Right and the Radical Left. Both diagrams are perverse with the obfuscation of the fact that the monopoly bourgeoisie uses fascism as its weapon after liberalism and social democracy prove to be ineffective in opposing and suppressing the forces of the Left and socialism.

Under the pressures of neoliberal globalization, leading representatives have tended to exaggerate their subjectivism and float in the backwash of social democracy and liberalism. Adorno and Horkheimer have withdrawn the purpose of changing society. Habermas has put forward a paradigm change to linguistic intersubjectivity to render "objectless" the dilemmas of idealist subjectivist philosophy.

There seems to be a loss of mission in critiquing Marxism because modern revisionism has been quite effective in revising and junking Marxism and in subverting and destroying socialism in the Soviet Union and China.

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But wait for a while, as in the 20th century, the economic and financial crises are becoming more frequent and worse and are intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions and generating the conditions for the resurgence of the proletarian class struggle and the world proletarian revolution.



## Questions on People's War

### Interview by Harsh Thakor

April 4, 2020

HT: I'd appreciate a comment on this comrade.

Can Chinese or Russian path still be emulated today? Urban insurrection to combine with PPW? Reproduced excerpt from article by Kenny Lake in 'When we ride our enemies from *Revolutionary Initiative* blog.

*HT: The article sums up blending of urban strategy in people's wars all over the world. Not surprisingly, developments in Davao City in the 1980s led to internal struggle within the Communist Party of the Philippines over the strategy of protracted people's war. Comrades in Mindanao contended that the advances in Davao presented the possibility of urban insurrections as a means for rapid victory. They continued to expand armed city partisan operations and looked to the experience of the Viet Cong and the Sandinistas' quick victory through urban-based revolution in Nicaragua as models. 95 This strategic view has been the target of criticism by the CPP central leadership, especially in its Second Great Rectification Movement. In a crucial document of that rectification movement, the CPP leadership points out how armed city partisan warfare in Davao City and other places advanced without an adequate mass base put the all-around development of the revolution, including building the mass movement and mass organization in the urban areas and consolidating military strength and base areas in the countryside, in danger of defeat by the repressive state apparatus. Moreover, ideas about quick victory through urban insurrection within the CPP became bound up with illusions about the "people power revolution" (also known as the EDSA revolution), in which massive street demonstrations played a pivotal role in ousting the Marcos military dictatorship in February 1986. Such illusions failed to distinguish between the overthrow of a particular faction of the bourgeoisie by a broad array of class forces of which communists were not in a leadership position, and a communist revolution led by the proletariat that shatters bourgeois state power. Central to the success of the latter is the defeat and destruction of the bourgeois repressive state apparatus, including the bourgeoisie's military, by the revolutionary armed force of the proletariat, which cannot be achieved through overwhelming street demonstrations. While the revolutionary advances in Davao City in the first half of the 1980s became mired by erroneous strategic thinking, it is nonetheless important to recognize the objective factors and subjective actions that made these*

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*advances possible. Among a newly proletarianized population migrating from rural life to overcrowded urban slums, the CPP was able to forge a revolutionary people and territorial strongholds in which revolutionary violence was widely supported. To whatever degree its armed city partisan operations became overextended, they nonetheless engendered a revolutionary crisis for the bourgeoisie in Davao.*

JMS: Indeed, the CPP was not in a position to overthrow the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines in 1986. The New People's Army had only 6,100 Red fighters nationwide at that time. There was only one NPA company deployed in Manila in February 1986. It was not enough to seize power in the city. What brought down Marcos was a convergence of the rising tactical offensives of NPA mainly in the countryside, the mass protests of the legal democratic forces and the conservative opposition (the anti-Marcos reactionaries) and the junking of Marcos by most of the big compradors and landlords, the Catholic Church and US imperialism from the assassination of Benigno Aquino in 1983 to the 1986 downfall of Marcos. In this broad range of forces against the Marcos fascist regime, the US and the local exploiting classes still had the most and could still install the successor to Marcos.

When the Second Great Rectification Movement went into full swing from 1992 onward, the following facts were already well-established: the urban insurrectionists of Mindanao appeared to be successful from 1981 to 1985 but from the latter half 1985 onward the line of premature regularization of the NPA and neglecting mass work in the country side and making the NPA subordinate to spontaneous urban insurrection as the lead factor began to weaken the mass base of the revolutionary movement in the countryside. The failure of the wrong line resulted in certain leaders blaming the "deep penetration agents" for the effective counter-attacks of the enemy and generating a witchhunt by which crimes were committed in violation of due process.

*HT: This raises two important issues to consider as communists develop new strategies and practices. First is the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)'s conception of fusion of armed insurrection and protracted people's war.<sup>97</sup> Davao City and Mindanao in the early 1980s are surely an example of this conception in practice.*

JMS: Whether a line is correct or not is decided or answered by its consequences. In Nepal, the so-called fusion of armed insurrection and protracted of people's war was in connection with the calculation and maneuvers of the CP leadership to be in a position in the urban areas to negotiate and exert direct pressure on those in power in Kathmandu and make compromise for peaceful settlement on the basis of ending the power of the monarchy but not of the ruling system of big compradors and landlords. The ultimate end of the Prachanda path has been capitulation.



In the case of the urban insurrectionists of Mindanao, their line ended up in disaster for the revolutionary movement in their areas of responsibility and worse in the witchhunt and the crimes committed in the course of hysteria.

*HT: Second is the problem of vastly uneven development of the revolutionary struggle within what for communists is, and has been for several decades, an unfavorable balance of forces internationally (to grossly understate the matter). While the Russian and Chinese revolutions succeeded in part through taking advantage of temporary weaknesses in the imperialist global order during and following world wars and a strong international communist movement, similar scenarios have not presented themselves since then. Since waiting for history, and "objective conditions" in particular, to repeat will always mean, for communists, resigning ourselves to the prison of the present, it is necessary to consider how to transform unfavorable conditions through struggle, taking advantage of particular situations and geographic locations where a revolutionary people can be forged into a fighting force.*

JMS: Communists do not wait for objective conditions to change "on their own" or in other words modified by the bourgeois ruling class according to its own interests. There is no way to escape the law of uneven development. But this means that there are always weak spots of a ruling system or an empire by which the communists have the space for maneuver against oppression and exploitation. The form of struggle depends on the concrete conditions to take advantage of. In general, the communists can wage protracted people's war in countries where the poor peasants and farm workers still abound and provide both the social and physical terrain for the people's war to develop in stages in the countryside over an extended period.

At this time, when the neoliberal policy is unravelling so fast and the extremest forms of exploitation and oppression are arising in both developed and underdeveloped countries, imperialist and nonimperialist, there are already crisis conditions favorable for the proletariat and the people to wage legal democratic struggles and strengthen their forces. All major contradictions are intensifying: between labor and capital, among the imperialist powers, between the imperialist powers and oppressed peoples and nations and between the imperialist powers and countries assertive of national independence and the socialist cause.

The worldwide mass protest actions since last year signal the transition to a period of the resurgence of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution. The aggravation of the crisis and the resistance of the proletariat and people can result in the spread of protracted protracted people's war in many underdeveloped countries and in the rise of urban-based mass movements that can enable the proletariat to carry out insurrections and seize power Petrograd-style even in imperialist

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countries in the next 50 years. The inter-imperialist contradictions can generate conditions that can favor both the rural-based people's war as well as insurrections brought about by the people's war or by strong mass movements in debilitated imperialist countries.

*HT: A very subtle reference to CPP work in Davao city. Positive comrade?*

JMS: Yes.

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# On the Threat of Martial Law and Military Junta

Interview with Jose Maria Sison

By Raissa Robles

April 24, 2020

May I ask you the following questions:

*1) Duterte has formed an Inter-Agency Task Force to fight the corona virus and most of its members are generals whom he had appointed Armed Forces chief-of-staff and then retired. In a number of speeches inside military camps and a military hospital, he has urged the military to take over and form a junta in case anything should happen to him or they simply want him out.*

*Can this IATF body be turned into a similar one like Ferdinand Marcos' Rolex 12 which planned and operationalized the imposition of Martial Law?*

JMS: The Inter-Agency Task Force of Duterte is quite similar to the Rolex 12 of Marcos which planned and operationalized the imposition of Martial Law. It consists of Duterte loyalists who owe to their commander-in-chief their previous promotions in the military service and opportunities for corruption in and out of the military service. The IATF is also a coordinate of the National Task Force-ELCAC which was earlier formed under Executive Order 70 to militarise the government and establish a fascist state.

Duterte is using the IATF to undertake a de facto martial law regime in the name of fighting the corona virus and to prepare the way for the formal declaration of martial law and the full imposition of a Marcos-type fascist dictatorship. There is also an added threat by Duterte that in case he dies because of his physical and mental illnesses or because of assassination by any of his many political enemies and rivals in the drug business the IATF becomes a military junta to rule the Philippines beyond the bounds of the 1987 Constitution.

*2) Duterte has a draconian law in the works --a revised Human Security Act that could stamp down on political dissent, surveil and arrest dissenters for longer periods. On top of this, he is still trying to change the 1987 Constitution. Today, he controls Congress through his political allies and is packing the Supreme Court with his appointees. Given all these, do you think he can do a Marcos?*

JMS: Duterte can do a Marcos by imposing a full fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. Aside from having turned the military and police forces as his instruments for tyranny, he can change the 1987 Constitution

to make himself fully a fascist dictator. For the purpose, he can use his supermajorities in the Lower House and Senate which he obtained through pork barrel corruption and rigging of the Comelec count in 2019. He can also use the Supreme Court to further legitimize his illegal and immoral acts, as previously done in the junking of the plunder cases of his allies and the removal of the sitting Supreme Court justice.

As I said previously, there is already a de facto martial law regime in the Philippines. Executive Order No. 70 has set the policy for such a regime under the pretext of anti-communism. It is being buttressed by a revised Human Security Act that can suppress by military force political dissent and can surveil, harass, arrest without judicial warrant and detain dissenters for longer periods. Duterte has already used both houses of Congress to obtain emergency powers and use public funds as he pleases under the pretext of fighting the Covid-19 contagion.

There are preparations for changing the 1987 Constitution to pave the way for the full establishment of a fascist dictatorship as the main objective in conjunction with such objectives as to establish a pseudo-federal system of government under a highly centralized fascist dictatorship and favor foreign investors with the right to have 100 per cent ownership of land and enterprises engaged in natural-resource exploitation, public utilities, media and other types of businesses previously reserved to Filipino citizens 100 per cent or at least to the extent of 60 per cent.

### *3) What is the biggest difference between Duterte and Marcos?*

JMS: In terms of personal characteristics, the biggest difference between Duterte and Marcos is that the current president is already old and sickly both physically and mentally. When Marcos set out to become a fascist dictator, he was much younger, more agile physically and mentally and more articulate in deceptive rhetoric about "saving the republic and building a new society". Duterte comes out as merely a crazy thug and a farcical copy of Marcos.

In terms of crisis conditions to exploit in order to realize fascist dictatorship, Marcos still had plenty of allowance to take foreign loans, raising the foreign debt from USD 500 million in 1965 to more than USD 28 billion in 1986 and he was faced with a still small armed revolutionary movement that had only 9 automatic rifles in 1969 and only 6,100 automatic rifles in 1986. Now, Duterte is hampered by a more lopsided underdeveloped economy, by far bigger trade and budgetary deficits and far bigger local and foreign public debt, now aggravated by the deleterious consequences of the Covid-19 crisis.

And of course, Duterte is faced with an armed revolutionary movement of the people with plenty of experience in frustrating strategic enemy campaigns of military suppression, a people's army with around 10,000 fighters and people's militia with hundreds of thousands of members in

more than 110 guerrilla fronts in 74 out of 81 provinces, mass organizations of different sectors with millions of members and local organs of political power that constitute the people's democratic government.

I have been informed by AFP insiders that Duterte and his generals are having nightmares over the potential of the NPA guerrilla fronts in launching tactical offensives even only at the rate of three to five offensives per guerrilla front per month as the socioeconomic and political crisis will further deepen and worsen.

4) *Do you think he will declare Martial Law or just continue threatening to?*

JMS: It is in the personal and political character of Duterte to make threats of formally declaring martial law and butchering many people. But I am not absolutely sure that he will carry out his threats. As described by Waldy Carbonell and Homobono Adaza, Duterte is an extreme coward in physical and moral terms but who is always trying hard to show off that he is a killer and a strong man. Most of the time, he merely orders his armed minions to butcher the victims who are already hogtied, as in the mass murder of 30,000 drug suspects. And according to himself, he himself as mayor of Davao City killed some individuals extrajudicially, while he was in the secure company of his armed minions, supposedly for the purpose of inspiring them to kill people upon his orders.

What can deter or prevent Duterte from formally declaring martial law and establishing a fascist dictatorship is a combination of various organized forces similar to those that concurred and moved towards the overthrow of Marcos in the years following the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, 1983 to 1986. The broad masses of the people keep on rising in protest mass actions until they inspire the anti-Duterte groups within the armed forces and police to junk Duterte. The churches already so much abused and insulted by the Duterte regime can support and encourage the broad masses of the people and the various anti-Duterte groups to fight for democracy and human rights. Duterte will be in deeper shit if he exposes himself as seeking or enjoying the protection of any foreign power, the US or China or both, in order to keep him in power against the popular demand for his ouster.

For Marcos to be overthrown, the New People's Army did not have to be in Metro Manila in any significant number. But with their relatively smaller size then, it could carry out many tactical offensives which pressured the Marcos regime and which persuaded the US to junk Marcos as a liability prejudicial to the persistence of the pro-US Philippine ruling system. Now, the NPA has a far bigger and more widespread strength than ever before. There are estimates that in due time soon the NPA can inflict serious blows to the Duterte regime in the countryside, whether to help discourage the regime from the project of fascist dictatorship or become the main fighting

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force against an already installed full fascist dictatorship.



## Tsikahan with Tito Jo

### Questions on the Anti-Terror Bill (ATB)

June 7, 2020

1. *Tito, in layman's term, what is the anti-terrorism bill and how is it different from the Martial Law imposed by Marcos?*

JMS: The so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill is actually a bill to carry out state terrorism against the people, without any constitutional restraint and with absolutely no respect for the right to due process and for the rights to free speech and assembly. Anyone can be surveiled, framed up and arrested without judicial warrant and detained without charges for as long as 24 days on mere suspicion of being terrorist or associated with terrorist or for speaking or joining any assembly to make a criticism, complaint, protest and demand against a policy or action of the Duterte regime.

The so-called Anti-Terrorism Council exercises the powers and roles of the executive and judiciary. It decides all by itself who is a terrorist that must be subjected to red-tagging, vilification, surveillance, arrest or detention. In violation of the constitution, it issues the orders for the arrest those labeled as terrorists and for their detention far beyond the three-day limit to detain anyone without any charge. The Anti-Terrorism Council plays the role of the Inquisition in medieval times in Europe.

The so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill gives those in power the license to abduct and kill people with the unlimited latitude of time and opportunity for them to torture and kill their victims extrajudicially and erase the evidence of their crimes. It removes all liability for illegal arrest and detention. It emboldens the military and police to commit crimes with impunity against those who are tagged as terrorists just because they criticize the regime and make demands on it in the exercise of their freedom of speech and assembly.

If Duterte approves and signs the bill, he achieves fully his goal of full-blown fascist dictatorship without having to formally declare martial law nationwide. A law of this kind for the purpose of state terrorism practically junks the Bill of Rights in the Constitution and replaces it with a Bill of State Terrorism. It would make Duterte a far worse and more brazen fascist dictator than Marcos.

Marcos did not junk the Bill of Rights outrightly but went around it by invoking the commander-in-chief provision on martial law and invented the factual grounds for the martial law declaration. With the brazenness of Duterte and his servants in Congress in putting forward this sort of

unconstitutional and anti-democratic bill, we can expect the worst acts of state terrorism surpassing those of the Marcos fascist regime and also those of the Duterte regime which have earned the condemnation of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights.

*2. Now that Duterte said that there is no urgency and that he would review the ATB before signing it, what should be our next steps?*

JMS: The people should remain vigilant and militant. Duterte railroaded the passage of the bill in the Senate and Lower House. Now, he is playacting that he is being deliberate and prudent because of the massive critical response of the legal, constitutional and human rights experts and the broad masses of the people in the Philippines and abroad who have condemned the brazenly unconstitutional and anti-democratic provisions of the so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill.

Duterte is very capable of suddenly declaring a fake revolutionary government to scrap the 1987 constitution in the same manner as Cory Aquino scrapped the 1973 constitution in 1986 or he can push through charter change and adjust the new constitution to the provisions of the so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill. After all, he controls the Comelec and the TIM-Smartmatic vote count and use a quick referendum to railroad his bizarre kind of constitution. The Filipino people are now confronted with the diabolical and criminal political brutes in power and must be ready to wage all forms of resistance to fight the worst kinds of state terrorism.

*3. It is said that ATB is greatly related to or influenced by the US regime, in what way?*

JMS: US imperialism, especially its so-called deep state, actually supports Duterte's vow of destroying the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people by any means and his promise of charter change to allow the US and other corporations 100 per cent ownership of enterprises owning land, exploiting the natural resources, operating public utilities, mass media and all kinds of businesses.

Duterte has pleased Trump since their conversation in 2017 by terminating the peace negotiations with the NDFP and continuing to wage an all-out dirty war of state terrorism against the revolutionary movement. And he has assured Trump that he has been merely humoring China to get infrastructure loans.

But in fact, he has emboldened China to build and militarize seven artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea and has allowed China to make major inroads in the telecommunications and energy sectors of the Philippines economy. And certain major US officials are not happy about these as well as the drug smuggling by the Duterte drug syndicate

*4. How will the people's struggle advance or move forward now that ATB is in place? What can you advise migrant organizations and revolutionary forces abroad? How can we prepare and support the people's movement*



*in the Philippines?*

JMS: While the ATB is not scrapped, the Filipino people in the motherland and abroad must remain vigilant and militant against it. As I have already explained, Duterte is capable of doing anything to use the ATB to his own advantage. At the least, while he does not sign it, he can use it for mass intimidation and for pressuring the social activists, his critics and the opposition.

Duterte is a man without any principle and moral scruple. He has been certified as a psychopathic narcissist, who is boundlessly obsessed with self-interest and self-satisfaction and who gloats over the humiliation, suffering and death of other people. He likes to pull surprises. One day he said that he wished to junk the Visiting Forces Agreement, then ultimately he would say he loved it.

*5. Is it true that the revolutionary forces in the countryside are decreasing? What will be the effect of the ATB to the number of revolutionaries and their strength? Can you say that they will be pulverized?*

JMS: Based on the daily fake news circulated by the Duterte regime and military in the commercial mass media about fake surrenders, fake casualties, fake raids and fake community support projects and the like against it, the NPA has ceased to exist as early one or two years ago. So, there is no need for the ATB. But the problem for the state terrorists of the Duterte regime is that the NPA enjoys the deep and wide support of the people, keeps on growing because of worsening conditions of oppression and exploitation and carries out tactical offensives nationwide.

The NPA is obviously alive and kicking and is growing in strength. That's why Duterte and his armed minions are going crazy unleashing all kinds of psywar and dirty acts of state terrorism. They find it necessary to push the ATB which is brazenly unconstitutional and anti-democratic. They are unwittingly exposing their desperation and frustrations. And they seem not to realize that all the repressive laws and actions that they unleash serve to outrage the people and goad them to join armed revolution.

The ATB will not decrease the strength of the NPA or pulverize it. Look at how all the people concerned with human rights and the entire Filipino people are condemning the ATB. This kind of terrorist law merely calls attention to the human right violations that have been committed and will be further committed by the Duterte regime on a wider scale. It arouses the people and inspires the most advanced activists to join the revolutionary underground and the New People's Army. As a result, the ranks of the NPA are rapidly expanding.

*6. It is timely how Duterte suspended the termination of VFA while at the same time railroading the passing of ATB. Few weeks before that he also bought a new naval ship, are these all connected? How?*

JMS: Duterte is a big liar. At no time has he been against the Visiting

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Forces Agreement and other military treaties with the US. Duterte and long-time US intelligence DND secretary Lorenzana have always been pushing their shopping list of military equipment to Washington and the Pentagon. All the time they have been begging for weapons from the US, wasting public funds on these and getting bribes from the private US military suppliers.

It is obvious that the US officialdom, from Trump to the so-called deep state, is happy with the ATB and Duterte's glee in receiving new military deliveries from the US, including attack helicopters, planes, a naval ship, artillery and bombs. These are profitable for the US military industrial complex and a huge financial burden for the Filipino people.

*7. What can we expect from Duterte in the upcoming days? Can the Filipino people finally oust him or will he last until the end of his term?*

JMS: It is possible for Duterte to be ousted any time before the end of his term in 2022 because the people are undergoing terrible suffering and are eager to rise up and oust him because he has been responsible for aggravating the economic and political crisis of the ruling system and for using the Covid-19 crisis to grab emergency powers, steal colossal amounts of public funds in the hundreds of billions of pesos and escalate repressive measures. He has failed to provide the medical solution to the Covid-19 epidemic and to deliver the promised food and economic assistance to the people.

The ouster of Duterte depends on how the patriotic and progressive forces can generate militant mass actions and build a broad united front with all opposition forces, including the conservative political groups and anti-Duterte groups within the AFP and PNP and among retired military and police officers. As in the dying years of the Marcos fascist regime, the armed revolutionary movement can also intensify their tactical offensives to gain strength and undermine the Duterte tyranny and persuade Duterte's imperialist backers that he has become more of a liability than an asset to them and to the Philippine ruling system.

But let us say that Duterte survives the ouster movement before the end of his term and becomes a full-fledged fascist dictator ala Marcos through charter change or a fake revolutionary government or he opts for his daughter Sara or Bong Go to succeed him because he controls the Comelec and TIM-Smartmatic vote count. The conditions will be even better for the overthrow of no less than the entire ruling system by 2022 and thereafter. By then the crisis conditions in the Philippines and the world shall have become far worse than now. And the people will become even more desirous of struggling for a revolutionary change of system.

*8. If we indeed, oust the Duterte dictatorship, who or what will replace him? Won't there be another historical mistake such as the election of Cory Aquino that is in one way or another, the same as Marcos?*

JMS: Whoever will be the president to replace Duterte before 2022 will depend on the balance of forces among those who can oust the regime. The important thing for the patriotic and progressive forces is to get rid of a terrorist regime and to gain democratic mass strength in the process. Certainly, the people's democratic government in the countryside will become stronger and the ruling system will become even weaker.

I have learned from relatives, province-mates and friends within the military that they can support the oust-Duterte mass movement if it comes out with mass uprisings as large as those in 1986 against Marcos and are willing to install Vice President Robredo as the constitutional successor to the physically, mentally and morally deranged president. Should the patriotic and progressive forces reject a priori such a prospect? Is it not better to oust Duterte in the easiest way possible than to allow him to stay on in power?

It is wrong for anyone to think that it was an error to fight Marcos and thereby pave the way for the presidency of Cory Aquino. The national democratic movement and the armed revolutionary gained strength by fighting the Marcos fascist dictatorship and causing his ouster and his replacement by Cory Aquino. The most important thing for the revolutionary forces to do is to keep fighting and on gaining strength and taking advantage of the conflict among the reactionaries.

It is not an alternative to cease fighting the Duterte regime for fear that the revolutionary movement will only pave the way for the ascendance of another reactionary leader. For the revolutionary movement to topple the entire ruling system depends on its own strength and the balance of forces. The full range of the united front policy is to strengthen the basic alliance of workers and peasants, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the power of one enemy after another.

*9. Tito, we are observing that in Europe, second-generation Filipinos are very vocal against the anti-terror bill, in fact, they are actively campaigning against it and even conducting discussions. What can you say about this? How do we in Anakbayan-Europa maximize the opportunity to build chapters in various European countries and what can be our important role in this time?*

JMS: I welcome and appreciate the fact that in Europe, second-generation Filipinos are very vocal against the anti-terror bill, in fact, they are actively campaigning against it and even conducting discussions. Indeed, the Duterte tyranny has become so notorious because of its crimes of treason, brutality, corruption and dishonesty. It is now even more notorious than ever before because of the recent release of the report of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights condemning the Duterte regime for grave human rights violations.

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In view of the growing notoriety of the Duterte regime and the desire of the Filipino youth and people abroad to help the Filipino people's struggle for national freedom and democracy, Anakbayan-Europa should intensify its efforts to build chapters in various European countries. With the use of the internet and the video conference, you can form chapters even at the level of cities consequent to the formation of country chapters. Your most important role is to arouse, organize and mobilize the Filipino youth in Europe. You can also develop solidarity relations with non-Filipino youth organizations and team up with them in exposing and opposing the Duterte regime.

### *10. Anything else, you would like to add?*

JMS: I am happy to be able to converse with you and our listeners through this forum. I hope that a forum like this can inform and enlighten and even more importantly inspire us to act resolutely and militantly for the purpose of arousing, organizing and mobilizing our compatriots and developing solidarity relations with all foreign friends who are interested in a better and brighter world of greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and international solidarity of peoples. Thank you. I look forward to being with you in the next web forum.

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**Basic Problems of the Filipino People**  
**Initial Q & A on Chapter 2 of *Philippine Society and Revolution* in the webinar series of the ND Online School**  
**conducted by Anakbayan-Europa**  
**Answers by Jose Maria Sison to questions from Anghelo Godino**

June 21, 2020

*1. The Philippines has three basic problems: imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism. Let's start with imperialism. What is it? How did it develop to be a problem of the Philippines? Why is it a problem?*

JMS: Imperialism is monopoly capitalism. It is the highest and final stage of capitalism. It dominates the economy in the industrial capitalist countries. It involves the merger of industrial and bank capital to form the financial oligarchy that is very parasitic. It exports not only surplus goods but more importantly surplus capital in the form of direct investments and loans.

It uses combines of monopoly corporations as cartels and syndicates within particular imperialist countries and within one bloc of imperialist countries against another bloc. It is the motive force of the imperialist countries in their competition to obtain sources of cheap raw materials, markets of surplus goods, fields of investments and spheres of influence. Such a competition involves a struggle for a redivision of the world, leading to wars of varying scales.

US imperialism engaged Spanish colonialism in a war starting in 1898 in order to grab the colonies of the latter in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. Then in its Treaty of Paris with Spain on December 10, the US bought the Philippines from Spain and proceeded to wage a war of aggression against the Filipino people who had earlier declared national independence on June 12, 1998, liberated the whole country except the walled inner city of Manila (Intramuros) and basically defeated Spanish colonialism.

US imperialism became a problem to the Philippines and the Filipino people because it violated their national sovereignty by waging a war of aggression that killed at least 1.5 million Filipinos, suppressed all patriotic and popular forms of resistance and turned the Philippines into a colony for exploitation. The US took superprofits from the Philippines as a source of cheap raw materials, as market for surplus goods, as field of investment and as a base for US participation in the partitioning of China

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*for exploitation by several imperialist powers.*

*The US ruled the Philippines as a colony from 1902 onward. It trained Filipino politicians to become US puppets and also allowed them to serve the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. During its direct colonial rule, the US developed a semifeudal economy in which the biggest Filipino landlords owning haciendas for producing crops for export became big compradors by becoming the chief trading and financial agents of the US monopoly firms. Most prominent examples of such big comprador-landlords were the Roxas, Ayala, Zobel and Soriano families of Spanish ancestry. Eduardo Cojuangco is a more recent prominent example of the big comprador-landlords.*

*2. What are the ways that it was able to take a firm hold of the material base or the economy of the Philippine society?*

*JMS: First, US imperialism succeeded with its war of aggression by using superior military might and taking advantage of the incompetent leadership and the lack of correct strategy and tactics of the Aguinaldo government. At the same time, the US complemented its superiority in military weaponry with the deceptive policy of "benevolent assimilation" and the false promise of self-rule in order to generate capitulationism within the Aguinaldo government and among the landlords who occupied key positions or had great influence in the localities.*

*US imperialism cleverly induced the landlords to withdraw support from the revolution and to convert them into puppet leaders at various levels of the bureaucracy and society. The landlord class became the political and economic base of US imperialism in imposing itself on the entire Filipino nation and making the Philippines a US colony for decades until the Japanese fascists came to occupy the Philippines during World War II.*

*During its direct colonial rule, the US steered the feudal economy towards promoting the role and operations of the big comprador-landlord class in a semifeudal economy by expanding the production of agricultural, timber and mineral products for export in exchange for imported manufactures. The expanded financing and trading operations stimulated the growth of the comprador big bourgeoisie as a distinct class.*

*3. Please give some examples of unequal treaties that ensured US control of the Philippines after its so-called independence in 1946. Are these treaties still relevant today?*

*JMS: On the very day that US pretended to grant independence to the Philippines on July 4, 1946, it required the Philippine government to sign the US-RP Treaty of General Relations, which provided for US control of Philippine foreign policy, continuance of the US military bases in the Philippines and the perpetuation of the property rights of US corporations and citizens.*

*Under the Bell Trade Act of 1946, the US continued to control foreign*

trade of the Philippines. The Philippine Constitution was also amended in 1946 in order to allow US corporations and citizens to have rights equal to those of the Filipinos in owning operating businesses in the Philippines. That was the infamous Parity Amendment. The Quirino-Foster Agreement was signed in 1949 to ensure that the US retained control and influence in the Philippine bureaucracy.

The US-RP Military Bases Agreement was signed in 1947 to further ensure the continuance of the military bases for 99 years. The US-RP Military Assistance Agreement was also signed in 1947 to ensure that US control of reactionary armed forces of the Philippines by making them dependent on US military indoctrination, planning, training, intelligence, military supplies and so on. The US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty was signed in 1951 to further bind the Philippines as a puppet state of the US. Further the Philippines became a key member the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a regional military alliance which the US controlled and used for wars of aggression in Southeast Asia.

The aforesaid treaties are still relevant today because they laid the foundation and built the structure and mechanisms of US economic and military hegemony over the Philippines even as new treaties and agreements have taken their place of earlier treaties and agreements.

The Laurel-Langley Agreement of 1955 amended the Bell Trade Act and expired in 1974. But the US continues to control the Philippine economy with the dominant position of US monopoly banks and firms in direct investments and under the US-controlled agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO.

The SEATO was dissolved in 1977 and the US-RP Military Bases Agreement expired in 1991. But a series of agreements have served to perpetuate US military control of the Philippines, including continued direct military presence and use of military facilities within the national territory. I refer to the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, the Visiting Forces Agreement of 1998 and the Enhanced Development Cooperation Agreement of 2014.

*4. Does the US still have a monopoly control of the Philippines? How about other countries, for example China?*

JMS: The US monopoly capitalism is still dominant in the Philippines if you take into account all US interests in the form of direct investments, loans and foreign trade on a bilateral basis as well as US control of Philippine economic policy and patterns of investments directly and through the multilateral agencies like IMF, World Bank and WTO. Aside from being No. 1 imperialist power in control of the Philippine economy, US imperialism has military dominance over the Philippines and the armed apparatuses of the reactionary state. China is merely an upstart in this regard, although it has made a dramatic aggression in the West Philippine Sea by building

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and militarizing artificial islands.

Japan has served as the secondary partner of the US in dominating the Philippine economy. It remains the biggest "official development assistance" lender but it is still second to the US in terms of investment. China has become the Philippines' top trading partner, serving as destination of Philippine mineral and semi-manufacture exports, especially after it became the giant manufacturing platform of the US-dominated global value chains in the wake of the Asian financial crisis of 1997. Chinese state loans in Duterte's Build Build Build program are just 17percent of the indicative amount of the flagship projects. Japan still accounts for the largest.

China has had the distinct advantage in having Filipino-Chinese big compradors in the Philippines collaborating with Chinese monopoly banks and firms. But they are more focused on trading and expanding their market share than on gaining control over the Philippine financial system, although China has also made key investments, such as in the national power grid and telecommunications. Certainly, China has benefited from serving as the main partner of the US in carrying out the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization in the Philippines and on a global scale for several decades already

But the long-time partnership of the US and China is now breaking up. Let us see how the increasing contradictions between the two since 2018 will affect their respective standing and operations in the Philippine economy. Let us also consider how such contradictions and the overall worsening crisis of the world capitalist system would adversely affect the economic and trade relations among the US, China and the Philippines.

*5. What is feudalism? What are the social conditions that exist in the Philippines that prove feudalism is present there? What are the forms of feudal and semifeudal exploitation that farmers suffer from?*

JMS: Feudalism is a mode of production whereby a few landlords own under torrens title or effectively control (under tax declaration, homestead, logging and mining concessions and lease agreements with government corporations) vast tracts of land and the big number of peasants who do not own land have to work as tenants and have to pay rent to the landlords in kind or cash at exorbitant rates and other varying terms. Some landlords have also adopted some amount of mechanization in plantations for export crops and big livestock or aquaculture farms producing for domestic consumption and export and have hired farm workers at subhuman wages on a year-round basis and on a seasonal basis.

The feudal form of exploitation is mainly and basically the payment of rent to the landlords by the tenants. It co-exists with such semifeudal forms of exploitation as hiring farm workers at subhuman wage levels by hacienda owners and rich peasants and the traditional practice of usury



by merchants, rich peasants and landlords and the rampant practice of underpricing the farmers' produce and overpricing their inputs and consumption goods. The latter practice has been worsening due to import liberalization and pass-on consumption taxes. There are also relatively more recent forms of semifeudal exploitation such as lopsided contract-growing arrangements with trading companies and so-called "community-based forest management agreements" wherein the land is supposedly owned by small farmers or the entire community.

The landed assets of the landlords are of far lesser value now than the capital assets of the big compradors and big comprador-landlords based in the cities. The output value of Philippine agriculture is grossly understated due to customary landlord evasion of taxes and consumption by most peasants of what they retain after paying rent.

Even then, the landlords still constitute the most numerous and widespread exploiting class in the country. And the poor and middle peasants who often double as farm workers and nonfarm odd jobbers are still the most numerous exploited class in the Philippines. The Philippines is not yet an industrially developed country and the industrial proletariat is still far smaller than the peasantry.

In looking at the entire Philippine economy, it is no longer a feudal economy but a semifeudal one in which the comprador big bourgeoisie is the more dominant exploiting class than the landlord class although many of the big compradors are also landlords because they continue to acquire land, using it as guarantees or collateral for loans, as source of agricultural surplus for capital accumulation and as an instrument of speculation, especially in real estate development.

In terms of the value of their assets in finance, trade, services and some amount of import-dependent manufacturing, the big compradors are more wealthy and far more politically powerful on a national scale than the landlords who are mostly stuck in the localities, exploiting tenants and engaging in municipal-level merchant-usury operations. Unlike the more numerous landlords who depend mainly on land rent, the big compradors enjoy high liquidity for business and political operations at the national center of power because they own the big banks and trading companies.

But as a distinct class, the landlords continue to carry a high degree of national clout because they have organizations for lobbying purposes and they are still a decisive factor in the elections of local government executives and representatives of the Lower House. They get themselves elected, entrench themselves in power with the captive votes of tenants and farm workers and with a bodyguard force or private army to complement the police and military. Thus, quite a number of them are known as local tyrants and warlords. And they are a still major factor in deciding who is the president and who are the senators.

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### *6. Is feudalism a necessary ground for imperialism?*

JMS: In the classical development of capitalism in the industrial capitalist countries, the agricultural surplus provided by feudal lords and then by capitalist farms, was a major factor of capital accumulation and industrial development. Ultimately, there was a political and economic clash between the rising manufacturing bourgeoisie and the feudal lords, resulting in the liberal democratic revolution and land reform, as in the French revolution. The full development of capitalism involves the liquidation of feudalism, even when a constitutional monarchy remains as a vestige of feudalism, as in England.

But there is a difference between the previous development of free competition to monopoly capitalism in imperialist countries on the one hand and the imperialist power dealing with feudalism in colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries on the other hand. In these dominated countries, the imperialist power is more interested in extracting superprofits from extractive operations and the backward or less developed economic conditions than developing them to become industrial capitalist countries themselves.

Imperialism is against the comprehensive industrial development of a colony, semicolony or even a dependent country with some amount of manufacturing. It is happier that the dominated country remains poor and ever willing to sell cheap raw materials from its natural resources, serve as the market for imported commodities and take direct investments and loans for natural-resource exploitation rather than for industrial development in the client-state. Thus, imperialism is happy with the persistence of feudal and semifeudal conditions here.

But the commodity system, development of some amount of manufacturing and foreign trade have also unavoidably arisen and eroded feudalism and resulted in semifeudalism and the rise of the comprador big bourgeoisie as the class more dominant than the landlord class. In the Philippines, the US carried out some amount of land reform to respond to land hunger, wean away the peasant masses from the old democratic revolution (which was led by ilustrados from landlord, merchant and bureaucratic families) and break up feudal controls to allow peasants to become resettlers, hacienda workers and mining workers. At any rate, the erosion of feudalism in the Philippines has fallen far short of the complete dissolution of feudalism because of the absence of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

*7. What is the meaning of bureaucrat capitalism? How are the big bureaucrats in the Philippines?*

JMS: In the simplest way, one can say that bureaucrat capitalism is the use of high public office for self-enrichment. But it can be more amply defined as a form of capitalism in which the highest public officials

use their government powers and control of government agencies and enterprises, public funds and natural resources in the public domain to serve their capital accumulation in collaboration with their families and cronies in the private sector as already accomplished big compradors or wannabe big compradors.

In the history and current circumstances of the Philippines, the accumulation of great wealth in land or capital has been enabled by family members occupying high government positions and using their bureaucratic power to the advantage of their families and cronies. They personally benefit from the grant of concessions to exploiters of natural resources in the public domain, alienation of public land, franchises for the operation of public utilities, contracts in infrastructure building and related speculation in real estate, purchase contracts of the government, loans from state banks and insurance systems, endless perks and privileges through multiple positions and directorships in fund-rich government corporations, and so on and so forth.

In the Philippines, the highest and most powerful bureaucrat capitalists, including the president and some of his cabinet members, are big compradors in public office because the semifeudal economic conditions and imperialist domination prevent them from becoming industrial capitalists. Contrary to the notion of the revisionists that Marcos used his political power to promote national industrialization, all the enterprises that he and his cronies grabbed or built were big comprador enterprises dependent on imported equipment, construction materials, components and consumer manufactures as well as agricultural production and mining for export.

*8. Is it possible to eliminate graft and corruption under the current system in the Philippines?*

JMS: It is impossible to eliminate graft and corruption under the current system of government in the Philippines. Many of the standard modus operandi of corrupt bureaucrats I have mentioned are brazenly facilitated, legalized, and institutionalized throughout the bureaucracy, through countless links with the foreign monopoly capitalists and the local exploiting classes and various pork barrel mechanisms, political dynasties, widespread nepotism, and bribery of all kinds to satisfy or silence subordinates or even intrasystemic critics and oppositionists.

It is in the very nature of the ruling system of big compradors, landlords and high bureaucrats to help each other out in exploiting the broad masses of the people. Defenders of the ruling system argue that high officials can be restrained from graft and corruption because of the freedom of the people to criticize the misconduct of officials, there are rival political parties that criticise each other and there is a check-and-balance system among the three branches of government.

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But we know too well how the ruling clique arises from generally friendly and peaceful competition during elections where groups of the exploiting classes finance their respective groups or parties of their political agents who vie for elective state offices during the elections. Whichever political party or group wins, the elected officials and their campaign financiers conspire to favor themselves and satisfy their drive for more wealth through the abuse of power and exploitation of the working people.

The acts of graft and corruption involving the violation or circumvention of the law or even the legalization of what is illegal and immoral can be restrained to some extent and within a certain period by criticisms from the opposition party that has loyalty to the ruling system and expects to take its own turn at engaging in graft and corruption. But very often, the competing factions of government officials can compromise among themselves and take their shares of the bureaucratic loot at the expense of the people. Even the biggest plunderers already convicted and in prison know how to pay for their freedom and proceed to gain more power and wealth.

*9. What does it mean when you state that bureaucrat capitalism is the basis of local fascism?*

JMS: Bureaucrat capitalists are already in power. More than any other section of the capitalist class they are in the best position to take initiative in acquiring despotic powers in fascist dictatorship in order to protect the wealth that they have already accumulated and to increase it further through the exercise of said powers. The only restraint on a president from becoming a fascist dictator is the potentially effective resistance of the people, opposition within government, from the churches and other powerful institutions and nonapproval and probable disapproval from the imperialist master.

In the semicolonial history of the Philippines, presidents have stayed in power according to the constitutionally-set term of office. But Marcos, the chief bureaucrat capitalist, dared to become a fascist dictator from 1972 to 1986. Ultimately, he would be overthrown by a convergence of diverse political forces.

But before he was overthrown, US imperialism consistently supported him for a long a time, at least up to 1983 and allowed the US-controlled reactionary armed forces the fascist dictatorship because he favored and assisted US economic and military interests. The US junked Marcos only after he made himself more of a liability than an asset to US interests when the broad masses of the people kept on rising up against him, especially in the years of 1983 to 1986.

Now, Duterte is imitating Marcos and is trying to become a fascist dictator. He is trying to retain US support for himself by promising to destroy the armed revolutionary movement of the people and make charter change to give US and other foreign companies unlimited rights of ownership of

Philippine land, natural resources, public utilities and all other businesses. He has pushed his political minions in Congress to pass bills for amending and making the 1987 constitution anti-national and anti-democratic and for carrying out unlimited state terrorism that trashes the Bill of Rights.

Because he is physically, mentally and morally deranged, he has become overdependent on retired and military officers, keeps on militarizing the government and threatens to yield power to the military if he cannot keep it. He has been pampering his favorite generals with the rewards of bureaucrat capitalism and with impunity for the bloody crimes that he orders them to commit. He is promoting bureaucrat capitalist ambitions among the generals and setting the stage for the possible rise of a fascist military bureaucrat capitalism similar to that of Suharto in Indonesia.

The example of Marcos succeeding in imposing a full-blown fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people shows that this can be done again in view of the persistence of imperialist domination and the exploiting classes, the impunity that has been enjoyed by the Marcos family and its cronies, the rapidly worsening crisis of the ruling system, the brazen campaigns of state terrorism and warlordism of provincial and regional ruling dynasties collaborating with the Duterte dynasty. But their problem is that the revolutionary movement of the people has grown much stronger nationwide than during the time of Marcos fascist dictatorship.

*10. What is the basis of a semifeudal, semicolonial society? How do the three basic problems combine to create this kind of society?*

JMS: The Philippines is semicolonial because while it has nominal independence and the trappings of that, US imperialism continues to dominate the country politically, militarily economically and culturally and violate the national sovereignty and independence of the Filipino people. Now the Duterte regime has practically surrendered to another imperialist power China the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the West Philippine Sea and is eager to make the Philippines a debt vassal of China.

The Philippines is semifeudal because the comprador big bourgeoisie is the chief ruling class and no longer a purely landlord class as in the 19th century. It acts as the principal economic, financial and trading agent of US imperialism, profits most from such role even as it is still involved in the ownership and operation of farms for export crops and supports the landlord class as its closest ally, especially in the provinces outside the major urban areas.

I think that we have already sufficiently discussed how each of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism look after their respective distinct interests and at the same time collaborate with each other to keep the kind of semicolonial state and semifeudal economy that they can use to oppress and exploit the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata.

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*11. How can this kind of society stay in place for decades? Is it possible to change it?*

JMS: The ruling system is already rotting. Its chronic crisis is rapidly worsening. That is why the current ruling clique is desperate and knows no solution to social problems but to escalate the oppression and exploitation of the people. It has terminated the peace negotiations with the NDFP because it wants to scapegoat the CPP and NPA for fully realizing his scheme of fascist dictatorship.

A ruling system becomes more oppressive and exploitative before it can be overthrown by the armed revolution. But it can stay for as long as the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people (the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's army, the mass organizations and organs of political power) are not yet strong enough to overthrow the reactionary state and achieve the victory of the people's democratic revolution.

Fortunately for the Filipino people, their revolutionary forces keep on growing in strength and advancing nationwide. They are strongest and most secure from enemy attacks in more than 110 guerrilla fronts. Conditions for them to achieve greater victories are favorable because of the worsening chronic crisis of the Philippine ruling system and the world capitalist system. The worsening crisis has been generated by neoliberal greed, state terrorism, fascism and wars of aggression. It inflicts more suffering on the people but it weakens the ruling system and drives the people to fight and win victory in the revolution.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the worst forms of oppression and exploitation under the ruling systems in the Philippines and the world and has contributed significantly to aggravation of the crisis of the world capitalist system to a point that this crisis will be even be worse than the Great Depression and will have far-reaching consequences, such as the intensified struggle between revolutionary and counterrevolution.

Ultimately, the crisis conditions will generate the resolute and militant forces and movements to carry forward the anti-imperialist and democratic revolutionary struggles of the people for socialism. The people's revolutionary movement in the Philippines will certainly advance with greater strides towards the final resolution of the three basic problems of the Filipino people and the building of a truly independent, democratic, socially just, progressive, prosperous and peaceful Philippines.



## On the Question of Fascism in Relation to the Duterte Regime<sup>26</sup>

Interview by Prof. Regletto Aldrich D. Imbong  
Department of Philosophy, University of the Philippines  
Cebu

June 23, 2020

*I am currently writing a paper on fascism in relation to the Duterte regime. I want to explore the arguments that would support the oftenly used label of fascism to apply on said regime. I have several questions in line with this research, especially those that concern the Philippine left.*

*1. Not so many intellectuals in the Philippines develop a strong theoretical argument on Duterte's fascistic tendencies. Many assume rather than argue that Duterte is a fascist. What conditions should be met for one to be considered a fascist?*

JMS: Any individual, group or movement can be fascist or have fascist tendencies in mentality, advocacy and behavior and is usually motivated by rabid anti-communism, a key factor that is ingratiating to the big bourgeoisie, especially the imperialists. But for an entire government or regime like that of Duterte to be described as categorically fascist and not merely having fascistic tendencies entails certain considerations and requirements.

To be fascist, the government or regime must be rabidly anti-communist and rule by open terror in the service of the big bourgeoisie (be it the comprador big bourgeoisie in the Philippines or the industrial monopoly class as in Hitlerite Germany) even as it uses demagogically nationalist, racist or even pseudo-socialist slogans to deceive the people. Most importantly, it has promulgated fascist laws to carry out the violent suppression of any opposition and prevent it from any recourse to the democratic rights guaranteed by a liberal democratic or socialist constitution.

The Duterte regime commits acts of state terrorism on behalf of the worst part of the Philippine big bourgeoisie but it has not yet reached the point of getting rid of the Bill of Rights and other relatively democratic provisions of the 1987 Constitution. However, Duterte is now on the verge of making his regime categorically fascist by enacting the so-called Anti-Terrorism Bill which practically gets rid of the Bill of Rights and is worse

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<sup>26</sup>Interviewed as Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

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than the Marcos martial law proclamation in 1972. He can also make charter change to formalize and entrench fascist dictatorship as Marcos did in fixing the 1973 Constitution and faking the referendum to ratify it.

*2. In several interventions, Walden Bello argued why Duterte is a fascist. His claim is that Duterte is a fascist original. By this I understand that right from the start Duterte is a fascist and that the (extreme) Left, being an initial ally of Duterte helped in Duterte's ascension into the heights of fascist power. Classical fascism, however, is essentially an anti-communist movement (as pointed out by Enzo Traverso), a reaction or mobilization of the middle class and nationalist bourgeoisie against the internationalist working class. In this case, Duterte's early presidency would not count yet as being fascistic. Could you give a comment on this claim of Bello and the role of the Philippine Left, in general, concerning Duterte's fascism?*

JMS: You are correct in saying that Duterte could not have been described as fascist or fascistic within the first six months of his presidency, especially if you evaluate him or his regime according to Enzo Traverso's definition of classical fascism as being essentially an anti-communist movement that is a reaction or mobilization of the middle class and nationalist bourgeoisie against the internationalist working class. Duterte had to unfold himself first as a fascist or fascistoid in contradiction with his avowals of being "Left" and "socialist".

You are correct in saying that Walden Bello is wrong for claiming that he knew Duterte as a fascist even before any manifestation of his being a fascist by word or deed. Before becoming president, Duterte never manifested himself as an adherent of fascism and was never the leader or member of a self-proclaimed fascist group or movement. As mayor of Davao City, he never declared himself a fascist. He had become vice mayor at first by being appointed by Cory Aquino. At the same time, he maintained close relations with the Marcos crony Florendo of Tadeco and used him to become mayor.

In the course of his mayorship, Duterte used Dirty Harry tactics to impress the electorate that he was a law-and-order leader and also used violence to kill or silence his political opponents in the course of conflicts among the various political agents of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class. Among the competing reactionary leaders, he sought to ingratiate himself with the revolutionary movement. In response, the revolutionary movement considered him at the most as an unreliable and unstable ally against those reactionary leaders deemed worse than him on a certain scale of political and tactical reckoning.

Even though Duterte claimed to be a close friend of the late Comrade Parago and helped in public events to honor him after his martyrdom, there have been questions within the revolutionary movement about Duterte's close relations with top intelligence officers in the AFP and whether the



report from inside the ISAFP that it was he who gave the A-1 information about the whereabouts of Comrade Parago to General Ano. The rapid promotions given by Duterte to Ano when he became president have aroused further the suspicion and investigation of his betrayal of Comrade Parago.

*3. Since the Philippine Left initially started as an ally of the Duterte regime, I believe it initially did not recognize the latter to be fascistic. At what particular point did the Philippine Left begin recognizing and labeling Duterte as a fascist? What were the triggers behind the redefinition of a former ally?*

JMS: There was never any alliance between the Duterte regime and the revolutionary movement. In fact, the people's war along the line of the new democratic revolution has proceeded, despite limited ceasefires to promote the peace negotiations. Warring parties can never be construed as allies until they can conclude at least a long-term truce for the purpose of alliance and other purposes beneficial to the people. The rabid anti-communist Walden Bello makes conclusions that are not based on the facts.

At the beginning of his presidency in 2016, Duterte presented himself as the first "Left" or "socialist" president of the Philippines, wishing to have peace negotiations and a just peace with the NDFP and the Filipino people and promising to amnesty and release all political prisoners. But within a few weeks after assuming his presidential office, he was in effect declaring himself a rabid anti-communist, he was reneging on his promise to amnesty and release the political prisoners and was carrying out the massacre of the poor as suspected drug users and peddlers.

Ka Oris as spokesperson of the CPP promptly criticized and condemned the aforesaid massacre of the poor within June 2016 and I also called Duterte a "butangero" on June 29, 2016 to his face when he was talking tough and reneging on his promise to amnesty and release the political prisoners. He wanted to trick the CPP into recommending certain personalities for four cabinet posts but he appointed them anyway on the basis of their individual merits.

He revealed himself categorically as an incorrigible enemy of the revolutionary movement when he included the CPP and NPA as targets of his martial law proclamation for Mindanao in May 2017. So, since early on, the revolutionary movement has considered Duterte as a rabid enemy and a rabid puppet of US imperialism by surrounding himself with generals who are notorious assets of the CIA and DIA of the US, carrying out immediately an all-out war policy under the cover of continuing Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan until he launched his own Oplan Kapayapaan in early 2017.

Eventually, the NDFP came to know that when he met Trump in

November 2017 Duterte promised to wipe out the revolutionary movement and give US corporations the right to own to the extent of 100 percent any enterprise owning land, exploiting natural resources and operating public utilities and other businesses. He was proving to Trump that he was a loyal puppet to the US despite his posturing as a close friend of China.

*4. Enzo Traverso claims that some of the current populist and rightist movements the world over are irreducible to the classic definition of fascism. These have developed features that do not anymore fit into the classic definition of fascism. He rather called these movements as postfascism. In Brazil also, Jeffery Webber acknowledges the current Jair Bolsonaro regime as a neofascism. Do the current political and economic manifestations of the Duterte regime still fit into the classic definition of fascism? Or is his regime more of what is called as postfascism or neofascism?*

JMS: Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War in 1991, US imperialism has increasingly used the term “terrorism” as the bete noire (black beast) for targeting by the most extreme forms of reaction, including fascist movements, official repressive measures, state terrorism, full blown fascist regimes and wars of aggression. The term “terrorism” is so broad as to encompass not only Islamic jihadists that the US intelligence agencies create but also the communists and other anti-imperialist and democratic forces that are supposed to be the target of “classical fascism”.

The imperialists, the ultra-reactionaries and the fascist movements still vilify their enemy as “communist”, “terrorist” or “communist terrorist” wherever the communist parties and working class movements are relatively strong in the legal struggle and/or the armed struggle and are regarded by the big bourgeoisie as imminent threat to the ruling system. Anti-communism is still a major element in the ideological and political line of fascism, fascist regimes and movements, notwithstanding the imperialist propaganda that communism died in the years of 1989 to 1991. Duterte points to the CPP as the main enemy of his regime and the main target of his state terrorism. In this regard, he is no different from Mussolini and Hitler and the fascist dictators of China, South Korea, Indonesia and Vietnam after World War II.

In looking at social and political phenomena, I am guided by the laws of contradiction and uneven development. There are generally similar phenomena that at the same time have distinctive dissimilarities or differences. Even at the time of Mussolini the original fascist, Hitler, Franco, Tojo and others, the fascist regimes had generally similar characteristics but also had distinctive dissimilarities. I do not like to play with prefixes like post and neo as some academic pedants do to claim any kind of new and unique discovery.

In my study of fascist movements and fascist regimes that arose before and after World War II, I have observed the following elements in their character and conduct:

1) The fascist groups and movements are ideologically and politically anti-communist and seek and get support from the big bourgeoisie (be it the industrial and financial big bourgeoisie in imperialist countries or the comprador big bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries).

2) They use xenophobic, chauvinist and racist slogans and target certain racial and ethnolinguistic minorities as the enemy to blame for the suffering and grievances of the people and deflect attention from the exploiting classes.

3) They use the biases of the politically backward section of the masses in order to create the base for their "mass movement". From this base, they try to influence and win over the middle section of the masses; and try to counter and ferret out communists and other revolutionary forces from the advanced section of the masses.

4) They collaborate with the big bourgeoisie and with the armed apparatuses of the reactionary state in breaking up demonstrations of democratic forces, assaulting workers' strikes and attacking the persons and properties of people who are communist or progressive in their stand or who belong to any minority deemed as enemy and target of hatred.

5) They ascend to absolute power through elections by taking up the grievances of the people and at the same time enjoying the support of the big bourgeoisie. They can also take power through a military coup against a discredited and weak civilian government. When in power by any degree, they can stage a series of false flag operations to scapegoat the communists and to justify the adoption and implementation of fascist laws.

6) They use the open rule of terror (fascist laws and actions) to suppress any criticism of or opposition to the fascist regime through the adoption and enforcement of laws that comprehensively and profoundly dissolve and violate the basic democratic rights and fundamental freedoms of the people which have been defined and guaranteed by the liberal democratic or socialist constitution.

All the above elements in varying forms and degrees of gravity have characterized the fascist movement and regimes that are employed and supported by the big bourgeoisie upon the failure of conservative and reformist parties, institutions and movement to contain and appease the exploited classes and counter the rise of the revolutionary party of the proletariat and the mass movement that it leads.

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## Comments on Alex De Jong's Anti-CPP Statements Interview by Michael Beltran

June 24, 2020

Please comment on the statements of Alex de Jong in his interview with me pertaining to the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Philippine revolution.

1. *Michael Beltran (MB): How would you measure success in a revolution?*

*Alex De Jong: This goes back to what you consider to be socialism. If you define socialism as the self-emancipation of the working masses, then the success of a movement cannot be determined by how many rifles it has, how many party members it has or how many people it can mobilize. You measure in which rights are won, how confident are the working masses to mobilize on their own terms without being led by a vanguard party.*

*What is for example, the level of organization among working people, are they able to defend themselves among neo-liberal reforms.*

*Another contradiction with the CPP, they say year after year, we are making progress, but they also say, year after year, things are getting worse for the Filipino people. So what then do your victories mean, are they all irrelevant until you take power in the future? It's a moment that I don't think they are anywhere near and I don't see them being any closer to that goal than they were in the 1980s.*

*How do you measure how close a society is to socialist transformation? The CPP would measure that in terms of rifles and party members. Another way is in terms of rights won, victories for the working class, defeating ruling class offensives, and the ability of the working class and other working classes as classes in themselves independent from political organizations.*

Jose Maria Sison (JMS): De Jong suffers from having blinders of his own making and misrepresenting the entire range of revolutionary forces and toiling masses of workers and peasants in the Philippines for easy demolition in his mind. The CPP has never said that the number of rifles that the NPA has is the sole determinant of the success of the revolutionary movement of the people.

The CPP has always taken into account the worsening crisis conditions of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, the desire of the people for revolutionary change and realization of national and social liberation, the

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adoption and implementation of the general line and program of people's democratic revolution and the development of such revolutionary forces as the vanguard proletarian party, the mass organizations of workers, peasants and other people, the people's army and its auxiliary forces, the organs of democratic political power, the united front formations and level of outrage and militancy of the unorganized masses.

The revolutionary forces of the Filipino people as well as the legal democratic mass organizations and movements have publicized what is their respective levels of organized strength, their programs and declarations and more importantly their activities and campaigns against neoliberal policies and related matters.

The CPP started from scratch in 1968, with a few scores of Party members although with 10,000 youth activists, trade unionists and a few veterans of the armed revolutionary movement. In the last more than 51 years, the CPP has become nationwide and deeply rooted among the toiling masses. It leads a people's army, various types of mass organizations and the local organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government. All these revolutionary forces constitute a solid base for advancing on the urban areas and eventually defeating the class enemy.

Contrary to the claims of the Duterte regime, the Trotskyites and other Philistines that the revolutionary movement is a failure until it seizes power in Manila, I wish to call attention to the fact that the revolutionary organs of political power are already governing thousands of barangays, hundreds of municipalities and scores of districts within the range of more than 110 guerrilla fronts. They do administration, land reform and other social programs, production campaigns, health work, self-defense, judicial work, disaster relief, environmental protection and so on.

There is no other combination of revolutionary forces and people in the Philippines but the one led and inspired by the CPP which is closest to the socialist revolution. In the programmatic view of the CPP and all other revolutionary forces, the Filipino people and the Philippine revolution must first complete the stage of fighting for, realizing and winning the national and democratic rights of against foreign and feudal domination by overthrowing the big comprador-landlord counterrevolutionary state.

Upon the seizure of political power in the stage of new democratic revolution, the proletariat and the people can begin the socialist revolution, with due attention to transitional measures to be undertaken. A dyed-in-the wool Trotskyite like De Jong does not accept the two-stages of the Philippine revolution and can never understand how Trotsky and the Trotskyites have consistently sought to attack genuine communist parties and find themselves on the side of counterrevolution.

*2. MB: What do you mean by advocating for pluralism within the Left?*

*De Jong: A crucial step based on socialism based on self emancipation is democracy, and that means recognizing the value of pluralism within the rev left. I think vanguard parties are created in the course of the struggle, but it is rare that only one exists in history. Parties go through a process of merging splitting, changing. And that's all over the world where the left in general is very weak. And that's a necessary process everywhere too. That means we have to re-learn a lot of things, and figure out a lot of things. And the strength of the CPP is that they just deny this need, and say nothing has changed that they have all the answers, I can understand the appeal of that. But I think we don't have all the answers and to figure out all the answers we need more cooperation among the left.*

JMS: There are several grouplets of Trotskyites with varied conflicting origins in the Philippines. They are under the influence of Trotskyites in the US, UK, France, The Netherlands, Japan and Australia. They have a talent for splitting among themselves as to be expected of petty bourgeois factionalists overreaching for socialism under semicolonial and semifeudal conditions.

They have weakened each other instead of strengthening themselves, by attacking each other. Take for example the well-known conflict between Popoy Lagman and Sonny Melencio, financed and influenced by their respective Japanese and Australian mentors. But they are all united in opposing the current general line of people's democratic revolution under proletarian leadership and with socialist perspective and in carrying the notion that they gain self-importance and size by attacking the CPP. They specialize in sniping at the CPP from the flanks in coordination with whichever is the incumbent or incoming ruling clique in the Philippines.

It is wrong for De Jong to say that the strength of the CPP comes from denying the need to cooperate with others and from presuming that it knows all answers to all questions. The CPP constantly teaches its cadres and members to learn from the masses and cooperate with allies. It promotes and carries out the broad united front policy of building the basic worker-peasant alliance, winning over the middle social strata and taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate, weaken and defeat the enemy, which is currently the Duterte tyranny.

It has alliances with Left liberals in professional and occupational organizations and religious-minded revolutionaries like those in the Christians for National Liberation and Muslims in the Moro Revolutionary Liberation Organization. These are honest opponents of the Duterte tyranny unlike the most obnoxious Trotskyites who talk in an ultra-Left way but specialize in attacking the CPP and in fact serving the counterrevolution.

Like the Bolsheviks, the CPP has become the revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat by building itself ideologically, politically and organizationally, engaging in a life-and-death revolutionary struggle and

strengthening itself in the process, learning from the masses, giving full play to democracy as the basis for making decisions from one level to another and using criticism and self-criticism and rectification movements to correct errors and improve work and the style of work.

*3. MB: What do you mean by: The revolution and socialist consciousness is happening "behind people's backs".*

*De Jong: That's what I mean, happening behind people's back. The vanguard party carries an idea of a socialist future and consciousness but this is not the consciousness of the masses that they organize. The UG orgs are on the basis of ND, and I think that says something about how they view socialism as something that is implemented by the party.*

*And that comes into play against Duterte. You can mobilize against him in defense of liberal bourgeois democracy in order to keep the broadest united front, but of course everybody knows that the current regime is a product of the previous liberal bourgeois democracy. And I think that is the analysis the CPP makes internally, they know that you have to go beyond the system of elite democracy to prevent this from happening again. But that's not the basis on which they mobilize.*

*And they don't appeal to their workers to defend their class interests, as workers against the government. They call on people to defend bourgeois liberal democracy in order not to break the united front with figures who are liberals.*

JMS: The CPP, the people's army and the revolutionary mass formations spread and follow the general line of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. They never conceal the socialist direction and future of the people's democratic revolution. And they always answer questions about socialist revolution in study meetings as well as in public meetings.

As in the time of the people's struggle against the emergence and entrenchment of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the CPP and the revolutionary mass movement are once more calling for anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal as an emphatically combative synonym for the people's democratic revolution.

The anti-fascist condemns the attack on and violation of the civil and political rights of individuals, groups and nonexploitative classes. The anti-imperialist condemns the attack on and violation of national sovereignty and independence. And the anti-feudal condemns the feudal and semifeudal forms of oppression and exploitation in the countryside and carries out agrarian revolution as the main content of democratic revolution in favor of the peasant majority of the people.

De Jong is a brazen liar beyond redemption when he says that the CPP and the revolutionary movement do not appeal to the workers to defend their class interests, as workers against the government. He always resorts to making his own straw figure to demolish with his own verbiage.



The CPP itself and the underground organizations of the workers have resolutely and militantly upheld, defended and advanced the class interests of the working class against the counterrevolutionary state, the imperialists and the big bourgeoisie in the Philippines. As regards the legal trade union movement, you can refer De Jong to the historical and continuing struggles of Kilusang Mayo Uno and related workers' organizations in the class interest of the proletariat as well as in the national and democratic rights of the entire Filipino people,

*4. MB: Do you think a strong communist party is a requirement for a strong left wing movement in Europe or the world.*

*De Jong: Yes. But how do you get to these strong parties? If parties are the expression of a certain relationship of forces, of social mobilization and awareness. Then the first step is the ability to fight of the popular and working class.*

*A strong communist party will be the expression of a strong working class movement. I don't think you can start this process by declaring party and start recruiting people bit by bit. Real mass parties are the expression of social contradictions. You see how Mao's original party and army, he didn't start with a small group, they had 300k soldiers who came out of nationwide insurrections. You see that also with the Bolshevik party that had 60k members before the first world war and then it balloons, so in that sense.*

JMS: De Jong is not competent ideologically, politically and organizationally to talk about building a communist party. I do not think that he has any experience in organizing any communist party beyond his small cocoon of Trotskyites and using the computer to attack the CPP and other communist parties.

As far as I am concerned, a communist party that succeeds at waging revolution grows in strength from being small and weak to big and strong by having the correct ideological, political and organizational line and by arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and engaging in various forms of revolutionary struggle that culminates in the armed overthrow and defeat of the class enemy. In the course of the revolutionary struggle, the communist party recruits its cadres and member from the revolutionary mass movement.

*5. MB: Any recommendations to the CPP?*

*De Jong: Stop intimidating and harassing other leftists. Stop making the claim to have a monopoly on truth.*

JMS: In the Philippines, the Trotskyites who hate the CPP are so few and are on the wayside casting malicious statements and false claims against the CPP. They have been ineffective in their counterrevolutionary activities and have thus been ignored by the CPP and by the revolutionary mass organizations.

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The most service that they give nowadays to the counterrevolutionary state in the Philippines is to talk and write against the CPP. In this regard, the CPP has let them wallow in their own shit. I think that with regard to some elements who have a Trotskyite background but who have some amount of mass following and are willing to join the broad united front formally or informally, the CPP is well known to have been open to cooperation with them within the framework of the broad united front.

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## Comments on Certain Views against the Communist Party of the Philippines In Reply to the Questions of the Journalist Michael Beltran June 26, 2020

*1. Critics from a Trotskyist standpoint say that the CPP's measure of success primarily banks on quantitative developments such as how many rifles it has won and how many new party members it has recruited. Moreover, they claim a disjunct in the Party extolling the advancement of the revolution yet the conditions are worsening for the Filipino people, making the seizure of political power a sole determinant in political development. Do you think this is fair? What are your thoughts on this?*

Jose Maria Sison (JMS): That is an unfair comment. Trotskyites suffer from having blinders of their own making. They deny and misrepresent the entire range of revolutionary forces and toiling masses of workers and peasants waging the people's democratic revolution. The CPP has never said that the number of NPA rifles is the sole determinant of the success of the revolutionary movement of the people. That is not the way the CPP thinks and acts. The accusation of militarism is well proven by the CPP leading the toiling masses of workers and peasants in revolutionary political struggles against the tremendous odds posed by US imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

The CPP has always taken into account the worsening crisis conditions of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, the desire of the people for revolutionary change and realization of national and social liberation, the adoption and implementation of the general line and program of people's democratic revolution and the development of such revolutionary forces as the vanguard proletarian party, the mass organizations of workers, peasants and other people, the people's army and its auxiliary forces, the organs of democratic political power, the united front formations and level of outrage and militancy of the unorganized masses.

The revolutionary forces of the Filipino people have declared from time to time what are their respective levels of organized strength, their programs and declarations and more importantly their activities and campaigns against neoliberal policies and related matters. All these debunk the Trotskyite slander. The broad range of legal democratic forces is encouraged by the organized political strength of the workers and peasants. The CPP would not have survived and overcome all the US-directed campaigns of military suppression since the time of Marcos if

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not for the political work of the CPP and the resulting wide and deepgoing mass support for the revolution.

The CPP started from scratch in 1968, with a few scores of Party members, supported by some 10,000 youth activists, trade unionists and a few veterans of the old armed revolutionary movement. In more than 51 years, the CPP has become nationwide and deeply rooted among the toiling masses. It leads a people's army, various types of mass organizations and the local organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government. All these revolutionary forces constitute a solid base for advancing on the urban areas and eventually defeating the class enemy.

Contrary to the claims of the Duterte regime, the Trotskyites and other Philistines that the revolutionary movement is a failure until it seizes power in Manila, I wish to call attention to the fact that the revolutionary organs of political power are already governing thousands of barangays, hundreds of municipalities and scores of districts within the range of more than 110 guerrilla fronts. They do administration, land reform and other social programs, production campaigns, health work, self-defense, judicial work, disaster relief, environmental protection and so on.

There is no other combination of revolutionary forces and people in the Philippines closest to the socialist revolution but the one led and inspired by the CPP. In the programmatic view of the CPP and all other revolutionary forces, the Filipino people and the Philippine revolution must first complete the stage of fighting for, realizing and winning the national and democratic rights against foreign and feudal domination by overthrowing the big comprador-landlord counterrevolutionary state.

Upon the seizure of political power in the stage of new democratic revolution, the proletariat and the people can begin the socialist revolution, with due attention to transitional measures to be undertaken. The Trotskyites do not accept the necessity of the new democratic stage in the two stages of the Philippine revolution. Because of their fatally wrong line, they cannot grow in the Philippines. Like Trotsky, the Trotskyites think that they can grow by vilifying the genuine communist parties, now guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Their anti-CPP obsession practically puts them on the side of the counterrevolution.

*2. Similarly, these detractors advocate for pluralism within the left. Because the left worldwide can be considered weak, much needs to be re-learned in terms of strategies and methods. For them, the vanguard parties must go through a necessary process of re-learning, merging and splitting to accommodate a number of different answers to their challenges. Conversely, the CPP supposedly denies the need for this. What can you say about this critique of the CPP's notion of a vanguard party?*

JMS: In the Philippine context, what may be loosely called the Left

of the political spectrum consists of the anti-imperialist and democratic forces, otherwise called patriotic and progressive. In class terms, these are motivated mainly by adherence to the rights and interests of the toiling masses of workers and peasants. The CPP always considers it of the utmost political importance to appeal to and rely on these forces and masses of the Left. It is a big lie for anyone to caricature the CPP as denying the need for these diverse Left forces to be put into revolutionary play and aroused, organized and mobilized for the purpose.

It is absurd for anyone to claim that the strength of the CPP comes from denying the need to cooperate with others and from presuming that it knows all answers to all questions. The CPP constantly teaches its cadres and members to learn from the masses and cooperate with allies. It promotes and carries out the broad united front policy of building the basic worker-peasant alliance, winning over the middle social strata and taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate, weaken and defeat the enemy, which is currently the Duterte tyranny.

It has alliances with Left liberals in professional and occupational organizations and religious-minded revolutionaries like those in the Christians for National Liberation and Muslims in the Moro Revolutionary Liberation Organization. These are honest opponents of the Duterte tyranny unlike the most obnoxious Trotskyites who talk in an ultra-Left way but specialize in attacking the CPP and in fact serving the counterrevolution.

The CPP adheres to the Marxist-Leninist principle and line of building itself as the advanced detachment of the working class or the revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat. Like the Bolsheviks, the CPP has become the revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat by building itself ideologically, politically and organizationally, engaging in a life-and-death revolutionary struggle and strengthening itself in the process, learning from the masses, giving full play to democracy as the basis for making decisions from one level to another and using criticism and self-criticism and rectification movements to correct errors and improve work and the style of work.

In contrast, there are several grouplets of Trotskyites with varied conflicting origins in the Philippines. They specialize in slandering and attacking the CPP. They are under the influence of Trotskyites in the US, UK, France, The Netherlands, Japan and Australia. They have a talent for splitting among themselves as to be expected of petty bourgeois factionalists overreaching for socialism under semicolonial and semifeudal conditions. By attacking each other, they have weakened each other instead of strengthening themselves. Take for example the well-known conflict between Popoy Lagman and Sonny Melencio, financed and influenced by their respective Japanese and Australian instigators.

They are all afflicted with a certain kind of political schizophrenia. They

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can flip-flop from bourgeois liberalism and factionalism in line with their anti-Stalinist obsession to ultra-Left phrase-mongering about socialism as the urgent main issue under semicolonial and semifeudal conditions. They oppose the current general line of people's democratic revolution under proletarian leadership and with a socialist perspective. They try to gain self-importance and please the reactionaries by attacking the CPP. They specialize in sniping at the CPP from the flanks in coordination with the psywar agencies of whichever incumbent or incoming ruling clique in the Philippines.

*3. I have heard phrases of the CPP's revolution "happening behind people's backs" in that the masses are mobilized on the basis of democratic struggle whereas socialist consciousness is absent from the equation. For them, socialism is not something implemented by the vanguard party alone, and hence, there is a disjunct between the mobilizing methods of the CPP and the socialist program it espouses. How do you respond to this? Basically, they are purporting that the CPP is not advancing proletarian consciousness among the masses.*

JMS: Nothing wrong for the CPP to propagate and carry out the general line and program of the people's democratic revolution, with the proletariat as the leading class and with socialism as the direction of the current democratic struggles against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. "Happening behind people's backs" is another Trotskyite straw figure to target.

The CPP, the people's army and the revolutionary mass formations spread and follow the general line of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. They never conceal the socialist direction and future of the people's democratic revolution. They explain fully the two stages of the Philippine revolution: the new democratic stage and the socialist stage. And they always answer questions about socialist revolution in study meetings as well as in public meetings.

The masses of workers led by the CPP as well as those coming from other class origins who wish to remould themselves as proletarian revolutionaries or communists are well educated on socialism as the historic mission of the working class on top of the immediate necessity of the democratic struggle against the current ruling system. The peasant masses also understand that they will benefit from free land distribution in the agrarian revolution and they will go through cooperativization and mechanization in the socialist society.

Right now, as in the time of the people's struggle against the emergence and entrenchment of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the CPP and the revolutionary mass movement are once more calling for anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal struggle as an emphatically combative expression for the people's democratic revolution.

The anti-fascist line condemns the attack on and violation of the civil and political rights of individuals, groups and nonexploitative classes. The anti-imperialist line condemns the attack on and violation of national sovereignty and independence. And the antifeudal line condemns the feudal and semifeudal forms of oppression and exploitation in the countryside and carries out agrarian revolution as the main content of democratic revolution in favor of the peasant majority of the people.

The Trotskyites are rabid anti-communists pretending to out-communist the communists. They are brazen liars beyond redemption when they say that the CPP and the revolutionary movement do not appeal to the workers to defend their class interests, as workers against the government. They use outright lies to construct their own straw figure which they demolish with their verbiage.

The CPP itself and the underground organizations of the workers have resolutely and militantly upheld, defended and advanced the class interests of the working class against the counterrevolutionary state, the imperialists and the big bourgeoisie in the Philippines. The revolutionary work and influence of the CPP in the trade union movement are so strong that every reactionary regime has tried to red-tag the legal trade union movement for the purpose of state terrorism and anti-communist suppression.

*4. One recommendation for building a strong communist party in the Trotskyite fashion is to start with a strong mass base already and that it should be born out of a strong, existing and active resistance and that they are the expressions of social contradictions, not necessarily of an ideological drive to do so. In your many years of party building, what can you draw from your experience about successful party building?*

JMS: I have already pointed out that when the CPP was re-established in 1968, it was so small and weak with only a few scores of members. But it based itself on and was benefited by the mass movement of workers, peasants and the middle social strata in the entire 1960s. The CPP further grew in strength not just by building itself in exclusive closed-door study sessions but by further developing and drawing recruits from the revolutionary mass movement through various forms of struggle.

In developing the revolutionary mass movement, the CPP, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front help each other out. As far as I am concerned, the Trotskyites are not competent ideologically, politically and organizationally to talk about building a communist party and are not qualified to give a serious fact-based critique of the party building and mass work done by the CPP. If you examine the record and activities of the current Trotskyites, they have no experience in organizing any communist party beyond their small echo chambers and using the computer to attack the CPP and other communist parties.

The CPP has become one of the most formidable forces in the upsurge

of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. It has grown in strength by having the correct ideological, political and organizational line, by arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and by engaging in various forms of revolutionary struggle that are aimed at the armed overthrow and defeat of the class enemy. In the course of the revolutionary struggle, the communist party recruits its cadres and members from the revolutionary mass movement.

*5. Trotskyists have regularly made claims that the CPP has an existing policy to attack them. Specifically, that there are even assassination orders within the NPA to target other members of the left. This is done supposedly to defend the CPP's "monopoly of truth." What can you say about this? Why do you think they have made such claims?*

JMS: The most malicious and most unbelievable lies of the Trotskyites are their false claims that the CPP has an existing policy to attack them and that specifically there are even assassination orders within the NPA to target other members of the Left. They should present facts so that the CPP and the NPA can answer the charges. It is not enough to ascribe a false motivation to the CPP like "defending its monopoly of truth."

Genuine Marxist-Leninists like those in the CPP do not believe in medieval myths of infallibility and monopoly of truth. The CPP has a materialist-scientific philosophy and methods of cognition and practice. It engages in periodic and timely criticism and self-criticism and rectification movements against major errors. In political work among the masses, it has the line of learning first from the masses their needs and demands through social investigation and class analysis before trying to teach them about anything. In its organizational life, the CPP upholds the principle of democratic centralism and bases its decision-making on democratic discussions of the facts and issues at the various levels of leadership.

In the Philippines, the Trotskyites who hate the CPP are so few and are on the wayside casting malicious statements and false claims against the CPP. They have been ineffective in their counterrevolutionary activities and have thus been ignored by the CPP and by the revolutionary mass organizations. Even if they are rabid anti-communists in the clothing of super-communists or overanxious socialist, they do not deserve any kind of physical punishment so long as they use only their mouths and computers against the CPP.

In my experience of Trotskyite malice, there is one Filipino Trotskyite who used his masteral dissertation against the CPP to ingratiate himself with a foreign intelligence agency and executed a written testimony against me in connection with the false murder charges against me in 2007. And he has continued to publish a stream of slanderous articles against the CPP. I have been happy enough to win my cases in court against false charges of murder and terrorism. I do not even think of any



physical counteraction against any of my detractors. I am satisfied with debunking the lies and false charges.

The most service that the Trotskyites give nowadays to the counterrevolutionary state in the Philippines is to talk and write against the CPP. In this regard, the CPP has let them wallow in their own shit. I think that with regard to some elements who have a Trotskyite background but who have some amount of mass following and are willing to join the broad united front formally or informally, the CPP is well known to have been open to cooperation with them within the framework of the broad united front.

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## On the People's Democratic Revolution

Prof. Jose Maria Sison answers questions of host Anghelo Godino  
Re: Chapter 3 of *Philippine Society and Revolution*:  
The People's Democratic Revolution  
*NDLine Online: National Democratic Online School,*  
*Pinas Serye with Tito Jo*

June 28, 2020

*1. What are the aims of the national democratic revolution? How is it different from other revolution that have happened throughout Philippine history?*

JMS: The most important aim of the national democratic revolution is to achieve full national independence and people's democracy. The old democratic revolution of 1896 was led by the liberal bourgeoisie. This time the new democratic revolution is led by the working class and is aimed at proceeding to the socialist revolution in consonance with the era of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution.

The revolutionary leadership of the working class and its vanguard ensures that the new democratic revolution has a socialist perspective, takes a socialist direction and is the preparation for the socialist revolution. With the peasantry as the main force of the revolution, it is certain that the main content of the democratic revolution is fulfilled with the satisfaction of the peasant demand for agrarian revolution. But the line is set for agricultural cooperativization and mechanization in socialist society.

*2. Why is it necessary for the revolution to study the different classes in the Philippine society?*

JMS: It is necessary to study the different classes in Philippine society in order to know who are the friends and who are the enemies of the revolution.

The friends of the revolution are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. They are the motive forces of the revolution.

The enemies of the revolution are the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists. They are the forces of counterrevolution that wish to perpetuate the ruling system of oppression and exploitation.

*3. Please discuss the different classes in the Philippines. How do we determine who is the enemy and who are our friends in struggle?*

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JMS: In the long course of the people's democratic revolution, the enemy classes are the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists.

The comprador big bourgeoisie is the chief financial and trading agent of the US and other imperialist countries. The landlord class perpetuates private ownership of lands and subjects the peasants and farm workers to feudal and semifeudal conditions of exploitation.

The bureaucrat capitalists are the political agents of the big compradors and landlords but they have become a distinct class by accumulating power and wealth by using their governmental authority. They gained notoriety as political dynasties wanting to perpetuate themselves in power in order to further accumulate private capital and land.

The big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists are considered the class enemies because they exploit the people, especially the workers and peasants, and they use the semicolonial state to oppress the people and keep them within the bounds of the ruling system through violence and deception.

Within the broad united front policy and tactics, the CPP refer to these enemy classes as the reactionary classes in order to focus the term "enemy" on the most reactionary clique that is in power.

The sharpening of the term is meant to take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries and narrow the target to the ruling reactionary clique as the enemy in a given period.

I have previously explained that among the friends of the revolution are the following: a) the working class as the leading class from the new democratic stage to the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution, b) The peasantry (essentially the poor and middle peasants and farm workers) as the main force or democratic majority of the people and c) the middle social strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie.

They are the friends of the revolution because they constitute the people and are the motive forces of the revolution. Their needs and demands are expressed in the program for the people's democratic revolution (PPDR). And they participate in order to realize the program. Their participation in the revolution spells the growth and advance of the revolution towards victory.

### *4. Why are the workers called the leading class of the revolution?*

JMS: The working class is the leading class of the revolution because it is the most advanced productive and political force among the various classes in Philippine society and in the world.

It is the class that can sustain and further develop the industrialized economy even without the bourgeoisie. It is indispensable in the development of an industrialized socialist economy.

It is the class that is capable of overthrowing the state power of the

bourgeoisie and replacing it with the state power of the proletariat and fulfilling the historic mission of socialist revolution and construction.

The working class has the most developed theory for revolutionary change and the accumulated practice of leading successful socialist revolutions. The theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism encompasses philosophy, political economy and social science.

The working class has created the Communist Party as the vanguard party focused on revolutionary theory and practice on the basis of the revolutionary mass movement. The Communist Party is the instrument of the working class for leading the revolution from the people's democratic stage to the socialist stage of the revolution.

*5. Why are the peasants the "pangunahing pwersa" or the main force?*

JMS: The peasant class (mainly the poor and middle peasants and traditional seasonal farm workers) are still the most numerous class in the Philippines and comprise the democratic majority of the people. The satisfaction of their demand for land through agrarian revolution is the main content of the revolution.

The protracted people's war in the new democratic revolution is possible in the Philippines because the peasant class has provided the people's army with the social and physical terrain as the widest area of maneuver against the enemy that is militarily superior in personnel, equipment and training before the people's army gains the upper hand by capturing the weapons from the enemy.

The actual social investigation and class analysis done by the CPP belies the claim of the enemy that the Philippines is already a newly-industrialized country, even without having to produce industrial capital goods.

The enemy's trick is to claim that of the 45 million labor force or manpower in the Philippines 58 per cent are workers in the service sector and 19.1 per cent are workers in the industry sector. Thus, the working class is now 77.1 per cent, while the peasantry has dwindled to 19.1 per cent without the need of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

The purpose of the enemy in making the peasantry dwindle and disappear is to conjure the illusion that industrial development is already removing the ground for protracted people's war.

Their statistical trick is to credit the import-dependent service sector, bloated by neoliberal financing, with the employment of most of the rural and urban oddjobbers in the informal economy consisting of outflows from the rural surplus population, who still maintain connections with their peasant families and who seasonally work with them during planting and harvest seasons.

The bourgeois statisticians can further make the peasants disappear by considering the family head as the only peasant in the family, denying the

fact that every able-bodied family member of the household participates in agricultural work and by making no distinction between the few whole-year farm workers that attend to hacienda machines and warehouses on the one hand and the traditional seasonal farm workers who existed ever since biblical times on the other hand.

*6. What is the Communist Party of the Philippines and what role does it play in the national democratic revolution?*

JMS: The Communist Party of the Philippines is the advanced detachment or vanguard party of the Filipino working class. It is the principal instrument of the working class for leading the national democratic revolution and then the socialist revolution. The role of the CPP is to build itself as an ideological, political and organizational instrument of the working class and to realize its class leadership of the working class in the entire revolutionary movement of the people.

As the ideological instrument of the working class, the CPP is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and applies this theory on the history, circumstances and revolutionary practice of the proletariat and people.

As political instrument, it draws up the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and with a socialist perspective and does political work to build itself, the people's army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the united front and the organs of power.

As the organizational instrument, it builds itself organizationally under the principle of democratic centralism in order to make collective decisions on the basis of democracy.

*7. Why is it erroneous to put the principal stress of mass work in the cities instead of in the countryside? Can you elaborate on the importance and balance of organizing in the cities and in the countryside?*

JMS: As far as I know, there has never been any CPP policy to put the principal stress on mass work in the cities instead of in the countryside. The objective fact is that historically and currently the urban-based mass movement has been the source of workers and educated youth redeployed for mass work assignment to the people's army in the countryside.

The policy of the CPP has always been to dispatch Party cadres and members and mass activists to the countryside from the cities in order to help strengthen the CPP, the people's army, the mass organizations, the local organs of political power and the united front.

To favor mass work in the countryside, the CPP has always stressed that the general line is people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and that the principal form of struggle is the revolutionary armed struggle which aims to overthrow the ruling system.

The CPP has always expected that the more revolutionaries from the cities joining their comrades in the countryside the faster would the armed revolution grow in strengthen and advance in building the people's

democratic government in the countryside until this can get rid of the government of the big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats in the cities.

The strategic line of protracted people's war is to accumulate political and armed strength in the countryside until it becomes possible to overthrow the urban-based counterrevolutionary state.

*8. Is armed revolution necessary?*

JMS: History has shown that the proletariat has never won a new democratic revolution and establish socialism without armed revolution. There has never been a case of the bourgeoisie giving up state power and the private ownership of the means of production voluntarily and peacefully.

The necessity of armed revolution is not due to any one-sided desire of the proletariat to use armed revolution. It arises because the bourgeoisie uses its class dictatorship or its organized system of violence called state power to prevent the proletariat from establishing socialism.

*9. Is participating in the parliamentary struggle important?*

JMS: Whenever there is space for participation in parliamentary struggle within any bourgeois ruling system, the communists and other revolutionaries avail of that space while possible in order to push for reforms without becoming reformists and in order to indicate the need for revolutionary change.

Parliamentary struggle has its own distinct importance. It facilitates the spread of the program of struggle for national and social liberation. It contributes to the efforts to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for that struggle. But the genuine communists and revolutionaries are ever vigilant against the counterrevolutionary policies and acts of the reactionary classes.

*10. What are the three weapons of the revolution and what are the roles of each one?*

JMS: The three weapons of the Philippine revolution are the revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat, revolutionary armed struggle and the united front. These are embodied by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front, respectively.

As vanguard party of the proletariat, the CPP realizes best the leading role of the working class by building itself through ideological, political and organizational work.

The NPA integrates the revolutionary armed struggle with the agrarian revolution and mass base building. Mass base building involves building the revolutionary mass organizations and the local organs of political power.

The NDFP does its best to help build the basic worker-peasant alliance,

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win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries and isolate, weaken and destroy the power of one enemy ruling clique after another.

*11. Please elaborate on the tasks of the revolution on the following fields: a) political field b) economic field c) military field d) cultural field and e) foreign relations field.*

JMS: The main tasks of the revolution in the political field is to propagate and apply the general program of people's democratic revolution and do everything necessary to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for strengthening the revolutionary forces and advancing the revolution towards total victory.

The main tasks of the revolution in the economic field are to uphold national economic sovereignty, protect the national patrimony and achieve genuine land reform and national industrialization. When the revolutionary forces are effective in the countryside, they can carry out land reform and other socioeconomic programs for the benefit of the people.

The main tasks of the revolution in the military field are to fight the enemy and to build the people's army as the main fighting forces, the people's militia as local police force and as auxiliary of the people's army and the self-defense units within the revolutionary mass organizations as active defenders of the people and reserve force for the people's army and the people's militia.

The main tasks of the revolution in the cultural field are to promote and realize the national, scientific and mass culture and education. The revolutionaries carry out all kinds of cultural work to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people by undertaking study sessions, agitprop meetings, artistic works and performances.

The main tasks of the revolution in the field of foreign relations are to undertake campaigns of information, organizing and mobilization among the overseas Filipinos and the host peoples in various countries in order to build international solidarity and realize practical cooperation of mutual benefit among all peoples in the common struggle against imperialism and all reaction.

*12. The national democratic revolution has a socialist perspective. How can the transition from the people's democracy to socialism be guaranteed?*

JMS: The national democratic revolution is the preparation for the socialist revolution. Through the national democratic revolution, the working class and its vanguard party learn how to lead the broad masses of the people in waging revolution, set the socialist direction of the revolution and develop the forces and mass strength for establishing socialism.

The successful leadership of the working class in the national democratic revolution and the revolutionary forces it has built guarantee



the establishment of socialism. At the same time, there shall still be some transitional measures of a bourgeois democratic character, like completing the land reform and integrating the patriotic bourgeoisie into joint state and private enterprises.

The national democratic revolution is basically completed upon the seizure of political power from the bourgeoisie and other reactionary classes and thus the socialist revolution can commence immediately with the working class and its vanguard party building immediately the political system to unite and govern the people and taking over all the commanding heights of the economy, all strategic industries, main transport lines and all sources of energy and raw materials. The state proceeds to build socialist industry and cooperativize and mechanize agriculture in a series of five-year plans.

*13. What are the major differences between a people's democracy and socialist state?*

JMS: As in the historical example of China, the people's democratic form of government based on the worker-peasant alliance and the broad alliance of democratic forces can be maintained. But the essence and core of state power shall already be the class rule of the working class and shall be socialist. The big comprador-landlord-bureaucrat-capitalist dictatorship shall be ended. Thus, the state power shall exist and run as the class dictatorship of the proletariat.

*14. Do you think Marxism-Leninism-Maoism still be relevant after the national democratic revolution has claimed victory? How?*

JMS: It will become an even more necessary and relevant guide to the socialist revolution that follows the national democratic revolution. The revolutionary teachings and successful practice of the great communists in the fields of philosophy, political economy and social science will shed light on what the revolutionary proletariat and people can do, with due respect to history and circumstances of the country.

The proletarian revolutionaries will be guided by and will apply Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and apply it creatively in the concrete conditions of the Philippines in order to carry out socialist revolution and construction, combat imperialism, revisionism and all reaction, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism under proletarian class dictatorship until imperialism is defeated and can no longer obstruct the road to communism.





# On Fil-Am Friendship Day: USA as Fake Friend

## Tsikahan with Tito Jo

Prof. Jose Maria Sison answers questions from host Anghelo Godino

July 1, 2020

*1. Could you elaborate more in detail to the younger generation why there are two (important) dates 6/12 and 7/4 to remember? What is the difference between the two of them?*

JMS: June 12, 1898 was the date when Aguinaldo proclaimed the national independence of the Philippines and signaled the uprisings that toppled Spanish colonialism on a national scale. But there was an expression in the proclamation that depreciated its value. It described Philippine independence as being “under the protection of the mighty and noble USA”, manifesting the willingness of Aguinaldo to make the Philippines a protectorate. So many of our people prefer August 23, 1896 as the day of independence for the old democratic revolution when Andres Bonifacio declared national independence and started the armed revolution against the Spanish colonial regime.

July 4, 1946 was the date when Manuel Roxas declared national independence and inaugurated the Republic of the Philippines. But this independence was fake or grossly incomplete, preconditioned by the US-RP Treaty of General Relations which made the Philippines a semicolony of the US and the “republic” a puppet one no different from the fake independence bestowed by Japan to the Philippine during the Japanese Occupation. The treaty retained the US military bases, the property rights of US corporations and citizens and US control of Philippine trade and diplomatic relations.

The full independence of the Philippines in the new democratic revolution is still to be decided by the revolutionary party of the proletariat. It could be the date when the current armed revolution started or when the Guide for Establishing the People’s Democratic Government or best of all when the armed revolution will achieve nationwide victory with the overthrow of the counterrevolutionary state of the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists in the cities.

By the way, the Kabataang Makabayan used to make ceremonial declarations of independence on the birthday of Andres Bonifacio from 1964 onward.

*2. Why are we still celebrating on July 4 and calling it Philippine-*

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### *American Friendship Day?*

JMS: It is actually the counterrevolutionary semicolonial state that is celebrating July 4 as Philippine-American Friendship Day. It was worse when the same semicolonial state and puppet republic celebrated July 4 as the Philippine day of independence. The celebration of July 4 as Philippine-American Friendship Day signifies the continuing subservience of the semicolonial state to US imperialism.

### *3. Why don't we celebrate the Philippine-American Friendship Day publicly?*

JMS: The Filipino people and the revolutionary forces do not celebrate Philippine-American Friendship Day in the same servile spirit and fashion that the Philippine semicolonial state does. But there is no problem for Filipinos and Filipino organizations to convey greetings of solidarity to their American counterparts who value the day as their independence day.

### *4. Why do NDs say that the Philippines is still not free from the US?*

JMS: As I have earlier pointed out, US continues to dominate the Philippines as a semicolony. It has done so since the preconditioning of the grant of national independence with the US-RP Treaty of General Relations. It has encumbered the Philippines with more treaties, agreements and arrangements that subordinate the Philippines as a semicolony or neocolony to US imperialism economically, politically, militarily and culturally.

### *5. They say the analysis of ND activists about the imperialist countries are already outdated. There is no imperialism any more but rather a multipolar world, is it true? Is it also true that US is no longer a super power?*

JMS: It is not true that imperialism has gone out of existence and that the US is no longer an imperialist superpower. Imperialism or monopoly capitalism exists in the US and several other industrial capitalist countries.

The use of such terms as unipolar, bipolar and multipolar world is anchored on the existence of imperialism. For instance, when there was the Cold War between the two superpowers, US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism, the world was described as bipolar by political analysts. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the US was referred to as the sole super power in a unipolar world.

Since the financial crash of 2008, the term multipolar world has become more than ever frequently used, with the US manifesting a more pronounced strategic decline because of its worsening economic crisis and the heavy costs of its overseas military bases and endless wars of aggression and at the same time with China and Russia rising as new imperialist powers and forming blocs of countries independent of the US, such as the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Despite its accelerated strategic decline, the US is still an imperialist superpower and maintains hightech military superiority over other

imperialist powers. Since 2018 US imperialism has become more wary of Chinese imperialism and accuses China of unfair economic, financial and trade practices and stealing technology from the US and becoming an economic and military rival of the US. The inter-imperialist contradictions between the US and China are sharpening. Thus, certain political analysts say that a new Cold War has arisen and that there is a return to the bipolar world.

*5. Tito, Duterte had PHP 275B to supposedly provide financial assistance to the marginalized and unemployed due to COVID-19, but throughout his press conferences he keeps on saying that he doesn't have money any more. The Philippines now has 7-8T international debt, where is Duterte using all his money? How is the Philippines going to pay for this?*

JMS: Duterte has used the Covid-19 pandemic to escalate the repressive measures and human rights violations against the Filipino people, butcher people in the guerrilla fronts of the revolutionary movement, deprive the people of livelihood, medical care, food assistance and forms of relief and steal hundreds of billions of pesos or trillions from the public treasury, private company donations and loans and grants from abroad by faking receipts of purchases of medical supplies and overpricing them.

Duterte has bankrupted the Philippine economy and his own government. The bankruptcy is so deepgoing that there is no way the Philippine government can pay back the mountains of foreign debt. He cannot pay for the loans by taking more foreign loans indefinitely because the world capitalist system is now in a severe crisis far worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s. The IMF, the World Bank and the OECD have already issued estimates that the global GDP will dive by as much 4.9 per cent to 6 per cent. The impact will be worst on the underdeveloped and debt-laden countries like the Philippines.

*6. There are videos circulating in the internet that the Philippines is surrounded by US and Chinese warships, is there a truth in it? How dangerous is it for the country?*

JMS: It is true that the US and China are making shows of strength in the South China Sea. China has made the provocations by intensifying its activities to assert its false claims, fortify its positions and further encroach on the sovereign and maritime rights of the Southeast countries under international law and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Thus, the Southeast Asian governments, with the exception of the Duterte regime, have protested and the US has demonstrated support for them and asserted freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.

The US and China are calculating and calibrating their moves, which are essentially demonstrations of naval and air power in the Asia-Pacific region. The US hightech military might is far superior to that China but the

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US will not attack China because this has enough nuclear power to destroy the US and the US wants to mobilize first the anger of the Southeast Asian countries against its imperialist rival. China is also afraid to attack the US naval fleet in the South China Sea and the Pacific because it will surely be destroyed by US military power and is in fact trying hard to counter the impact of its deteriorating relations with the US.

*7. Should Duterte or the Philippines – for this matter, start siding with China instead of US to defeat US?*

JMS: It is wrong and traitorous for Duterte to allow Chinese imperialism to build and militarize artificial islands in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea, take control over the rich marine and mineral resources in the West Philippine Sea and take over the Scarborough or Pagan Shoal.

The Filipino people's struggle for full national independence is chiefly directed against US imperialism but it does not allow Chinese imperialism to violate the sovereign rights of the Filipino people. Fighting Spanish colonialism was never a license for surrendering the country to US imperialism. The revolutionary movement must be consistent in fighting imperialism, whether it is that of the US or China.

*8. There is certainly going to be a war in the West Philippine Sea and Duterte is the first to blame, he is not just compromising the safety of the Filipino people but also the neighboring ASEAN countries. How will this affect the already stale relationship of Duterte with the international community? Is it too late to stop this war? What should we do to stop this?*

JMS: As I have already explained, there is no certainty of war breaking out in the South China Sea between the US and China at least within the next few years. You cannot blame Duterte for a war that has not yet burst out. We can hold Duterte accountable for allowing and encouraging China to take over the West Philippine Sea in violation of Philippine sovereign rights, the UNCLOS and the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines against China and also for failing to unite with the other ASEAN countries in opposing China's illegal claim over 90 percent of the South China Sea.

You can hold Duterte accountable for being a traitor and a complete moron. He has failed to bring charges against China before the UN and appropriate courts for violating the sovereign rights of the Philippines, illegally occupying the artificial islands in the West Philippines and damaging the marine environment; and demand payment for rent and damages to the environment in the same manner as the US was required to pay for damages when its boat damaged a part of the Tubbataha Reef. The Philippines can actually sue China in the US and other countries where it has assets to pay for obligations and damages.

But the worst stupidity of Duterte is to allow China to prevent the

Philippines from exploring and exploiting the oil, gas and other mineral resources in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea. These resources are worth several tens of trillions of USD (the estimated value of the oil and gas resources is at least USD 26 trillion and that of the marine resources is at least USD 1.5 trillion) which could save the Philippines from underdevelopment and the humiliation of being the eternal beggar of foreign loans from the imperialist powers.

*9. It might be hard to believe that Duterte is treading on dangerous waters because of the ongoing tension and the provocation between US and China, thus, can you explain why Duterte is doing this? Why is he putting the lives of the millions of Filipino people in danger?*

JMS: Duterte is criminally responsible for allowing and encouraging China to assert its false claim of owning more than 90 per cent of the South China Sea and to take over the West Philippine Sea as its own sovereign property. Because of this, he is also responsible for aiding and abetting the Chinese acts of aggression against the Philippines and other ASEAN countries and for creating a situation in which the US comes into play as defender of the right to free navigation and supporter of the sovereign rights of the ASEAN countries against the Chinese acts of aggression.

*10. How is this commotion, affecting the livelihood of the fisher folks in these areas? We've seen that in the past and even up to today, in the thick of the pandemic, the fisher folks are being bullied by the Chinese fishing vessels, prohibited to make a living inside our territories. In the thick of the pandemic, the fisher folks are facing demolition and reclamation. How is this new international situation going to affect them?*

JMS: I agree with you that in the past and even until today, in the thick of the pandemic, the Filipino fisher folks are being rammed and bullied by the Chinese fishing vessels and prohibited to make a living inside the West Philippine Sea. The fisher folks are facing demolition and reclamation projects in the interest of the Chinese criminal triads engaged in operating casinos and in drug smuggling.

I do not mind if the US uses its naval fleet to stop China from committing acts of aggression in the West Philippine Sea and occupying the artificial islands. The US should also stop continuing to support Duterte just because he made a promise to Trump in 2017 that he would terminate the peace negotiations with the NDFP and destroy the armed revolution through sheer military force.

Duterte cannot stay a day longer in power if the US assets within the reactionary armed forces agree to withdraw military support from him. It is still a puzzle why the pro-US generals in the AFP and PNP continue to support Duterte despite China taking control over the national power grid and telecommunications and putting cell towers in military camps in contradiction with the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement which

allows the US to have its own bases within the AFP military camps.

*11. On July 12, 2016, Permanent Court of Arbitration ruled in favor of the Philippines, so what is China still doing in our sovereign waters? Why did Duterte allow the invasion of the Philippines by China? What should the PCA or the international community do?*

JMS: I have already pointed out that Duterte is a traitor and complete moron for failing to uphold the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favor of the Philippines against China. Instead, he has condoned and emboldened China to occupy, build and militarize the artificial islands and control the waters that belong to the Philippines. The Philippine can charge China for the violation of Philippine sovereign rights and demand compensation for illegal occupation and damage to the marine environment before the appropriate courts, especially in countries where China has assets that can pay for obligations and damages.

*12. Any message to the youth in Europe and in the Philippines?*

JMS: I call on the Anakbayan and the entire Filipino youth in Europe and in the Philippines to intensify their common efforts to fight and oust the Duterte regime of butchers and crooks. They must carry out the out-Duterte movement with the framework of the Filipino people revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation.

Of course, Anakbayan and the Filipino youth in the Philippines have the magnitude and the most potential for intensifying all forms of revolutionary struggle not only for changing the reactionary ruling clique but also for making significant advances in the new democratic revolution against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. They contribute to the advance of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the youth and people of the world and need international solidarity and support.

Anakbayan and the Filipino youth in Europe and elsewhere abroad have the special role and duty of speaking freely and availing of the hightech means of immediate communication to support and coordinate with the Anakbayan and the Filipino youth in real time and at the same time gain the international solidarity and support of the youth of the world for the struggle of the Filipino youth and people for full national independence and democratic rights against foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes now chiefly represented by the traitorous, tyrannical, murderous and plundering ruling clique headed by Duterte.

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## **Duterte Seals his Political Doom by Signing Law of State Terrorism**

**July 4, 2020**

At the peak of his narcissistic arrogance and greed for political power and ill-gotten wealth, Duterte has signed into law the bill of state terrorism that he had railroaded together with his servants in both houses of Congress, mostly beneficiaries of the rigging of the 2019 elections. This law of state terrorism nullifies the basic democratic rights of everyone and anyone of the social activists and critics of his regime whom he targets as his opponent and whom he can arrest, torture, kill or detain and dispossess on the basis of mere suspicion.

We are now in the last act of a tragedy in which a local tyrant gets elected to the presidency and becomes a hubris-afflicted national tyrant, a traitor trying to serve two competing imperialist powers, a mass murderer of tens of thousands of the impoverished people, a gangster who has gained a monopoly of the drug trade and a plunderer stealing more public money than any of his predecessors in four years of sitting as president.

Duterte is driven to realize his scheme of fascist dictatorship by his fear of trial and punishment either by the people's court of the revolutionary movement for his so many grievous crimes against the Filipino people or by the International Criminal Court for his brazen violations of human rights and for his bloody crimes against humanity. He seeks to enjoy impunity without end by either keeping himself in power beyond 2022 or picking his successor and protector.

The law of state terrorism that he has signed exceeds the qualified powers of the commander-in-chief in the 1987 Constitution and practically nullifies the Bill of Rights and all related human rights provisions. By signing this unconstitutional and anti-democratic law he has already obtained unlimited powers, exceeding those in the martial law declaration of 1972 which enabled Marcos to impose fascist dictatorship on the people for 14 years.

Duterte has done the worst at the expense of the Filipino people. But it is fine that he does so at a time when the broad masses of the people and the broadest range of patriotic forces of the people have manifested their resolute and militant opposition to the accumulated crimes of tyranny, treason, butchery and plunder committed by the Duterte ruling clique and at a time when the people are outraged by the regime's militarist and repressive lockdowns, the nondelivery of food and other forms of

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assistance, the gross malversation of public funds and the railroading of the law of state terrorism during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Duterte could not have chosen a better time than now to seal his political doom. He and his ruling clique are thoroughly isolated as the enemy of the people. He has become notorious as a physically, mentally and morally deranged person, addicted to Fentanyl and now subject to dialysis treatment three times a week. But in terms of ability to rule, even with the use of his subalterns, he is already cramped now and in his remaining years by the unprecedentedly worsened crisis of the domestic ruling system and the world capitalist system.

He has bankrupted the economy and his own government. All the ills of the semicolonial and semifeudal society, including unemployment and mass poverty, are rapidly worsening. The regime does nothing but to escalate oppression and exploitation. Thus, there is widespread and deepgoing social discontent among the workers, peasants and the middle social strata. This is fuelling the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

With the crisis of the US and world capitalist surpassing that of the so-called Great Recession that started with the financial crisis of 2008 and that of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Duterte regime cannot borrow enough resources and time from foreign banks to cover the widening budgetary and trade deficits and mounting foreign debt service. There is no way for Duterte to fulfill his promise to Trump on November 13, 2017 that he would destroy the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people.

The signing of the law of state terrorism is quite similar to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 in serving as conclusive proof that Duterte now, like Marcos in 1971, was on an incorrigible and irrevocable course of fascist dictatorship and as clear signal for the revolutionary movement as well as the legal democratic forces of the Filipino people to be ready for a life-and-death struggle against such a monstrous regime.

The Duterte regime and its loyalists try to disarm the people by blaring out that the law of state terrorism would be applied selectively by the Duterte-led civilian-military with executive and judicial powers. But it is a law of unlimited state terrorism, which guarantees absolute power and absolute corruption for the benefit of the fascist dictator and his clique of cronies and generals. We can expect that the law will be used for mass arrests and mass murder and for the grabbing of properties of the Duterte rivals within the oligarchy as well as the properties of the lower classes who are vulnerable to extortion by military and police officers at all levels.

If the Filipino people and the broad range of patriotic and democratic forces are to learn from the preparation and realization of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, they must intensify all legal and political efforts to oppose the law of state terrorism which has practically installed and entrenched the

Duterte fascist dictatorship. At the same time, those who are in imminent danger of arrest, detention or murder are expected as in 1971 to retreat into the underground in the cities and in their home provinces and be ready for integration with the armed revolutionary movement in the countryside.

The Kabataang Makabayan is a prime example of legal mass organization making an orderly retreat from legal struggle to armed revolutionary struggle when it was the prime target of state terrorism in 1971. This orderly retreat resulted in the increase of the membership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Red fighters of the New People's Army from the level of a few hundreds to 4,000 by the 1974. The state terrorism of Marcos inflicted great suffering on the people but unwittingly goaded the people to strengthen and intensify the armed resistance of the people.

The anti-communist terrorists headed by Duterte have boasted that they could destroy both the CPP and NPA by launching bloody campaigns of suppression in both cities and countryside against all persons suspected of either being members or allies of these revolutionary forces. They do not understand certain points like the armed revolution thriving because of oppressive and exploitative conditions and because the revolutionary forces can grow far beyond the knowledge of enemy spies by means of revolutionary education, mass work and campaigns of mass struggle.

The counterrevolutionaries and even their US imperialist masters do not understand that the CPP under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is completely different from the Communist Party of Indonesia which was an open and legal party thoroughly exposed to the enemy intelligence services from 1951 to the year 1965 of anti-communist massacres. And right now, to kill just one communist the armed thugs of Duterte would have kill 100 to 1000 suspects, including some of their own relatives who like to study in the University of the Philippines and join the patriotic and progressive organizations.

The current strength of the patriotic and progressive organizations, which is now at least in the hundreds of thousands, is a far cry from the much smaller strength of KM in 1971, which had only 15,000 members nationwide. The anticommunist terrorists are acting like idiots by trying to compel an already huge legal democratic movement to go underground and wage armed resistance and satisfying themselves with false claims of having decimated the revolutionary forces by forcing or bribing them to surrender or get killed under the law of state terrorism and actually using such false claims to corrupt themselves by stealing public money for fake surrenders, fake projects and fake operations.

In 1971 the CPP had only 2000 members and increased from only a few scores in 1968 to hundreds in the course of small-scale people's war in Tarlac and Isabela in 1969-1970, a period when the Task Force of 5000

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troops could not nip in the bud the few squads and armed propaganda teams of the NPA. But the police and military breaking up peaceful mass demonstrations in Manila and other cities in effect delivered thousands of mass activists to the CPP and NPA from 1969 to 1972. By 1974 the CPP had 4000 members who were educated, trained and deployed as revolutionaries on a nationwide scale.

Now, the CPP has many tens of thousands of members and the NPA has thousands of full time Red fighters, assisted by the people's militia and self-defense units of revolutionary mass organizations, in thousands of barangays, hundreds of municipalities and 74 provinces in more than 110 guerrilla fronts. They have well-developed mass organizations of various types and have organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government.

Definitely, they have a bigger and wider welcoming capacity for the integration of the urban mass activists compelled by the law of state terrorism to join the armed struggle and mass work in the countryside. These activists trained in armed struggle in the countryside can be sent back in the short run to the cities to operate against the enablers and enforcers of state terrorism in every branch of the reactionary government and in the long run as cadres and commanders leading regular mobile forces to seize power in the cities.

Before and soon after becoming president, Duterte boasted of wishing to become the "first Left and socialist president of the Philippines". But he was being duplicitous, he was already under orders by US imperialism through his pro-US military advisers to unleash an all-out war against the armed revolutionary movement.

He was completely impervious to the good advice given to him by his peace-minded advisers that he could engage the NDFP, the CPP and NPA in a just peace agreement with a substantive agreement on genuine land reform and national industrialization to be financed by the trillions of US dollars worth of oil and gas that can be extracted from the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea.

But what has Duterte, the bloody and greedy moron, done against such good advice. He preferred to stay in the good graces of Trump by promising to destroy the armed revolution with strictly military means and deliver charter change allowing US and other foreign corporations the unlimited right to own land, natural resources, public utilities and all other businesses.

At the same, he preferred to monopolize the illegal drug trade in collaboration with the Chinese criminal triads and to beg from China high-interest loans and overpriced infrastructure projects in exchange for cuts for himself and his Davao-based Chinese cronies and for laying aside the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favor of the

Philippines against China.

The last four years of Duterte's rule has been characterized by treason, tyranny, butchery, plunder and bankruptcy of the economy and his government. The last two years of every one of his presidential predecessors were normally lameduck years for proven failure to solve the problems of foreign monopoly capitalism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and the inadequacy of time to make up for lost time.

Now, this traitor, tyrant, butcher, plunderer and incompetent Duterte thinks he can use his last two years in power to use state terrorism and fascist dictatorship to rule beyond 2022 and pick his own successor. The Filipino people and all patriotic and progressive forces—including those who uphold the 1987 Constitution of the reactionary government against state terrorism—ought to rise up, fight for the national and democratic rights of the people and oust the Duterte regime as soon as possible.

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# On the Land Problem, Peasant Class and Agrarian Revolution in Special Course on the Peasant Movement

National Democratic Online School, Mga Serye ni Tito Jo  
July 5, 2020

1. *Who are the Farmers and what is their significance in the Philippine society?*

JMS: In English, one can play loose with synonymous terms like peasant, farmer or planter for someone who tills the land or in Tagalog, *magsasaka*, *magbubukid* or *magbubungkal*, in the same manner as you may alternately use the word worker, laborer or wage-earner for someone who sells his labor power and gets wages.

But from the time of Marx to the present in class analysis, in the English language, the word peasant is used instead of farmer. The word peasant has the nuance of being serf in medieval or feudal times or being in the main landless and poor tillers of the land. The word farmer carries the nuance of being the owner of the land he tills or farms. Even landlords and farm capitalists sometimes call themselves farmers or planters but never do they call themselves peasant.

We notice that the Philippine reactionary government uses the word farmer to conjure the illusion that its bogus land reform program is a success and that the predominantly poor peasants, among the peasants of various social strata, have disappeared and have become owner-cultivators or owner-farmers. There is a deliberate attempt to diminish drastically or even make the peasant class disappear not only linguistically but also statistically.

In an earlier study session, I have pointed out that the Philippine reactionary government has reduced the peasantry to only 22.9 per cent of the labor force of 45 million being in agriculture and the rest are in the service sector at 58 per cent and in industry at 19.1 per cent. With 77.1 per cent considered as working class, that makes the peasant class quite a small minority. The truth is that the industrial proletariat is far smaller than the peasant class but the reactionary economists and statisticians detach the traditional seasonal farm workers and odd jobbers from their peasant base.

The understatement of the size of the peasantry and the undervaluation of the share of agriculture at only 7.4 per cent of GDP are calculated to

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conjure the illusion that the Philippines has become a newly-industrializing economy and that the diminution of the peasantry has drastically reduced the ground for maneuver in the protracted people's war in the new democratic revolution. We cannot rely on the false categories and false estimates of the reactionary government. Original social research must be done to establish the facts.

The Philippine reactionary government takes advantage of the fact that the neoliberal policy has bloated the service sector with extreme and unsustainable debt financing for private construction and the importation of nonreproducing equipment and consumer manufactures and dishonestly counts as employed in the service sector the great mass of odd jobbers from the surplus rural population in the so-called informal economy. And practically those recognized as peasants are merely the family heads as if they were workers individually registered and employed by nonagricultural enterprises, as the diminished number of regulars and the far greater number of casuals or 5-month contractuels.

The peasant class, mainly the poor and middle peasants, is highly significant in the Philippine society because it comprises the biggest socioeconomic class and provides the food for itself and for the whole country and certain products for local processing and for export. It is the largest bloc of the most exploited and oppressed people and it is still the base of most of the urban and rural oddjobbers and unemployed who have increased in number due to the lack of industrial development and the dwindling of regular employment in every sector of the economy. The peasant class is so important because it is the main force of the people's democratic revolution through people's war in the countryside until the revolutionary forces become strong enough to seize political power in the cities.

*2. Can you discuss the different strata within the peasantry? There are farmers who have managed to own a few hectares of land and who have a more comfortable life than the poor farmers. How did these different strata emerge?*

JMS: There are three strata of the peasant class: the poor, middle and rich peasants. The poor peasants do not own land or have inadequate land and have to become tenants of the landlords and augment their income by being farm workers seasonally for the upper strata of the peasantry and for the plantations or do odd jobs in the urban areas. The middle peasants in the main own and till enough land for their own subsistence, although the lower middle peasants also serve as farm workers for others or do urban odd jobs. The rich peasants own more than enough land for their subsistence but they still till the land and hire farm workers as well as use their surplus income to engage in trading or small-scale enterprise or buy additional land.



The fact that the poor peasants are the majority of the peasants indicates that they have originated from the feudal system and that they continue to exist because of the persistence of feudal and semifeudal relations of production and conditions in the countryside. Even when the landed estates of landlord families become fragmented from generation to another, the landlord class persists because some of the heirs expand their inherited shares and new landlords keep on arising and expanding their estate through purchase and the alienation of land from the public domain. The middle and rich peasants exist for various reasons but are generally manifestations of the transition from feudal to semifeudal conditions or the combination of both. The rich peasants are sometimes called the rural bourgeoisie for owning property and using its surplus income to hire labor and engage in some small enterprise and side occupation or in money-lending.

3. *One of the main problems that the peasants face is the problem of land ownership. They don't own the land that they till. What is the origin of this land problem and how bad is it?*

JMS: Even before the coming of Spanish colonialism, aside from communal land ownership, there was already private ownership of land by the ruling families in the Islamic sultanates in southwestern Mindanao and in the patriarchal slave system in other parts of the archipelago. The *aliping sagigilid* and *aliping namamahay* were put to work on the land by their owners. There were those who acted as tenants as well as those who worked on certain lands for the benefit of landlords in exchange for rations or crop share.

But the Spanish colonialists were the ones who systematically imposed feudalism on the widest scale. It started with the *encomienda* system, which was a grant of extensive lands to the Spanish conquerors and bureaucrats for the purpose of tribute collection. The churches also accumulated land where they were established. But the largest church lands owned by the Spanish religious orders arose in connection with the production of export crops, such as tobacco, hemp, sugar, indigo and so on. At the same time, the domestic ruling class of landowning families called the *principalia* increased their landholdings as domestic and foreign trade expanded from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The system of haciendas was established during the Spanish colonial period. The land reform undertaken by the US colonial regime against friar estates was just enough to promote a semifeudal economy and allow the peasants to move freely. Although the land reform was carried out with the avowed purpose of distributing land to the tenants, who could not afford the redistribution price, the land ownership shifted only to the landlords and certain corporations. And the money paid to the religious corporations were invested in the big comprador Bank of the Philippine Islands.

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*4. What forms of exploitation and oppression do the farmers experience through this land problem?*

JMS: The main form of exploitation in the feudal system was the exaction of rent by the landlords from the tenants and making the latter perform menial service to landlord families and unpaid labor on certain occasions, such as church and community festivities. Because the arable lands were already designated or titled as private property of the church or certain families, the impoverished landless peasants had to become tenants or farm workers on the land of the landlords and the rich peasants.

The religious corporations and the landlords were notorious for abusing their political power by grabbing the land even of the freemen or freeholders of land. The colonial state also required the peasant masses to render *polo y servicio* (public works) or else pay fines. And the triumvirate of the parish priest, *gobernadorcillo* and the civil guards made sure that the landless peasants could escape their service of forced labor.

*5. Who are the main feudal landlords and how did these feudal landlords accumulate and monopolize these lands?*

JMS: First, among the native population, the religious corporations and native landlords had political power and could arbitrarily grab land from the powerless peasants. Second, the landlords bought more land at dirt cheap prices with the rent paid by tenants. Third, they engaged in merchant-usury operations by which the indebted peasants lost their land. The feudal forms of exploitation have extended to current times.

The *gobernadorcillos* always came from the landowning families (*principalia*). They could arbitrarily claim, title and put under tax declaration any large area of land legally considered as royal or public domain. This practice of landgrabbing has continued until now under various guises, such as pasture leases preparatory to privatization, logging concessions, forest management agreements and so on.

*6. The agriculture in the Philippines is still backward. Why are the landlords and the government not interested in developing tools and machinery to improve the way of farming? And how does this affect the farmers?*

JMS: So long as there is no genuine land reform or agrarian revolution and no national industrialization, the landlords will continue to exist, keep on accumulating land with the rent paid to them and retain the backward technological level of agriculture. There is no other way for most landlords to do but keep on collecting rent and practising usury and using their income to accumulate land. They have no interest in raising the technological level of agriculture as the landless peasants abound as cheap source of labor power.

However, the biggest landlords engage in export-crop production in plantations and become big comprador bourgeois by performing the role

of trading and financial agents of foreign monopoly capitalism. They own haciendas as well as export-import companies and banks like the Ayalas and Cojuangco. You will notice that the biggest comprador bourgeois are also the biggest landlords or have huge interests in haciendas.

They adopt some amount of mechanization but they do not go so far as to use harvester combines because there is an abundance of the traditional seasonal farm workers, they thus save on capital outlays by using the extremely cheap labor power of the farm workers and they are also afraid that social discontent would burst out if these farm workers are displaced by machines without any industrialization to absorb the displaced.

*7. How do Landlords, Big Business Owners and Imperialist Agri-Corporations team up to further profit from the exploitation and oppression of the peasants and farm workers?*

JMS: The teaming up of the landlords, the big compradors or big business owners and the imperialist agrcorporations is most amply manifested in the operation of haciendas by the landlords for the production of export crops for sale to the imperialist agrcorporations. The landlords get their profits from the exploitation of the peasants and farm workers. They have big comprador export-import trading firms to realize profits from trade with the foreign agrcorporations. With their foreign exchange income from the sale of export crops, they import to the Philippines foreign manufactures for profitable sales to domestic wholesalers. They also own the big comprador banks for making the letters of credit in export-import transactions and thereby earning interest.

*8. What ways do the landlords use to maintain their monopoly of land?*

JMS: In the history and current circumstances of the Philippines, the landlords acquire and maintain their monopoly of land by having political power in localities and higher levels of the reactionary government. First, they can gain control over vast tracts of land from the public domain under various legal pretexts and then acquire private ownership of the land under the pretext of having developed them. Second, they have devised inheritance laws so that land ownership is passed on from generation to another within the same family and through inter-marriages of cousins and with other families. Third, the income drawn by the landlord from land is used to acquire more land.

*9. How do imperialists benefit from feudal exploitation of the farmers and what is its role in preserving feudalism?*

JMS: The imperialists benefit from the feudal exploitation of peasants and farm workers by buying the cheap export crops from the landlords and selling the manufactures to the big comprador-landlord trading firms. Aside from collaborating economically, the imperialists and landlords also do so militarily. The imperialists provide military support to the big comparator-landlord-bureaucrat-capitalist state and the landlords rule the

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localities and provide the political base for said state. The imperialists are the sources of the weapons used by the reactionary state in the futile campaigns to destroy the revolutionary movement and preserve the feudal and semifeudal system of exploitation.

*10. What kind of policies and attitude does the government have in resolving the land problem?*

JMS: The reactionary state or government is the class rule of the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. They are fundamentally against genuine land reform aimed at solving the land problem. They keep on carrying out one bogus land reform after the other but it is because the land expropriated from certain landlords is overpriced and the poor peasants cannot afford to pay for the exorbitant price of the land. The land usually end up in the hands of landlords and other entities who acquire the land for real estate development and other non-agricultural purposes.

*11. The Republic of the Philippines have created policies and institutions that they say will help the farmers. For example, the CARP and CARPER, DENR, DAR. Do these policies and institutions really help farmers?*

JMS: These policies and institutions do not carry out or promote genuine land reform and rural development for the benefit of the peasant masses. They benefit the landlords, big compradors and bureaucrat capitalists.

*Follow up Question: Does this mean the government of the republic of the Philippines are part of the problem of the Farmers that further oppress and exploits them?*

JMS: The reactionary government belongs to the landlords and other exploiting classes and is therefore a big problem to the peasant masses because it is the instrument of the landlord class for ensuring the oppression and exploitation of the peasant masses.

*12. How is the struggle of fisherfolks related to the struggle of the farmers?*

JMS: The struggle of fisherfolks is related to the struggle of the peasants. The fisherfolks are subject to exploitation and oppression by owners of fishpens who play a role similar to that of the landlords and by owners of fleets who act like hacienda owners and farm capitalists. Sometimes, peasants also augment their income as fisherfolks in rivers, lakes and marine coasts and suffer the same exploitation and oppression suffered by fisherfolks.

*13. Can you discuss how the a. Military b. Church c. Justice System d. Reactionary Associations contribute to the exploitation of the peasant class?*

JMS: a. The military and the police are bound by the state to protect the landlords against the peasant demanding genuine agrarian or land reform or fighting for agrarian revolution. They target the peasant leaders and activists in counterrevolutionary campaigns of suppression.

b. The church is an institution that owns land and is socially close to the landlords who are its big donors. Many of the church leaders are conservative and support the landlords even as many of them are progressive and support the peasant masses because these are poor people who deserve social justice.

c. The justice system is based on laws designed to serve the interests of the big comprador-landlord state and the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

d. Reactionary associations are instruments of the landlord class and other exploiting classes. They uphold the privilege of the landlord class to exploit the peasant masses.

*14. The Farmers in Hacienda Luisita for example have exhausted all their means to fight for their lands. They have filed cases in the Supreme Court, conducted mass protest, joined dialogue even with the late Danding Cojuangco, and have also suffered a terrible massacre called Hacienda Luisita Massacre. Despite of this, almost all of them still do not have their own land. These struggles are experienced not just by the Hacienda Luisita Farmers but also Farmers all over the country. What choice do you think they have left and how can we, regular citizens, help them with their struggle?*

JMS: The farmers in Hacienda Luisita must continue to fight for their rights and interests legally and politically. I would not be surprised if some of them join the armed revolutionary movement in order to be able to undertake effective actions against those who frustrate or violate their rights. The revolutionary movement can be expected to support the struggle of the peasants and farm workers in Hacienda Luisita and elsewhere. We can and should support their struggle by exercising our freedom of speech and assembly in their favor.

*15. What is the solution to the land problem?*

JMS: The revolutionary movement offers the best solution to the land problem in the Philippines. The Communist Party of the Philippines declares in its Program for a People's Democratic Revolution that the main content of the democratic revolution is to satisfy the peasant hunger for land through agrarian revolution. It provides two stages in the agrarian revolution.

The first stage is to carry out the minimum land reform program where the revolutionary movement has just started to take roots among the peasant masses. It means reducing the land rent, eliminating usury and reducing interest rates, raising farm wages, setting fair prices for farm products at the farm gate and raising production in agriculture and sideline occupations. However, whenever already possible, the land grabbed by landlords and corporations can be seized and returned immediately to the peasants and indigenous communities. The land of despotic landlords can

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

also be confiscated and distributed free to the peasants.

The second stage is to carry out the maximum land reform program where the revolutionary forces, especially the people's army, and the organized masses through their local organs of political power have the capability to do so on a wide scale. It means realizing the agrarian revolution. It consists of confiscating the land, distributing it free to the peasant masses and raising production by rudimentary cooperation among the households in a community. The reaction of the landlord is expected to rise. And the people's court is ready to try despotic landlords with blood debts.

### *16. How do we unify the different strata under the peasant class?*

JMS: There is a general revolutionary line for the anti-feudal united front to unify the peasant class. It is for the working class and the CPP to rely mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers who need the agrarian revolution most, win over the middle peasants and neutralize the rich peasants in order to isolate and destroy the power of the landlord class, especially the despotic ones who use violence against the peasant masses.

Care is taken not to offend but not to kowtow to the rich peasants. They are allowed to keep their extra land if they comply with fair requirements. A distinction is also made between despotic landlords who commit crimes against the people and enlightened landlords who comply with the policy of land reform or agrarian revolution of the revolutionary movement.

### *17. What is the agrarian revolution and how is it being waged?*

JMS: At the moment, the first stage of the agrarian revolution is being carried out in most areas of the revolutionary movement. But land grabbed by landlords and corporations from the indigenous communities and the poor peasants are returned to them. And the land of despotic landlords is confiscated from them and distributed free to the poor peasants. It is in the second stage of the agrarian revolution when the land is confiscated from all landlords and is distributed free to the poor peasants and the lower middle peasants.

The agrarian revolution is made possible by the people's war along the line of the people's democratic revolution.



## Answers to Questions on Youth for the Special Mass Course on the Youth Movement<sup>27</sup>

July 19, 2020

*1. What are the characteristics of the youth sector and how important is their role in the progress of society?*

JMS: The young men and women from the age of 15 to 30 years are officially categorized as the youth. They comprise more than 40 percent of the Philippine population. In the past, the Kabataang Makabayan extended the age of youth to 35 years and in that regard the youth were more than 50 percent of the population. The youth belong to various classes, corresponding to the structure of social classes in the Philippines. Most of them belong to the working class and peasantry comprising more than 90 percent of the population. Some six to eight percent belong to the urban petty bourgeoisie and other middle social strata.

The youth are characterized by vigor and readiness to learn new ideas and skills. It is the stage of life in which people try to get education and training or are already in the process of working for the benefit of their families and their country, unless they suffer from the double affliction of being poor and without steady employment. In the face of an oppressive and exploitative ruling system, many of them are receptive to revolutionary ideas and efforts to organize and mobilize them for revolutionary change. The extent and level of patriotic and progressive consciousness and militancy of the youth decide the future of the entire people.

*2. In what ways are the youth being oppressed and exploited under the semifeudal and semicolonial society?*

JMS: The overwhelming majority of the youth are subject to the oppression and exploitation of the working class and peasantry to which they belong. The youth of the urban petty bourgeoisie are also vulnerable to the worsening crisis of the ruling system. Most of them face difficulties due to the rising costs of education and living and are in danger of falling to the ranks of the toiling masses because they cannot finish their college courses and even if they graduate from these, they cannot get employment that is commensurate to their education and training.

Only 21 percent of the youth are enrolled in high school, colleges at tertiary level and vocational schools. Some 22 percent are young peasants,

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<sup>27</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman of Kabataang Makabayan and Author of *Philippine Society and Revolution*.

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21 percent are not mostly odd jobbers and only a few are registered as five-month contractuels in the so-called service sector in the urban areas, only four percent are working students and 36 percent are unemployed and out of school. The big number of unemployed and underemployed youth shows how dismal are their living conditions and how the people are deprived of their productive capacity by the rotten ruling system.

### *3. How accessible is education for the youth?*

JMS: According to the latest report that I have read, the number of youth in school decreases from one level of formal education to a higher one. The drop-out rate in primary school is 33 percent, in secondary school 30 percent and in college 73 percent. Of 100 children, 67 finish primary school, 45 finish secondary school and only seven are able to finish college.

Access to education is limited due to the yearly reduction of the budgetary allocation for the public school system and state colleges and universities in favor of military overspending and bureaucratic corruption. Schools are not being built in the poverty-stricken remote areas. Where communities, churches and NGOs set up schools, these are either occupied by military troops or destroyed on suspicion of having been built by communists.

The teaching and non-teaching personnel in public schools are underpaid and the school facilities deteriorate but are neither being improved nor expanded. The government programs for scholarships and student loans serve only 1.82 percent of the student population. Tuition fees and the cost of living for students keep on rising in both private and public schools and are unaffordable to the overwhelming majority of the youth. Poverty is the primary factor why students drop out of school. Even in public schools, the poverty-stricken families cannot afford to pay for the costs of school supplies, uniforms and school projects.

### *4. What kind of educational system does the Filipino youth get and what is its effect on them?*

JMS: The children who finish only four years of primary school or less eventually lose literacy and suffer from retrogressive illiteracy. At all levels of education, the curriculum and textbooks do not promote a national orientation that is critical of colonialism and imperialism and that is assertive of national sovereignty, protective of the national patrimony, proud of the national cultural heritage and mindful of learning from peoples and countries to serve national needs.

The scientific orientation is either stunted by medieval or feudal obscurantism, especially in the schools of the dominant churches or distorted to serve imperialist domination, to glorify the despotic rule of Duterte and the class rule of the local exploiting classes in secular schools. Scientific education is not being used to serve the people and the



economic, social, political and cultural development of the people. Thus, the youth are deprived of a national, scientific and pro-people type of education. They have to learn this from the national democratic movement.

*5. Do you think our youth can freely practice their democratic and political rights? If not, what are the ways the state use to repress these rights, specifically towards the youth?*

JMS: So long as the ruling system in the Philippines is dominated by US imperialism and run by the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists, the youth like the people cannot freely practice and enjoy full national independence and democratic rights, without vigilance against the use of the reactionary state to suppress these rights. The ruling system always tries to control the youth and people through the exploitative relations in the mode of production, through the violent use of the state instruments of coercion and through the use of education and the mass media for the purpose of deception.

The worst situation is when there is an open rule of terror like the Marcos fascist dictatorship or the tyrannical Duterte regime which has adopted a law of state terrorism. But when there are regimes that pretend to be liberal-democratic, there may be some relatively wider space for the exercise of democratic rights than under regimes of open terror. But still the instruments of class violence continue to surveil and slander the patriotic and democratic forces of the people and unleash plans and campaigns of military suppression against the revolutionary forces of the people.

*6. I think by now we understand that the ruling class has a massive control of the material base as well as the superstructure of our society. What kind of culture have they developed and what kind of effect does this have to our youth?*

JMS: The kind of culture that is developed and propagated by the ruling system is anti-national, anti-scientific and anti-people. Colonial mentality and pro-imperialist ideas are being generated all the time in the educational and cultural system. It is not only feudal religious obscurantism but also the narrow interest of the big bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes that is being perpetuated against the understanding and application of science for the benefit of the people. The imperialists and reactionaries favor a culture that is emphatically anti-people and that uses state power and science against the people.

*7. In what way do imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism become related to the problems of the youth?*

JMS: Imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism are the basic problems that afflict Philippine society and the entire people, including the youth. The national and class oppression and exploitation suffered by the working class and peasantry, which compose the overwhelming majority of the people, are also suffered by the youth of exploited classes. The

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difficulties of the middle social strata are likewise shared by the youth belonging to these social strata.

*8. Tito, as Jose Rizal said, the Youth is the Hope of the Future. What is the solution to the problems that are being faced by the youth?*

JMS: Rizal and other educated reformers like Marcelo H. del Pilar and Graciano Lopez Jaena carried out the Propaganda Movement to confront the colonial and feudal problems of the Filipino people and youth, sought to solve these problems through liberal democratic reforms and hoped to realize a bright future for the youth.

Under current circumstances in the Philippines, the Filipino youth also try to develop the national democratic movement and use legal forms of struggle to advance the cause of national independence and democracy. But because the reactionary state is used by the exploiting classes to suppress them, the youth activists recognize the need to wage the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

Right now, like Marcos, Duterte is again engaged in an open rule of terror and is compelling the youth to carry out underground revolutionary work and to prepare for armed revolution and mass work in the countryside. As taught by the great revolutionary thinkers and leaders, from Marx to Mao, the way to change the oppressive and exploitative ruling system is to overthrow it with an armed revolution by the people.

*9. Historically, what roles have the youth played in the Philippine revolution?*

JMS: The Filipino youth have a great tradition in spearheading the Philippine revolution. In the old democratic revolution of 1896, Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto were young members of the working class and the intelligentsia. They were motivated by liberal democratic ideas and were determined to end the colonial and feudal rule of Spain over the Philippines and the Filipino people.

Likewise, those who initiated the resumption of the new democratic revolution by reestablishing the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968 and founding the New People's Army in 1969 were young men and women from the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie. They were guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and were determined to carry out the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution under the class leadership of the proletariat.

*10. What is the role of the youth in the revolution in our present time? In what way can we help in the struggle in the city and most especially in the countryside?*

JMS: The role of the youth is to raise the level of their revolutionary consciousness, organize themselves and mobilize themselves for various forms of struggle in order to advance the people's just cause of realizing full

national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and the attainment of a national, scientific and pro-people culture.

The youth can start belonging to the main youth organization and other forms of organization that are characterized by youth participation. When they join the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the scope of responsibility for the young cadres expands in terms of so many types of organizations to lead and types of work to carry out. Work that is directly related to the armed revolution is of course done in the underground in the urban areas and in the countryside where there is more space for maneuver to build the revolutionary forces like the Communist Party, the New People's Army, the mass organizations and the organs of political power.

*11. One of the significant revolutionary youth organizations in history and at present is the Kabataang Makabayan or KM. Can you give us more information about the organization such as What is it about, what do they do, and what are their task in politics, military, culture, and economy?*

JMS: The Kabataang Makabayan was founded as a comprehensive organization of young people from the working class, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie and from various social sectors and professions. It characterized itself as the assistant of the working class in playing its role as the leading class in carrying out the Philippine revolution. It adopted the general program of struggling for full national independence and democracy.

It was inspired by the revolutionary example of Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan. And it was determined to learn lessons from all previous revolutionary struggles of the Filipino people and of other peoples, especially those that won victory in people's democratic revolution and socialist revolution. It encouraged the study of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in conjunction with the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution.

The Kabataang Makabayan vowed to launch a Second Propaganda Movement and to arouse, organize and mobilize the youth nationwide among the workers, peasants, student youth, indigenous peoples, women and all professionals. With only a few scores of charter members when it was founded in 1964, it reached a membership of 15,000 (aside from the memberships of trade unions and various other mass organizations it was responsible for organizing) before it was forced to go underground in 1971 when Marcos declared the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and ordered the arrest of KM leaders and raids on the offices of the KM nationwide.

In connection with the reestablishment of the CPP in 1968 and founding of the NPA in 1969, the KM provided the initial young cadres for these revolutionary forces. After the First Quarter Storm of 1970, it was able

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to provide hundreds of young cadres and mass activists for integration with the NPA and mass work in the countryside. When and after Marcos declared the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and martial law in 1972, thousands of young activists in danger of arrest volunteered to join the NPA and do mass work in the countryside nationwide.

Duterte is reminiscent of Marcos unwittingly strengthening the armed revolution by compelling great numbers of young activists to join the armed revolution. Fascist monsters make people's war necessary and inevitable. History has shown that the more brutal they become the more young people they drive to join the armed revolution. Thus, in effect the counterrevolutionaries become the best recruiters, the best suppliers and best transport officers of the people's army.

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# On Duterte's 2020 SONA

## Questions and Answers

July 19, 2020

### *1. What is the real state of the nation?*

JMS: Since the last time he delivered the SONA after successfully rigging the 2019 midterm elections in order to create his super-majorities in both houses of Congress, Duterte has not only maintained but raised to a new and higher level his successes at being tyrant, traitor, mass murderer, plunderer and as a con man.

Duterte achieved the new peak of success by taking advantage of the lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. He has been able to rechannel public funds in the hundreds of billions of pesos to himself and his cronies, bankrupted the economy and his own government and sank these into deeper bankruptcy. He has been able to railroad the enactment of his law of state terrorism and is now hell-bent on using it to silence his critics and the opposition and proceed with his scheme of making a full-blown fascist dictatorship.

Duterte should celebrate his success at letting COVID-19 enter and spread in the Philippines through more than 500,000 Chinese and casino players for two months before providing the military solution instead of the medical solution to the contagion. He should also congratulate himself for failing to stop the contagion and for failing to fulfil his promises of providing food and cash assistance to the millions of people whom he has locked out of their means of livelihood. Greatest success of his is blaming the people as "*pasaway*" and making them culpable for his own ruffian and plundering kind of rule and their own misery as his victims.

*2. Early this January, cronies of Duterte had this campaign called "The Duterte Legacy" where it showed numbers and figures on progress under his term. For example, families lifted out from poverty, classrooms were made, etc. What is your take on this?*

JMS: No amount of fake news and false numbers and figures can cover up and distract the attention and wrath of the people against the horrendous crimes of the Duterte tyranny. It is a regime of greed and terror. It is characterized by senseless death, destruction, despoliation and deception. At the rate he is going in using state terrorism against the people and bankrupting the economy and his own regime, there is no way that Duterte can extricate himself from the damning verdict of history on his colossal crimes.

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The Duterte legacy is a criminal record of treason and selling out the national sovereignty and national patrimony to US and Chinese imperialism, tyranny and state terrorism against the people, mass murder of 30,000 poor people to make supreme the Duterte drug syndicate and flood the country with more illegal drugs, an all-out war to preserve the oligarchy of the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists, the biggest plunder in the quickest time to bankrupt the economy and the government, the absolution of his biggest plundering predecessors and current accomplices, the highest priority given to military spending and corruption at the expense of public health, education and other social services. and the proven falsity of promises of being "Left" and "socialist", bringing about peace, ending endo and improving the lot of the workers, land reform and independent foreign policy.

*3. Also I know for sure we will also be hearing a lot from Duterte on his SONA about the revolutionary CPP, NDFP, and NPA. Why do you think Duterte is putting all the blame on these groups instead of focusing on solving COVID-19 and providing social care?*

JMS: The more Duterte attacks the revolutionary forces of the people, the CPP, NPA and NDFP, the more he unwittingly stresses the justness of the revolutionary cause of the people's struggle for national and social liberation and the more he exposes the traitorous, tyrannical, murderous, plundering and deceptive character of his counterrevolutionary regime. Duterte keeps on attacking the revolutionary forces and labeling them as terrorists in order to rationalize his policy and law of state terrorism against all social activists, critics and opposition to his regime. He is using red-tagging to silence the just demands, criticisms and opposition. He is hell-bent on using the law of state terrorism to arrest, torture, murder and dispossess all the people he considers as opposed to his regime

*4. What can the Filipino activists here in Europe do to help the kasamas in the Philippines?*

JMS: The Filipino activists should do everything within their individual and organized capabilities to expose the crimes of the Duterte regime, express support for the Filipino people in the motherland to oust this evil regime, send any possible moral and concrete support to the people most in need through partner organizations in the Philippines and seek the widest possible support from host peoples and migrants from other countries.

It is not too difficult to further expand the support of overseas Filipinos and further gain international support because the Duterte regime has become notorious for the mass murder of poor people and other grave human rights violations. In fact, complaints have been submitted to the International Criminal Court for investigation of the regime's human rights violations and crimes against humanity.

*5. In Europe it is very easy to get caught up in many petit bourgeois comforts—what can we do to stay connected with the struggle in the Philippines and help our kasamas?*

JMS: Overseas Filipinos work hard to earn their subsistence and save some amount to help their close relatives in the Philippines. They do not have much time and means to enjoy the high standard of living in Europe. It is the duty and task of the organized social activists to arouse, organize and mobilize their compatriots.

Arousing means learning the conditions and need of compatriots abroad and then informing and educating them about the Philippine situation and why they have been compelled to seek jobs abroad through meetings, publications, audio-visuals and cultural activities that are both enlightening and entertaining. Organizing means recruiting more members for the various types of patriotic and democratic Filipino organizations at the level of countries, cities and neighborhoods. Mobilizing means holding campaign and activities that uphold and promote the rights and interests of the overseas Filipinos and their relatives and friends in the Philippines.

*6. How do the youth and migrant struggle align with the overall struggle?*

JMS: Except for the very few Filipinos who are on scholarship grants or who are children of wealthy families or who are well paid as professionals, company executive or diplomatic officials, the Filipino youth are themselves migrant workers or belong to migrant worker families who work hard for their subsistence and make small savings. On the basis of class affinity, the struggle of the youth and all migrant workers can be aligned. Even the few Filipinos who are better off than the rest of the overseas Filipinos, can be approached and won over on the basis of patriotism and enlightened concern for the suffering of the Filipino people in an unjust ruling system and under a regime so evil as the Duterte regime.

*7. Do you think Duterte has ever done good with his term?*

JMS: The crimes of Duterte and his regime against the entire Filipino people are so grave that they are unpardonable and far outweigh any claim they are good in whatever regard. It is a matter of fact that the worst of criminals can be terribly unkind to other people but can also be kind to their own families or girlfriends, their criminal accomplices, cronies and pet animals. But such kindness cannot offset the grave crimes.

Before and in the early weeks of his presidency, Duterte pretended to be a "Left" and "socialist" friend of the revolutionary movement and that he wanted peace. But he was making a pretense and doing an act of deception. He released a few political prisoners only to renege on his promise to release all political prisoners and then he ordered the arrest of the few released political prisoners when he could not make the NDFP capitulate in the peace negotiations. He appointed a few progressives to his cabinet and he had them kicked out by his agents in Congress when he

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could not obtain the capitulation of the revolutionary movement. Duterte can be a deceptive enemy as well as a barefaced monster.

*8. If Duterte gets ousted, what actions can we take to ensure systemic change? Like with Marcos' ouster and Cory Aquino who ended up still serving the ruling classes, how do we ensure that the same thing doesn't happen with Duterte and whoever succeeds him?*

JMS: The Duterte tyranny can be ousted from power by a broad united front of anti-fascist forces just like the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986. It would be better to have a president who follows the 1987 Constitution and assume the presidency as constitutional successor than a proven tyrant who is now in a hurry to constitutionalize and legalize what is unconstitutional and illegal in the state terrorism law and impose a full-blown fascist dictatorship on the people.

As in 1986 the revolutionary movement or the NPA in particular does not yet have the regular mobile forces in the form of battalions to seize political power in Manila and other cities and overthrow the Duterte regime and entire ruling system. Thus, the quickest possible ouster of Duterte is through a combination of gigantic mass actions and the withdrawal of support from him by the anti-Duterte forces within the reactionary armed forces as in 1986.

It is still better to have a regime that tries to respect civil and political rights than a regime that is blatantly traitorous, tyrannical, murderous, plundering and deceptive. It is never a good choice to perpetuate in power a fascist dictator or tyrant like Marcos or Duterte just because it is not yet possible for the NPA to knock out or compel the surrender of enemy forces in Manila. The anti-fascist struggle in unity with the entire people will serve to strengthen the revolutionary movement but will not yet bring the regular mobile forces to take the lead in seizing political from all the reactionaries.

So long as the NPA does not yet have the regular mobile forces to knock out the strategic political and military holdouts of the ruling system, the revolutionary movement must keep on building its revolutionary forces while the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system rots with an alternation of fascist and pseudo-democratic regimes because of the ever-worsening crisis and internal contradictions among the rival factions of the reactionary classes.

The way to total victory of the people's democratic revolution is to keep on building the strength and alliance of the workers and peasants, winning over the middle forces and taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries. In case the Duterte regime and its successors manage to perpetuate themselves in power, the people will continue to suffer escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation and will tend to rely on the armed revolution for the overthrow not only the fascist regime but the entire rotten ruling system.



*9. How can the Anti-Terror Law pave the way for Duterte's term extension and/or Charter Change? What can we do to expose and stop this?*

JMS: Duterte can use his law of state terrorism to silence or neutralize all opposition to it and to ensure that his super-majority in the Supreme Court will declare it as constitutional and lawful. It is difficult and unwise to depend completely on the Supreme Court because most justices are appointees of the Duterte gang and has been used to dismiss all the plunder cases against the big plunderers allied to Duterte. They are corrupt like most members of Congress.

But without having to wait for a Supreme Court in his favor, Duterte can move fast enough to constitutionalize and legalize what is unconstitutional and illegal in his state terrorism law under the 1987 Constitution. He can railroad charter change and rig the plebiscite for its ratification to render moot and academic the petitions filed by the most respected constitutional experts against the state terrorism law.

The charter amendments have cooked in advance, mostly in secret. And there is now a campaign to drum up the semblance of support for charter change from the local officials under the manipulation of DILG secretary General Año who is a key figure in the civilian-military junta that Duterte has already created in the form of National Task Force-ELCAC.

*10. The Duterte administration is pushing for parliamentarism: can this be a window of opportunity for a genuine change or will this be a mere concentration of power?*

JMS: Marcos used the pretext of opting for parliamentarism as pretext for charter change in order to pave the way for autocratic transitory provisions which would allow him to take executive actions imposing fascist dictatorship on the people. Duterte is using the same pretext of parliamentarism in connection with federalism.

The real purpose of charter change under Duterte is to centralize power in the hands of a fascist dictator instead of decentralizing it to the federated states and parliamentarism can be nothing more than a talking shop among political agents of the fascist dictator like the Batasang Pambansa of Marcos.

*11. It has been a pleasure Tito to have another episode of Tsikahan with you! Do you have a message to our viewers before we go?*

JMS: I thank you and all our listeners for participating in this webinar. I hope that this webinar has served to clarify issues concerning the Philippines and Filipino people and to encourage them to do whatever they can to enable and support the Filipino people to fight and win in the struggle for national liberation and democracy. In the days and months to come, you must closely watch the developments in the Philippines and join the campaigns and activities launched by Anakbayan Europe, Migrante

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Europe and other patriotic and democratic organizations of Filipinos in Europe. Mabuhay kayo! [Long live!] Mabuhay tayong lahat! [Long live us all!]



## On Dialectical Materialism

First of the 4-Part Series of Webinars on Sison's book,  
Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism conducted by Anakbayan-Europa  
and the National Democratic Online School  
Answers of Jose Maria Sison to Questions by Anghelo Godino

August 9, 2020

*1. We can sum up Marxism in three basic components: philosophy, political economy, and social science. We will discuss these three components for the duration of this series. Let us start with philosophy, which, in Marxism, is dialectical materialism. What were the political and economic landscape and dominant philosophical ideas during the time when Marx introduced dialectical materialism?*

JMS: Politically, there were sharpening class tensions between the rising bourgeoisie and the people on one hand and the monarchy and the landed aristocracy on the other in Europe. While the bourgeoisie and monarchy could either clash as in the French Revolution of 1788-89 or compromise as in England, there were also sharpening class contradictions between the rising bourgeoisie and the proletariat which became manifest in the workers' uprisings of 1848.

It was a time where free competition capitalism developed fastest in certain countries under the impetus of the industrial revolution and the bourgeoisie benefited from the primitive accumulation of capital and the application of science and technology in industry and agriculture. The primitive accumulation of capital included the plunder of colonies, the rapid proletarianization of peasants and the extremely long hours of work, from 12 to 16 hours or even more in factories.

The dominant philosophical ideas were idealist, rationalist in continental Europe and empiricist in England. Marx and Engels turned upside down and put on a materialist basis what was then the most developed idealist philosophy, that of Hegel who accounted for change with the use of dialectics. They also made use of Feuerbach's materialism, whose recognition of sensuous human activity they brought to the level of critical-practical revolutionary activity.

Marx and Engels had German philosophy as their basic source in developing their dialectical materialist world outlook and method of knowing and acting. Consistent with their philosophy, they had British political economy as their basic source of knowledge for their critique of the capitalist economy and comprehension of its internal laws of motion. They had French social science as their major source of knowledge about

the class struggle and the social revolution.

*2. Let us clarify what materialism means in Marxist philosophy, as it might have another connotation in present times. What is materialism and what is the relationship of matter and consciousness?*

JMS: From ancient times to the present, the basic struggle in philosophy has always been between materialism and idealism. As Engels simply put it, whether you are materialist or idealist depends on which is your starting point. If your starting point is matter, then you are a materialist. If your starting point is consciousness, then you are an idealist. It is therefore important to know the correct relationship of matter and consciousness.

Science has shown that the emergence of homo sapiens came quite recently, some 60,000 years ago, in the long evolution of nature. Thus, non-thinking matter arose far, far ahead of human consciousness. On this basis, the materialist declares that matter precedes consciousness in time but consciousness is the highest development of matter. But the objective idealist argues that a supernatural being with its divine consciousness preceded and created the material universe.

Of course, the materialist can shoot back that humankind has been the one responsible for creating or imagining the supernatural, from animism through polytheism to monotheism. The subjective idealist can butt in to say that he is indifferent to what came first, matter or consciousness, and lays stress on personal experience and empirical investigation and analysis and tries to make a positivist appropriation of science for seeing reality through appearances. There is a dizzying plethora of subjective idealist philosophies, often appropriating a mechanistic kind of materialism but also falling into metaphysics.

*3. How about the word dialectics, what does that mean?*

JMS: Dialectics can be understood narrowly as simply the exchange of arguments and counter-arguments as in the Socratic dialogues. But in Hegel's development of idealist philosophy in the 19th century, he posited the self-development of thought through thesis and anti-thesis resulting in synthesis which is a new and higher kind of thesis. This idealist dialectical process of ideational change is supposed to be realized subsequently in historical and social change.

Marx and Engels adopted the concept of dialectics but put it on a materialist basis and rejected the idealist basis. They also rejected the Hegelian notion of the dialectical process of leading to the synthesis as the final and highest point of development. They put forward the law of contradiction as existent and operating in material objects and in the process of knowing them. Engels put forward three basic laws of contradiction or materialist dialectics: the negation of the negation, the interpenetration or unity of opposites and the quantitative change to qualitative change.

Marx thoroughly applied materialist dialectics in the critique of the

capitalist political economy. He observed and analyzed all the contradictory factors in the capitalist economy: between capital and labor and within capital as well as within labor to understand how changes occur within the capitalist system and how the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat would take the direction of installing the proletariat as the new ruling class and establishing socialism.

*4. Marx and Engels developed dialectical materialism. How did it differ from the dialectics of Hegel and materialist basis of Feuerbach?*

JMS: For having a materialist basis, the dialectics of Marx and Engels differs from that of Hegel, which has an idealist basis. Change arises from the contradictions within material objects or societies and not as a mere copy or reflection of the thinking process of any kind of supernatural spirit or human intellect.

Furthermore, change does not end with the Hegelian synthesis or with the Prussian state as the highest realization of thought in history. Marxist dialectical materialists assert that change is permanent. Even the classless society of communism, which is a tremendous advance from capitalism through socialism, is not the end of history.

The materialism of Feuerbach radically departs from idealist philosophy and recognizes the conscious and sensuous character of humans but falls short of dialectical materialism, which entails the critical analysis of society and the revolutionary activity of the masses in order to make a fundamental change of society.

*5. The essence of dialectical materialism is that everything is in the process of constant change. Can you explain this process? What is the basis of change?*

JMS: Even before the appearance of homo sapiens on earth, the process of constant change in nature has been going on through the law of contradictory motions among the atoms and among the molecules and among the biggest objects such as the oceans and land through climatic changes and movements of tectonic plates. Scientists have shown the geological changes, the big epochal climatic changes and the development of the flora and fauna on earth.

While the process of constant change in nature is evolutionary and relatively slow, the process of constant change in society is comparatively rapid and revolutionary from one stage of social development to another because of the cognitive ability of homo sapiens to learn from social practice, which includes production, class struggle and scientific experiment.

Primitive communal societies took more than 50 to 60 thousand years to exist but it took only some 6000 years for human society to develop from slave society through the feudal society to capitalist society. The advance of society has been more conspicuously cumulative, especially since the advent of metallurgy, literacy and class struggle. Capitalism started to

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grow in the city states of the Mediterranean in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and look at how capitalism grew even faster upon the adoption of electro-mechanical and chemical processes since the Industrial Revolution.

6. *In order for us to understand better, please give us concrete examples of the following three laws of dialectics, namely: 1) the negation of the negation, 2) the unity of opposites, and 3) the law of quantitative to qualitative change.*

JMS: To explain negation of the negation: There is no social formation or phenomenon that is not preceded by its opposite and that is not subject to negation that leads to a new formation or phenomenon. Capitalism was previously a negation of feudalism and in turn capitalism is subject to negation by socialism.

To explain the unity of opposites: Contradictory factors, such as capital and labor or the bourgeoisie and the working class, are bound up together and their relative unity and temporary balance determine the character of capitalist society under the rule of the bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie and working class have contradictory interests and the class struggle ensues and when the working class succeeds in defeating the bourgeoisie, it becomes the new ruling class in a socialist society.

To explain the law of quantitative to qualitative change: Substantive quantitative changes must occur to result in qualitative changes. Take water for instance, at 1 degree to 100 degrees Celsius, it is stable as liquid. Below 1 degree, it becomes ice and beyond 100 degrees, it starts to steam and evaporate.

In the process of social change, workers' strikes and mass protests can result in reforms and retention of the capitalist system but the crisis can become so serious that the capitalist ruling class cannot rule in the old way and becomes even more oppressive and exploitative, then the masses rise in revolution to overthrow the ruling system and establish socialism.

7. *What is meant by the law of contradiction being universal and particular?*

JMS: In being universal, the law of contradiction applies to all of nature and society and the totality of more particular categories and things. At the highest level of generalization, the law of contradiction applies to the study of all natural and social sciences. But as you go down to more particular categories of things and fields of study the contradictions to deal with take different forms.

Let us start with the general relationship and contradiction between society and nature. Society is part of nature and uses nature in production and in the maintenance of society. The relationship between nature and society can be friendly or unfriendly depending the handling by society of contradictions as well as harmonies with nature. It is now increasingly a problem that the system of monopoly capitalism has abused and plundered

the environment to an extent that catastrophe is imminent and threatens the very existence of human society.

For a long time in the life of human society, the primitive communal life persisted. There was no class struggle but a very low kind of social practice and life of hard struggle against the vagaries of nature, with the most rudimentary tools and methods of production. Upon the advent of class society, the law of contradiction takes the form of the class struggle, mainly between the slave owning class and the slaves in society, between the landlords and the serfs in feudal society and between the capitalists and the working class in capitalist society.

*8. What are principal and secondary aspects?*

JMS: In any kind of class society, there are several kinds of contradictions at work. Let us take the case of the current Philippine society. We often say that the Filipino people are waging a revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation. National liberation takes into account domination by foreign monopoly capitalism, especially US imperialism. Social liberation takes into account the more direct oppression and exploitation inflicted on the people by the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalist who also act as agents of foreign domination.

Because the US has relinquished direct political rule since 1946, the Filipino people confront the local ruling system and engage in a civil war with it in order to achieve the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. But if US imperialism launches a war of aggression against the Philippines, then the Filipino people wage mainly a war of national liberation and identify US imperialism as their principal adversary on top of its local puppets. The main form of contradiction changes from civil war to a national war against foreign aggression.

*9. Can you please tell us a concrete example of how several contradictions can be at work at the same time in the same thing or process?*

JMS: In the explanation that I have just made, I spoke of handling the national contradiction with foreign monopoly capitalism and domestic social contradiction and applying the highest form of revolutionary struggle, be it civil war or national war against foreign aggression. We determine the principal and secondary contradictions, depending on circumstances, even as several types of contradictions co-exist and the Filipino people struggle against foreign and local adversaries in varying degrees.

*10. Is there anything that is not in the process of change?*

JMS: All things are always in a process of change, that is imperceptible to the naked eye for a while and then becomes conspicuous when a qualitative change occurs. There is always a contradiction or set of contradictions that we have to deal with in order to strengthen the revolutionary movement and advance it towards victory.

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But that which may be considered an external factor in relative terms can become an obvious internal factor in the process of revolutionary war. I have already explained US imperialism possibly becoming an outright aggressor. China is another possible outright aggressor. It has already occupied and militarized the seven artificial islands in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines.

*11. Let us also discuss the theory of knowledge. According to Marx, social practice is the basis and source of knowledge. What did he mean by that? And what exactly is social practice?*

JMS: Indeed, social practice is the basis and source of knowledge. Mao has explained in a comprehensive and simple way the basic elements of social practice in "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?" From production, class struggle and scientific experiment. From time immemorial, man has differentiated himself from other animal forms by engaging in production with the tools that he himself has fashioned and thereby surviving and advancing to higher forms of production.

As societies have grown in size and class societies have developed, the class struggle has become the impetus to higher levels of social practice and knowledge. To be able to rule society and overcome domestic and external adversaries, the exploiting classes have compelled the exploited classes to produce the surplus product for sustaining and developing the mode of production and the superstructure of society.

On the basis of the advance of science and technology, the capitalist system has made far greater material and cultural achievements as well as far bigger wars than previous forms of societies. But the capitalist system has been able to grow only with oppression and exploitation of the working class. But the working class has become armed ideologically politically and organizationally to be able to dig the grave of the capitalist system and establish the socialist system.

*12. Mao also contributed to the theory of knowledge, and stated that there are two processes for acquiring knowledge: 1) the perceptual or empirical and 2) the cognitive or rational. Can you explain what these processes are?*

JMS: By perceptual or empirical process, he meant doing concrete investigation and gathering the facts, the sense data from your perception and experience. Mao said that without investigation and without the facts, you have no right to speak. You have to go to the peasant masses to learn from them about their dire conditions, their needs and demands. Thus, you learn and acquire the factual basis for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the peasant masses for agrarian revolution.

By cognitive or rational process, he meant analysing the facts, drawing the truth from the facts and making conclusions and judgments. On the basis of adequate concrete information that you have at a given time, the



leading organ or collective unit can make the plan and set forth the tasks for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the peasant masses for agrarian revolution.

The higher level of knowledge is applied in revolutionary practice to raise its level of development. The higher level of revolutionary practice leads to the development of a higher level of knowledge. There is a wave-like advance in the alternating rises in the levels of revolutionary theory and practice. There is a dialectical interaction of rising knowledge and rising practice.

*13. What are empiricism and dogmatism and what are the dangers of both?*

JMS: Empiricism means limiting knowledge to the personal experience of an individual or a small group and not drawing further knowledge from the collective practice and accumulated knowledge of the entire Party and revolutionary movement. Empiricism prevents understanding the various requirements of the revolutionary movement and the general direction that the movement must take. Because of the narrow-mindedness, fragmentariness and short-sightedness that empiricism breeds, the empiricist can go blind and astray politically.

Dogmatism can be simply book worship without any social investigation and analysis and simply mouthing jargon and generalities without understanding the concrete meaning of the terms used in reading materials and discussions. The dogmatists may sound the most learned with big words or appear most revolutionary by urging everyone to leap into communist society but they are ignorant of the hard work and struggle that it takes to advance the revolution from one stage to another.

The phrase monger or windbag flies over the concrete reality and over the ideological, political and organizational tasks needed to carry out and lead the masses. The dogmatists deny the stages and phases that the revolutionary movement go through in order to advance surely and steadily. They can mislead others to an adventurist or putschist line and then upon its failure they make them lose confidence in the revolution.

*14. Dialectical materialism and the theory of knowledge - why are they relevant today?*

JMS: The study of dialectical materialism and the theory of knowledge is always necessary and relevant. Dialectical materialism provides us with the materialist-scientific outlook and the method of thinking and acting to understand and solve problems and fight the enemy more effectively than ever. The Marxist theory of knowledge guides us in obtaining and accumulating knowledge from revolutionary practice and gaining further knowledge to improve our work and style of work and achieve bigger and better results in the revolutionary struggle.

No revolution led by proletariat can advance without ideological building

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of the communist party through the study of dialectical materialism and Marxist theory of knowledge and related matters. There is a calibration of studies through basic, intermediate and advanced courses in the communist party. There are refresher and post-curricular studies by organs and units of the party. There are continuous studies in the course of work and studying current problems and issues.

It is always the duty of the cadres and members to promote and realize the curricular and extracurricular studies of newer or younger party members. This is the best way to ensure the consolidation and advancement of the party and the revolutionary movement. When we learn in concrete terms the friends and enemies of the revolution and the principles, policies and line of the revolutionary movement, we are well guided in our revolutionary practice and we are encouraged to carry out our tasks in the service of the people and their revolution.

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# On Historical Materialism

August 16, 2020

*1. Today, we will discuss historical materialism. It is the application of dialectical materialism (which was our last topic) on the study of the various forms of society and their development from one form to another. Nothing is permanent except change - this also applies to society. What are these different forms of society that we have had so far?*

JMS: In about 60,000 years of existence, humankind has developed five major forms of society in the following sequence: primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist. The classless primitive communal society took 90 per cent of human existence to develop from old stone age to new society, from nomadic clans to settled tribes and further on to inter-tribal alliances and societies that began to use metals, especially bronze, for production and war and engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry.

In the most recent 10 per cent of human existence, some 6000 years, class society has prevailed and has changed quite more rapidly than primitive communal society and in a cumulative way because of the development of the mode of production and superstructure of society. There is a discernible sequence of the different forms of societies because a certain form of society cannot arise without germinating first in the womb of a previous form of society.

The universal law of contradiction is at work in every form of society and in the transition from one form of society to another. But different forms of society can co-exist, interlap and overlap over varying geographical scales. Just consider how the settler colonial society of the US imposed itself on the Indian native tribes and then used African slaves to make feudal plantations and create the big agriculture surplus to export some of it to England and import modern equipment to build industrial capitalism.

*2. Historical materialism also seeks to comprehend the interaction between the material base and the superstructure of society. What is meant by the material base of society?*

JMS: The material or economic base of society is otherwise called the mode of production in the exact terminology of Marxism. It consists of the forces of production and the relations of production. The forces of production in turn consist of the people in production and the means of production available to them. In class society, the relations of production are determined by the class that privately owns the means of production, organizes the people in production and distributes the means of subsistence to those who toil.

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As regards to the interaction of the mode of production and the superstructure, the former arises or develops in time ahead of the latter which however in further time can either delay or accelerate the development of the productive forces, depending on the main current or character (reactionary or revolutionary) of the relations of production and the entire superstructure. In due course, we can further discuss the interaction of mode of production and superstructure after we explain the content of the latter.

*3. The mode of production is significant in society. It consists of the forces of production and the relations of production. What are these? And can you please give examples on the role of the mode of production in the development of society from one form to the other?*

JMS: In slave society, the slave owning class owned the metal tools, land, work animals and other means of production. They also owned the slaves and used them as beasts of burden to produce the biggest amount of surplus. They had had power of life and death over the slaves, gave meagre rations and appropriated all the products of their labor. Slavery was perpetuated due to inheritance of status, failure to pay debts, commission of felonies and captivity in wars, abductions and trade.

In countries where slavery evolved to feudal society, the slave owners used the slaves to open and cultivate large agricultural lands. These would be called the latifundias in the ancient Roman empire. Then, it became unwieldy for the slave owners to manage the slaves on vast lands and who could slacken in their assignments or even run away. Thus, the so-called enlightened slave owners opted to become feudal lords and turned the slaves into rent-paying serfs.

In feudal society, the people in production that produced the biggest amount of surplus, especially with deep plowing that used metal instruments, were the serfs who worked on the agricultural land or who tended to the animal farms owned by the landlords. The landlords allotted pieces of land for the serfs to till and for obliged them to pay rent and render extra services.

In the womb of feudal society, handicrafts, trading and other sideline occupations based in the towns developed and gave birth to the bourgeoisie who emerged from the ranks of the masters of the handicrafts guilds and from the traders between town and countryside. From the stage of handicraft workshops where the individual artisans could make whole products, manufacturing developed with ever higher division of labor among the workers. Still further on, industrial capitalism arose with largescale machine production, using electro-mechanical and chemical processes and concentrating larger numbers of workers in factories, mines and other work sites.

In socialist society, the private ownership of the means of production is

replaced by state and collective forms of ownership. Class exploitation by the capitalist class ceases. State economic planning ensures the growth and improvement of the productive forces in accordance with priority given to satisfying the basic needs of the people and expanding production. Agriculture is the basis of the economy and the basic and heavy industries are the lead factor, with light industry producing the consumer and producer goods for households. The growth of the economy is aimed at raising the wage level and the people's standard of living and paving the road to communism.

*4. How about the superstructure of society? What is meant by that?*

JMS: The superstructure consists of the political and cultural institutions, organizations, ideas, practices and social relations above the mode of production at the base of society. It is sustained by a major part of the surplus product created by the exploited class. It reflects the dominant interests of the ruling class. It encompasses all the personnel, instruments and methods for coercing or moulding the mentality of the people to give loyalty to the incumbent social order.

The highest form of political organization in the superstructure is the state. It seeks to perpetuate the law on the ownership of the means of production of the social order. For the purpose, it uses persuasive political methods as well as the use of organized violence. The state becomes conspicuous as an instrument of class oppression, consisting of such apparatuses of coercion as the army, police courts and prisons, whenever the ruling exploiting classes use it to suppress just demands for reforms and revolutionary movements.

The cultural institutions and organizations, ideas and practices express the interests of the ruling class, the dominant religions, the formal education available, the history and characteristics of dominant and related ethnolinguistics communities. They serve to endorse and support the ruling system and captivate the thoughts and sentiments as well as the traits, customs and habits of the people.

*5. What is the relationship between the mode of production and the superstructure?*

JMS: The ruling class in any society controls both the mode of production and the superstructure and use them to perpetuate their class dominance. The mode of production is in charge of the economic wherewithals of the society and provides the economic surplus for maintaining and expanding the superstructure.

The working people are responsible for sustaining the facilities, lives and activities of the politicians, the military and police, the philosophers, the academicians, scientists, priests, artists and creative writers who inhabit the superstructure. The superstructure involves a few political and cultural personages but they are attended to and assisted by many more

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people who belong to the exploited and oppressed classes.

When the forces of production grow to such an extent that they run against the existing relations of production, the class struggle becomes conspicuous and becomes reflected in the various aspects of the superstructure. As I have earlier pointed out, the mode of production arises or develops in time ahead of the superstructure which however in further time can either delay or accelerate the development of the productive forces, depending on the main current or character (reactionary or revolutionary) of the relations of production and the entire superstructure.

*6. Can you please discuss the superstructure of the various forms of society?*

JMS: The political and cultural institutions, ideas, social relations and practices in the superstructure reflect in general the mode of production, especially the relations of production. While the superstructure evokes mainly the political and cultural dominance of the ruling class, it also reflects in due time the growth and advance of productive forces and growing resistance of the exploited class to the dominant relations of productions as well as to the dominant political and cultural relations.

In the superstructure of slave society, the state arose as an instrument of class rule. It consisted of the government with distinct agencies, with personnel for decision-making and for administering society and most importantly with the apparatuses of coercion which enforced the laws to maintain slavery. In the institutions of learning and in cultural works, the idealist kind of philosophy was favored against the materialist kind. The rulers invoked supernatural authority to legitimize their rule even as there were political and cultural mechanisms where the freemen could participate.

In the superstructure of feudal society, the state was the principal instrument of the monarchy and the feudal aristocracy who drew power for their ownership of land and control over the serfs. In Europe, the Roman Catholic Church became a powerful partner of the state. It gained power by being the spiritual legitimizer of the feudal system and by accumulating land. But contradictions and tensions could arise now and then between the church and state even as these collaborated in influencing and dominating the minds and behavior of the people. In the long course, the resistance of the serfs often invoked the scripture and the liberal bourgeoisie arose to invoke science and reason against the feudal system.

In the superstructure of capitalist society, the state is the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. It has developed further as a system of organized violence against the proletariat and other exploited classes as well an instrument of persuasion and conjuring the illusion of democracy through elections and parliamentarism, for making the laws and mechanisms to perpetuate private ownership of capital and land and for

engaging in colonialism and eventually modern imperialism. To develop and draw more profits, the bourgeoisie used science and technology, built academic institutions and even instituted public education more than feudal system did in order to serve the expanding industry, businesses and government.

In the superstructure of socialist society, the state is the class dictatorship of the proletariat to stand for upholding and developing socialism and defending the people against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The institutions and organizations are expanded tremendously and they promote the materialist-scientific outlook, methodology and morality of socialism. The proletariat as the leading class is dedicated to building socialism as the first phase of communism or as a phase transitory to communism.

*7. When can we say that a society is ripe for radical transformation?*

JMS: It was Lenin who clarified when a society is ripe for radical transformation. First, the society is already stricken by a crisis that is so severe that the ruling exploitative class can no longer rule in the old way. Second, the people are desirous of revolutionary change. And third, a revolutionary party has arisen and developed to be strong enough to lead the revolution.

In the time of Lenin, Russia was ripe for revolution when Tsarism and then the bourgeois government of Kerensky could not extricate themselves from imperialist crisis and war, the broad masses of the people and the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers wanted revolution and the Bolshevik Party was strong enough and ready to lead the revolution.

The semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines is in a chronic socioeconomic and political crisis. The oppressed and exploited people are therefore desirous of revolutionary change. And the Communist Party of the Philippines has grown from small to big and from weak to strong on a nationwide scale and is strong enough to carry on the people's democratic revolution through protracted peoples' war.

*8. What are the roles of the mode of production and the superstructure in the process of the transformation of society?*

JMS: The mode of production starts to become outmoded when the forces of production have grown so much as to strain and tend to break the existing relations of production. When the working class grows so big because of the growth of industrial production, the capitalist ruling class can no longer solve the recurrent and ever worsening crisis of overproduction, even by resorting to monopoly capitalism, fascism and war, then the conditions are ripe for revolution by the working class.

But the class struggle is not limited to economic struggle in the mode of production or economy, it must also become a class struggle in the superstructure, in the political and cultural fields. The class struggle in

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the superstructure whips up and inflames the over-all class struggle. The capitalist class thinks it can limit the class struggle to the confines and premises of his factory over issues of wages and working hours. But the workers gain more freedom of action and gain political power through political and cultural organizations and movements of the entire working class and the rest of the exploited people.

*9. Is transformation of a society possible if the class being ruled does not fight?*

JMS: No radical or significant transformation of society is possible if the class being exploited and ruled does not fight or remains weak because of objective limitations due to material conditions or they are not aroused, organized and mobilized to fight effectively. Even if in ancient times, the slave society could evolve into a feudal society, there were the slave revolts and slave runaway to persuade the slave masters that it was more clever and profitable to convert the slaves into serfs.

In the feudal society of France, the liberal bourgeoisie was able to win the liberal democratic revolution and seize power from the monarchy and landed aristocracy by raising the rags of the poor plebeians and serfs as their flag and actually availing of their anti-feudal class hatred and mobilization in the revolution.

But now, there is the industrial proletariat, an exploited class that is the most productive and politically progressive force and that has the potential for taking power from the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes and for allying itself with and emancipating all other exploited classes. This is a class for carrying out the radical rupture from the millennia of private ownership of the means of production, which been the basis of exploitative class society.

*10. Is having a vanguard party required for social transformation? Has society not been changed before by mere spontaneous uprising? What is the importance of a leading party?*

JMS: In the current world era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, it is absolutely necessary to have a vanguard proletarian party to lead the revolution in any society ruled by the industrial monopoly bourgeoisie as in capitalist countries or by the comprador big bourgeoisie as in the semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines. Anywhere in the world in the current era, no proletariat and people can wage a revolution against the domestic bourgeoisie without taking into account the intervention or aggression of the international bourgeoisie or at least a bloc of imperialist powers.

The proletariat is the class that has the ideological, political and organizational strength and resources to lead the revolution against the big bourgeoisie and has close relations with the peasantry and other exploited classes as allies. In slave society, the slaves engaged in uprisings against



their slave masters but did not have all the necessary means and conditions for leading the transformation to next possible form of society, feudalism.

In the long feudal history of China, there were big peasants uprisings but there were yet no conditions for feudalism to advance to capitalism. Then when a peasant uprising succeeded in overthrowing a feudal dynasty, it merely served to install a new feudal dynasty. In modern times, peasant uprisings can help a liberal democratic revolution as in France in 1788-89 or the peasants can ally themselves with the proletariat to make the socialist revolution as in Russia and then in China in the era of modern imperialism and world proletarian revolution.

*11. Please explain how social transformation has occurred in the history of mankind. From primitive communal, slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. And how certain are we that the next social transformation will be towards socialism?*

JMS: In all major social transformations, from primitive communal society to the various forms of class society, the universal law of contradiction was at work and took various forms in accordance with the concrete conditions. In primitive communal society, significant contributions occurred quite slowly in tens of thousands of years of because of the most underdeveloped mode of production.

It took a lot of time to advance from the old stone age to new stone age, from the savage period of the nomadic clans and the barbaric period of the tribes. And it also took a lot of time to advance from barbaric period to class society through the development of bronze tools and the settled agriculture of intertribal societies. The progress of social development depended on what kind of instruments of production the people had at a given time.

By the time that so-called civilization came, starting with the slave society as the first form of class society, social progress could become much faster than before because of well-developed metallurgy, agriculture breeding more people, the rise of literacy and numeracy and advances in the division of labor, together with the class division of society between the few owners of the means of production and the many who did not own such means and had to work for others in order to survive and subsist.

As the means of production advanced so did the people in production increase and improve their productive skills. When the growth of productive forces breaks the existing relations of production, a new form of society is on the way and the class struggle intensifies in class society and becomes reflected by and becomes dialectically interactive with the class struggle in the political and cultural aspects of the superstructure.

We have seen in a few centuries how industrial capitalism has made achievements in economic and social development several times far greater than all previous forms of society with the use of electro-

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mechanical, chemical and biological processes. Quantum physics has brought about further advances in the application of science in both the mode of production and superstructure. Unfortunately, the monopoly bourgeoisie uses all these advances for exploiting the proletariat and other working people, worsening the crisis of overproduction and unleashing state terrorism and wars of aggression.

After all the irrationalities and injustices under neoliberalism in the last four decades, the toiling masses of workers and peasants are rising up in anti-imperialist and democratic struggles for a socialist future. The crisis of the world capitalist system is now rapidly worsening. And the only way to overcome the dangerous escalation of inter-imperialist contradictions is for the proletariat and peoples of the world to unite and intensify their struggles against imperialism and all reaction. We are now in transition to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

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## Tsikahan with Tito Jo

### Covid-19 and its Impact on Youth Education

August 26, 2020

*1. Tito Jo, in most countries; September marks the commencement of the new academic year – Philippine academic calendar is a little different, though. Before we start with this week’s topic of Tsikahan, can you tell us about your life as a student and university professor in the Philippines? I’m sure the young generation is eager to know how university life was like for you?*

JMS: I entered the University of the Philippines as freshman in 1956. I rushed through the 4-year AB Course and finished it in 3 years’ time because I had planned to take law. I had fun with schoolmates, including fellow campus writers and activists, even if I took overloads of 24 or 27 units per semester and went to summer school twice.

But when I finished my AB course in 1959, I needed a job immediately because I had gotten married to Julie. Thus, I accepted from the UP English Department the scholarship grant to take the masteral course in Comparative Literature, combined with teaching fellowship and the duty to teach English.

I did not yet have the rank of a professor when I taught English in the UP from 1959 to 1961. I was still at the bottom of the faculty. I became a professorial lecturer at the Lyceum of the Philippines in political science from 1964 to 1968. When I stepped out of political detention in 1986, I became an associate professor at the UP Asian Center of Graduate Studies in 1986.

*2. It might not be an exaggeration to say that Philippine education might be one of the most expensive. One semester might cause you a minimum of PHP 30,000 sans the books, school supplies, projects, uniform and daily allowance. How come? Why is the Philippine education very expensive in our country?*

JMS: Philippine education, especially at the university level, is expensive, because the reactionary government has reduced funding for the state colleges and universities and the school administrations are compelled to raise tuition fees to pay the teachers and maintain operations. The Duterte regime channels most of the public funds to bureaucratic corruption and to overspending for the military and police.

The private colleges and universities benefit from the state policy of promoting commercialized education or education for profit by school

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owners. They take advantage of the inadequacy and expensiveness of the state colleges and universities. And they have wide latitude in charging high tuition fees and other kinds of school fees.

The state policy of under-funding state colleges and universities and letting the private schools have their way in making profits is due to the fact that the foreign and domestic employers in the Philippines have limited needs for professionals and technical experts for an underdeveloped, pre-industrial and agrarian economy. Thus, many of our people who reach the high school and college levels of education are compelled to seek jobs abroad.

*3. Has the education system in the Philippines always been like this? Has it always been designed on the framework of neoliberalism? What was the education system like during the pre-colonial times?*

JMS: You are correct in mentioning the framework of neoliberalization. This has aggravated the decline and deterioration of the Philippine educational system and the rising costs of getting an education. Neoliberalism promotes profit-making by the capitalists in education and serving the limited needs of the foreign monopolies and the local exploiters for highly educated Filipinos. The neoliberal emphasis is on educating the students for local exploitation and export of cheap labor.

Since the adoption of the neoliberal economic policy four decades ago, the Philippine educational system has deteriorated. But of course, even in previous times, there were already limitations and encumbrances on the Philippine educational system because of the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society. The university level of education is mainly a privilege of the children of the exploiting classes and the upper middle class.

In Spanish colonial times, when feudal conditions prevailed, catechism was the main form of education for the entire people. Only the children of the landlord class, merchants, professionals and bureaucrats could go to Ateneo, Letran and the University of Sto. Tomas. It would only be under the US colonial regime that the public educational system was established and private schools established to serve the expanded needs of a semifeudal economy under modern imperialism.

But let us not idealize and romanticize education in pre-colonial times. We had a high literacy level of supposedly 80 per cent, much higher than that of Spain at the time. But we did not yet have a full system of primary, secondary and tertiary level of education. The children of the *datus* and the wealthy family had also the privilege of being more and better tutored than others in the sultanates and other types of societies that existed in the archipelago.

*4. Many migrant workers leave their home country to send their children to school hoping to end the cycle of migration – but failing. There seem*

*to be no end to the cycle of migration for poor countries. How bad is the global economy for these students and families to decide to still leave their countries and try their luck elsewhere?*

JMS: It is a major global phenomenon that migrant workers come in big numbers from the underdeveloped countries to industrial capitalist countries and other developed economies. This has been undertaken by the imperialist powers to make up for the loss of colonies by bringing cheap labor to the metropolis from the underdeveloped hinterlands.

Under the neoliberal economic policy, the phenomenon of labor migration has grown because of the poverty in the source countries and also because of wars of aggression by the imperialist powers and because of the degradation of the environment by the multinational firms.

As the global capitalist economy deteriorates, there will be more impoverished people wishing to get jobs abroad even as the economic crisis worsens in the capitalist countries and generates anti-immigrant sentiments and movements among the reactionaries.

By the way, do you wish to know the number of Filipino migrant workers. They are 12 million and they are 25 per cent of the 48 million labor force of the Philippine. Another 10 million or some 20 per cent of the labor stay behind in the Philippines as unemployed. This a huge reserve of cheap labor for Philippine and foreign employers.

*5. Now, there is a growing number scholars coming from third-world countries. Why do Western countries promote their schools and import academics from third world countries? How does this effect the origin countries of scholars?*

JMS: Indeed, there has been a brain drain, a migration of scholars and professionals from the third world to the Western countries. They are excellent and are cheap to hire. And they desire to be employed because of less opportunities for higher income and professional advancement. The imperialist power also has a special interest in using them to influence ideological and political currents in the Philippines, especially in the social sciences.

There is a vicious cycle in the diaspora of scholars and professionals. The dire conditions in their home countries push them to go and stay abroad. As they leave the country, the people are deprived of their services. But I do not blame these migrant scholars and professions. It is the duty of the revolutionary forces and people in the Philippines to make revolutionary change. And these migrant scholars and professionals will come home to help build a better and brighter Philippines.

*6. Tito, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a political and economic crisis, many have not returned to their jobs yet and many might not be able to return. Like any other global crisis, it is the poor who are usually suffering. How is it going to affect the millions of youth and students?*

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JMS: Yes. By itself the COVID-19 pandemic has generated political and economic crisis. It has aggravated the earlier and continuing worsening political and economic crisis of the world capitalist system. Crisis conditions are becoming worse in both the capitalist and underdeveloped countries. The poor toiling masses of workers and peasants suffer most. And the youth and students are suffering worse conditions than ever before.

The states provide the monopoly capitalist class with loan bailouts and stimulus packages and allow them to end employment contracts and obligations to the workers. The unemployed remain unemployed and can get no sufficient unemployment relief. If the host people suffer, the more are migrant Filipino workers are in a dire situation. Many of them have lost their jobs and need to return home. They can no longer remit money to their children to allow them to go to school.

*7. The world leaders are trying to restore the normality of life, from tourism to business and education. As an educator yourself, can we hear your opinion about this "new normal"?*

JMS: The biggest companies have taken advantage of the COVID-19 to retrench their work force because the economy has in fact receded. And many of the medium and small enterprises which employ a lot of people have been devastated. Even when the COVID-19 pandemic recedes as a problem, the crisis of overproduction of the entire world capitalist system will become worse.

The economies will continue to sink because it cannot employ so many unemployed and thus the market for the products of industry will continue to shrink. The "new normal" will be even more abnormal than relatively better times in the past. The crisis will continue to worsen. Contradictions among imperialist powers, between imperialist powers and oppressed peoples and nations and between capital and labor will intensify.

The imperialist and local reactionaries will unleash state terrorism and ultra-reactionary movements of xenophobes, racists, misogynists and fascists. The US will continue its endless wars and will try to win its growing contradictions with China. At the same time, the proletariat and peoples of the world will continue to intensify the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles that became conspicuous last year. The crisis conditions make people suffer but also drive them to fight back.

*8. Many of the students even in Western countries are taking part-time jobs so to sustain their education. There are also the parents of migrant children and whose jobs are most probably in the front-lines. Cleaners, health workers, shop-keepers, etc., If the labour market is worsening, why still insist on the resumption of the academic year?*

JMS: Indeed, a great number of students will not be able to go to school because they lose their part-time jobs or parents can no longer finance their studies. But it is important to make demands even on imperialist and

reactionary states to enable all the students to continue with their studies. If these states do not comply with the just and reasonable demands, then they are exposed for what they are and become easier targets for revolutionary resistance,

In the meantime, there are still students with some families that can support their education. Let them continue to study but try to motivate to join the movement for revolutionary change as much as possible. They can still significant contributions to the revolutionary movement of the youth and the entire people.

*9. What do you think about the postponement of the academic year? Is there an alternative?*

JMS: In the Philippines, the public schools, including the state college and universities, under the direction of the Department of Education, are supposed to start the new academic year in October because the COVID-19 pandemic has become worse in the Philippines. But certain private schools, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels, have already begun their academic year through online schooling.

I think that even under current conditions, it is possible to have a mix of teachers meeting the students for the purpose of instruction and homework assignment at the primary level. The teachers and parents can cooperate to ensure that the home work is done. The teachers and their supervisors can be trusted with lesson plan and methods of teaching and using the school facilities, like the classrooms, the school grounds and other facilities with due respect to social distancing, sanitation and hygiene.

At the secondary and tertiary levels, it is more feasible to have a mix of online schooling and classroom or laboratory meetings. Online schooling can be availed of, as already done by certain by private schools. It might be worthwhile to study and plan how to put into convenient groups those students who live in the same area and let those students with computer gadgets to share these with those who have none. Otherwise, the government must provide the computer gadgets. The problem is that Duterte and his fellow thieves have already bankrupted the government.

*10. In the Philippines, the Department of Education is considering online schooling—it might work in foreign countries, but not in the Philippines. Why is it not going to work in the country? Or for the sake of the argument, how can we make it work?*

JMS: As I have said, certain private schools in the Philippines at the secondary and tertiary levels have resorted to online schooling. But these are schools of students from well to do families who can afford the computer gadgets. The poor students do not have these gadgets and cannot participate in online schooling. Probably it can work if the students who live in the same neighborhood can be grouped, with those who own

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the gadgets to share these with classmates who have none, as I have earlier said.

*11. Tito, as Filipinos, we cannot discuss the educational system of the country without discussing the famous slogan of the youth and students, "PAMBANSA, SIYENTIFIKO AT MAKASAMASANG EDUKASYON," What is it about and why is it that important that our educational system should be patriotic, scientific and pro-people?*

JMS: The line of patriotic, scientific and pro-people education is important for defining the nature and purpose of the educational system. It guides and determines the content and methods of education. We need to carry out the line in order to overcome the dominant anti-national influence of pro-colonial and pro-imperialist ideas, feudal and medievalist obscurantism and the anti-people and selfish motivations and direction of those who think that they are superior to other people because of their higher formal education.

Education must be national or patriotic in character in order to satisfy the encircling Filipino nation, cherish our own national cultural heritage and repudiate colonial mentality and subservience to imperialist powers. Education must be scientific so that we can use science and technology that have been achieved by us as well as by other peoples to develop the country. Education must serve the entire Filipino people, especially the workers and peasants, who are oppressed and exploited. It must serve their national and social liberation.

*12. Lastly, Tito, can you tell us about the educational system envisioned by the revolutionary forces, we know it is included in the NDFP's 12 point-program.*

JMS: The kind of educational system envisioned by the revolutionary forces in the NDFP program is patriotic, scientific and pro-people in character and purpose, as likewise espoused by the legal democratic forces of the people. During the current stage of people's democratic revolution, the revolutionary forces welcome what good reforms can be realized by the legal democratic movement despite the tremendous odds. But in the guerrilla fronts in the countryside, the People's Democratic Reform is striving to promote and advance the line patriotic, scientific and pro-people in a more extensive and intensive way.

The current stage of the Philippine revolution has a socialist perspective and direction. The Filipino revolutionary forces and people ought to know even now that education shall be universally free at all levels of formal education. Upon the basic completion of the people's democratic revolution through the seizure of political power, the socialist revolution shall begin and the realization of universal free education at all levels of education, with a patriotic, scientific and pro-people character, shall also begin. We know the great achievements made by socialism in the field of education



in order to develop a country by leaps and bounds economically, socially, politically and culturally.

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## On Scientific Socialism

Questions from the host Seyra Rico of Anakbayan-Europa  
Answers by Jose Maria Sison, Author of Basic Principles  
of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

September 6, 2020

*1. What is scientific socialism? You have stated three other forms of socialism: reactionary, conservative and bourgeois, and critical-utopian. How is scientific socialism different from them?*

JMS: Scientific socialism is the theory and practice of the modern industrial proletariat for revolutionary class struggle to emancipate itself, together with other oppressed people, and become the ruling class in lieu of the bourgeoisie; to bring about and develop a society in which the means of production are under public ownership and planned production for the common good of the people rather than for the private profit of a few; and thereby to prepare the way for the classless communist society.

The *Communist Manifesto*, drawn up by Marx and Engels for the Communist League in 1848, laid down for the first time the comprehensive theoretical foundation of scientific socialism. Previous to this, socialism was a loose term referring to various trends of thought denouncing the abuses of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat and seeking to ameliorate the condition of the latter.

The *Manifesto* in its third section identifies three forms of socialism preceding scientific socialism: 1) reactionary; 2) conservative and bourgeois; and 3) critical-utopian socialism and communism.

The reactionary socialists included the feudal socialists, the petty bourgeois socialists and the German or “true” socialists. In common, they reacted to and opposed the new historical conditions brought about by the bourgeoisie and proposed some backward model of community, like the monastery or the guild system in feudal society. Marx and Engels regarded them as foolhardy and reactionary for wanting to turn back the wheel of history.

The conservative and bourgeois socialists included a number of economists, philanthropists and petty do-gooders who believed that the grievances of the proletariat could be redressed within the capitalist system and that anything good for the bourgeoisie was good for the proletariat. The proletariat was urged not only to stay within the bounds of bourgeois society but also to cast away all ideas of class struggle so that it can enjoy the bourgeois system as the New Jerusalem.

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The critical-utopian socialists and communists included Henri St. Simon, Charles Fourier, Robert Owen and others who acknowledged the class antagonisms between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but who could not as yet recognize the infant industrial proletariat of the early nineteenth century as a force capable of historical initiative or political movement.

So, they believed in their separate ways that individuals like them from the ranks of the educated could transcend the class struggle and invent some form of social organization into which the workers would spontaneously and gradually enter for their own good and for the sake of social harmony. They therefore appealed to the sense of charity and philanthropy of the bourgeoisie to either support or emulate their ideas and projects of class reconciliation.

St. Simon made the most panoramic proposal for the reorganization of society. He envisioned not only a new French society run by the industrialists, philosophers, physicists, chemists, astronomers, mathematicians and other men of modern scientific learning for the benefit of the poor and actual producers in society; but also a federation of European states run along the same line.

Followers of Fourier and Owen put up in America several isolated communities along the lines designed by their masters. So did the followers of the utopian socialists Cabet and Weitling who had previously experimented in France and Germany, respectively. All these experimental societies broke up under the pressures of the surrounding capitalist society.

Marx and Engels described the foregoing conceptions and projects as utopian building of castles in the air and fantastic pictures of the future of society, painted at a time when the industrial proletariat was still in a very undeveloped stage. But at the same time, they noted that these corresponded with the first instinctive yearnings of that class for a general reconstruction of society.

They pointed to the critical element that made the utopian socialist and communist publications full of the most valuable materials for the enlightenment of the working class. These criticized every principle of bourgeois society and in this regard proposed quite a number of practical measures such as the abolition of the distinction between town and country and carrying on industries for the account of private individuals; the conversion of the functions of the states into a mere superintendence of production; and so on.

At the time of Marx and Engels, the socialists and communists of the utopian kind had degenerated into narrow religious sects, pedantically repeating the outdated writings of their departed masters, fanatically opposing political action by the workers and becoming more reactionary

as the very conditions for socialism became apparent. They could not keep pace with the growth of the proletariat and the development of historical conditions.

Engels' *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (actually a section of *Anti-Duhring*) elaborates on scientific socialism as the diametrical opposite of utopian socialism. Marxist socialism is scientific because it analyzes capitalism and grasps the law of motion that leads to its socialist transformation. Of all pre-Marxist forms of socialism, utopian socialism came closest to the yearnings of an infant industrial proletariat but fell far short of the theory of scientific socialism.

Scientific socialism was formulated at a time that capitalism had developed sufficiently to reveal not only its past and present but also its future. The very growth of modern industry and the proletariat could already be observed as contradictory with the capitalist relations of production. As the forces of production grew, the capitalist mode of production became increasingly marked by crisis. The *Communist Manifesto* avers that capitalism creates its own gravediggers—the proletariat and modern industry.

The most incontrovertible proof for Marxist socialism as a scientific theory is the series of victories that the proletariat has achieved under its guidance. Socialist revolution and construction succeeded in the Soviet Union, China and other countries until modern revisionism was able to subvert socialism and restore capitalism.

2. *What is class dictatorship? Why is that a main requirement for the establishment of a socialist society?*

JMS: The chief overall requirement for the establishment of a socialist society is the class dictatorship of the proletariat. This simply means that state power must be in the hands of the proletariat as the ruling class in order to ensure socialist democracy for the proletariat and the entire people.

Marxism or scientific socialism frankly admits that the proletariat or socialist state is a class dictatorship, unlike the bourgeoisie which misrepresents its own state power or class dictatorship as a supraclass instrument for the common good of all classes, groups and persons. As a class dictatorship, the socialist state is definitely turned against the bourgeoisie and other enemies of the people. The coercive apparatuses of the state are used to guarantee, consolidate and defend the workers' state and the people's democratic rights, socialist revolution and construction against internal and external enemies.

The socialist revolution deprives the bourgeoisie of its political power and its private ownership of the means of production. The determination of the bourgeoisie to retain these or, upon defeat, to recover these can never be underestimated. Before a socialist society can be established,

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the bourgeoisie does everything in its power to prevent the victory of the proletariat. The armed strength of the proletariat at the inception of its rule is maintained and developed in the face of persistent threats from the domestic and international bourgeoisie.

*3. Can democracy be practised within a society with a class dictatorship of the proletariat?*

JMS: The class dictatorship of the proletariat against the exploiting classes means at the same time a socialist democracy for the proletariat and all other exploited people who have emancipated themselves. Without being able to put reactionaries and counterrevolutionaries in their proper places, the proletarian state would be incapable of guaranteeing democracy for the entire people.

The socialist constitution expressly upholds the class leadership of the proletariat on the basis of its alliance with all other democratic forces, like the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and others in the process of socialization. Decisive practical measures to favor the formerly exploited classes are spelled out in such a constitution. The Bill of Rights of the socialist constitution guarantees the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, groups, local communities, sectors, the former exploited classes and the entire nation.

The best of bourgeois liberal constitutions completely refrains from pointing to the existence of classes and class struggle. It deliberately uses abstract and universalistic references to individual rights, without class distinctions of any kind, in order to cover up and promote the effective legal right and freedom of the exploiting classes to exploit the great masses of individuals belonging to other classes and accounting for more than ninety percent of the population.

*4. How necessary is armed struggle in obtaining class dictatorship? And when is a country ripe for armed struggle?*

JMS: Armed struggle is necessary because the ruling bourgeoisie will never give up its state power and private wealth voluntarily and give way peacefully to the proletariat and people who are determined to build socialism. In either capitalist or semifeudal country, armed revolution is justified and is likely to succeed when objective conditions favor it and the subjective factors of the revolution are strong enough.

In the process of waging armed struggle, the proletariat forms the revolutionary army which is the main component of state power. This army defeats the reactionary army and allows the proletariat and the people to build both the civil bureaucracy and the military machinery of the class dictatorship of the proletariat. This class dictatorship is the workers' state which defends itself, the people and socialist society from the attempts of the bourgeoisie to subvert or overthrow it.

In a semicolonial and semifeudal country like the Philippines, the

people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective must win victory first before commencing the socialist revolution under the auspices of the people's democratic republic at the core of which is the proletarian class dictatorship. Even in an industrial capitalist society, the proletariat must first win the struggle for democracy before it can conduct armed revolution to seize political power.

In an industrial capitalist country, objective conditions are ripe for armed struggle when the crisis of the ruling system disables the ruling class from ruling in the old way and the subjective forces of the revolution are strong enough to carry out uprisings to disintegrate and dismantle the reactionary army and other coercive apparatuses of the state. So far in history, the industrial capitalist countries have been most resistant to armed revolution, unless they engage in war among themselves and conditions arise for a revolutionary uprising like the Paris Commune of 1871.

Under the conditions of the inter-imperialist World War I, the Bolsheviks seized power through uprisings in the cities of Petrograd and Moscow but the fighting shifted to the countryside in the civil war and in the war against foreign intervention after the uprisings in Petrograd and Moscow. In semicolonial and semifeudal countries which are stricken by chronic crisis, the proletarian revolutionaries can avail of the vast area of maneuver in the countryside to wage a protracted people's war. This is well proven in the history of China and other countries

Objective conditions refer to the situation when the political and economic crisis of the ruling system becomes so serious as to violently split the ruling class and prevent it from ruling in the old way. Factions of the ruling class fight among themselves. The ruling clique engages in open terror against a wide range of people and is extremely isolated. The people in general, including those unorganized, are disgusted with the system and are desirous of changing it.

The subjective forces of the revolution refer to the conscious and organized forces of the revolution. These are the revolutionary party, the mass organizations, armed contingent, and so on. To gauge their strength fully, one has to consider their ideological, political and organized status and capabilities. The armed contingent of the revolution may be small at the beginning but the process of armed revolution can destroy and disintegrate a far larger reactionary army.

The objective conditions are primary over the subjective factors. The former arise ahead of the latter and serve as the basis for the development of the revolutionary forces. The Communist Party cannot really be accused of inventing or causing the political and economic crisis of the bourgeois ruling system. The crisis arises from the internal contradictions of the ruling system. The armed revolution arises from

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the crisis conditions, the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation and the eventual necessity of the people's resistance.

*5. Different countries have different sociopolitical situations. You have described the Philippines as semifeudal and semicolonial. Can you describe what this means? Why is the Philippines not capitalist?*

JMS: The terms semicolonial and semifeudal describe Philippine society. Semicolonialism is a distinctly political term that refers to the lack of full national independence of the Philippines and to the continuing control of the Philippines by the US and its imperialist allies. It is a longstanding term from Lenin who spoke of colonies, semicolonies and dependent countries being subordinate to the imperialist powers.

Like the term semicolonialism, semifeudalism comes from Marxist-Leninist literature describing the Chinese economy before the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949. It is used to describe economies that have long been dominated by the commodity system of production and no longer by a natural economy of feudalism. But it is a merchant bourgeoisie rather than an industrial bourgeoisie that is the chief ruling class based on land ownership or in partnership with the landlord class.

If you wish, you can use the expressions semifeudal capitalism or big comprador capitalism to denote the economic dominance of the comprador big bourgeoisie in the Philippine economy. It is wrong to mean or insinuate that the Philippines is already industrial capitalist when one says that it is capitalist and not semifeudal. The Philippines still imports its capital equipment from the industrial economies.

Semifeudalism is a precise term with a definite content. It is a kind of a nonindustrial or pre-industrial and agrarian economy in which the comprador big bourgeoisie has arisen as the wealthiest and most powerful exploiting class from feudal haciendas as resource base for exports and in combination with the landlord class. Influenced by bourgeois economists, right wing social democrats and Trotskyites, some people think that it is a term that has never been valid or has outgrown its validity.

They think that an economy has to be exclusively feudal or capitalist. They do not understand that in its world history capitalism grew out of the womb of feudalism, first in the form of the handicraft business, some light manufacturing and the merchants trading between town and country before industrial capitalism surged forth as the dominant form of capitalism with the steam engine and then with the electro-mechanical equipment.

Semifeudalism is a term that refers to a kind of economy that evolved from feudalism and became starkly conspicuous in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Philippines with the rise of the comprador big bourgeoisie as the chief exploiting class in collaboration with the landlord class. Big compradors have long been big landlords who base themselves on their large landed estates and use these to produce crops for export in exchange for the



importation of finished products from abroad.

The big comprador Ayala family and related families have not only owned banks and trading companies but have also owned or managed big landed estates in Calatagan and Nasugbu, Batangas and elsewhere since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In recent times in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the recently deceased Eduardo Cojuangco owned the United Coconut Planters Bank and came to own the gigantic big comprador firm San Miguel Corporation but he also owned some twenty haciendas in various provinces in the Philippines (Tarlac, Pangasinan, Isabela, Negros, Palawan, Agusan, Albay and so on).

*6. The CPP is waging a two-stage revolution. Why is a bourgeois-democratic revolution necessary for a semi-feudal country in order to advance to socialism? Is it not possible to advance to socialism without this stage?*

JMS: It is necessary to carry out first the new type of bourgeois-democratic revolution or otherwise called the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective and under the leadership of the proletariat because the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions require that you must fight and defeat the forces of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. In the course of waging the people's democratic revolution, the proletariat builds the people's army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the national united front and the local organs of political power which constitute the provisional revolutionary government.

When political power is seized by the proletariat from the reactionaries and thereby the people's democratic revolution is basically completed, then the socialist revolution can commence immediately with the use of the proletarian dictatorship for seizing the commanding heights of the economy and securing the country and people from any further attacks from the imperialists and the reactionaries. Socialism is impossible and is not the immediate issue under conditions where the proletariat and the people are still under foreign and feudal domination and must first end this through people's war along the line of the new type of bourgeois-democratic revolution.

*7. How will the dictatorship of the proletariat be achieved after a bourgeois-democratic revolution?*

JMS: In the course of the bourgeois democratic revolution of the new type or what I have been calling the people's democratic revolution, the apparatuses of the class dictatorship of the proletariat or the worker's state are built. By the time that the bourgeois democratic revolution is basically completed through the seizure of political power, these apparatuses of state power shall already be well-developed in the hands of the proletariat even as the proletarian dictatorship may take the form of people's democratic

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dictatorship in a transition period.

In the course of the people's war, the people's army is developed by the proletarian revolutionary party as the main component of the future workers' state or what may be otherwise called class dictatorship of the proletariat. The people's militia is also developed as the police force. The system of people's courts is developed. The organs of political power learn to prosecute, try, judge and detain or punish those proven or convicted as counterrevolutionaries and other criminals according to law.

8. *Let us talk about socialist economy. Can you talk about the main changes that need to be made from capitalist to socialist economy?*

JMS: The socialist economy has been made possible in world history by the growth of modern industry and the proletariat in industrial capitalism. These forces of production outgrow and rend asunder the capitalist relations of production which have become their fetters. They therefore become liberated and can grow at an accelerated rate.

In a socialist society, social or public ownership of the means of production replaces private ownership. The new relations of production are made to correspond to the social character of the means of production. The entire mode of production is revolutionized. The proletariat uses its political supremacy to wrest step by step all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state, and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible in a planned way.

The *Communist Manifesto* lists down a number of measures for revolutionizing the mode of production in the most advanced countries but at the same time point out that these measures will be different in different countries. The experiences of the Soviet Union and China in carrying out socialist revolution and socialist construction are the best historical examples to study and learn from.

Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Program* shows how the total product of society is divided. There are the funds for 1) wages; 2) capital reproduction; 3) public welfare; 4) administration; and 5) defense. The wage system is retained but the essential difference between capitalism and socialism in this regard is that there are no more gross disparities in income and that the average level of income is deliberately made to rise above mere subsistence level and is planned to rise ever higher. The surplus product (above wages) is no longer appropriated as private income by any exploiting class but used for capital reproduction, public welfare, administration and defense.

9. *Can you explain more the concept of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his deeds." among the working people and the government and economic officials?*

JMS: In the payment of wages, the principle to be followed is "from

each according to his ability, to each according to his deeds.” There are wage or salary differentials according to differences in productivity. A manager or an engineer will still get a higher wage than a skilled worker; and the latter will get a higher wage than an unskilled worker or apprentice.

For a certain period, the industrial proletariat will get higher wages and more benefits than the peasants but the latter will soon be benefited by collectivization and mechanization. At the very start, steps are taken to remove the gross disparities in income in the old society. The long-term objective is to remove gross disparities in incomes that result in class differences and keep on raising the general level of the incomes and the quality of life.

Certainly, the extremely high salaries for high government officials and high executives of the state and private corporations in the past will be immediately ended. They are reduced in line with the state policy of spreading the available social benefits and mustering the resources for further socioeconomic development, instead of favoring the few bureaucrats and technocrats as in the past when they were coddled by the big bourgeoisie and landlords to assist them in oppressing and exploiting the people.

But the government and economic officials shall be provided with salaries commensurate to their education, training and contributions. They can gain new motivation and new morality from socialist education. It is good policy to treat them fairly and justly and win them over to the socialist revolution. Otherwise, they will emigrate and it will be more costly to hire foreign experts.

*10. How will the economic planning be different from the economic planning during capitalism?*

JMS: National economic planning takes the place of the conflicting calculations by various private firms on the basis of the capitalist market. Production is for use rather than for private profit. The most essential and necessary commodities and projects are given priority. The internal balanced and self-reliant development of the socialist economy is carried out.

With social profit taking the place of private profit, a tremendous and ever-increasing amount of the surplus product is released every year for the reproduction of capital. Such ills endemic to capitalism, such as the motive of private profit against social need, misallocation of resources, the anarchy of competition, conspicuous consumption, the business cycle and excessive military expenditures are done away with.

Economic planning is effective because all economic factors are under unified control and all active components of the economy at all levels report the information and recommendations to serve as basis for

the plan. An economic plan is the result of the open interaction between the central planning body and lower levels. National goals are related to available resources and actual capacities.

Economics acquires the precision of an applied science. In a capitalist society, economics as well as economic planning is really a far more imprecise field of knowledge and is often a guessing game as the individual capitalist firms keep from each other and from the public the timely and accurate information on production, trade, technical and other data and process which they consider trade secrets. In the name of private ownership and competition. Only partial information is given publicly by private firms when it serves their ends.

*11. Defense will be an important concern in a socialist society. Will the cost be as huge as during capitalist society?*

JMS: Defense is a necessary concern in socialist society. Without defense, socialist society would be destroyed by its internal and external enemies. But the cost of defense in such a society is relatively far, far smaller than in capitalist society. Especially in the case of imperialist powers, their military expenditures are astronomical in magnitude. Worst of all, the police and military forces are used for the purpose of repression and aggression.

The military policy of a socialist state is truly defensive and is opposed to aggression from its own side or from another. The military forces are built according to the principles of the people's army. In connection with the economy, military units are actually productive units, aside from being military, political and educational units. Periodically beefing up the standing army, the youth are rotated into military service and training. The people in general are politicized and trained as militia units and are not detached from production.

The people's defense is their own home base strength against the aggressor and it is further strengthened by proletarian internationalism, international solidarity with all other peoples and diplomacy and friendly relations with other states and countries on the basis of mutual respect for independence, equality, mutual cooperation and benefit.

*12. Can concessions be given to capitalists in a socialist economy? If so, how do we make sure they don't grow and dominate the economy? Maybe you can give us examples from China's experiences.*

JMS: After the people and the people's army led by the revolutionary party of the proletariat defeat the enemy and take power, the workers' state or the people's democratic state takes over the commanding heights of the economy such as the existing industries, lines of transport and communications and sources of raw materials.

But conditions might require that transition measures are taken in order to revive the economy as soon as possible and to avail of what positive

contributions can be made by the rich peasants, traders, the middle bourgeoisie as in the New Economic Policy under Lenin and even the big compradors who are required to follow the example of the national bourgeoisie in joining state-private corporations and thereby complying with state policy.

Lenin adopted the New Economic Policy (NEP) in order to revive the economy as soon as possible after the devastation resulting from the civil war and by the war of foreign intervention. Thus, the rich peasants and small and medium entrepreneurs and traders were allowed to operate from 1922 to 1928. Stalin ended the NEP to launch the first five-year plan to build socialist industry and carry out the collectivization and mechanization of agriculture.

In much of its first decade, China also had a transition period of overcoming war damage, inflation and corruption, supporting the Korean people and combatting US aggression and basic socialization of the economy. This was accompanied by the operation of joint state-private corporations to integrate and absorb the capital of the bourgeoisie. Payment of dividends was phased out after a number of years.

In the Soviet Union, the bourgeoisie resurged from the ranks of the private entrepreneurs, traders and rich peasants during the New Economic Policy. But these social strata came under restraint when Stalin launched the policy of socialist industrialization and the collectivization and mechanization of agriculture. Then the Left Opposition of Trotsky to push the bourgeois line that socialism was impossible in one country and the Right Opposition of Bukharin pushed the other bourgeois line that the New Policy must continue and that capitalist must be further carried out.

In China, Liu Shaoqi and the like pushed the bourgeois line in the late 1950s that the "national democratic economy" must first be developed before there is ground for socialism and that the national capitalists must not be phased out but further given concessions. They also opposed the Great Leap Forward which was planned to counter the natural calamities, the imperialist embargo and the Soviet Union tearing up previous agreements and contracts with China due to the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute. Under Mao's leadership, China prevailed with the socialist line over the Chinese revisionists and capitalist roaders who persisted until the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution became necessary in 1966.

In the process of socialist revolution and construction, the Communist Party as advanced detachment of the proletariat issues the principles and policies to prevent bureaucratic corruption and to have a definite plan for phasing out concessions given to the capitalists, to keep on advancing the socialist revolution and construction and develop socialist education, culture and morality. We must learn from the error of Stalin in declaring prematurely the end of classes and class struggle in 1935 and

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mishandling class contradictions within socialist society and depending on administrative measures.

We must also learn from Mao's theory and practice of cultural revolution under proletarian dictatorship in order to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of socialism and consolidate socialism as well as from the errors of the Chinese CP of allowing the return to power of revisionist renegades like Deng Xiaoping who pretended to have been rehabilitated. The danger to socialism comes not only from the imperialists but also from internal elements who are remnants of the old bourgeoisie or who emerge in socialist society by first adopting the petty bourgeois mode of thinking while they are in school and then climbing their way to higher positions in the Party, state, economy and cultural institutions while becoming revisionists and bourgeois.

*13. Previously socialist country have turned into or become imperialist countries in history. Where do we draw the line between a leading party that is still pushing for a socialist cause and party that is transforming into an imperialist one?*

JMS: When the modern revisionists take over power in a socialist country as in the Soviet Union from 1956 onward, they make breaches on the socialist system in order to introduce capitalist reforms supposedly to strengthen socialism as Khrushchov did. By the time of Brezhnev, his own pack of modern revisionists turned social-imperialist and centralized resources to enlarge bureaucratic corruption and to engage in the arms race with the US as the other superpower in the Cold War.

Khrushchov made his counterrevolutionary revisionist coup in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin. So did Deng Xiaoping in 1976 after the death of Mao. He declared the GPCR as 100 per cent catastrophe and proceeded to adopt the line of outright capitalist reforms and opening up to the capitalist world. He made China the main partner of US imperialism in carrying out the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization. China became an imperialist power.

For a while Mao's theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through cultural revolution gave hope to proletarian revolutionaries and won most of the time through twists and turns in the ten years course of the GPCR from 1966 to 1976. While the GPCR posed correctly the problem of modern revisionism and unfolded the basic principles and methods for combating revisionism, still the revisionist capitalist roaders headed by Deng were able to defeat the GPCR, restore capitalism and make China an imperialist power.

The defeat of the GPCR, which spelled the victory of capitalism in China over socialism, only means that we need to learn positive and negative lessons from the entire process of socialist revolution and construction up to the end of the GPCR in China in the same way that proletarian

revolutionaries learned positive and negative lessons from the victory and defeat of the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871 and from the much longer life and greater consequentiality of the Soviet Union.

*14. How will the transition from socialism to communism take place?*

JMS: With regard to the transition of socialism into communism, Marx and Engels prognosticated the withering of the state, the emergence of classless society, the massive and rapid growth of productive forces and the all-round development of human civilization.

The withering of the socialist state or class dictatorship of the proletariat means the steady dissolution of the coercive character of political authority. By then, there shall have been a lessening and finally a disappearance of the need for a distinct class, the proletariat, to hold in check another class, the bourgeoisie, with the use of the coercive apparatuses of the state like the army, police, courts and prison.

The advance of socialism, especially in its mode of production, is expected to dissolve the very conditions that create such antagonistic classes as the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. A generalization and equalization of conditions occur for the benefit of one and all. It is not an impossible dream to anticipate the growth of productivity to the point that all members of society need to work for a far lesser number of hours than now, have a basic income that assures a comfortable and productive life and have more time for other creative endeavors in private and in public.

One knows exactly how the bourgeoisie is differentiated from the proletariat in capitalist society. By their right of ownership in the means of production and by extracting profits for themselves, the bourgeoisie lives a more comfortable and even luxurious life while the proletariat is consigned to the drudgery of a long daily work routine and the rough conditions of poverty and misery. Certainly, one cannot fail to see the benefits derived by the working class by succeeding through struggle to reduce the working day progressively from sixteen hours to eight hours, although the worker still remains exploited in capitalist society.

The attainment by all of the material conditions enjoyed by an educated middle class family relying on high salaries and not on private ownership of the means of production is not an impossibility. While this is an impossibility for the working class under capitalism, socialism can bring this about because the growth of productive forces and all-round social development are no longer restricted as in capitalism and are enhanced by the rapid advance of science and technology, provided the monopoly capitalist attack on the environment is prevented.

Modern industry is capable of wiping out poverty overnight. But capitalism would rather manipulate and restrict the forces of production in order to exact a high rate of profit. Marx pointed out clearly the

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problems that socialism in transition to communism would have to solve. These are the contradictions between the vestiges of the past and the new socialist society, between town and country or industry and agriculture and between mental and physical work.

The contradictions between the vestiges of the past and the new socialist conditions can be solved by further developing the achievements of socialist revolution and construction. The contradiction between the town and country or industry and agriculture can be solved by bringing mechanization and the amenities of urban life to the countryside and building smaller cities integrated with rural life. The contradiction between physical and mental work can be solved by expanding educational and other cultural facilities, increasing real wages and reducing the workday for all.

Since Marx, it has been generally understood that the mode of production can be developed to such a point that the income of producers will no longer be decided according to their productivity. There will be such a superabundance of public facilities and articles of consumption that it will become impertinent for anyone to talk or think of being deprived and disadvantaged regarding these things.





## Tsikahan with Tito Jo: On Trotskyites and Social Democrats

September 9, 2020

*1. Before we progress to our week's topic, let us try to define some terminologies that should help the viewers understand our discussion. Tito, what is Trotskyism and who was Leon Trotsky? In the Philippines, the National Democratic Movement is long brushing with the Social Democrats; who are these National Democrats and Social Democrats, how did they arise in the Philippine political spectrum?*

JMS: Trotskyism is a petty bourgeois anticommunist ideology which masquerades as more Left than the communist parties that have built socialist societies and have led anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles towards the goal of socialism. Leon Trotsky had no grounding on materialist dialectics and did not have a proletarian revolutionary stand and flip-flopped from ultra-Left to Right opportunism and back. He opposed Lenin and the Bolsheviks on all major issues in the revolution, such as the new type of party, class dictatorship of the proletariat, the worker-peasant alliance, the sequence of democratic and socialist revolution, and so on.

A primer for CPP cadres and members titled, Special Study on Trotskyism, defines Trotskyism in the following terms:

It is an ideological and political petty-bourgeois trend hostile to Marxism-Leninism and to the international communist movement. It conceals its opportunist essence with radical, left-wing slogans. Trotskyism arose within the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party at the beginning of the 20th century as a form of Menshevism. It was named for its leader, Leon Trotsky (real name Lev Davidovich Bronstein, 1879-1940). It is carried over to the 21st century by adherents known as Trotskyists or Trotskyites.

Lenin described Trotsky in the following words:

Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. He explained further: Trotsky was an ardent Iskraits from 1901 to 1903. At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e., he deserted from the Iskraits to the Economists. ...In 1904 and 1905, he deserted the Mensheviks and occupied a vacillating position, now cooperating with Martynov (the Economist), now proclaiming his absurdly Left 'permanent revolution' theory.

Trotsky had his final undoing when the Bolsheviks expelled him after

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he pontificated about the impossibility of building socialism in one country, opposed the socialist revolution and construction in the Soviet Union and engaged in counterrevolutionary activities. He led the so-called Left Opposition, Bukharin led the Right Opposition. They attacked the socialist line from the flanks. The more vociferous Trotsky made anti-Stalinism his trade mark.

Trotsky and his Trotskyite followers have served the fascists in World War II and the US and other imperialist powers before, during and after the Cold War by spreading lies and slanders against the communist parties and revolutionary mass movements which they simplistically attack as Stalinist. For instance, only recently in his diatribe against both the old Communist Party and the new Communist Party in the Philippines, the Trotskyite Joseph Scalice accuses the old Communist Party of Stalinism even after the Lavaite remnants of that party became revisionist and anti-Stalin like the Trotskyites when it sided with the CPSU after the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s and more so when it collaborated with the Marcos fascist regime from 1972 to 1986.

For several decades already, the Trotskyites from the US, Western Europe, Japan and Australia have formed grouplets of Trotskyites in the Philippines. These have tried to worm their way into the Communist Party of the Philippines and the revolutionary movement and have failed miserably. These grouplets quarrel among themselves but they directly and indirectly assist the reactionary government, especially the current Duterte terrorist regime, in slandering the CPP and red-tagging leaders and members of the patriotic and democratic forces of the national democratic movement.

The national democratic movement is a mass movement of workers, peasants, indigenous peoples, women, youth, professionals and other people in the Philippines who demand and struggle for full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, cultural progress and international solidarity with all peoples against imperialism and all reaction. The national democratic movement is inspired by the Philippine Revolution of 1896 against Spanish colonialism and by all revolutionary struggles of the Filipino people against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

After the defeat of the armed revolutionary movement in the early 1950s, the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP) became the starting point of a renewed national democratic movement. It further developed into the comprehensive youth organization, Kabataang Makabayan, which embraced the student and the young workers, peasants and professionals. Together with trade unions and peasant associations, the KM became the strongest nationwide base for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968.

The so-called social democrats (soc-dems) in the Philippines are not

really the same as the classical social democrats in Europe who have garbed their petty bourgeois liberalism and pacifism with the language of Marxism or the bourgeois laborism of the labor aristocracy. They used to be called clerico-fascists up to the 1960s because of their religious sectarianism and glorification of feudal institutions as models of good society. Subsequently, they called themselves social democrats like the US puppet Nguyen van Thieu in Vietnam, using a hodgepodge of religiosity, liberalism, social reformism and anti-communism which they use to attack the anti-imperialist and democratic forces in the national democratic movement.

The antecedent of the soc-dems was the Christian Social Movement, whose leader Raul Manglapus gained national prominence as propagandist for the CIA-supported presidential candidate Ramon Magsaysay and who occupied high positions in the reactionary government. The most notorious of the soc-dems in recent times is Norberto Gonzales of the *Nagkakaisang Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas* (NPDSF) who became national security adviser and then defense secretary of the Arroyo regime and was responsible for fouling up the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, teaming up with General Esperon in the series of terror campaigns called Bantay Laya I, II and III and requesting the US government to designate the CPP, NPA and myself as terrorists.

*2. In the 2016 election, Duterte claims that if he wins, he will be the first socialist president of the Philippines. Many said that because of this statement and the supposed "support and aid" he provided for the ND movement, particularly in Mindanao, that the communists endorsed and supported his presidential bid. Is this true? And by the definition of socialist, is Duterte a socialist?*

JMS: The Trotskyites are grossly lying when they claim that the CPP supported the presidential candidacy of Duterte. The CPP is banned from the electoral exercises of the reactionary government and as a matter of principle the CPP is waging a people's democratic revolution through people's war and is building the revolutionary government of workers and peasants in the guerrilla fronts.

The BAYAN MUNA and others in Makabayan Bloc, well-known electoral parties of the national democratic movement, supported the presidential candidacy of Grace Poe and not Duterte. In this regard, the Trotskyites are also grossly lying. And desperately grasping for a semblance of evidence of ND support for Duterte before and after the 2016 presidential elections, they cite the diplomatic and tactful words and gestures to Duterte encouraging him to engage in peace negotiations and cooperate in realizing the People's Agenda.

Before, during and after the 2016 presidential elections, nobody in his right mind believed Duterte when he said that he was Left and socialist.

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The most discerning knew that he was the candidate of big comprador-landlord dynasties and former presidential plunderers with links to the US and Chinese imperialism, especially the Marcos, Arroyo and Estrada families. In his entire political life, Duterte has never explained what he meant by calling himself a socialist. Definitely, he is not socialist in any sense by word or deed.

*3. Duterte has killed over 30,000 Filipino people under the War on Drugs. Our country is now on the second spot as Asia's deadliest country to be activists. A certain contributor to the World Socialist Website wrote that the CPP called on the revolutionary forces to cooperate with Duterte's War on Drugs and published it in Ang Bayan, calling the Party and the entire ND movement "enabler." What can you say about this?*

JMS: In principle, before and after Duterte became president, the CPP has always been for the solution of the drug problem as a health problem and for cracking down on the drug lords, especially at the top level of illegal manufacturers, smugglers and governors and generals who were protectors. The CPP has always wished that the drug problem be solved the way Comrade Mao did in the early years of the People's Republic of China.

As soon as it was clear that the Duterte regime was listing and killing the urban poor as drug users and drug peddlers, Comrade Oris as spokesman of the CPP and NPA condemned Duterte's bogus war on drugs in July 2016, the very first month of Duterte's presidency. Since then, the CPP has been the most outstanding in condemning Duterte for using the bogus drug war to intimidate the people and install himself as the supreme drug lord. The Trotskyites make themselves complicit with Duterte in the drug trade and in his commission of grave crimes by trying to discredit the CPP and trying to disable it from fighting Duterte on the issue of illegal drugs and extrajudicial killings.

*4. In the beginning of the Duterte administration, he seemed to be really bringing the change that he promised. Duterte appointed Leftist personalities in his cabinet such as Ka Paeng Mariano, Liza Maza, Joel Maglunsod, and Judy Taguiwalo. Because of this, speculations arose such as the Left, by that the Party – is already turning revisionist. Some say that the ND movement is forming a coalition government with the Duterte administration. Do you subscribe to this? Why did the Left allow the appointment of these personalities? How is it beneficial to the people they are serving?*

JMS: When Duterte said publicly that he wanted to appoint communists to his cabinet and government agencies, I answered him publicly that he could not appoint persons to the cabinet or other government positions as representatives of the CPP or NDFP because the peace negotiations and the people's war were still going on. And I told him publicly, he could

appoint people to positions on the basis of individual merits of being patriotic, competent, honest and diligent.

The Trotskyites and other anti-communists are red-tagging the persons that you have mentioned by insisting that they were appointed as communists to government position by Duterte. They pretend to be more revolutionary than the revolutionaries by dishing out the lie that the CPP engaged in coalition with the Duterte by letting him appoint patriotic and progressive people to his cabinet.

Scalice is a big liar for claiming or insinuating that the CPP coalesced with and supported the Duterte regime. The people's war went on and is still going on. Only a liar can try to make it appear that the armed conflict or civil war is a form of coalition or mutual support. The Trotskyites and other anti-communists, in their comfortable bureaucratic and academic chairs, utterly fail to make themselves appear revolutionary by casting scandalous lies and false accusations against the CPP exactly at a time that the Duterte regime is intensifying its murderous rampage on the people and their revolutionary movement against the regime.

*5. Will the Left be open to a coalition government with Duterte or any administration for this matter? How do you see the alliance with the Liberals at this point? Conversely, if the Left will ally with the Liberals or form a coalition government, what would it mean? Will it not veer from its principles?*

JMS: Since May 2017, when Duterte aborted the fifth round of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, he has done everything to prevent serious peace negotiations. On November 23, 2017, he formally terminated the peace negotiations and on December 5, 2017 he designated the CPP and NPA as 'terrorist' organizations. Subsequently, he formed the National Task Force to eliminate the CPP and the armed revolution and he has licensed himself to engage in state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism. There is no longer any basis for peace negotiations and there is absolutely no prospect of coalition with the Duterte regime.

If you mean by Liberal the Liberal Party, it is premature to talk about forming a coalition government with them even as there is a basis for discussing and forming a formal or informal alliance against the Duterte regime. At the same time, there are soc-dems, militarists and other rabid anti-communists around Robredo who are bent on opposing such alliance. The US is also cultivating her as successor to Duterte and coaxing him to resign or simply finish his term. The possibility of a coalition government with the Liberals can arise only if they take power from Duterte under the pressure of mass actions and then engage the NDFP in peace negotiations. The success of such peace negotiations can be the basis for a coalition government. Otherwise, there is no basis.

*6. Joseph Scalice who claims to be a Philippine historian wrote that the*

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*CPP is a "reactionary nationalist ideology of Stalin and its Maoist variant", and even goes as far as saying that socialism is off the agenda in countries like the Philippines which he said is belated-capitalist. What does he mean by belated-capitalism and is socialism really off the agenda?*

JMS: Joseph Scalice is merely parroting the old line of Trotskyism that communist parties can only be nationalist if they seize power in one country after another and carry out socialist revolution and construction as Stalin and Mao did. The Trotskyites follow the crazy idea of Trotsky that it is impossible to build socialism in one country. But Stalin and Mao built socialism. What kind of a historian is Scalice who denies the great historic achievements of Stalin and Mao.

With regard to the oppressed peoples and nations still fighting for national liberation and democracy against imperialism and the local exploiting classes in semicolonial and semifeudal countries, the Trotskyites deny the necessity of the new-type bourgeois democratic and socialist stages of the revolution and have the perverse notion that being anti-imperialist is necessarily being bourgeois nationalist and winning over the national bourgeoisie, even as an unstable and unreliable ally, to the anti-imperialist alliance is necessarily merging with it and even being subservient to this social stratum. The Trotskyites are totally dishonest in misrepresenting communist revolutionaries and they obscure and cover up imperialism as the enemy of the proletariat and the people.

Actually, the Trotskyites and the pseudo-social democrats in the Philippines say that the Philippines is already 'capitalist' and no longer semifeudal, that socialism should be the immediate issue in the revolutionary agenda and that the CPP is being nationalist for first engaging in the people's democratic revolution. But the Trotskyites are self-contradictory because they do not like socialism in one country. And the reformist social-democrats wish to conserve the exploitative system while improving the lot of the workers.

These imbeciles do not understand that semifeudalism is a form of capitalism dominated by the comprador big bourgeoisie in combination with the landlord class in subordination to foreign monopoly capitalism. They also do not understand that the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective has first to defeat the forces of foreign and feudal domination before the proletariat and the people can obtain the basis and the power to begin the socialist revolution and construction.

*7. One of the most hackneyed arguments against the ND movement by the Trots and the Liberals is on Stalinism. According to them, Stalin's notoriety should not be celebrated or looked up to and yet the ND movement pays respect to this man. How should we respond to such claims? Why do the Left draw lessons from Stalin's experiences? As Filipino activists, what can we actually learn from him?*

JMS: Stalin as the leader of the Bolshevik party engaged in socialist revolution and construction in the Soviet Union twice over (first before World War II, then again after the war when it rebuilt itself) and inflicted the most fatal blow on fascism during World War II. Roosevelt and Churchill had high praises for Stalin until the US and Britain launched the Cold War out of fear that the rise of several socialist countries and national liberation movements was endangering the world capitalist system. During World II, the Trotskyites collaborated with the fascists in Germany, Spain, the US, the Soviet Union, Indochina, Latin America and elsewhere.

The Trotskyites and the Liberals are against Stalin for the most despicable reasons. The CPP appreciate highly Stalin's great achievements in socialist revolution and construction and in defeating Nazi Germany but is critical of him for prematurely declaring the end of classes and class struggle in socialist society in 1935. As a consequence, Stalin failed in correctly handling contradictions among the people and failed to preempt the rise of modern revisionism. I have written extensively on these issues. You and our listeners can read my piece titled *Stand for Socialism against Modern Revisionism.*'

*8. Tito, these Trots seem to be delving more on their attacks against the Philippine Left instead of exposing and opposing the tyrant that is Duterte. Why do they do this? Why do they seem to devote their time trying to bring down the Left movement instead of uniting against the common enemy?*

JMS: The Trotskyites expose themselves as counterrevolutionaries by concentrating their attacks on the CPP and the revolutionary movement and red-tagging the legal forces of the national democratic movement, while these are now in the forefront of the struggle to oust Duterte from power. The Trotskyites are practically special agents of the Duterte terrorist regime.

In a perverse and absurd way, they hold the most resolute and consistent anti-Duterte forces responsible for Duterte's crimes. This is a case of blaming the victims in order to minimize the culpability of the culprit and save him. The Trotskyites practically support the all-out war of Duterte against the people and revolutionary movement. Even if sometimes they shed crocodile tears over the martyrs murdered by Duterte, the Trotskyites make themselves complicit with him in his bloody crimes and they insinuate that the martyrs deserve their death for having supported him.

They are like their cultist idol Trotsky who fled the Soviet Union to attack Bolsheviks and the socialist cause. He and his followers have specialized in the role of posing as more revolutionary than the revolutionaries and then attacking the revolutionaries to favor the people's enemy. Trotskyites are traitors to the proletariat and the people. They are barefaced swindlers whose highest ambition is to sell information and analyses to anti-communist foundations, research groups and intelligence agencies.

9. *Scalice went on with his lecture on August 26, during this lecture he showed what he called proof of the Left's support to Duterte. There were photos, quotes from you, and other Leftist personalities, even. To clarify this, does the Left really think that Duterte could bring hope? If you did so in the past, what changed? Scalice is not the only one using the past interviews, pictures and whatnot to support their allegation, a lot of anti-communists and Trots are using it as well. Do you have anything to say to them? To what extent should the Left support or commend the positive decisions of the Duterte or for this matter, any reactionary personalities?*

JMS: The NDFP has long been engaged in peace negotiations since 1992 when the The Hague Joint Declaration was mutually approved by the NDFP and GRP principals in order to set the framework of purpose, agenda and methods for the peace negotiations. The purpose is to address the roots of the armed conflict, arrive at comprehensive agreements on social, economic and political reforms and thereby lay the basis for a just and lasting peace. The NDFP has stood by its revolutionary principles and policies and has never capitulated to the GRP, from the time of Ramos to Duterte.

Together with the CPP, NDFP and so many peace advocates from religious and nonreligious organizations and mass organization, I made statements to encourage Duterte to engage in peace negotiations because he himself asked for the peace negotiations, made promises about amnestying and releasing all political prisoners; and declared that he was ready for social, economic and political reforms.

The GRP-NDFP peace negotiations have been characterized by diplomatic dialogue and principled objections of the NDFP to repeated attempts of the GRP to maneuver the NDFP into a position of capitulation. The NDFP has always rebuffed such attempts and thus the peace negotiations have been interrupted by the enemy so many times. It is utterly stupid for Scalice to pick out diplomatic statements and gestures of the NDFP and mine and disregard the firm adherence of the CPP and NDFP to revolutionary principles and the continuance of the people's war. Duterte has never stopped his all-out war against the revolutionary movement and the latter has never stopped its people's war. Only a Trotskyite and fake historian can deny such a glaring fact.

If for instance, I spurned Duterte's plea for peace negotiations from the beginning, the same anti-communist Trotskyites and Liberals would attack me as dogmatist, unreasonable and bellicose. The CPP and NDFP actually put Duterte under the test to prove whether or not he was for a just peace. And he was exposed as refusing a just peace, while the NDFP was able to publicize its program of social, economic and political reforms for a just peace. You have to be inside the peace process and on the side of the NDFP to know how Duterte came to be distrusted as early as in October



2016 when he refused to amnesty and release all political prisoners.

*10. The Trots say that there is no longer need for protracted people's war—encircling the cities from the countryside is a romanticism of an obsolete belief. They even say that now more than ever, the world is ready for a spontaneous, synchronous revolution. Why was it wrong a few decades ago and why is it still wrong now? Is it still wrong even in the present context of the Philippine society where Duterte is extremely unpopular?*

JMS: The Trotskyites expose themselves as counterrevolutionary agents of US imperialism and the Filipino reactionaries by spouting the propaganda that there is no longer need for a protracted people's war—that encircling the cities from the countryside is a romanticism of an obsolete belief.

And they repeat the old rotten line of Trotsky that revolution in any country is futile unless it is synchronized with a spontaneous and seamless world revolution. This is the stupid idea of having a permanent revolution but not having a revolution anywhere if there are no simultaneous revolutions on a world scale. At best, it is the dogmatism of wanting to reach a mountain summit without any arduous climb, waiting instead for a cable-car to magically appear. It is an outright rejection of any serious effort at making revolution.

The conditions of the Philippines are semicolonial and semifeudal and thus there is a need for people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective through protracted people's war under the leadership of the CPP and under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The CPP wields the revolutionary armed struggle as the main weapon and integrates this with agrarian revolution and mass base-building. It also wields the national united front by relying mainly on the basic alliance of workers and peasants, winning over the middle social strata and taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the enemy one after the other.

Without the people's army in the Philippines, the Filipino people have nothing. The people's war is precisely what has compelled the GRP to negotiate with the NDFP. By engaging in peace negotiations, the NDFP has succeeded in propagating the people's demands for national and social liberation even as the GRP and Trotskyite special agents of the enemy have tried to misrepresent the principles and position of the NDFP.

What is the strength of the CPP and NPA, which are belittled and scorned by the Trotskyite counterrevolutionaries who wish to liquidate the armed revolution? Let me quote a recent statement of the NPA about its current strength:

The NPA continues to operate in more than 110 guerrilla fronts in 73 of 81 provinces across the country. It has several thousand guerrilla fighters.

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They are armed with high-powered weapons and small firearms seized from the enemy, security forces and other sources. The NPA employs grenades and command-detonated explosives. They also use indigenous methods of warfare such as booby traps and punji sticks. Units of the NPA operate under 14 regional operations command, which in turn are under the National Operational Command (NOC). The NPA is under the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines through its Central Committee and Political Bureau and its Executive Committee and the Military Commission of the Central Committee.

The NPA was able to mount at least 710 military actions of various sizes from March 29, 2019 to March 29, 2020. These include harassment, disarming, demolition, sapper and partisan operations, punitive actions, raids against enemy detachments and ambushes. Most of these actions are not reported in the bourgeois media. At least 651 enemy troops were killed, while more than 465 were wounded in action, the equivalent of around 30 platoons or two battalions of enemy troops. All regions across the country were able to contribute to these tactical offensives. Among the most significant victorious tactical offensives were those in Southern Tagalog in Luzon, in Eastern Visayas and Negros in the Visayas and in North Central and Northeast Mindanao.

*11. Some critics mentioned that the CPP-NPA is losing its foothold on the toiling masses because of sheer militarism, irrelevance of its advocacies, and duration of the war it's waging. Is there a truth in it? Are the masses already impatient?*

JMS: As I have already explained, the CPP and NPA are not engaged in sheer militarism. They are guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and they are carrying out a program of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. They have grown in strength and advanced in the revolutionary struggle because they have won the support of the Filipino people in their millions. The NPA is not only a fighting force for developing the people's political power but it is also an organization for mass work and for helping the people and the people's government in carrying out social, economic, political and cultural programs.

The CPP has excellently built itself ideologically, politically and organizationally. It is deeply rooted among the masses and exists nationwide. It leads various types of mass organizations of workers, peasants, indigenous peoples, women, youth, professionals and people belonging to various sectors. Millions of people belong to these mass organizations.

At the same time, more millions of people are under the governance of the local organs of political power that comprise the People's Democratic Government. The various mass organizations and various types of alliances support this government.

The revolutionary mass movement led by the CPP is born out of the lessons from the revolutionary history of the Filipino people and from the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. The CPP and NPA have so far been the biggest and strongest revolutionary forces of their kind in the entire history of the Filipino people. They have created the people's democratic government which continues to win victories against the reactionary government of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists servile to foreign monopoly capitalism.

*12. What makes Trotsky's writings so palatable, especially for philosophers and activists in Europe, especially in countries where he was exiled? He is still very popular now in France, for example.*

JMS: To dispel any impression that Trotskyites are attractive in Europe or anywhere else, let me refer to Ho Chi Minh's exposure of Trotskyites as counterrevolutionary agents:

For example, in Spain, their names are Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). Did you know that it is they who are the nests of spies in Madrid, Barcelona and elsewhere in the service of Franco? It is they who organized the famous "fifth column," agency of the army intelligence of the fascist Italians and Germans. In Japan, they are called Marx-Engels-Lenin League (MEL). The Japanese Trotskyites attract young people to their league, then reported them to the police. They seek to penetrate the Japanese Communist Party in order to destroy it from within. In my opinion, the French Trotskyites, now organized around the Proletarian Revolution Group set a goal to sabotage the Popular Front. On this subject, I think you are better informed than I am. In Indochina, Trotskyites are grouped into formations like La Lutte, War against the Japanese, Culture and Red Flag.

In my own time, as a young trade union activist in the Philippines, in the early 1960s, I became aware of the notorious Trotskyite Jay Lovestone who was being denounced by the Filipino trade union leaders as a long-time agent of the Central Intelligence Agency. He exemplified the Trotskyite who wormed his way to the communist leadership and trade unions in the US in order to subsequently carry out anti-communist witchhunts against alleged communist party members and trade unionists and make intelligence reports to the CIA. Since then, I have become alert to entryism or penetration by Trotskyites into revolutionary organizations. I have come across Trotskyites in the US, Australia, Japan, France, The Netherlands and other countries. They use a wide variety of party names and take various guises as activists and academics. And I have always managed to distance myself from them.

The writings and historical record of Trotsky appeal only to a few with a petty bourgeois mentality. The Trotskyites are very often funded and used by the imperialists to attack communist parties because of their

anti-communist, anti-Stalin and anti-Mao propaganda. The Trotskyite organizations are small and easily get split when someone among them starts accusing the leaders of being Stalinist for trying to centralize the decision-making and to require discipline. They are hostile to the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, such as the class dictatorship of the party, the vanguard role of the communist party, the basic alliance of the workers and peasants, democratic centralism.

When a Trotskyite group grows relatively big, it is because it adopts a misleading name and self-description and attracts the petty bourgeois youth. But it is soon riven by factionalism and petty bourgeois wrangling. Most of those who join Trotskyite groups drop out after a short while because of internal rows, lack of revolutionary mass activity and disgust at being stridently anti-communist. At any rate, I have not seen any Trotskyite party winning revolution since Trotsky got himself thrown out of the Bolshevik party as a counterrevolutionary nearly a century ago.

Trotskyites persist as small groups railing against the truly revolutionary parties of the proletariat. They have long been exposed as using ultra-Left slogans as well as ultra-liberal and anti-Stalin slogans to mask their counterrevolutionary purposes. Because of their anti-Stalin and anticommunist views, Trotskyite groups are favorite recruiting pools of the imperialists and reactionaries for propagandists and spies against communist parties and revolutionary movements.

In the past, Trotskyite parties were relatively strong in Mexico and Sri Lanka. But they have disintegrated here because of their anti-communist ideology and political line, anarchism and adventurism, their preoccupation with slandering and attacking communist parties. At certain times, the Trotskyites appeared to be successful when they collaborated with social democratic institutions and groups as in France or with anarchist groups in mass actions. But eventually they dwindled because of their Trotskyite cultism and sectarianism.

*13. Lastly, Tito, for the sake of our viewers from Europe. One of the most common questions of Western Leftists is if there are Trotskyites in the Philippines. Are there and how do you spot one? Why is it necessary to know about Trotskyism?*

JMS: There are small Trotskyite groups in the Philippines. They have been formed by various foreign Trotskyite groups based in Western Europe, Japan, Australia and the US. They have tried to penetrate the CPP but have also failed ultimately because they are exposed for suddenly opposing Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the general line of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective after pretending to adhere to them.

All of the Trotskyite groups are mere babblers and are most active with publications, especially now online. They have some academics and a few unions. But they have failed to hoodwink the people and the intelligentsia.

Like Trotsky their idol, they do not do serious mass work and they do not struggle against the enemy but against the revolutionaries.

They have isolated themselves with their anti-Stalinist obsession, their opposition to the people's democratic revolution as a supposedly unnecessary stage in the Philippine revolution and their preoccupation with anti-communist attacks on genuine communist parties and revolutionary movements wherever they are in the world. They can only get themselves further isolated by joining Duterte in attacking the communist revolutionaries and the patriotic and democratic forces that are now rising up.

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# On the Struggle against the Marcos Fascist Dictatorship

Questions by the Host Edna Becher, Anakbayan-Europa  
Answers by Jose Maria Sison

September 20, 2020

*1. Even before Marcos proclaimed martial law in 1972, revolutionary forces in the Philippines had been waging the national democratic revolution. How big was this movement before Martial law?*

JMS: In the entire 1960s, the national democratic movement against US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists grew steadily among the student youth, workers and peasants through activities to arouse, organize and mobilize them.

The Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP) made the first major mass action in the struggle for national democracy when it led 5000 students on March 15, 1961 to scuttle the anticommunist hearings of the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities of the Lower House of Congress. Those hearings had persecuted the faculty members and student activists of the UP for writing patriotic and progressive essays.

The leading activists of the SCAUP subsequently generated study groups and seminars to promote the national democratic line of resuming the Philippine revolution among the students, young workers, peasants and professionals. They established the Kabataang Makabayan as a comprehensive youth organization in 1964.

The KM gained national prominence as an articulator and militant force of the national democratic movement in 1964. It worked with student organizations, labor federations of Lapiang Manggagawa and the MASAKA led by Felixberto Olalia. It spearheaded demonstrations that peaked with 25,000 rallyists in 1965 against the treaties, agreements and arrangements that bound the Philippines as a semicolony to the US.

It also led the youth demonstration against the so-called Manila Summit in which US president Lyndon Johnson rounded up the Asian puppet government to join the US in its war of aggression against Vietnam. The demonstration was violently dispersed but the student demonstrators were inspired to launch the October 24<sup>th</sup> Movement for carrying out social investigation and recruiting the youth in urban and rural poor communities.

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In 1967-68, the KM led nationwide student strikes against reactionary school owners and administrators; and built school chapters nationwide. In 1969, the KM cooperated with jeepney drivers to carry out transport strikes against rising oil prices.

In the meantime, the Communist Party of the Philippines was established under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism with only 12 delegates representing more than 80 full and candidate members. And it soon established the New People's Army on March 29, 1969 with only a few squads in Tarlac but with a mass base of some 80,000 people.

The First Quarter Storm (FQS) led by the KM broke out in 1970. From January to March, a series of mass protests surged, with 100,000 to 200,000 youth and workers joining each protest action. As a result, the national democratic mass organizations increased their membership by leaps and bounds.

The violent dispersal of the mass actions which resulted in the killing and injury of mass protesters only served to arouse popular outrage, inspire further mass actions, drove many activists to study revolutionary theory and practice and embolden many activists to join the CPP and NPA.

The mass protests continued despite the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 until the declaration of martial law in 1972. Against the strident threats of Marcos to declare martial law, the mass protesters shouted people's war as the answer to martial law.

On the eve of the declaration of martial law, the KM had a membership of 15,000. The revolutionary trade unions reached a membership of at least 30,000 and the peasant mass base was at least 200,000 mainly in Tarlac, Pampanga, Ifugao, Cagayan, Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya provinces in 1972.

The CPP membership was approaching 2000 and the NPA had more than 300 Red fighters with automatic rifles, excluding the people's militia with inferior weapons. Marcos exaggerated the number of NPA fighters as 10,000 in his declaration of martial law.

*2. Please tell us about the First Quarter Storm. What were the significant mass actions? What did it achieve?*

JMS: Metro Manila was the center of the FQS of 1979 but the mass actions spread nationwide. As I have already said, they ranged in size from 100,000 to 200,000. The storm broke out when Marcos ordered the violent dispersal of the students gathered before Congress after he delivered his state of the nation address on January 26, 1970.

The violent dispersal and the death and injury of the student demonstrators provoked further mass actions. The subsequent mass actions involved having assembly points in various parts of Metro Manila and then the demonstrators marched from those points, picking up more demonstrators and mass support along the way before converging on



Congress, the presidential palace or the US embassy.

Following the violent dispersal of the rally before Congress on January 26, 1970, the KM mobilized 150,000 demonstrators to march to the presidential place on January 30. The presidential guards and Marines attacked the demonstrators and the demonstrators captured a fire truck to ram through the gate of the palace. A see-saw battle ensued at the Mendiola bridge, resulting in serious casualties on the side of the students and the reactionary side.

Marcos pleaded to the Movement or a Democratic Philippines (MDP) to stop the mass actions. But the KM decided that the mass movement must go on. The next demonstration in February gathered at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila and then proceeded to the US Embassy. The demonstrators broke into the gate of the embassy and vented their ire on the entire ground floor of the embassy.

The mass movement proceeded with major issues raised against US imperialism and the Marcos puppet regime. After the FQS, more demonstrations occurred on labor and land reform issues as well as on the US military bases and the US war of aggression against Vietnam until the declaration of martial law in 1972.

*3. What was the effect of Martial Law on this national democratic movement?*

JMS: The martial law declaration of 1972 served to inflame the revolutionary spirit of the Filipino people. They were outraged that Marcos was imposing fascist dictatorship on them in the service of US imperialism and his own selfish interests, despite his propaganda of saving the republic and building a new society.

Marcos outlawed all the legal forces of the national democratic movement and engaged in the mass arrest of their leaders as well as the leaders of the opposition Liberal party. The mass activists who could not be arrested went underground. In Metro Manila alone, 4000 mass activists went underground with the intention of joining the people's war in the countryside.

The CPP membership leaped to more than 2000. By 1974, most of the thousands of activists joining the urban underground were deployed nationwide to help build the Party, the NPA the revolutionary mass organizations, and the local organs of political power in so many regions nationwide.

Instead of being able to destroy the legal national democratic movement, with martial law and fascist dictatorship, Marcos unwittingly succeeded in helping the armed revolutionary movement by driving the mass activists from the ranks of the workers and educated youth to join the CPP, NPA and the peasant masses in the countryside.

*4. What were the different forms of resistance against the Marcos*

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### *fascist dictatorship?*

JMS: Despite the violence and terrorism of martial law, various forms of legal and illegal resistance were possible against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Only those threatened with arrest, torture and death had to go underground. The civil rights and religious organizations tried their best to defend the human rights of the social activists, the disemployed print and broadcast journalists, the trade unionists and leaders of the conservative opposition.

There was no way Marcos could stop the patriotic and democratic forces among the workers, peasants, students, professionals, religious people and the legal opposition parties who carried on their daily work to express their views and among themselves, especially because Marcos insulted every one by closing all mass media that were not under his control and by trying to monopolize information.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines was formed on April 24, 1973 to build and strengthen the broad united front against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. This united front was successful in coordinating the legal forms of resistance and the armed revolutionary movement. Anti-fascist publications circulated and lightning protest actions occurred.

Under conditions of martial law, both legal forms of struggle and the people's war flourished. That was why the Marcos fascist dictatorship was ultimately overthrown. In class terms, the working class as the leading class relied mainly on its basic alliance with the peasant masses, won over the middle social strata and took advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the power of the Marcos fascist regime.

*5. The Bangsa Moro led by the Moro National Liberation Front also waged armed struggle against the Marcos dictatorship. Was there an alliance between the CPP and the MNLF? What was their relationship?*

JMS: Nur Misuari and other key leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front got their political education and training from Kabataang Makabayan, which propagated the right of national self-determination among all indigenous peoples in the Philippines. There was therefore a high level of common understanding between the MNLF and the revolutionary movement of the entire Filipino people.

There was at least an objective alliance between the MNLF and the revolutionary movement of the entire Filipino people in fighting the reactionary Manila-based government as the common enemy. The Moro nation's fight for self-determination had the effect of helping the revolutionary struggle of the entire Filipino people. Reciprocally, the struggle of the Filipino people helped the Moro people.

The CPP and all patriotic and democratic forces succeeded in countering the attempt of Marcos to use Christian chauvinism against the

MNLF, the MILF and the Moro nation. The NDFP and the Christians for National Liberation advocated ecumenism and mutual respect between the Christian and Islamic believers. The military minions of Marcos committed atrocities against the Moro people but were condemned by the Filipino people for doing so.

The NDFP and the MNLF agreed to stand together as complainants on behalf of the Filipino and Moro peoples against the Marcos fascist dictatorship as defendant in the trial conducted by the International People's Tribunal in Antwerp, Belgium in 1980. Marcos and his criminal accomplices were convicted by the International People's Tribunal.

*6. Was there an international support in the movement against the fascist dictatorship? If so, what kind and what was its significance?*

JMS: There was abundant international support for the Filipino people and their just struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. As early as 1969, we in the CPP anticipated that Marcos would impose fascist dictatorship on the people. Thus, we started to deploy cadres to conduct solidarity work in socialist countries, in certain countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the US, Europe and in the Asia-Pacific region.

The CPP formed committees and branches in whichever country it had Party members. These engaged in mass work in order to build Filipino community organizations and solidarity organizations with the host people. The NDFP also had its international political work. It was able to form alliances of Filipino organizations and solidarity organizations and develop diplomatic and protodiplomatic relations with foreign governments and their agencies.

The CPP and the NDFP were open to alliance and cooperation with all Filipino organizations in opposition to the Marcos fascist regime even if they belonged to the conservative opposition. The national democratic organizations abroad were themselves alliances and could include Filipinos of various ideological, religious and political persuasions as long as they agreed to fight against the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

*7. The assassination of Aquino in 1983 upon his return to Manila triggered an anti-fascist upsurge. How significant was this in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship?*

JMS: The Aquino assassination on August 21, 1983 triggered the gigantic mass actions that led to the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986. That was the biggest mistake of Marcos. It led to the firm conclusion of the US government that Marcos had become more of a liability than an asset to US interests. The US State Department and the Republican and Democrat parties were offended that Marcos resorted to murder to eliminate a political leader they thought could replace Marcos in a peaceful way.

The Catholic and other Christian churches were also offended. So

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were most sections of the big comprador and landlord classes that had long been offended by Marcos and his upstart cronies for engaging in flagrant plunder, monopolizing the infrastructure projects and grabbing the enterprises and assets of others.

The Ninoy Aquino funeral was attended by a million people. But the pro-Aquino forces did not have solid mass organizations for launching mass protests. In the interest of the broad united front against the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the forces of the national democratic movement cooperated with the pro-Aquino forces in mobilizing the masses in great numbers to seek justice and effect the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

*8. Could you tell us about the EDSA uprising? How did it happen and what effect? How did the regime respond to it?*

JMS: The biggest contradiction between the Filipino people and the Marcos fascist dictatorship became conspicuous with the rise of the mass actions after the Aquino assassination from 1983 to 1986 and the electoral rallies of the opposition during the campaign period for the presidential snap election of February 7, 1986.

As a result of the electoral cheating of Marcos through his control of the Comelec, the CPP immediately announced intensified armed resistance. The legal democratic forces also announced the intensification of mass protests. Subsequently, Cory Aquino announced a campaign of civil disobedience and the Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter proclaiming the Marcos regime as having no legal and moral foundation. The stage was set for unprecedented mass actions against the Marcos fascist regime.

Meanwhile the contradictions between the side of Marcos and General Ver on one side and defense secretary Enrile and General Ramos on the other side broke out into the open. The former side was able to foil the coup attempt of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) as the instrument of the latter side. From Camp Aguinaldo, the Enrile-Ramos side and the RAM called for public support before they walked over to Camp Crame. Cardinal Sin called for public support for the beleaguered military opponents of Marcos and Ver.

Using the radio Veritas broadcast station of the Catholics, Boots Aquino (Ninoy Aquino's brother) called on the people to assemble at the Isetann along EDSA. The forces of BAYAN, Justice for Aquino and Justice for All and Congress for the Restoration and Democracy were the first to appear in significant number. Thus, the great number of people started to build up along EDSA. Colonel Santiago called for volunteers to accompany him in seizing the broadcast station of Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) and the government. And 500 members of BAYAN-Quezon City accompanied him.

The people who occupied EDSA from Cubao, Quezon City to Makati, Rizal peaked to as high as two million people to block the Marcos loyalists

from attacking the Enrile-Ramos side. Some 80 per cent of the people responded to the calls of Cardinal Sin, using the Veritas broadcast station. Twenty percent of the people were mobilized by BAYAN. In the direct encirclement of the Malacanang Palace, more than 90 per cent of the 100,000 people were mobilized by Kilusang Mayo Uno and the League of Filipino Students.

Marcos and Ver tried to use force against the Enrile-Ramos side but the gigantic mass of people along EDSA and around the palace was insurmountable. They blocked the army and marine convoys sent out by Marcos from Fort Bonifacio and Sangley Point. At the same time, the US embassy used General Iletto to neutralize the Marcos loyalists in the Philippine Army. He and US ambassador Bosworth remanded the orders of Marcos for the artillery bombardment on Camp Crame from the site of Imelda's Ministry of Human Settlements. Air force General Sotelo of Camp Basa Air Base was ordered to bomb Camp Crame but instead he defected to the Enrile-Ramos side.

At the end of his power, Marcos and his family had no choice but to be airlifted by US helicopters to the Clark Air Base and from there to Guam and further on to Hawaii. If Marcos took the road to escape from the palace, he would have been ambushed by one of the special platoons which had been deployed by the NPA in Manila.

*9. What was the role of the national democratic movement in the EDSA uprising?*

JMS: I have already pointed out the particular role of the forces of the national democratic movement in joining the great number of people at Edsa, in seizing the broadcast facilities of KPN and the government and the encirclement of the presidential palace in the final days of Marcos in power from February 22 to 25, 1986.

I have not yet mentioned many other important contributions of BAYAN, like their organizations in several regions and provinces building the united front against Marcos and persuading the pro-Marcos politicians and units of the AFP and Philippine Constabulary to withdraw support from Marcos.

The regional commander of the PC in Bicol General de Villa cooperated with BAYAN in neutralizing the pro-Marcos politicians in the Bicol region. The BAYAN organizations of Angeles City blocked the way of the convoy of Marcos loyalist troops headed by General Palafox coming from Camp Aquino in Tarlac.

But the biggest role of the national democratic movement in ultimately bringing down the Marcos fascist regime was its long resolute and active resistance in the legal forms of resistance as well as in the form of the people's war. As the Marcos fascist dictatorship reigned long and had the illusion of ruling forever, the organizations and local organs of political power grew in strength and spread nationwide.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

The legal democratic forces were outlawed and had to go underground but they kept on launching lightning protest mass actions and new legal mass organizations also kept on arising, especially after Marcos pretended to lift martial law in 1981. However, as early as 1974 to 1975, the trade unions were able to carry out a nationwide strike in 300 workplaces; and in 1976 the student masses were already able to reestablish student councils in the UP and so many other schools.

The people's war was inspirational to the broad masses of the people during all the time that Marcos rode roughshod over them with his armed minions and with US imperialist support.

The heroic resistance of the CPP, NPA, the NDFP, the revolutionary mass organizations and the local organs of political power demonstrated to the broad masses of the people that it was possible to fight the fascist regime.

The inspiration of the revolutionary forces became even stronger when the economic, social and political crisis of the fascist regime and the suffering of the people became conspicuous from 1979 onward. The budgetary and trade deficits were widening and international credit for the regime was tightening.

*10. It was a time of social unrest and political instability. Why was the revolutionary movement not able to seize political power from Marcos at that time?*

It was a time of social unrest and political instability. Why was the revolutionary movement not able to seize political power from Marcos at that time?

JMS: As of November 1985, when the Plenum of the CPP Central Committee convened, the New People's Army had already accumulated a total of 5,600 high powered rifles and was already operating nationwide in so many guerrilla fronts, in all rural regions and in the majority of Philippine provinces. That was not a small achievement from having only a few squads with only nine automatic rifles and 26 inferior firearms in 1969. But the strength of the NPA was not yet enough for destroying the armed strength of the enemy and seizing political power in the cities.

The advance of the NPA would have been more rapid if not for the subjectivist line gaining currency within the CPP in 1981 that the Philippines was no longer semifeudal but industrial capitalist and that it was wrong to follow the strategic line of protracted people's war of availing of the peasantry and the country as the social and physical terrain for maneuvering against the militarily superior enemy and for accumulating armed strength from stage to stage and from phase to phase in every stage.

The subjectivist line led to the Right opportunist line of turning the NDFP into a reformist united front by ending the class leadership of the proletariat

supposedly to attract more people to the NDFP. But the worst political errors resulting from the subjectivist line were several “Left” opportunist lines of insurrectionism in several regions at several times. These insurrectionist errors resulted in severe losses of mass base and worse in the commission of crimes when the failure of line became a pretext for the so-called anti-DPA witchhunts. The Second Great Rectification Movement of 1992 to 1998 dealt with and rectified these errors and crimes through ideological and political education.

The Trotskyite urban insurrectionism of Popoy Lagman in the Manila-Rizal region presumed that it was enough for the workers to seize political power in order to win the entire Philippine revolution. And in Mindanao the Reyes-Quimpo Trotskyite Red Area-White Area strategy presumed that people’s strikes so-called and armed city partisan warfare were the lead factor of the armed revolution, with the NPA as secondary factor trying to catch up with the urban actions by rapidly organizing companies in an absolutely vertical way without sufficient horizontal deployment of sufficient armed units for mass work and mass base-building.

*11. You were part of this struggle against Marcos dictatorship. Can you share with us your experiences in participating in this struggle?*

JMS: I am happy that I was able to contribute what I could to the ideological, political and organizational development of the revolutionary forces that struggled against the Marcos dictatorship. I took part in the development of labor, peasant and youth organizations and alliances during the entire 1960s. These led to the founding and development of the CPP, NPA, NDFP, revolutionary mass organizations and local organs of political power.

I was in the preparation of the revolutionary forces that anticipated the emergence of fascist dictatorship. From 1969 to 1972 I was already involved in the people’s war against the increasing military actions of the Marcos regime against the people and from 1972 to my capture in 1977 I fought what was blatantly a fascist dictatorship. Together with many comrades, I faced the tremendous odds, dangers and risks to life, limb and liberty and became tempered by overcoming them in the course of struggle.

Even while I was under maximum military detention, I continued to fight in the best way I could up to my release after the downfall of Marcos in 1986. I was confident that the revolutionary comrades and the masses outside of prison were doing their best and were advancing the revolutionary struggle according to the founding principles and strategic and tactics already laid.

I was conscious of fighting from inside prison to demonstrate to the people outside that if I could fight under extremely limited conditions, they could fight the enemy even more and better. I was never discouraged by the various forms of physical and mental torture inflicted on me. These

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only strengthened my determination to fight.

Since I went out of prison in 1986, I have continued to be guided by the revolutionary principles and to do the best that I could. I have been able to do ideological, political and organizational work to the best of my ability. By being a refugee abroad for a long time and no longer of the age for military combat, I can share my accumulated knowledge and experience with the people in order to offer lessons that they can study and learn from. Thus, I keep on doing research, writing and participating in study sessions like this webinar.

We should be cognizant of the fact that it is now the task of much younger comrades to take advantage of the ever-worsening chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, the nationwide spread of the revolutionary movement and the deep roots of the revolutionary forces among the exploited masses. They can be more daring in the revolutionary struggle and accelerate the offensives for the maturation of the strategic defensive, move into the strategic stalemate and advance to the strategic offensive on time for the unravelling of neoliberalism, the rising tide of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.





## Struggle against Fascism Continues

Questions by the Host of Anakabayan-Europa in ND Online School  
Answers by Jose Maria Sison

September 27, 2020

1. *What was the significance of the overthrow of Marcos dictatorship to the national democratic movement? What were the gains, even though it did not lead yet to complete victory?*

JMS: The overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship proved that the national democratic movement had gained enough strength and had advanced to such an extent that it could play a decisive role in the process of overthrowing the dictatorship. More than 90 per cent of the people directly encircling the presidential palace when Marcos fled in 1986 came from the national democratic movement. The 20 per cent hard core of the two million people at EDSA also came from the national democratic movement.

The fascist dictatorship could last for 14 years because the traditional intrasystemic opposition became impotent when Marcos enjoyed US support and used the armed strength of the state against the entire people. Despite their previous large mass actions, the legal and democratic forces were vulnerable to the brute strength of the armed forces under the orders of Marcos. They had to go underground

But they were able to develop networks of resistance in the underground, circulate publications and launch lightning mass actions against the fascist regime. In 1974 they were able to launch a nationwide workers' strikes in 300 workplaces. In 1976 the student masses were able to establish openly student councils and student organizations in defiance of the fascist dictatorship. The fascist regime came under pressure to "normalize" the situation as a result of the public outrage in the Philippines and abroad over the gross human rights violations.

Consequently, many legal forces of the national democratic movement emerged among the workers, peasants, students, community youth, teachers, professionals, women, journalists and human rights defenders. After the Aquino assassination, they played a decisive role in launching mass actions along the united front line under such banners as justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA), Conference for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD), Nationalist Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Democracy (NAJFD), Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) and others against the regime in the years of 1983 to 1986.

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When martial law was declared in 1972, the revolutionary forces like the CPP, NPA, NDFP, revolutionary mass organizations and local organs of political power were still small and weak relative to the armed forces of Marcos. But by waging armed struggle and other revolutionary forms of struggle, they were able to grow in strength nationwide in several scores of guerrilla fronts.

Thousands of activists belonging to the *Kabataang Makabayan* joined the armed resistance after being forced to go underground. The increasing strength and tactical offensives of the NPA undermined the previous US confidence of Marcos being able to destroy the NPA. By 1985 the NPA had increased its high-powered rifles from only nine in 1969 to 5,600 automatic rifles in November 1985. But this number was not yet enough for it to be able to capture any city, especially Manila, the national seat of reactionary power.

After the Aquino assassination, the US conclusively judged Marcos as more of a liability more than an asset to US national interest and decided to junk him. It persuaded him to call for a snap presidential election and when he cheated as expected, the broadest range of political forces condemned the cheating and called on the broad masses of the people to rise up.

The legal forces of the national democratic movement joined up with all other antifascist forces to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for gigantic mass actions in Metro Manila and nationwide. The NPA intensified the armed struggle and was able to seize 500 more high powered rifles, raising its rifle strength to 6100. This was more than two times the armed strength of the old people's army in the late 1940s. And the NPA did not benefit from an inter-imperialist war as the old people's army did.

Upon the overthrow of Marcos, the balance of strength between the revolutionary and reactionary forces was such that the US, big compradors and landlords, the Catholic church and the majority of the armed forces and police could still put into effect the proclamation of Cory Aquino as the duly-elected president of the neocolonial republic.

The way to measure the victory of the CPP and the revolutionary movement in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship is to know how small and weak were the revolutionary forces from 1968 to 1972 and how much bigger and stronger they became from then on to 1986. The local organs of political power established in the countryside constituted the People's Democratic Government (PDG) of the workers and peasants.

The exploiting classes managed to hold state power in the cities. But in the countryside, the toiling masses of workers and peasants were able to establish and develop the People's Democratic Government under the leadership of the CPP, defended by the NPA and supported by the NDFP, the revolutionary mass organizations and millions of people nationwide.

The People's Democratic Government has lasted for more than 51

years, surpassing the life spans of the governments put up by the old democratic revolution. It continues to accumulate strength politically, economically, culturally and militarily. It governs millions of people, has a people's army with thousands of full-time fighters, people's militia with tens of thousands of members, self-defense units with hundreds of thousands of members and mass organizations with tens of millions of members.

*2. You have stated in various interviews that Duterte can be compared to Marcos, or even worse. Can you tell us what their major similarities are? Or differences, if there are significant ones?*

JMS: In terms of personal character, Duterte and Marcos are both extremely greedy for power and personal wealth and extremely deceptive, capable of saying anything at a given time to gain a personal advantage but ever ready to say the opposite when it suits them. They have a proneness to the criminal use of violence for personal gain or out of malice or braggadocio.

In terms of class character, they are bureaucrat capitalists who are obsessed with using political power to gain personal wealth in quick way and rise from their provincial origins as middle class and small landowners to the stratosphere of the super-rich among the big compradors. They have relatives and friends who are previously far more wealthy than their parents and they are hell-bent on surpassing them through the use of political power.

Marcos was far more smart and became president at a much younger age. Duterte was a mediocre student by his own admission but streetwise, wily enough to become a long-time mayor of Davao city and demagogic enough to outshine other presidential candidates who were lackluster in addressing crowds. As regards being a butcher, Marcos killed 3,257 political opponents and critics. Duterte has already killed far more poor people, more than 30,000 in the bogus war on drugs. And he wishes to kill more political opponents by applying on them his law of state terrorism and his Tokhang methods of mass murder.

It is a matter of history that Marcos was able to rule as a fascist dictator for 14 years. Duterte still needs to prove that he can rule beyond his six-year term that is supposed to end in 2022. It is already well-known that he is seriously sick physically, mentally and morally. He has already made himself a de facto fascist dictator with his own law of state terrorism. But it remains to be seen whether through a charter change he can make himself formally a dictator and rule beyond 2022 or handpick a successor

*3. In the beginning of the Duterte regime, he presented himself to be open to pro-people policies and working with activists. How did it turn into the direction his regime has today, which is actively having a violent crackdown on activists?*

JMS: In trying to outshine his rivals for the presidency and obfuscate

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his reputation as a human rights violator and as a factotum of the Marcos and Floirendo families, he claimed to be Left and socialist, appeared in ceremonies to honor the late Ka Parago, volunteered to be the medium for the release of the prisoners of war of the NPA and promised the amnesty and release of all political prisoners prior to peace negotiations, despite his being told frankly that the revolutionary movement was not in any position to support his presidential bid.

Soon after he became president, he started to wiggle out of his promise to amnesty and release all the political prisoners. It would also become clear that the US used former President Ramos and Esperon to encourage him to run for president, that he got financial support from the Marcoses, Arroyos, Estradas and other big plunderers and their respective financiers and that he got unrecorded cash contributions from some Filipino-Chinese big compradors and from the Chinese criminal triads.

Despite Duterte's failure to amnesty and release all the political prisoners, the NDFP proceeded with the peace negotiations in response to the clamor of the peace advocates and the people to negotiate a just peace and in the spirit of giving Duterte a chance to fulfil his promises and of testing him. At the same time, the NDFP wanted to present not only to the enemy but more importantly to the people the social, economic and political reforms they desired to be adopted and carried out to achieve a just and lasting peace.

As soon as the NDFP draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms was being presented to the public, Duterte signaled that he could not agree because his pro-US retired and active military officers were already pressuring him to back out of the peace negotiations, escalate the all-out war to destroy the CPP and NPA and pretend to opt for fake localized peace negotiations with their own psywar agents. But the estimate of the NDFP is that Duterte was never interested in peace negotiations, except as a device for deceiving the public and for trying to trick the NDFP into capitulation.

*4. Would you say that the Philippines is under an undeclared Martial Law? If so, can you please state concrete basis of this?*

JMS: Indeed, the Philippines is already under an undeclared martial law by virtue of Duterte's law of state terrorism and the frenzied actions of the military and police to apply it through red-tagging, abductions, gruesome acts of torture and extrajudicial killings.

Before Marcos declared martial law in 1972, he suspended the writ of habeas corpus in 1971, Duterte looks like he is imitating his idol Marcos. In advance of his last year in power, Duterte has also signed into law his law of state terrorism. But this law is far worse than the suspension of writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and is even far worse than the martial law declaration of 1972.

Why? Duterte's law of state terrorism allows him and his armed minions even now to ignore all civil and political rights, red-tag social activists critics or political opponents and then abduct, torture and murder them with impunity. Thus, you observe quite a number of victims like Randall Echanis, Zara Alvarez, Jory Porquia and many others being murdered in quick succession.

Human rights organizations in the Philippines and abroad are now concerned that Duterte and his armed minions are hell-bent on slaughtering people to stay in power. The troll armies of Duterte and Marcos in the social media boast that the military and police will apply Tokhang methods on their political opponents and they plan to kill more people whom they red-tag as "communist terrorists" than the poor people they have arbitrarily listed and murdered as alleged drug users.

*5. Do you think Duterte would officially declare a nationwide Martial Law?*

JMS: Duterte's law of state of terrorism is already far worse than the kind of martial law declared by Marcos in 1971, in which executive orders took the place of judicial warrants of arrest. It is well demonstrated in Oplan Tokhang and in the recent cases of political murder by Duterte's masked armed minions simply barge into private apartment or homes to torture and kill someone like the peace consultant Randall Echanis or to kill someone in a public place, like health worker Zara Alvarez who was peppered with bullets.

Most likely Duterte will formally declare martial law to take full control of the ruling system and make sure that he will also get a new charter that will centralize absolute power in his hands under the pretext of establishing a revolutionary government or shifting to federalism and parliamentarism. He would certainly prefer to declare martial law and have a new charter to secure his fascist dictatorship and his power to choose his successor because of his ill health.

*6. Marcos' declaration of Martial Law was backed by the United States. How is the relationship now of Duterte and the US? And how about China? Would it benefit them if Marcos declared Martial Law?*

JMS: Definitely, Duterte has gotten approval, advice and logistical support from the US for his all-out war to destroy the CPP and NPA and even the legal anti-imperialist and democratic forces. But the US has already noticed that Duterte is failing to destroy the revolutionary forces but succeeding in encouraging more people to join the armed revolutionary movement.

The US is already offended by Duterte's allowing China to build and militarize seven artificial islands in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines, to control the national power grid of the Philippines, to erect China Telcom-DITO cell towers inside AFP military camps, and to assist

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the military and police in improving their communications systems.

There are indications that the US will not approve Duterte's declaration of martial law. Political leaders of the US and the European Union are already calling on Duterte to stop the extrajudicial killings and other human rights violations or else face economic sanctions.

But there are some speculations that the US has some deep scheme to let Duterte declare martial law and get the full wrath of the people for doing so and then signal to its assets within the AFP and PNP to withdraw support from Duterte. That would be similar to the US persuading Marcos to call for snap presidential election and then bringing him down for cheating.

China has become wary of Duterte since some two years ago for failing to surrender outrightly to China the entire West Philippine Sea. Thus, the delay in the implementation of infrastructure projects it has promised. There is more reason for China to be wary of Duterte because of his recent speech to the UN General Assembly, saying that no Philippine government can give up the 2016 judgement of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines pertaining to the West Philippine Sea.

*7. What would Martial Law mean to the socioeconomic situation of the Philippines now, which is already in deep crisis?*

JMS: Martial will certainly accelerate the worsening of the already terrible socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system. The people will suffer far worse conditions of exploitation and oppression. There will be far more unemployment, less income and more mass poverty. There will be more social discontent and the fascist regime will inflict more acts of state terrorism on the people.

The recurrence of fascist dictatorship from Marcos to Duterte is a manifestation of the chronic crisis and fatal rottenness of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. It is a sure sign that Philippine society is in need of revolution and radical social transformation. Unwittingly, Duterte is giving the revolutionary movement of the people one more chance to take a great leap forward in the people's war. The revolutionary movement now has a far wider, deeper and stronger base for advancing in the people's war than in 1972.

*8. The people's struggle during Marcos time was strong enough to overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship but not yet the entire semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system. Would you say that the movement now is strong enough to be able to overthrow the entire semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system?*

JMS: There is a greater possibility now than during the time of Marcos for the revolutionary movement to bring down not only a specific fascist regime but even the entire ruling system. The starting base for the revolutionary movement in 1972 was relatively too small and too weak in comparison to the current strength of the revolutionary forces nationwide.

Let me hypothesize on the basis of my experience: when we started guerrilla warfare in Tarlac and then in Isabela, our mere squads could finish off enemy combatants at the rate of at least 10 enemy combatants and their weapons per week per guerrilla zone or base. In two years in Tarlac from 1969 to 1971, our nine rifles increased to more than 200 through tactical offensives

At present, the revolutionary movement has more than 110 guerrilla fronts. Their platoons can launch tactical offensives that can wipe out more enemy combatants. It would be a conservative and lackluster guerrilla front that cannot finish off ten enemy combatants per month. That would mean 110 times 10 enemy combatants and weapons or 1100 enemy casualties. That is equivalent to 11 companies wiped out per month or 132 companies wiped out and an increase of Red companies every year. At that rate, the people's war will be graduating soon from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

The CPP and NPA have issued publications to the effect that they are shaking off conservatism and are committing one third of NPA armed strength for battles with short rest periods against the enemy while two-third of the strength attend to mass work and local self-defense. The NPA units are rotated periodically for full-time combat duty so that they can wipe out more enemy units and increase the arms of the NPA. They benefit from the wise decisions of the leading organs, the daring spirit of their commanders and the mass base that provides them the wide area for maneuver in extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare.

The objective conditions for the people's war in the Philippines are favorable because the chronic crisis of the domestic ruling system will certainly worsen from year to year. The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system is also worsening the inter-imperialist contradictions, especially between the US and China. The proletariat and people of the world are already rising up against neoliberalism, fascism, chauvinism, racism, gender discrimination and the destruction of the environment.

*9. Were there mistakes that the movement experienced during Marcos' Martial Law that the current generation of activists should not repeat?*

JMS: There were great triumphs as well as certain setbacks due to mistakes of varying scales. There were mistakes that could be dealt with through periodic and timely criticism and self-criticism sessions. And there were bigger mistakes that required a rectification movement of some duration and territorial scale.

The biggest error of subjectivism during the time of Marcos was the spread of the notion of a Trotsky-influenced cadre since 1980 who promoted the line that the Philippines was no longer semifeudal but industrial capitalist. He veritably echoed Marcos' false claims of industrialization, the revisionist and imperialists.

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The subjectivist line led to the Right opportunist trend of reformism, which advocated taking out working class leadership in the national united front supposedly to attract more popular support. The worst result of the same subjectivist line was whipping up the "Left" opportunist line of urban insurrectionism among certain regional cadres influenced by Trotskyism.

To cite major examples: in Metro Manila there was the line that it was enough for the workers to take the lead in armed revolution and the rest of the people in the whole country would follow. In Mindanao. There was the line of making the people's strikes and armed city partisan warfare in urban areas the lead factor and the people's army in the countryside as the secondary factor that must catch up with the urban insurrectionists by rapid formation of regularized companies in absolute concentration without minding the balance of relatively concentrated units for tactical offensives and relatively dispersed armed units for mass work.

When the "Left" opportunist lines resulted in damage to the mass base and military setbacks, especially in the period of 1985 to 1988, the cadres did not focus on reviewing the erroneous line and the circumstances but suspected "deep penetration agents" of having sabotaged the line. So they carried out punitive actions without due process. The central leadership of the CPP acted promptly in 1986 to 1991 in one region after the other to stop the wrong line and the violations of due process.

And the Second Great Rectification Movement was launched in 1991 as a campaign of education in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and in the strategy and tactics of the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war until 1998. From 1994 onward, the revolutionary movement became stronger from year to year as a result of the rectification movement after overcoming urban insurrectionism, reformism and the inroads of bourgeois liberalism, Trotskyism, Gorbachovism, Dengism and other obnoxious currents.

*10. On the other hand, what were the successes, effective practices and lessons can activists today learn and apply from the activists during the Martial law dictatorship?*

JMS: The most important successes, effective practices and lessons arose by virtue of ideological, political and organization building of the CPP as the advanced detachment of the leading revolutionary class, the proletariat.

Ideological building meant learning the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (then called Mao Zedong Thought). The CPP cadres and members read and studied the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao on philosophy, political economy and social science and sought to apply the basic principles in the study and understanding of Philippine society, current circumstances and the concrete practice of the revolution.

In political building, the CPP set the general line of people's democratic



revolution through protracted people war against fascism, imperialism and feudalism. It developed itself as the vanguard of the proletariat, the revolutionary armed struggle and the united front as the political weapons of the proletariat and the people against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

In pursuing the protracted people's war, the CPP realized the strongest alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry and integrated the revolutionary armed struggle with agrarian revolution and mass base building. The CPP started first with some guerrilla bases and guerrilla zones and then connected these and consolidated them as guerrilla fronts.

In organizational building, the CPP was guided by the principle of democratic centralism. This means centralized leadership on the basis of democracy. The CPP took deep roots among the toiling masses of workers and peasants and organized itself on a nationwide scale by requiring every Party member to belong to a party groups within various types of mass organizations and related formations of various patriotic and democratic classes and sectors.





## On Comrade Mao's "Talks at the Yen'an Forum"

Questions by Host Edna Becher of Panday Sining Europa

Answers by Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson Emeritus  
of International League of Peoples' Struggle

October 4, 2020

1. *Talks at the Yen'an Forum* is a speech of Mao Zedong on the relationship between work in the literary and artistic fields and revolutionary work in general. Since the May 4th Movement, a cultural army has taken shape in China. To have a better background, can you talk about the May 4th movement? What can the Philippines learn from it?

JMS: The May 4th Movement was an anti-imperialist cultural and political movement which emerged from the student mass protests that began with 4000 students in Beijing on May 4, 1919. The student masses rose up against the traitorous policy of the Chinese reactionary government that complied with the Versailles Treaty of the imperialist powers and allowed Japan to rule territories in Shandong that Germany had surrendered.

The militant student protest movement spread nationwide from Beijing and gained the support of the broad masses of the people. It inspired the New Cultural Movement, which laid stress on anti-imperialism and the adoption science and democracy as new rallying points against the Confucian tradition. It stimulated among the young Chinese intellectual, cultural and political leaders the study of revolutionary movements abroad, especially the Great October Socialist Revolution, and led to the founding of the Communist Party of China in 1921.

Mao Zedong was himself was influenced by the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement and praised it in 1939 in the following words: "The May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement twenty years ago marked a new stage in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism. The cultural reform movement which grew out of the May 4th Movement was only one of the manifestations of this revolution. With the growth and development of new social forces in that period, a powerful camp made its appearance in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, a camp consisting of the working class, the student masses and the new national bourgeoisie. Around the time of the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement, hundreds of thousands of students courageously took their place in the van. In these respects, the May Fourth Movement went a step beyond the Revolution of 1911."

In his "Talks at Yen'an Forum" on May 2, 1942, Mao further said: "In our struggle for the liberation of the Chinese people there are various

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fronts, among which there are the fronts of the pen and of the gun, the cultural and the military fronts. To defeat the enemy, we must rely primarily on the army with guns. But this army alone is not enough; we must also have a cultural army, which is absolutely indispensable for uniting our own ranks and defeating the enemy. Since the May 4th Movement such a cultural army has taken shape in China, and it has helped the Chinese revolution, gradually reduced the domain of China's feudal culture and of the comprador culture which serves imperialist aggression, and weakened their influence.

"The purpose of our meeting today is precisely to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind. What are the problems that must be solved to achieve this objective? I think they are the problems of the class stand of the writers and artists, their attitude, their audience, their work and their study."

The May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement was one of the major influences on the student activists in the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP), which I co-founded in 1959. We were inspired by it to do our best in igniting a student mass movement against imperialism and feudalism in order to resume the unfinished Philippine Revolution of 1896 and raise it to the level of the new democratic revolution led by the proletariat in the era of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution.

We understood and appreciated the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement as the signal for the advance of China from the old democratic revolution of 1911 to the new democratic revolution. At that time, we were avidly reading and studying Comrade Mao's works. As chairman of the SCAUP in the period of 1959-61, I wrote a long article in the *Philippine Collegian* on the May Fourth Movement to praise it as a historic event worthy of emulation by the Filipino youth and nation.

We considered the anti-CAFA demonstration of 5000 students on March 15, 1961 a historic anti-imperialist event like the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement. We also proclaimed our positive response to Claro Mayo Recto's call for the Second Propaganda Movement against US imperialism and local reactionaries. The anti-imperialist and democratic protest mass actions for the national and democratic rights of the Filipino people against imperialism and feudalism developed nationwide throughout the 1960s to the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

The key leaders of SCAUP also became leaders of the Kabataang Makabayan (KM), which was a comprehensive youth organization of students and young workers, peasants, teachers and other professionals.

The KM was strongly linked to the trade union, peasant movement and student organizations and was in the forefront of the legal struggles of the national democratic movement until Marcos proclaimed martial law in 1972. The KM was forced underground and facilitated the participation of thousands of its members to join the armed revolution.

*2. In cultural work, there are some problems that need to be addressed. Mao talked about the class stand. Cultural workers should always have the stand of proletariat and of the masses. But how do we ensure this? What are the criteria that you have to fulfil in order to say, as an artist, you have the class stand of the proletariat and the masses?*

JMS: The semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines is exploitative and oppressive. It is dominated by foreign monopoly capitalism and run by the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords through corrupt politicians that we call bureaucrat capitalists. The most exploited classes are the workers and peasants and to some extent the middle social strata.

To be socially significant and relevant, the artists and creative writers must know not only the general statements that I have made but they must do as much social investigation as they can and interact with the people. Thus, they can find out for themselves that to be factually honest, truthful and socially just they must side with the exploited and oppressed masses of workers and peasants against the exploiters and oppressors and they must choose the class stand of the working class as the most productive and progressive class that stands for current social progress and for the future in a socialist society.

According to Comrade Mao in his "Talks at the Yen-an Forum", "Our stand is that of the proletariat and of the masses. For members of the Communist Party, this means keeping to the stand of the Party, keeping to Party spirit and Party policy." The organs of the party, the cadres and earlier members of the party can facilitate understanding of the basic principles, policies and line that can guide the understanding of and needed action on concrete practical issues.

Even as as they need to work and associate with their peers in the cultural field, the artists and creative writers can take the initiative to study the best that has been written about the role of the working class as well as about their own role as cultural workers from Marxist-Leninist classics to the current proletarian revolutionary thinkers and leaders. They do not have to read an entire library within a short period of time to learn enough of the revolutionary theory and practice of the proletariat. The point is to apply the already understood concepts on the understanding of social reality and in giving life to the people's struggle in artistic and literary works as organisms.

Comrade Mao teaches us, "It is right for writers and artists to study

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literary and artistic creation, but the science of Marxism-Leninism must be studied by all revolutionaries, writers and artists not excepted. Writers and artists should study society, that is to say, should study the various classes in society, their mutual relations and respective conditions, their physiognomy and their psychology. Only when we grasp all this clearly can we have a literature and art that is rich in content and correct in orientation.”

*3. There is also the matter of audience. How do we ensure that our art and literature reach the audience that we want to reach, which is the masses? How do we not limit ourselves to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals?*

JMS: The matter of audience is indeed important. The revolutionary artists, creative writers and other cultural workers must go to and address the biggest possible audience, which consists of the workers and peasants. They can also help develop their own artistic, literary and cultural organizations and activities. Thus, a great movement of revolutionary art and culture as well as a great body of artistic and cultural workers and works would arise and develop beyond the control of the exploiting classes.

In the exploitative social system that we have in the Philippines, the artists, creative writers and other cultural workers must create and develop their own organizations and link up with the movements of the workers, peasants, indigenous people, youth, women and others in order to learn from the masses, their economic, social and cultural conditions and activities and try to create works that reflect their conditions, needs and aspirations, catch their interest and inspire them to fight for a brighter and better future.

It is wrong to limit the relations of the revolutionary artists, creative writers and other cultural workers to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. It is worse to adopt the petty bourgeois pose of being without class or above classes and evading the reality of classes and class struggle and the question of what is just and what is unjust and what is truthful and what is dishonest in the exploitative society. It is worst when artists, creative writers and cultural workers outrightly cater to the class interests and sensibilities of the exploiting classes, simply because they wish to earn the good graces of the exploiters, reach a big audience and earn more money.

Comrade Mao points out that there is a big audience for revolutionary art and literature. According to him, “The cadres of all types, fighters in the army, workers in the factories and peasants in the villages all want to read books and newspapers once they become literate, and those who are illiterate want to see plays and operas, look at drawings and paintings, sing songs and hear music; they are the audience for our works of literature and art. Take the cadres alone. Do not think they are few; they far outnumber the readers of any book published in the Kuomintang areas.”

*4. The question of "for whom" is fundamental in creating art - Is it for the oppressor or for the oppressed. Are all artistic works political? Is it not possible to have an art that is neutral?*

JMS: To be revolutionary, the artists and creative writers must be resolutely for the oppressed masses against the oppressors. This is of fundamental importance. In the final analysis, any work of art has a class character and is political. It serves either the oppressor or oppressed. Even works that are created from a petty bourgeois standpoint that opposes, obscures or evades the just cause of the oppressed amount to works serving the oppressor and falling into line with the class interests of the oppressor.

Mao points out that Marxists have long solved the problem of "for whom" in literature and art. He states: "This problem was solved long ago by Marxists, especially by Lenin. As far back as 1905 Lenin pointed out emphatically that our literature and art should "serve...the millions and tens of millions of working people. For comrades engaged in literary and artistic work in the anti-Japanese base areas it might seem that this problem is already solved and needs no further discussion.

"Who, then, are the masses of the people? The broadest sections of the people, constituting more than 90 per cent of our total population, are the workers, peasants, soldiers and urban petty bourgeoisie. Therefore, our literature and art are first for the workers, the class that leads the revolution. Secondly, they are for the peasants, the most numerous and most steadfast of our allies in the revolution. Thirdly, they are for the armed workers and peasants, namely, the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies and the other armed units of the people, which are the main forces of the revolutionary war. Fourthly, they are for the laboring masses of the urban petty bourgeoisie and for the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, both of whom are also our allies in the revolution and capable of long-term co-operation with us. These four kinds of people constitute the overwhelming majority of the Chinese nation, the broadest masses of the people.

"Our literature and art should be for the four kinds of people we have enumerated. To serve them, we must take the class stand of the proletariat and not that of the petty bourgeoisie. Today, writers who cling to an individualist, petty-bourgeois stand cannot truly serve the masses of revolutionary workers, peasants and soldiers. Their interest is mainly focused on the small number of petty-bourgeois intellectuals. This is the crucial reason why some of our comrades cannot correctly solve the problem of "for whom?" In saying this I am not referring to theory. In theory, or in words, no one in our ranks regards the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers as less important than the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. I am referring to practice, to action. In practice, in action, do they regard petty-bourgeois intellectuals as more important than workers, peasants and

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soldiers? I think they do.”

Therefore, Comrade Mao, gives the following admonition: “We encourage revolutionary writers and artists to be active in forming intimate contacts with the workers, peasants and soldiers, giving them complete freedom to go among the masses and to create a genuinely revolutionary literature and art. Therefore, here among us the problem is nearing solution. But nearing solution is not the same as a complete and thorough solution. We must study Marxism and study society, as we have been saying, precisely in order to achieve a complete and thorough solution. By Marxism we mean living Marxism which plays an effective role in the life and struggle of the masses, not Marxism in words. With Marxism in words transformed into Marxism in real life, there will be no more sectarianism. Not only will the problem of sectarianism be solved, but many other problems as well.”

*5. Mao talked about the balance of popularization and raising of standards. What does that mean? Can you give an example on this for us to better understand it?*

JMS: Comrade Mao states that since in the first place our literature and art are basically for the workers, peasants and soldiers, “popularization” means to popularize among the workers, peasants and soldiers, and “raising standards” means to advance from their present level. He raises a series of questions and answers them: “What should we popularize among them? We must popularize only what is needed and can be readily accepted by the workers, peasants and soldiers themselves. Consequently, prior to the task of educating the workers, peasants and soldiers, there is the task of learning from them.”

“This is even more true of raising standards. There must be a basis from which to raise. Take a bucket of water, for instance; where is it to be raised from if not from the ground? It means raising the level of literature and art in the direction in which the workers, peasants and soldiers are themselves advancing, in the direction in which the proletariat is advancing. Here again the task of learning from the workers, peasants and soldiers comes in. Only by starting from the workers, peasants and soldiers can we have a correct understanding of popularization and of the raising of standards and find the proper relationship between the two.”

Comrade Mao considers the relationship between popularization by pointing out first that popular works are simpler and plainer, and therefore more readily accepted by the broad masses of the people today. Works of a higher quality, being more polished, are more difficult to produce and in general do not circulate so easily and quickly among the masses in the course of the people's war. He points out that the workers, peasants and soldiers are now engaged in a bitter and bloody struggle with the enemy but are illiterate and uneducated as a result of long years of rule by the



feudal and bourgeois classes, and therefore they are eagerly demanding enlightenment, education and works of literature and art which meet their urgent needs and which are easy to absorb, in order to heighten their enthusiasm in struggle and confidence in victory, strengthen their unity and fight the enemy with one heart and one mind. He points out that the prime need is not "more flowers on the brocade" but "fuel in snowy weather" and that therefore, popularization is the more pressing task.

To round up, Comrade Mao concludes that through the creative labor of revolutionary writers and artists, the raw materials found in the life of the people are shaped into the ideological form of literature and art serving the masses of the people. Included here are the more advanced literature and art as developed on the basis of elementary literature and art and as required by those sections of the masses whose level has been raised, or, more immediately, by the cadres among the masses. Also included here are elementary literature and art which, conversely, are guided by more advanced literature and art and are needed primarily by the overwhelming majority of the masses at present. Whether more advanced or elementary, all our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

*6. In revolutionary art, there is the political criterion and there is the artistic criterion; what is the relationship between the two?*

JMS: Comrade Mao declares that in the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines and that there is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes or art that is detached from or independent of politics. He points out that proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine. He stresses that Party work in literature and art occupies a definite and assigned position in Party revolutionary work as a whole and is subordinated to the revolutionary tasks set by the Party in a given revolutionary period.

He rejects any contrary arrangement that leads to dualism or pluralism, and that in essence amounts to "politics--Marxist, art--bourgeois", as preached by the muddleheaded Trotsky. Comrade Mao states,

"We do not favour overstressing the importance of literature and art, but neither do we favour underestimating their importance. Literature and art are subordinate to politics, but in their turn exert a great influence on politics. Revolutionary literature and art are part of the whole revolutionary cause, they are cogs and wheels in it, and though in comparison with certain other and more important parts they may be less significant and less urgent and may occupy a secondary position, nevertheless, they are indispensable cogs and wheels in the whole machine, an indispensable

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part of the entire revolutionary cause.”

He emphasizes, “If we had no literature and art even in the broadest and most ordinary sense, we could not carry on the revolutionary movement and win victory. Failure to recognize this is wrong. Furthermore, when we say that literature and art are subordinate to politics, we mean class politics, the politics of the masses, not the politics of a few so-called statesmen. Politics, whether revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, is the struggle of class against class, not the activity of a few individuals. The revolutionary struggle on the ideological and artistic fronts must be subordinate to the political struggle because only through politics can the needs of the class and the masses find expression in concentrated form. Revolutionary statesmen, the political specialists who know the science or art of revolutionary politics, are simply the leaders of millions upon millions of statesmen--the masses. Their task is to collect the opinions of these mass statesmen, sift and refine them, and return them to the masses, who then take them and put them into practice. They are therefore not the kind of aristocratic “statesmen” who work behind closed doors and fancy they have a monopoly of wisdom.”

Comrade Mao gives guidance to united front in the world of literature and art in the following words: “Since literature and art are subordinate to politics and since the fundamental problem in China’s politics today is resistance to Japan, our Party writers and artists must in the first place unite on this issue of resistance to Japan with all non-Party writers and artists (ranging from Party sympathizers and petty-bourgeois writers and artists to all those writers and artists of the bourgeois and landlord classes who are in favour of resistance to Japan). Secondly, we should unite with them on the issue of democracy. On this issue there is a section of anti-Japanese writers and artists who do not agree with us, so the range of unity will unavoidably be somewhat more limited. Thirdly, we should unite with them on issues peculiar to the literary and artistic world, questions of method and style in literature and art; here again, as we are for socialist realism and some people do not agree, the range of unity will be narrower still.

He gives further advice to the Party writers and artists in united front work with non-Party colleagues. “While on one issue there is unity, on another there is struggle, there is criticism. The issues are at once separate and interrelated, so that even on the very ones which give rise to unity, such as resistance to Japan, there are at the same time struggle and criticism. In a united front, “all unity and no struggle” and “all struggle and no unity” are both wrong policies--as with the Right capitulationism and tailism, or the “Left” exclusivism and sectarianism, practised by some comrades in the past. This is as true in literature and art as in politics.”

Comrade Mao weighs the relationship between the political and artistic

criterion in the following words: "Politics cannot be equated with art, nor can a general world outlook be equated with a method of artistic creation and criticism. We deny not only that there is an abstract and absolutely unchangeable political criterion, but also that there is an abstract and absolutely unchangeable artistic criterion; each class in every class society has its own political and artistic criteria. But all classes in all class societies invariably put the political criterion first and the artistic criterion second.

"The bourgeoisie always shuts out proletarian literature and art, however great their artistic merit. The proletariat must similarly distinguish among the literary and art works of past ages and determine its attitude towards them only after examining their attitude to the people and whether or not they had any progressive significance historically. Some works which politically are downright reactionary may have a certain artistic quality. The more reactionary their content and the higher their artistic quality, the more poisonous they are to the people, and the more necessary it is to reject them.

"A common characteristic of the literature and art of all exploiting classes in their period of decline is the contradiction between their reactionary political content and their artistic form. What we demand is the unity of politics and art, the unity of content and form, the unity of revolutionary political content and the highest possible perfection of artistic form. Works of art which lack artistic quality have no force, however progressive they are politically. Therefore, we oppose both the tendency to produce works of art with a wrong political viewpoint and the tendency towards the "poster and slogan style" which is correct in political viewpoint but lacking in artistic power. On questions of literature and art we must carry on a struggle on two fronts."

*7. In art school, works of the bourgeoisie are the ones being studied. Is it important to study the art of the bourgeoisie? Should the curriculum of art academies be changed after victory?*

JMS: It is of course in the nature of bourgeois art and literary academies to admire, study and celebrate the classical works of ancient slave and feudal societies and of course the great works of bourgeois artists and creative writers. The most reactionary administrations and faculty members of such academies completely shut out proletarian revolutionary works of literature and art, although at certain times some faculty members on their own initiative allow these works to be studied and appreciated by the students.

After the victory of the people's democratic revolution, the art and literary academies will certainly change the curriculum and favor proletarian revolutionary art and literature against bourgeois reactionary art and literature. But there can be subjects for examining and criticizing reactionary works. These can be studied by specialists, although they are

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not subjects for general propagation or obligatory study by all students.

The critical study of bourgeois works of literature and art is important and useful, especially for specialists. We must know their positive and negative features and contrast them with revolutionary democratic and proletarian works. Remember that science and technology, the proletariat and machine large production have passed through capitalist society. Anyway, especially in the digital age, there is no way of shutting out completely works from the past and from the class enemy.

We must know the history of art and literature in the Philippines and other countries. Otherwise, the artists, creative writers and the public will become ignorant of the contents of museums and the significance of artistic works and structures that continue to stand in public places. We must know the continuity and discontinuities in the cultural heritage of our nation and the world. Otherwise, we would not know how to measure and evaluate the revolutionary advances that we have made. But always the main point is to learn from the past and others in order to serve the needs of the people and the present.

Comrade Mao states, "We must take over all the fine things in our literary and artistic heritage, critically assimilate whatever is beneficial, and use them as examples when we create works out of the literary and artistic raw materials in the life of the people of our own time and place. It makes a difference whether or not we have such examples, the difference between crudeness and refinement, between roughness and polish, between a low and a high level, and between slower and faster work. Therefore, we must on no account reject the legacies of the ancients and the foreigners or refuse to learn from them, even though they are the works of the feudal or bourgeois classes."

His caveat and positive guidance are as follows:

"But taking over legacies and using them as examples must never replace our own creative work; nothing can do that. Uncritical transplantation or copying from the ancients and the foreigners is the most sterile and harmful dogmatism in literature and art. China's revolutionary writers and artists, writers and artists of promise, must go among the masses; they must for a long period of time unreservedly and wholeheartedly go among the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, go into the heat of the struggle, go to the only source, the broadest and richest source, in order to observe, experience, study and analyse all the different kinds of people, all the classes, all the masses, all the vivid patterns of life and struggle, all the raw materials of literature and art. Only then can they proceed to creative work. Otherwise, you will have nothing to work with and you will be nothing but a phoney writer or artist, the kind that Lu Hsun in his will so earnestly cautioned his son never to become."

*8. Art and literature, or cultural work in general, is part of organizational*

*tasks. Would a revolutionary organization be effective without it? How important is it in organizing?*

JMS: Art and literature, or cultural work in general is a necessary and decisive part of the revolutionary machinery and tasks. Without it, a revolutionary organization or the entire movement would be ineffective. Cultural work facilitates in the most persuasive and pleasing way the people's understanding of the moral justness, the principles, policies and line of the revolutionary movement. It hastens the arousal, organization and mobilization of the masses and inspires them to act as a revolutionary force against their oppressors and exploiters.

It would be a dull and ineffective revolutionary movement that has no culture. Cultural work raises the fighting spirit of the people and sharpens all weapons of the revolution. Without, cultural work, the revolutionary movement would be sluggish and would even fail. Even before being able to seize political power with the use of the people's army, the proletariat must be able to create and develop the cultural part of the superstructure of the socialist future during the people's democratic revolution. Otherwise, the cultural dominance of the exploiting classes would persist and hamper or even reverse the advance of the socialism.

*9. Should artists be organized? Some artists express that their art is being restricted by organization. How do we deal with such sentiments? How do we balance organizational tasks and the freedom of art?*

JMS: As I have already pointed out earlier, in accordance with the teachings of Lenin and Mao, it is absolutely necessary for the artists, creative writers and other cultural workers to be organized. Otherwise, as isolated individuals, they are ineffective elements against oppression and exploitation and they remain more subject and more vulnerable to attack or manipulation by the forces, agents and mechanisms of imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

Petty bourgeois subjectivists and opportunists preach that the artists, creative writers and other cultural workers must be against being organized in order to be free. But in fact, they thus become captive to the ruling system and the exploiting classes. In the just revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people, every creative writer, artist or cultural worker interested in the common struggle against oppression and exploitation needs to be organized and encouraged to contribute to the unity and strengthening of the revolutionary movement.

When they are organized, they learn from each other collectively, draw strength from each other and from their unity and collective capabilities and they can fight more effectively against the unjust ruling system and the forces of class oppression and exploitation. And yet they can still create and develop their works individually and in necessary work collectives and draw inspiration from their multi-talented colleagues in their organization

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and from the entire revolutionary movement.

It is necessary to build the organizations of Party writers, artists and cultural workers under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat. And it is also necessary to build united front organizations which the Party elements and nonParty elements can join. The waging and advancement of the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines requires the broad united front of the patriotic and progressive creative writers, artists and other cultural workers.

*10. Maybe you can share some personal experiences how art and culture influenced your political activism, if it did?*

JMS: I am very much influenced by revolutionary art and culture in the development of my political activism. While I was in the university, as an undergraduate and graduate student, I practically gobbled up all creative writing that was available in the UP Main Library and had something to do with the Philippine revolution, with the Left movement in the US during the 1930s and the classic literary works from the Russian, Chinese and other revolutions.

I had the advantage of being a student in English and journalism and then a graduate student in comparative literature. But I was also intensely interested in literature with revolutionary content.

I also found it enlightening, invigorating and fulfilling to be with cultural and political activists in SCAUP with writers in the *Philippine Collegian* and the UP Writers Club. In my time, these became centers of discussions, mass communications and militancy along line of the national democratic movement.

I also acted in plays together with Behn Cervantes, Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal who became great film makers. It is in theatre that you learn to work with others, rehearse and coordinate with many others and blend with various artistic talents, in order to come out with a creditable total product in a series of stage presentations.

I have written poems, essays and other works with revolutionary content to this day. I wrote short stories and two novels and put them away because of my own judgment that they were not good enough politically and artistically. I taught English literature and encouraged my students to study revolutionary literature even when this was not part of the syllabus. I also taught, as a social science subject, Rizal's novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*. I dealt with these as expose of the oppressiveness and exploitativeness of Spanish colonialism, with continuing relevance to the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines today.



# Cultural Imperialism in the Philippines

Second session of webinar series on Art and Culture,  
sponsored by Panday Sining Europe, Anakbayan Europa  
and ND Online School

Questions by Host Edna Becher

October 11, 2020

*1. Can you talk about the Philippine culture before colonialism came? What kind of societies existed by then?*

JMS: With regard to the peopling of the Philippines, the Aetas are recognized as aborigines. Next came the Austronesians from across the South China Sea. Then came the Malays from the South with knowledge and skills in iron smelting and forging. The various local cultures had their respective origins and development but were exposed to outside influences by trading with neighboring lands in Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia as well as by wars and subjugation of one type of people by another.

When Spanish colonialism came to the Philippines, there was already a variety of societies and cultures of varying scales in the Philippine archipelago. There were the forest-based primitive communal societies of the Aetas, the patriarchal slave societies of the Malays along the sea coast and big rivers and the Islamic feudal communities with features of slavery mainly in Mindanao but also in other places up to Luzon, including Manila.

On the basis of the different types of societies, there were different kinds of cultures. There were distinct methods of production as well as distinct designs of products, especially in pottery, weaving and blacksmithing. There was a variety of scripts, songs and poems. Tattooing was widespread and was a way of self-dignification and artistic expression. There were various types of belief in the supernatural, such as animism, pantheism, polytheism and Islamic monotheism.

*2. A colonial and feudal society evolved during the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. How did it evolve and what did it look like?*

JMS: Spain conquered most of the Philippines with the use of the sword and the cross. The first colonial expedition headed by Magellan failed in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. But the subsequent Legazpi expedition in the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century succeeded with the use of divide-and-rule tactics. Legazpi had only some 250 men but he recruited Visayans to be able to conquer communities in Luzon.

Typically, the Spanish conquistadores launched an attack on a community that was resistant despite offers of friendship and gifts to the datu or rajah. After the success of the sword, the Catholic chaplain of

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the Spanish military force engaged in religious proselytization, usually converting the ruling families first and then the rest of the community. The subjugated Malay communities usually had a patriarchal slave system, with elements of feudalism already in its womb. Thus, it was not too difficult to use this as base for the feudal *encomienda* system.

In the first century of Spanish colonial dominion, slavery was still practiced in the *encomienda* system but it would be formally abolished and would dwindle. The slaves became share-cropping tenants or serfs and the house slaves became servants, with the former slave master's power of life and death over subjects neutralized and moderated by Christian and feudal rules and values. Thus, feudalism was adopted and became widespread in most of the more than three centuries of Spanish colonial rule.

*3. Catholicism was propagated by the colonizers. How could it be that it was effectively adapted by the native Filipinos? What role did it play in the colonization of the Philippines?*

JMS: The motives and objectives of Spanish colonialism are evident in the official slogans of God, Gold and Glory. Spanish colonialism was supposed to do the work of God in making Christians out heathens. Gold in the Philippines was a prime target of Spanish mercantile capitalism. And of course, Glory belonged to the Spanish crown/monarchy.

The friars accompanying the conquistadors had effective tactics in proselytization and conversion of the natives. Even after the conquest or submission by a community to the superior Spanish military force, they did not compel the *datus* to become monogamous but they taught Christianity to the wives and baptized the children as Christians. They supplanted the worship of many *anitos* with the worship of many saints around the single God who supplanted Bathala wherever this was the supreme deity.

While the Spanish military and their native conscripts had the sword and guns as hardware of colonial power, the friars and their converts supplied the software like the crucifix, the Bible, the catechisms, novenas, the rosary beads, the daily twilight prayers, the Sunday masses and other rituals and the statues of Christ, Mary and the saints which dwarfed the *anitos*. In other words, while the Spanish soldiery was the essential politico-military instrument of domination, Christianity and the friars were the cultural instruments of persuasion and manufacturing consent or acquiescence to colonial domination.

*4. Were there any cultural factors that influenced the 1896 Revolution?*

JMS: There were cultural factors that arose in the Philippines, eventually influencing the Philippine revolution of 1896. As a result of further agricultural development for the purpose of export and inter-island trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, families of landlords and an increased number of bureaucrats and merchants could send their children to the university



to study for various professions. Liberal democratic ideas seeped into the country in various ways, especially in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When so many natives and mestizos became priests, they carried out the so-called secularization movement and demanded that the parishes be put under their charge, instead of the Spanish religious orders. The friars pressed the Spanish colonial government to punish the leaders of the secularization movement. Thus, Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora were martyred. Their martyrdom stirred national consciousness among the Filipino people and inflamed anticolonial sentiment.

There were contradictions among the colonialists themselves reflecting their contradictory interests in the colony as well as the contradictions between the monarchists and the liberal democrats in Spain. It was in this kind of situation when the Propaganda Movement of the Filipino expatriates began and developed in Spain. They were influenced by the French revolution but at the same time they limited themselves to demanding reforms and to making the Philippines a regular province of Spain.

In the meantime, there were Filipinos in the Philippines like Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto who became determined to establish the Katipunan, declare independence and wage a liberal democratic revolution against Spain. Spanish colonialism became more and more exploitative and oppressive in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the Moro people rallying to their Islamic society and culture became more combative against Spain. So were the indigenous people in the hilly and mountainous regions who had always resisted Spanish colonialism and retained their own local cultures.

*5. How was the colonial power in the Philippines transferred from Spain to the United States?*

JMS: The Kawit proclamation of independence was done on June 12, 1898. Then all over the Philippines Spanish colonial power was swept away by the Filipino revolutionary forces, except the Intramuros of Manila. In the meantime, the US and Spain engaged in peace negotiations in Paris and reached an agreement on December 10, 1898 whereby Spain sold the Philippines to the US for USD 20 million.

In accordance with such peace agreement, the American fleet headed US admiral Dewey and the Spanish fleet staged a fake battle at Manila Bay and the Spanish authorities in Intramuros surrendered to Admiral Dewey. From then on, relations between the Philippine revolutionary government and the US became openly hostile. War broke out between the Filipino people and US imperialism on February 4, 1899. US imperialism prevailed over the Filipino people by using superior military power and killing 1.5 million Filipinos.

*6. US colonial rule was different from the Spanish colonial rule. It shifted from feudalism to semi-feudalism. How were the changes that were made*

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*and how did it benefit the US?*

JMS: Spanish colonialism was at the most merchant capitalist, engaging in the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade and later on in the trade with Europe via the Suez Canal. It was mainly interested in the feudal mode of producing such agricultural crops as tobacco, abaca, sugar and the like for export and the import of consumer manufactures. To some extent, the feudal mode of production was eroded by the production of goods for exchange within the archipelago and with foreign countries. But the relations of production were still predominantly feudal, with the landlord being the ruling class among the Filipinos.

To make the Philippines semifeudal, the US undertook a series of actions like the following: remove the feudal restrictions on the movement of the people, transfer ownership of the friar estates to Filipinos, expand the haciendas for the production of export crops, grab the land from the indigenous people and open the mines, set up enterprises to manufacture domestic consumables out of locally available raw materials, expand the infrastructure to facilitate domestic and foreign trade and commerce and expand the educational system to produce more bureaucrats and professionals.

The US benefited from its own colonial power by taxing the people to defray the costs of colonial administration and the social infrastructure building. Its monopoly banks drew superprofits from loans and direct investments. It favored the production of export crops and mineral ores and the import of consumer manufactures and equipment of the type that fell short of industrializing the country. Until now, the semifeudal economy persists. The US and other foreign monopoly firms continue to profit from the grossly unequal exchange of cheap raw materials from the Philippine and high-priced manufactures from abroad.

*7. To achieve economic and political control, the United States had to exercise cultural control over the Filipino people. Education played an especially significant role in this. How did the US use the educational system in influencing the Filipino people into submission?*

JMS: Spanish colonialism failed to establish a public school system. But the US was able to do so and also expanded the secondary and tertiary levels of educations. It designed the curriculum and study materials to favor and glorify the US. Like the Spanish colonialists used Christianity, the Catholic schools and the catechism to promote their colonial rule, the US propagated their so-called Jeffersonian kind of liberal ideology to prettify the monstrosity of imperialist conquest and domination of the Philippines.

US soldiers who could teach in the primary grades were allowed to teach and were called Thomasites. American Catholic and Protestant religious missionaries also came in big number to the Philippines. Filipino

students with high academic marks were enlisted for scholarship in the US in various fields of study and professional course. They were called the pensionados. The English language supplanted the Spanish language as the principal language of the ruling system and the educational system.

Since the end of direct US colonial rule, US cultural influence in the Philippines has remained dominant. It combines with the economic and political dominance and is supported by it as well as supports it. Many Filipino still take their postgraduate studies in US universities. And the Filipino people are daily bombarded by US propaganda and entertainment programs in printed and electronic media., The puppet leaders of the Philippines and the upper classes tend to follow and echo the latest propaganda from the US.

*8. Besides education, what were the other ways that the US used culture to dominate the Philippines?*

JMS: Aside from the educational system, the US has used the mass media to spread its cultural dominance not only among the formally educated but among the people in general. The mass media are used to spread US cultural influence by presenting US political leaders all kinds of celebrities in the movies, popular music and sports as role models and sources of ideas, cultural biases and consumer taste.

News broadcasts and entertainment programs are used directly to play up and favor US cultural imperialism in overt and subtle ways. Political and commercial advertising are also designed to favor the so-called American way of life and consumerism at the expense of one's own national, class and personal sense. It promotes the culture of automatically preferring the US side of controversial issues and choice of US products over local products. Whatever is the latest hype in the US cultural scene is often aped by the many pro-US creatures in Philippine society.

*9. In 1946, the Philippines became a neocolonial republic. Could you explain briefly what neocolonial means?*

JMS: Strictly speaking, in using the conventional language of Lenin and Mao, it is okay to say that the Philippines became a semicolony of the US from being a full colony under the direct colonial administration by US colonial officials. But you may also use the term neocolony as a synonym of semicolony. There is no fundamental difference between the two terms, except that Sukarno and Zhou Enlai popularized the term neocolony in the 1950s to stress the nuance of economic and financial control by foreign monopoly capitalism.

Semicolony or neocolony means that a colonial or imperialist power has granted nominal independence to a colony but still retains economic, financial, political, cultural and military power over the former full colony by virtue of certain treaties, agreements and arrangements and through puppet leaders at all levels of the formally independent country.

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In the case of the Philippines, the US made sure that when it granted nominal independence US corporations and citizens retained their property rights and their right to engage in business on terms equal to those of Filipino, and the US military bases stayed on. The Military Bases Agreement, the Mutual Defense Treaty, the Military Assistance Agreement, the Quirino Foster Agreement (US control of the bureaucracy), the Laurel Langley Agreement and other agreements followed to perpetuate US dominance.

The US Military Bases Agreement was not extended in 1991 but the Philippines was still bound to the US by the Military Assistance Pact, Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, Visiting Forces Agreement and Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. The multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and the WTO and various financial and trading agreements have been used effectively by the US and its allies to subordinate the semicolonial system to the world capitalist system.

*10. The US conducted a strong anticommunist campaign in the late 40s and 50s. Did this also reach the Philippines and what effect did it have? What cultural venue did it utilize for this campaign?*

JMS: The US carried out a vicious anticommunist campaign in the Philippines in opposition to the armed revolution of the Filipino people for national independence and democracy against the US and the local exploiting classes in the aftermath of the defeat of Japanese fascism and the US reconquest of the Philippines and also in connection with the US Cold War against the Soviet Union as well as the US hot wars against the national liberation movements and the peoples of Asia, especially in Korea and the Philippines.

Aside from masterminding and drawing the so-called insurgency plans and supplying the military logistics, the US provided the anticommunist indoctrination to motivate and embolden the Filipino puppet leaders and their military and police forces to suppress the people and the revolutionary forces for national independence and democracy. They fabricated all kinds of lies against the supposed evils of communism and spouted the slogans of US-style democracy and free enterprise.

*11. The print and electronic mass media have been nationalized since 1972. How could colonial mentality still spread through these media?*

JMS: Colonial mentality can still spread through the print and electronic media because they are under franchise and regulation by pro-US ruling politicians, they are owned by big compradors who are tightly bound up with the foreign monopoly firms by financial arrangements, they are sustained and made profitable by the advertisements of US and other foreign monopoly firms and big comprador firms and they disseminate content produced by editors and producers who follow the dictates of the media owners and advertisers.

*12. What are the objectives of colonial mentality? What kind of culture do they want to dominate?*

JMS: Colonial mentality means subservience to foreign monopoly interests and pro-foreign comprador interests and holding political, cultural, economic and security biases in favor of the aforesaid interests against the national and democratic rights and interests of the people. It is a reactionary kind of mentality which is derived from pro-imperialist and reactionary upbringing and education or is adopted by those adhering to it by way of getting a higher position and compensation than others.

*13. Does language play a part in spreading colonial mentality? How?*

JMS: It is an advantage to know the language of a dominant foreign power, like Spanish in the time of Spanish colonialism or English in the time of US imperialism. The language facilitates your understanding of the ideas and values of the dominant foreign power and your obtaining personal benefits from serving that foreign power and its puppets. Thus, you become a person with colonial mentality if you use the foreign language to serve the foreign power and its puppets against the Filipino nation.

But you can use a foreign language like Rizal did in order to criticize and repudiate colonialism and colonial mentality and to gain support from the Spanish people and other peoples abroad. That is what the proletarian revolutionaries and anti-imperialists do today. They use English to criticize, condemn and fight US imperialism among the English-educated people in the Philippines and to gain international support from peoples abroad along the anti-imperialist line and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. Language is like a knife that you can use for a good purpose or for a bad purpose.

*14. A lot of other countries, that were not colonies of the US, are also heavily influenced by American culture. How do you compare this to the colonial influence in the Philippines?*

JMS: American culture, especially the imperialist kind of culture, has spread widely even to the countries not colonized by the US because of the overwhelming dominance of the US in the world capitalist system in economic, political and cultural terms and because of the powerful means of communications available from the time the US became No. 1 imperialist power, especially since the end of World War II. And the US has systematically and vigorously spread its economic, political, cultural and military influence in order to counter socialist countries, newly-independent and the national liberation movements.

*15. Was there any resistance to cultural imperialism?*

JMS: Of course, where there are patriotic and progressive forces, especially where there are revolutionary forces led by the proletariat, there is resistance to cultural imperialism. In the Philippines, for instance, the legal national democratic movement and the armed revolutionary movement

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of the Filipino people demand national liberation and democracy; and in the specific field of culture, they demand a national, scientific and mass culture.

*16. What kind of culture should we put forward to replace colonial culture?*

JMS: We demand a national or patriotic kind of culture which is anticolonial and anti-imperialist. This means that we assert our national sovereignty and we cherish our national cultural heritage, including the achievements of individual compatriots in the field of arts and sciences and by the entire nation and all regional and local communities of diverse characteristics. The point is for culture to serve the needs of the entire Filipino nation and to give full play to its creativity and uphold its dignity.

We demand a scientific culture. This means that we avail of science and technology developed by us and others and use this to advance the Philippine economy, further democratize the political life, realize social justice and a healthy environment and raise the educational and cultural level of the people. In view of the information technology that we have now, we can more easily than before the propagate and raise the educational and cultural level of the nation in schools and outside of schools.

We demand a mass culture. This means the culture is oriented to serving the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, in their struggle for national and social liberation and for a socialist future. It must inspire them to raise their economic, political and cultural level and to make the most and best contributions that they can make from one period to another in order to win gain political power and advance the social revolution and construction.



# Concerning the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Philippine Revolution and International Situation

## Interview with Jose Maria Sison<sup>28</sup>

By Angel Marrades Rodriguez  
Recifrando la Guerra

October 17, 2020

*1. Your personal political experience began with your militancy in progressive patriotic organizations. How was this experience like and to what extent is it still important?*

JMS: To understand the importance of what little we could do for a start in 1959 on the campus of the University of the Philippines, you must know that the old Communist Party in the Philippines had been nearly decimated and the backbone of the old people's liberation army had been broken in 1952 to 1954. Waging its Cold War in the Philippines, US imperialism directed the puppet government to enact the Anti-Subversion Law in 1957 and use it for conducting anti-communist witchhunt in collaboration with the US Central Intelligence Agency and clerico-fascist elements in the dominant Catholic Church.

We, the patriotic and progressive student activists and teachers, were not frightened at all by the Anti-Subversion Law which threatened to mete out the death penalty to anyone who was pointed to as a communist leader by two witnesses. Instead, we were challenged to fight US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. We invoked the academic freedom of the university and its constituents to do research, issue publications and speak out on any issue in the public interest. We made it a point to write and speak for national and democratic rights against foreign and feudal domination.

We formed the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP) in 1959 and I was elected the Chairman. We openly announced the objective to study and learn from the revolutionary history of the of the Filipino people against Spanish colonialism and then against US imperialism and to strive to continue the unfinished national democratic revolution, no longer under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie but

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<sup>28</sup>Interviewed as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines.

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under that of the proletariat. At the same time, we secretly conducted study meetings on the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism in relation to Philippine history and current circumstances of the people.

We issued publications and conducted study meetings and mass protest actions on current national issues on and off the campus. The so-called Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA) of the Philippine Congress held a series of hearings from 1959 onward in order to subject the progressive faculty members and students to anti-communist witchhunt. On March 15, 1961, the SCAUP succeeded in organizing 5,000 students to protest in front of Congress. And then we stormed into the hearing hall and scuttled the hearings.

For the first time since the crackdown in the early 1950s, we succeeded in holding a demonstration in the thousands in order to defend the publication of our anti-imperialist and anti-feudal writings. We were able to put a stop to the anti-communist inquisition and generate a movement of defiance and resistance against US imperialism and the ruling system along the line of national liberation and democracy.

*2. In the 1960s, you created organisations such as MAN and MASAKA to mobilise sectors from different social classes which supported a patriotic and a democratic-oriented struggle for the liberation of the Philippines. What led you to split from the PKP, organization where you formerly were active in, and the construction of the new party in 1968?*

JMS: In the 1960s, I played a key role in the organization of several major mass formations like Kabataang Makabayan in 1964, in the consolidation of Lapiang Manggagawa (Workers' Party) and its reconstitution as Socialist Party in 1964 and 1965 respectively and in the formation of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism as an anti-imperialist and democratic united front. I had no part in the organization of MASAKA in 1963 but I was subsequently put in charge of the refresher courses for the veteran peasant cadres openly on the worker-peasant alliance and discreetly on Marxism-Leninism.

Following the success of the anti-CAFA demonstration in 1961, the student leaders of SCAUP were highly appreciated by the leaders and masses of students in other universities in Metro Manila. Thus, we were welcome when we made a campaign to form student groups like the SCAUP to carry out openly the study of the national democratic struggle and discreetly the study of Marxism-Leninism as theoretical guide.

The authorities in my department in the university did not like my role in the anti-CAFA demonstration and they did not renew my teaching fellowship and graduate scholarship. Thus, I gained time organize secret study circles in Marxism-Leninism in several universities. I even found time to travel to Indonesia to study the Indonesian language and the mass movement there in the first half of 1962.



I joined the Lapiang Manggagawa (Workers' Party) for political education work among the trade union members in the latter half of 1962. I became the head of the research and education department of the party. I was in charge of research, drafting party statements, issuing publications and holding seminars. The student activists from various universities joined the workers in seminars. Later on, children of veteran peasant leaders from the rural regions close to Manila also joined.

Soon enough, we were able to launch mass actions on national issues against the reactionary government and its pro-imperialist policies, especially economic and military subservience to the US. Even before I joined the old Communist Party (CP), we in the SCAUP adopted a plan in late 1961 to form in the next two years a comprehensive youth organization, consisting of students and young workers, peasants, teachers and other professionals to be called Kabataang Makabayan (KM, Patriotic Youth). We envisioned this as a force to assist the working class in leading the movement for national liberation and democracy.

I joined the old CP in December 1962 upon the invitation of its general secretary Jesus Lava through a nephew of his. He designated me immediately as a member of the Executive Committee which he formed and expected to be the embryo of the Central Committee, which he wished to reconstruct in the course of time. Since some years ago, there had been no single Party collective organ or any Party branch in existence. Lava was merely hiding himself in Manila without connection to any mass base or armed force since probably 1957 when he issued the "single-file policy" which practically liquidated the old CP.

Within the Executive Committee of the old CPP, I learned from internal documents of the old CPP and from my conversations with veteran worker and peasant cadres the facts about the errors of the series of Lava siblings who had become general secretary of the party (Vicente from 1942 to 1947, Jose from 1948 to 1950 and Jesus from 1951 to 1964). To know the errors fully, you can read the document titled "Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party". I wrote the draft of this document in accordance with the decision of the five-man Executive Committee in 1965. But the document was rejected by the majority, consisting of three close relatives of Jesus, for being critical of the series of Lava general secretaries.

Vicente Lava was responsible for the Right opportunist error called "retreat for defense policy" which echoed the policy of the pro-US guerrillas called "wait and watch" policy which meant doing intelligence work in preparation for the US reconquest of the Philippines from the hands of the Japanese fascists. Jose Lava was responsible for the "Left" opportunist line of "winning victory in two years time" of the armed struggle, without minding the needed mass work and agrarian revolution. After Jose was arrested, Jesus Lava lost interest in the armed struggle and he swung to

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Right opportunism by deciding to liquidate the people's army in 1955 and the old CP itself in 1957,

It was my criticism of the history of subjectivist and opportunist errors of the series of Lava general secretaries and the emergence of highly important current issues in 1964 to 1966 that led to the two-line struggle in the old CP and eventually the breakaway of the proletarian revolutionaries, including myself, from the old CP. The current issues then involved the refusal of the Lavaite revisionists to make a definite plan for the resumption of the people's war and to take a definite stand against Soviet modern revisionism.

*3: How are democratic and national objectives linked to the objectives of the Socialist Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat?*

JMS: The general line of the CPP is to carry out the people's democratic revolution, with a socialist perspective, through protracted people's war against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system dominated by US imperialism and run by the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

The national and democratic objective is to achieve the national and social liberation of the Filipino people by defeating US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. The CPP is now fighting a civil war against the local exploiting classes but is ready to fight a war of national liberation in case the US unleashes a war of aggression.

It is by carrying out the people's democratic revolution that the working class as the leading class builds the people's army as the main component of the dictatorship of the proletariat or the worker state. Upon the completion of the people's democratic revolution through the seizure of political power, the working class can commence the socialist revolution and socialist transformation of the economy because it has the state power to take all the commanding heights of the social, economic and political life of the nation.

*4. What role has Maoism played during the build-up of the CPP, which was founded on Mao's 75th birthday on 26 December 1968? Did your embrace of Maoism entail the breakup with the previous PKP? At a personal level, how did you come to know about Mao and how did his thought influence you? To what extent were you compelled by the Chinese Cultural Revolution?)*

JMS: We as proletarian revolutionaries broke away from the old CP which we called the Lavaite revisionist party on issues directly pertaining to its history since 1942 up to the circumstances of 1964 to 1966 in the Philippines as well as pertaining to international issues, especially the struggle between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism.

We were critical of the subjectivist and opportunist errors of the series of general secretaries from the same family from 1942 to 1964 and to the

revisionist line of their followers that armed struggle should be avoided and that the legal mass movement should run on indefinitely without any clear plan to resume the armed struggle. We took the position that within the next 4 or 5 years the armed revolution should resume on the basis of the nationwide spread of the mass movement and the deep roots of the party among the workers and peasants.

On international issues, we stood firmly for Marxism-Leninism against Soviet modern revisionism. We took the side of the Chinese CP on all major issues in the ideological debate. We expressed our position frankly on these issues which the Lava revisionist renegades tried to avoid. At first, they posed as having no position and then being neutral or centrist from 1962 to 1964 and finally admitted that they were pro-Soviet revisionist after all.

We were guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in reestablishing the Communist Party of the Philippines. We applied this theory in the criticism, repudiation and rectification of the Lavaite errors that afflicted and weakened the old party from 1942 to the 1960s as well as in the analysis of Philippine history and the social circumstances and adoption of the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war against US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

I had the good fortune of being in China in August 1966, when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) was just beginning. I had very enlightening conversations with members of the CPC Central Committee and the highest responsables of the CPC Higher Party School. I went back to China in 1967 to make a nationwide tour. It was at the seminar in Beijing to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "Talks at Yanan Forum" when I met Comrade Mao Zedong personally. This was covered by the *Beijing Review*.

*5. Despite it being such a broad topic, which lessons might be drawn from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution? How has this historical experience been studied by the Philippine revolutionary movement?*

JMS: Comrade Mao brought to a new and higher stage, the third stage, in the development of theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, by putting forward the theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through cultural revolution (starting with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution) to combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism.

The GPCR brought to the peak Comrade Mao's theoretical and practical achievements along the Marxist-Leninist line. It is the most important component of Mao Zedong Thought on top of its other components. It serves to underscore the series of major contributions Comrade Mao made in philosophy, political economy, social science, rectification movement in

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party building and protracted people's war in the new democratic revolution. The CPP has sought to learn the principles and lessons involved in the theory and practice of the GPCR and in the earlier components of Mao Zedong Thought.

In philosophy, Mao elaborated on and developed Lenin's identification of the unity of opposites (divide into two) as the most fundamental law of materialist dialectics. He applied materialist dialectics in the process of gaining higher knowledge from the dialectics of theory and practice, in carrying out the new democratic revolution through people's war and undertaking socialist revolution and construction.

In political economy, Mao had the advantage of learning positive and negative lessons from Stalin's policy of socialist industrialization and agricultural collectivization. He criticized the revisionist reversal of socialist revolution and construction. And he put forward the line of self-reliant socialist construction by using the basic and heavy industries as the leading factor, agriculture as the base of the economy and light industry as the bridging factor under conditions of imperialist blockade, revisionist betrayal and natural calamity during the Great Leap Forward.

In social science, Mao developed further the theory and practice of the new democratic and socialist stages of the Chinese revolution. But his most important achievement in social science was in recognizing the problem of modern revisionism and the continuing fact of classes and class struggle in socialist society and in adopting solutions. He put forward a series of campaigns to uphold, defend and advance socialism, such as the anti-Rightist campaign, the Great Leap Forward, the socialist education movement and ultimately the cultural revolution as he faced greater resistance from the revisionists and capitalist roaders within his party.

In party building, Mao adopted and developed further the Leninist teaching on building the proletarian vanguard party. He excelled at developing the rectification movement as the campaign for educating the Party cadres and members in Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, as the method for identifying the errors and weaknesses and for saving the patient from the disease and as the way for the Party to better serve the masses, mobilize them, let them acquire power and come under their supervision.

In people's war, Mao had already demonstrated how the toiling masses of workers and peasants could defeat an enemy that was superior in military equipment and trained personnel through the strategic line of protracted people's war by encircling the cities from the countryside in semicolonial and semifeudal countries. By winning the new democratic revolution through people's war, the revolutionary proletariat and the people obtain the state power to proceed to socialist revolution.

The theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through the GPCR was regarded as the greatest epoch-making contribution of Mao. It was aimed at combatting modern revisionism, preventing capitalist restoration and consolidating socialism. Even as the GPCR would be defeated by the Dengist counterrevolution, it still confirms and explains how socialism can be subverted and destroyed from within. Such a lesson will guide the forthcoming socialist revolutions.

We the Filipino proletarian revolutionaries have studied the GPCR as the answer to the problem of modern revisionism arising in socialist society in view of the degeneration of the bureaucrats and intelligentsia in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. At the same time, we benefited from its underscoring of the proletarian revolutionary line of Comrade Mao in the new democratic and socialist stages of the Chinese revolution.

Like the Paris Commune of 1871 being defeated by the bourgeoisie, the GPCR was defeated by the Dengist counter-revolution and capitalist restoration but it laid down the basic principles and methods for future adoption and further development in confronting the problem of revisionism and degeneration in future socialist societies.

*6. The restoration of Capitalism in China did not stop the revolutionary movements that were taking place in India or in the Philippines, as well as those which would develop later in Peru or Nepal. How do you observe the absence or waning of revolutionary movements across the globe, other than the Philippine movement itself and its counterpart in India? Do you consider it the result of an ideological crisis, and therefore a political crisis, within Maoism?*

JMS: We can be confident that the ever recurrent and ever worsening crisis of overproduction and the tendency of imperialist powers to use state terrorism and wage wars of aggression generate the conditions for the irrepressible rise of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution, despite the twists and turns and setbacks that it might undergo. Let me explain.

In my lifetime, I saw how the world anti-imperialist struggle and proletarian revolution peaked in the 1950s, with one third of humanity already governed by communist and worker parties and the national liberation movements advancing against colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism, after the fascist powers failed to destroy the Soviet Union and stop the Chinese revolution. Then, the Soviet Union itself came under revisionist rule in 1956 and so did China in 1976. Both became capitalist, with the Soviet Union collapsing in 1991.

From 1991 to sometime around 2008, the US enjoyed being the winner in the Cold War sole superpower in a so-called unipolar world while the recurrently worsening crisis of overproduction and the endless US wars of aggression accelerated the strategic decline of the US. The US and

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China became main partners in the propagation of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization for four decades. Now, they are locked in a bitter inter-imperialist competition and rivalry. The capitalist restoration in both the Soviet Union and China has aggravated in a big and deepgoing away the crisis of the world capitalist system.

The advance of anti-imperialism, democracy and socialism is cumulative but is not always on a straight line. There are the twists and turns, ups and downs in history on varying scales of geography and time. On the whole at the moment, we the proletarian revolutionaries observe the intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions and the unravelling of the extremely anti-proletarian and anti-people policy of neoliberalism. We now see the rise of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles all over the world. And we can see the conditions for the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution precisely because of the intensifying inter-imperialist conflicts.

The revolutionary movements in the Philippines, India and elsewhere can take pride in the fact that they have continuously stood up as torch bearers of the world proletarian revolution even in the decades of setbacks of the socialist cause on a global scale and decline of certain revolutionary movements as those in Peru or the cooptation of other revolutionary movements as in Nepal. But the conditions have arisen once more for the resurgence of the anti-imperialist struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

Revolutionary movements have their own share of errors and weaknesses from time to time but Comrade Mao has provided the principles and methods of the rectification movement. Entire revolutionary movements may suffer a big decline like that in Peru where the first ten years of its armed struggle in the 1980s was very heroic and promising. But only the proletarian revolutionaries in that country can rectify the errors and weaknesses of the movement. That is also true in the case of Nepal in which the Prachanda party in power is now being challenged by proletarian revolutionaries who are striving to resume the people's war.

*7. I would like to pose the same question regarding People's War in Nepal, which, as you already know, concluded with the revisionist's victory. What reasons do you think lies behind the defeat of Nepal's revolutionary movement, a revolution which in fact was relatively close to achieving the victory over the State? What is the CPP's position regarding to Prachandaist revisionism and the current situation in Nepal?*

JMS: Like the people's war in Peru, that in Nepal was a ten-year phenomenon which was brilliantly carried out up to the point of inflicting hard and heavy blows on enemy military forces based in Kathmandu, forcing the bourgeoisie to compromise and even the monarchy to dissolve. The Prachanda leadership stopped the people's war before it could smash

totally the bureaucratic and military machinery of the reactionary state and was satisfied with the dissolution of the monarchy as the victory of the democratic revolution.

But the Marxist-Leninist line is for the proletariat through its revolutionary party to lead the new democratic revolution and to seize political power in order to commence the socialist revolution. It is not merely to overthrow the feudal monarchy but more essentially the bourgeois state. Otherwise, what purports to be a proletarian revolutionary party is merely performing a bourgeois liberal task and backing out of the proletarian-socialist revolution.

*8. How do you regard the People's War led by the Communist Party of Peru – Shining Path? And your opinion on Chairman Gonzalo?*

JMS: The people's war in Peru broke out in the early 1980s as an exceedingly happy and inspiring event for the proletariat and people not only in Peru but in the whole world in the face of dismal events, such as the Dengist counterrevolution and capitalist restoration in China adding up to the continuing degeneration of Soviet modern revisionism and to the self-defeating adventures of Soviet social imperialism.

But I think that certain problems or errors afflicted the party leadership and revolutionary movement and made them decline in the course of their ten years of armed struggle, especially after the capture of Abimael Guzman. But it is up to the proletarian revolutionaries of Peru to do their criticism and rectification of errors, even as many revolutionary observers have noted that the Gonzalo leadership had been ultra-Left sectarian and failed to use the united front fully as one more weapon in the course of the people's war and that after his capture, he swung to the Right by toying with peace negotiations as his possible way out of prison, with no safeguards against confusing the revolutionaries and the masses.

*9. Historically, Great Leadership has been Maoism's hallmark, but unlike what happened in Peru, your role in Philippines has been substantially different? Could you elaborate on this?*

JMS: Out of modesty, the Chinese comrades even during the enthusiastic years of the GPCR shied away from touting Mao Zedong Thought as Maoism as if on the same plane as Marxism and Leninism, even as paradoxically they asserted that Mao Zedong Thought was the third and so far the highest stage of the development of the theory and practice of the revolutionary proletariat. As label to the great contributions of Mao, Mao Zedong Thought had evolved from previous labels like "Mao thinking" and then "Mao thought", with a small letter t.

It is to the credit of the CP of Peru and the RIM that they were ahead of all other entities in using the label Maoism to supplant Mao Zedong Thought. But they were not only for the symmetry of Maoism in relation to Marxism and Leninism. They claimed that in adopting the label of

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Maoism they were determining and defining its content to shame all other CPs for being off the line by not using the term Maoism. Worst of all, Gonzalo or the CP of Peru adopted the phrase, Gonzalo Thought, with the immodest claim that the phrase signified his own definition of Maoism as the third stage of Marxism-Leninism and his Thought as the brilliant further development, despite the fact that he had not yet won total victory in the Peruvian revolution.

The CPP in 1994 and soon after the CP of India (People's War, later Maoist) followed suit in using the word Maoism in lieu of Mao Zedong Thought for definite reasons: First, they accept the great contributions of Mao to the development of theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism constituting the third stage after Marxism and Leninism; and second, it is a matter of language symmetry to use Maoism instead of Mao Zedong Thought alongside Marxism and Leninism

To this day, CPP frowns on the immodest practice of certain parties naming their guiding theory after their principal leaders, like Gonzalo Thought, Prachanda Path and Avakian's New Synthesis. These labels are immodest and are manifestations of puerile idolatry and the leaders' own self-indulgence and self-glorification. Communists should selflessly do the best they can to wage and advance the revolution and forget about seeking personal fame or claiming for oneself the credit that belongs to the revolutionary forces of the proletariat and the people. It was not Marx and Lenin themselves who labelled their collection of ideas and actions with their respective names.

*10. Going back to the ideological crisis seemingly haunting Maoism, how do you assess the fact that both Naxalites and Filipinos have not been able to serve as support bases to relaunch the Revolution in other countries?*

JMS: The very cause of socialism has been in crisis in the last 70 years because of the rise of modern revisionism in the Soviet Union and then in China, the restoration of capitalism in these two big countries and the imposition of neoliberalism on the whole world by the imperialist powers. It is a good thing that in the last 50 years there have been Maoist parties leading the armed revolution in the Philippines and India, with current populations of more than 100 million and 1.38 billion, respectively.

Compared to the far bigger crisis of socialism in the last 70 years, it is much less of a crisis of any kind, ideological or otherwise, that so far it seems only the CPP and CPI (Maoist) are carrying out armed revolutions that have a socialist perspective. It is a good thing that these two parties are engaged without let-up in armed revolution. But there are other Maoist parties in other countries already waging armed revolution or preparing for it, despite let-downs in the decline of armed revolution in Peru and the revisionist turnaround of Prachanda in Nepal. The rapid worsening of the



crisis of the world capitalist system and the rise of anti-imperialist struggles on a widening scale signal the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.

The CPP and the CP of India (Maoist) are parties that seriously carry out the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war in their respective countries. They also seriously carry out international work in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity with all peoples. They are conscious of their revolutionary struggles being contributory to the world proletarian revolution, seek international support and are ever ready to share their ideas and experience.

But neither of them claims to be the leader or center of the world proletarian revolution. They have joined anti-imperialist as well as communist international organizations, conferences and seminars. But they do not make the immodest claim of being the center of authority or line-setter for the entire communist movement, unlike certain small groups calling themselves Maoists and exaggerating one component of Maoism like protracted people's war and obfuscating other components of Maoism.

Like those who were called infantile communists by Lenin, there are infantile Maoists whose main activity is to prance around and preach dogmatically that protracted people's war is doable at all times in all kinds of countries irrespective of the actual state of domestic social conditions and inter-imperialist conflicts. But if you look at the biographies of these infantilists in imperialist countries, they have been babbling about people's war for at least two decades to make themselves look superior to the real Maoists who are actually waging protracted people's wars.

These pseudo-Maoists do not do any serious mass work and do not set up any self-defense organization among the people for possible armed resistance. They are little chicks in comparison to the fascist gangs. These infantile Maoists are a fringe phenomenon and do not involve or cause any serious crisis of Maoism. Neither is it a crisis that certain genuine Maoist parties are still in the process of trying to reach the level of armed struggle and prominence already achieved by the CPP and the CPI (Maoist).

*11. In 1977 you were arrested by the Marcos dictatorship, and would not be released from prison until 1986 under the new Corazon Aquino government and her "national reconciliation" policies. However, shortly after that you had to go into exile, and since then you remain in Utrecht. Could you narrate how your imprisonment was and what it meant for the revolutionary movement? In a context of increasing repression, how did the party confront the arrest of its main leader?*

JMS: I am happy and proud to say that when I was captured in 1977 the ideological, political and organizational foundation of the revolutionary movement had become solid and strong. The Marxist-Leninist ideological and political line was well-established by basic, intermediate and advanced

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courses of study among CPP cadres and members, by the rectification movement against the Lavaite errors from 1942 onward ("Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party") and by the analysis of Philippine history and society and (Amado Guerrero's book *Philippine Society and Revolution*) and by the CPP Program for a People's Democratic Revolution.

From a little over 100 CPP members in 1969, they were already in the thousands in 1977, nationwide in scale and deeply rooted among the workers and peasants. From only nine automatic rifles at the start in 1969, the NPA had increased them to more than 2000 automatic rifles in 1977. From only tens of thousands of mass activists in 1968, they were already in the hundreds of thousands in various types of mass organizations in 1977. The rural mass base had been 80,000 in only one district in Tarlac in 1969. There was a total of two million people as mass base in some 40 guerrilla fronts in 1977. They were also under the governance of the local organs of political power or the people's democratic government.

The foundation of the revolutionary movement was so strong that it could withstand the major errors of subjectivism and opportunism in various regions at various times from 1981 to 1991. These errors could not stop the general advance of the movement even if they reduced the rate of advance. They became the target of timely rectification campaigns as well as the Second Great Rectification Movement from 1992 to 1998, under the guidance of the CPP document "Reaffirm Basic Principles and Rectify Errors".

When the fascist dictator Marcos was overthrown by gigantic mass actions and by withdrawal of support from him by the reactionary armed forces, the CPP had only about 6000 full-time Red fighters with automatic rifles nationwide. These were not enough for seizing any major city and changing the balance of forces which was still in favor of the US and the reactionary classes. But the broad anti-fascist united front was strong enough to free all political prisoners, including myself. The legal forces of the national democratic movement were a formidable and decisive force in mobilizing the gigantic mass actions.

I went back to the university to teach political science for one semester and had the opportunity to write a book *Philippine Crisis and Revolution* to confront the pseudo-democratic government of Cory Aquino before I left the Philippines on August 31, 1986 for a lecture tour in the Asia Pacific region. Just like my political detention from 1977 to 1986, my stay abroad from the latter part of 1986 to the present has not adversely affected the general advance of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines. I intended to return home but the Aquino government cancelled my passport and fabricated a new charge of subversion against me. Thus, I was constrained to seek political asylum in The Netherlands, instead of delivering myself to the enemy.

12. *The “EDSA Revolution” took place in 1986, leading to the end of Marcos’ dictatorship. It can be asserted that during this period the Communist Party and the New People’s Army presented themselves as the vanguard of this democratic movement. However, it was Corazón Aquino, supported by the USA, who finally managed to take the control of the country. How did the revolutionary movement face this historical moment? What mistakes led to the later dissolution of many political cadres?*

JMS: Since its founding in 1968, the CPP had always described itself as the advanced detachment of the Filipino working class and as the leading force in the people’s democratic revolution as a matter of principle, policy and line. The extent of development of the revolutionary movement was significantly large despite the tremendous odds but it was not yet enough to overthrow the entire ruling system. It was just enough to cause the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and participate in the broad united front to overthrow Marcos and release all the political prisoners. US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists were still dominant.

During the 14-year resistance against the fascist dictatorship from 1972 to 1986, the CPP had grown to some tens of thousands. The NPA had acquired 6000 automatic rifles through armed struggle and had organized auxiliary and reserve forces like the people’s militia and the self-defense units of the mass organizations. A few millions of people were in underground mass organizations and under the governance of the people’s democratic government. The legal mass organizations of the national democratic movement could muster hundreds of thousands of demonstrations in Manila. But these were not enough to overthrow the entire ruling system.

As part of consolidating her power, Cory Aquino asked for ceasefire negotiations in Manila. A ceasefire agreement for 60 days was reached for the purpose of negotiating the substantive agenda for the peace negotiations. But the ceasefire negotiations were surveiled by enemy intelligence and would lead to the arrest and killing of some negotiators and staff. Before the ceasefire agreement ran out, the presidential security guards murdered and injured peasant demonstrators and their urban supporters in the infamous massacre near the presidential palace on January 23, 1987. This led to the discredit of the Aquino regime and further inflamed the people’s war.

The most important guarantee for the continuance of the Philippine revolution is the perseverance of the CPP, NPA and NDFP on the road of protracted people’s war along the line of the people’s democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. In time of a crackdown on patriotic and democratic forces in urban areas, they have somewhere to go in the countryside in order to fight even better and in a more advantageous way

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for the national and social liberation of the people.

*13. In 1992, as you argue in your texts, the Second Great Rectification Movement was launched to correct errors of the party's political line and the deviations thereof. Both of a left and right-wing nature. Would you say that the revolutionary movement was strengthened? To what extent were the objectives of the Second Great Movement of Rectification achieved for the current revolutionary period?*

JMS: The Second Great Rectification Movement (SGRM) was launched in 1992 to rectify the subjectivist and opportunist deviations from the CPP's correct ideological, political and organizations line. The CPP and the revolutionary movement became much stronger as a result of the SGRM). They became more vigorous and more productive.

Mass work was emphasized to make up for the loss of mass base due to the premature formation of NPA companies and neglect of mass work. Increased Party recruitment and expansion of mass organizations also made up for the loss of CPP members and activists who had been punished without due process by the "Left" opportunists when their line was grossly failing from 1985 to 1988.

Where the errors had taken effect, the rectification movement resulted in the reinvigoration of the revolutionary forces and expansion of the mass base. The strong guerrilla fronts helped the guerrilla fronts that had been weakened by the errors. Before 2000, the NPA was able to kill one general in the field and capture another one. And a third general defected to the NPA.

I cite the cases of these generals to indicate that the revolutionary movement became stronger and was successful in both annihilation and disintegration of the enemy. By 2000 and 2001, the CPP was once more able to cause the overthrow of a president, Joseph Estrada, for corruption but also once more could not yet overthrow the entire ruling system.

Because of the SGRM, the revolutionary movement made great strides up to 2005. The CPP membership grew by some tens of thousands. The guerilla fronts increased to more than 120 from about 40 in 1986. The NPA increased by the thousands and exceeded the losses in areas where these resulted from errors.

The underground mass organizations and the local organs of political power continued to gain adherents by the millions. But there was a downside to the emphasis on mass work by the SGRM to combat the purely military viewpoint and the previous premature regularization of NPA forces in the 1980s.

All NPA units were so preoccupied with mass work that they could not respond effectively with counter-offensives against the enemy campaigns of suppression from 2005 onward. It would take some time before the decision was made to have one third of every NPA platoon and company

on combat duty with short rest periods and two-thirds for mass work.

Combatants are rotated so that everyone has combat experience and contribute to the drive for increasing the arms of the NPA by launching tactical offensives to wipe out enemy units. The long-running plan of the CPP is to raise the armed strength of the NPA from 10,000 high-powered rifles to 25,000 in order to reach the strategic stalemate and launch tactical offensives with companies and battalions.

*14. The NPA promotes the creation of "New Power" and the "People's government", what do they consist of and how are they organized? What role does "Remolding" play in this in the last decades?*

JMS: Building the new power or the people's democratic government means creating the local organs of political power from the level of villages up to the municipal, district and provincial levels. The people's government serves to shadow the reactionary government and render services to the people by carrying out land reform, raising production, improving the social infrastructure, providing health, education and other social services, settlement of disputes, internal security and people's self-defense, disaster relief and environmental protection.

Depending on the circumstances, the Red organs of political power can either fight and supplant the local governments of the reactionary classes or engage them in united front cooperation against the higher level of reactionary government or the entire national reactionary government. The Filipino people are quite experienced in having their own revolutionary system of government against a foreign colonial power or a tyrannical government.

Remoulding means ideological, political and moral remoulding. The proletarian revolutionaries of whatever class origin should take the proletarian class stand by grasping the basic concepts of Marxism-Leninism not only by reading books and attending formal courses of study but having close relations with the toiling masses, learning from them through social investigation and class analysis, engaging in mass work to arouse, organize and mobilize them and joining them the struggles to advance the revolution.

*15. One of the main questions which the revolutionary movement must address concerns the entry in urban centres. This seems to be a military question pertaining to the guerrilla's work and which strategy to pursue. Nonetheless, it could also be linked to the relationship between the Party and the people and how both connect. In this way, what efforts are being undertaken to achieve the aforementioned aims?*

JMS: Prior to the resumption of the armed revolution in 1969, there was nearly a decade of developing the legal anti-imperialist and anti-feudal or national democratic movement. The legal forces of this movement prepared the ideological, political and organizational factors for resuming

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the armed revolution. Even when Marcos outlawed them when he proclaimed martial law in 1972, the aforesaid forces went underground and facilitated the integration of thousands of mass activists in the armed revolutionary movement.

In the specific conditions of the Philippines, encircling the cities from the countryside in the protracted people's war, involves a certain class line. It means that the revolutionary party of the proletariat must base itself among the peasant masses as the basic revolutionary ally of the proletariat. The great number of peasants and the vast scale of the countryside provide the wide social and physical terrain for maneuver in order to preserve the people's army, fight the enemy and accumulate arms seized from the enemy through ambushes and raids.

At the current strategic defensive stage of the people's war in the Philippines, the CPP has stressed waging intensive and extensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base. The CPP hopes to produce from the guerrilla warfare squads, platoons and companies in the maturation of the strategic defensive the companies and battalions that shall carry out regular mobile warfare in the strategic stalemate.

While the revolutionary armed struggle is mainly in the countryside in the Philippines, the NPA has also the armed city partisans and commando units to carry out certain types of offensives in urban areas, highways and centers of logging, plantations and mining operations. These are areas relatively well-guarded by the enemy but they are isolated and vulnerable. With mass support, the NPA can learn how to approach and attack these targets. Tactical offensives against valuable sites of the enemy compels him to take defensive positions and have less forces for offensives against the NPA in the countryside,

*16. How has the NPA developed its relations with the native people? How does the NPA manage to respect native culture with the idea of building a new society?*

JMS: Since the years of developing the national democratic movement in the 1960s and since the resumption of the reestablishment of the CPP in 1968, serious attention has been paid by the revolutionary movement to indigenous people who are some 15 per cent of the population but occupy large parts of the Philippine territory, which are in the hilly and mountainous regions and are favorable for people's war. It was of the highest social concern of the CPP that their oppression and exploitation must be solved, that they exercise their right to national self-determination, wage revolution for their national and social liberation, enjoy respect for their previous roles in the revolutionary struggles against colonialism and imperialism and for their cultural heritage and avail of their terrain which is exceedingly favorable for people's war.

The CPP, NPA, NDFP and the mass organizations gave the highest priority to the political education and organization of the workers, peasants, students, teachers and other professionals from the indigenous communities. Thus, since the beginning, they have played a major role in the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. Many of them have become leading cadres in the central and regional organs of all revolutionary forces. And their peoples enjoy self-determination, autonomy and self-government in their communities. Where the local communities are mixed in border areas, the rule of proportionate representation is followed in order to allow their participation in discussing issues and making decisions.

The Program of People's Democratic evolution which is being implemented by the CPP, NPA, NDFP, the mass organizations and the local organs of political power criticizes the oppression and exploitation of the indigenous people and other national minorities in the following terms: "National minorities in the Philippines have been abused and grossly neglected. US imperialism, the local reactionary government and the Christian churches have too long regarded the national minorities as mere objects of bourgeois charity and Christian proselytization. The four-million people belonging to the national minorities, especially those of Mindanao and the mountain provinces, can be powerful participants in the revolutionary overthrow of US imperialism and feudalism. The bourgeois government, reactionary scholars and Christian chauvinists talk loud about national integration but they stand in reality for the exploiting classes that are the main sources of abuse and oppression".

The Program declares the following course of action: "The main concern of the national minorities is land; the abuses of landlords, loggers and landgrabbers; and exploitation in mines and plantations. A new type of leadership, a revolutionary one must be encouraged to rise among them so as to supplant the traditional leadership that has failed to protect them and has merely contributed to and participated in their exploitation. With regard to naturalized Filipinos and foreign nationals, the class approach must be firmly taken so as to do away with "Malay" racism and chauvinism".

*17. Focusing now on the affective relationships between individuals who live within the New Power bases created by the NPA where it is assumed that a couple's matters affect those involved the community or corresponding unit. Seeing that in the stages leading to socialism there is a coexistence of elements belonging to the class society and those representing the new society that is to come, can the institution of marriage be explained as the product of class society?*

JMS: The CPP has promulgated a Code on Family Relations for Party members and the masses. When a Party member intends to court someone, he or she must inform his or her Party branch. If the other party

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in the courtship is not a Party member, efforts are exerted to develop him or her at least a Party candidate-member before the marriage is approved and realized so that the couple will be helpful to each other in revolutionary work. The couple are required to remould themselves and develop as proletarian revolutionaries.

There is the assumption of romantic or sexual attraction between the parties in the courtship but the relations must be developed and raised to the level of proletarian class love and revolutionary partnership. Marriage among Party members is monogamous. And there is a recourse to divorce if incompatibility, infidelity or political betrayal by the offending party is proven. Care of the children if any is taken into account.

Among the masses in the guerrilla fronts, the most responsible official of the people's democratic government, the CPP, NPA or any of the mass organizations concerned can approve the marriage and be the officiating officer. But the partners may also get married upon the approval of their religious organization of choice. They may step out of the guerrilla front to hold the marriage ceremony officiated by an official of the reactionary government or religious organization, as a matter of social custom, a matter of united front policy and a matter of letting as many relatives and friends as possible of the couple to attend the marriage ceremony.

All couples, whether they belong to the CPP or not, are required to follow the policies, laws and regulations that govern family relations and all matters pertaining to good social relations for the benefit of the community. Good social relations involve respect for fundamental freedoms and democratic rights and cooperation to realize social, economic, political and cultural reforms for attaining social justice and better conditions of life.

*18. In 2016, Duterte's election victory was welcomed as an opportunity to relaunch the peace negotiations and as a president who could be progressive against US imperialism. How do you assess those positions? Were they correct?*

JMS: Duterte had a long record of being a bureaucrat capitalist and an unreliable and unstable ally of the NDFP in Southern Mindanao in a number of struggles against the common enemies, including the reactionary military and other bureaucrat capitalists. One more point: he was a former student of mine in political science and became a member of the Kabataang Makabayan.

When he became presidential candidate, he offered to form a coalition government with the NDFP if elected and unconditionally to amnesty and release all political prisoners even before the start of the peace negotiations. Still the electoral parties of the legal democratic movement, the Makabayan Bloc, did not support him but Grace Poe. Even then, Duterte offered peace negotiations when he became president.

He did not issue any general amnesty for all political prisoners but



offered to appoint to his cabinet four communists to entrap the CPP in the position of capitulation. But I told him publicly to appoint people on their individual merits because there was yet no peace agreement. Instead of amnesty for all political prisoners, only 19 of them were released and he tried to obtain indefinite protracted ceasefire in exchange. We rebuffed him. Thus, the peace negotiations practically died in the water in April 2017 although there were actions and statements from both sides manifesting both break down of the peace negotiations and attempts to revive the peace negotiations.

In undertaking peace negotiations, the CPP and NDFP have to be guided united front policy and tactics. They could not just dismiss the Duterte's offer peace negotiations without exposing him first as being actually hostile to peace negotiations. To reject outright Duterte's offer of peace negotiations would have made the CPP and NDFP appear as the bellicose party and they would thus be offending the broad range of peace advocates and millions of people.

*19. There is a clear trend to identify Duterte's government and Marcos' dictatorship. It is obvious that Duterte is undertaking a repressive policy against the Filipino people which might be similar to Marcos' rule. How may this strategy when addressed by the Party be advantageous for the revolutionary movement, taking into account the experience of the so-called "EDSA Revolution", what result can the revolutionary movement expect from an eventual fall of Duterte?*

JMS: As you observe, it is positive or beneficial for the revolutionary movement to stress the similarity of the Marcos and Duterte regimes for taking a repressive policy against the Filipino people. Indeed, they are similar in engaging in the open rule of terror. Duterte has signed into law his state terrorism law in the name of anti-terrorism. And he openly idolizes Marcos and emulates him in butchery and plunder.

If Duterte were to fall before or soon after 2022, it will be because of gigantic mass actions and the consequent withdrawal of support from him by the pro-US reactionary military officers. These pro-US military officers will still be able to transfer power to the Vice President or the opposition presidential candidate in 2022 in a way similar to the instalment of Cory Aquino as president in 1986. The legal forces of the national democratic movement have the capacity to mobilize people for gigantic mass actions. But the NPA does not yet have enough armed strength to seize power in Manila.

In the meantime, it is best for the NPA to accumulate armed strength in the countryside and help the people's government to strengthen itself there. All efforts are exerted to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries. The best thing that can happen by way of taking advantage

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of the splits among the reactionaries is when they fight each other violently. But that is not yet going to happen soon.

*20. What is the current situation in Philippines after the pandemic? How has been this situation been managed by the Filipino Revolutionary Movement and which work or task has been set with regard to Filipino People?*

JMS: Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis of the ruling system had become worse than ever before. Since the pandemic lockdowns, Duterte has used his emergency powers to apply more repressive measures against the people and steal the public money promised to support the medical fight against the pandemic and to provide economic assistance to the people who have been deprived of their jobs and other means of livelihood. The people are hungry and exceedingly angry against the Duterte regime.

The legal forces of the national democratic movement are using the social media and webinars to take up issues against the regime and encourage the arousal, organization and mobilization of the people in all possible ways despite the lockdowns implemented by the military and police.

In the countryside, the revolutionary forces have more freedom of action because of lessened number of troops as a result of their preoccupation with enforcing the lockdowns. But in a number of areas in the countryside, the military are engaged in so-called focused military operations. But the space is wide in the countryside for maneuver by the NPA for the purpose of evasion, defense or offense.

*21. Amid a global pandemic, i toward which direction does Duterte's bourgeois foreign policy point to? Is it still favourable towards the USA or do you think it is shifting towards China?*

JMS: Duterte has always remained loyal to US imperialism. He has retained all treaties, agreements and arrangements that make the US still dominant over the Philippine economy, politics, culture and the military. And the big deal between the US and Duterte is for the latter to eliminate the armed revolution and give the US unlimited ownership of land, natural resources, public utilities and all businesses.

The big deal between the Duterte and China is for the latter to deliver the promised high interest loans amounting to USD 24 billion for overpriced infrastructure projects. But China has been slow on fulfilling its promise because it wants Duterte first to surrender in an outright and flagrant manner Philippine sovereign rights over the West Philippine Sea. Duterte is getting more Chinese money from the Chinese criminal triads smuggling in illegal drugs and operating casinos in the Philippines.

Serving two imperialist powers that are now conflicting can become a big problem for Duterte. He has allowed China to build and militarize

seven artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea, to own 40 percent of the national power grid and worst of all to have China Telcom erect cell towers in military camps and assist the military and police in improving their communications system. At the same time, the US maintains personnel and facilities in these military camps under the Visiting Forces Agreement and Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

*22. What is the position adopted by the CPP as to the existing rivalry between China and the USA, currently materialised by a trade war?*

JMS: The CPP condemns the US and China as imperialist powers because of their respective violations of Philippine national sovereignty. The US and China were the two main partners in the propagation of the neoliberal policy in the last four decades. But now they are increasingly in conflict with each other because the US policy makers have come to the conclusion that China has taken advantage of its two-tiered economy (state capitalism and private capitalism) to achieve strategic economic and military goals, has manipulated trade and currency policies to gain undue advantage, has used its export surplus and foreign exchange reserves to export capital and take over markets and has stolen US technology from US subsidiaries in China and research laboratories in the US.

The US government has to blame China in order to mislead the American public about the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system, to obfuscate the fact that the US government had committed the folly of overspending for US military forces abroad and for wars of aggression and making concessions to China such as outsourcing manufacturing to it (to avail of cheaper Chinese labor at the expense of employment in the US), increasing US investments in China after the mass uprisings of 1989 in scores of Chinese cities and allowing China to enjoy large trade surpluses and to undertake ambitious projects like the Belt and Road Initiative.

The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system has become so bad that the inter-imperialist contradictions are worsening and the service sector and public debt bubbles are already in the process of implosion. The inter-imperialist contradictions of the US and China have taken center stage because they are now the biggest economies and the US finds convenient as well as necessary to oppose China as its chief economic rival capable of reproducing and rebranding products that used to carry US brands and as its main political rival with hightech military weapons.

*23. Given the current situation characterised by an increase of global tensions and struggle among imperialist powers, how do you assess the current international situation? Is there any country which might bolster Philippines' revolution? What is your opinion about countries such as Cuba, North Korea, or Venezuela?*

JMS: Neoliberalism is unravelling. It has served to aggravate the crisis

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of overproduction. The inter-imperialist contradictions are intensifying. The US and China are now cutting each other down. We can expect that the imperialist powers become more engrossed with their own internal problems even as they are at the same time entangled in inter-imperialist contradictions and they overextend themselves in so many other countries in acts of aggression.

The worsening crisis of the world capitalist system is generating conditions favorable to the Philippine revolution. Being in an archipelago, the Filipino people have to be self-reliant in waging revolutionary struggle. In their history, they were able to defeat Spanish people and were the very Asian people to defeat a Western power and then they were able to give a good fight against the rising imperialist power of the US from 1899 onward.

I admire the anti-imperialist forces and peoples of Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and in other countries for standing up against US imperialism and waging struggles against it and its lackeys. Their just struggles serve to support the Philippine revolution. In turn, the Philippine revolution supports their own struggles.

Good if the US gets tied down in its own home ground and in many other countries so that it has less force to focus on the Philippines. It is also good if any revolutionary force in another country can extend moral support and concrete assistance to help the Filipino people in their revolutionary struggle. But it is best that the Filipino people rely on themselves and not to become dependent on foreign assistance even when it materializes.

The ongoing people's democratic revolution in the Philippines has proven that it can grow in strength and advance even as the big socialist countries are gone and no foreign country of whatever kind has extended any kind of assistance for the armed revolution. The Filipino people are confident that they will be making greater strides on their own as the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens and the imperialist powers and the local reactionary classes find themselves in a worse situation than ever before.

24. *In one of your documents, "On the question of People's War in Industrial Capitalist countries" you deny any chance of waging a People's War in an imperialist centre. Can you elaborate on this? What should be the role played by revolutionaries in these countries? How can the revolutionary proletariat get constituted as ruling class if it is not applying the tenets of the People's War?*

JMS: To be precise, I have stated that the protracted people's war that is possible and viable in a semi-colonial and semifeudal society like pre-1949 China and current India and Philippines cannot be universally doable in any imperialist country at any time. Under conditions of direct inter-imperialist war like World War II, without the use of nuclear weapons, it

was still possible to do partisan or guerrilla warfare for a number of years in both the urban and rural areas of Western Europe.

Right now, the farm population in the imperialist countries has become quite small. In both the US and Norway where a few infantile Maoists are blabbering about carrying out a protracted people's war, the farm population is around two per cent of the national population and consists of both monopoly farm capitalists and rich farmers, using a great deal of mechanization, unlike the traditional landlords of China exploiting a great mass of poor and middle peasants using primitive tools of agriculture.

Mao's strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside in protracted people's war works in countries where the peasants are the majority of the national population and the semi-feudal economy is in chronic crisis. Mao himself said that protracted people's war, which could be done in China, cannot be done in any imperialist country with a highly unified and centralized economy and system of communications and with a paucity of poor and middle peasants.

Let the infantile Maoists start armed struggle now in the countryside of the US or Norway. They will be wiped out in less than 30 minutes by SWAT teams of the local police. Until now, no group advocating protracted people's war has started it in any imperialist country. Small conspiratorial armed groups with no wide mass base among the workers or in an oppressed national community can go far within an imperialist country, as soon as the shooting starts.

There should be no confusion between Mao's practice of protracted people's war in semicolonial and semifeudal China as a particular form of warfare and the general Marxist concept of the proletariat overthrowing the bourgeois state by armed force as taught since a long time ago by the Communist Manifesto. Especially when a group calls itself Maoist, it should understand why protracted peoples war was possible in China and why since then we have not seen such type of warfare occurring and succeeding in the imperialist countries.

Revolutionaries in imperialist countries can propagate the line in the *Communist Manifesto*, *Civil War in France* and in Lenin's *State and Revolution* for the proletariat to establish its class dictatorship by overthrowing the bourgeois state. Towards that goal, the communists can develop a strong working class movement through effective ideological, political and organizational work attuned to the worsening crisis of the capitalist system and prepared to fight the desperate effort of the monopoly bourgeoisie to use fascism against the working class.

It is easily conceivable, based on historical experience and current circumstances, that politico-military preparations can be made for the overthrow of the monopoly bourgeoisie, such as exercises in mobilizing the people for mass protests and blockades against the class enemy,

the formation and training of self-defense units in trade unions and other mass organizations as well as in communities, Bolshevik-style work within the imperialist army for future mass defections of the troops to the revolutionary side, discreet accumulation of weapons in the hands of the revolutionaries, and so on and forth.

*25. Has the CPP ever intended to reconstitute the Communist International? What do you think of the International Party and its role? Formerly within Maoism movement itself, there have been some attempts, where the Revolutionary International Movement can be highlighted. What is your opinion on this matter?*

JMS: I do not speak for the CPP in this interview. And I am not aware of any intention of the CPP to reconstitute the Communist International. But I think that it makes more sense for the CPP to do its best in leading the Philippine revolution for the time being in order to make significant advances and thus make a significant contribution to the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle and to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

Those communist parties with more resources and with more political space can try to bring together communist delegations from various countries for conferences or seminars. But I do not think that it is wise and workable for any party or group of parties to constitute any international party that puts various CPs under the principle of democratic centralism as the RIM tried to do. RIM got into deep trouble over issues like Gonzalo's reported desire for peace negotiations and then Avakian's new synthesis.

Since the dissolution of the Third International in 1943 due to the conditions of World War II, the concept of an international communist party treating communist parties of various countries as national sections has become outmoded. The principle and practice have been for communist parties of various countries to be equal and independent and respect each other as such, whether they are in power or not or whether they are big or small. They are responsible for the application of Marxism-Leninism in their respective countries, while they are bound by the spirit and principle of proletarian internationalism.

*26. What can the Philippine Revolutionary Movement contribute to the International Communist Movement? Is the Philippine Revolutionary Movement currently the ideological vanguard within the International Communist Movement?*

JMS: At the moment, the CPP can make a significant contribution to the international communist movement by leading the Philippine revolution and in the process by growing in strength and making advances in the struggle. When it wins the Philippine revolution, then it shall have the resources and political space to host international conferences or seminars in the Philippines. What the CPP can do now is to share its revolutionary

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experience and views on domestic and international issues with other communist parties through publications, conferences and seminars.

In the meantime, the International Department of the CPP can facilitate the participation of CPP delegations in international anti-imperialist and conferences and seminars. The CPP is convinced that it takes the correct position on national and international events and issue. But I do not think that the CPP is inclined to proclaim itself immodestly as the ideological vanguard of the International Communist Movement. That is best proven by revolutionary practice rather than by any self-proclamation.

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## **On the Tasks of Cadres in the Cultural Field**

### **Questions by Host Edna Becher of Panday Sining Europa, Anakbayan Europa and ND Online School**

### **Answers by Jose Maria Sison**

**October 18, 2020**

*1. Revolutionary culture is a powerful revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people. How powerful is it? What role can revolutionary culture play in advancing the national democratic revolution?*

JMS: To serve the people is the single most important task of cadres and mass activists in the cultural field. This is their single most important task. In this regard, they perform a definite role in the revolutionary struggle for national democracy against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The cultural revolution is a distinct yet integral part of the revolutionary mass movement. Without the preparation of public opinion, there can be no revolution. In the course of the national democratic revolution, cultural work is always necessary to heighten the fighting spirit of the revolutionary masses.

Revolutionary culture is so powerful and decisive a weapon that without it the national democratic revolution cannot win. It is the most persuasive and pleasant way of arousing the broad masses of the people along the general line of the national democratic revolution. It inspires the people to join the revolution and fight for the just revolutionary cause until total victory is won.

According to Comrade Mao, "Revolutionary culture is a powerful revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people. It prepares the ground ideologically before the revolution comes and is an important, indeed essential, fighting front in the general revolutionary front during the revolution." He also points out, "All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use."

*2. As the revolutionary mass movement becomes stronger and stronger the reactionaries also deliberately allow the spread of social- democratic or revisionist literature. How do we battle these ideas within our cultural workers? Do cultural workers play a significant role in battling these?*

JMS: Indeed, as the revolutionary mass movement becomes stronger and stronger, the reactionaries deliberately allow the spread of social-

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democratic or revisionist literature in an attempt to infect the revolutionary cadres and mass activists with fears of revolutionary wars and nuclear weapons and with the philosophy of survival and capitulation.

To preserve their power and wealth, which they have accumulated by oppressing and exploiting the people, the reactionaries deliberately employ the mass media to try to sow confusion within the ranks of the revolutionaries and among the people. The cultural workers of the revolution must promote Marxist-Leninist education and the national, scientific and mass culture in order to combat social democratic or revisionist ideas.

They can run study courses and learn how to criticize and repudiate such anti-communist and anti-people ideas. They can issue publications. They can run seminars and mass courses on culture and develop the education and cultural departments of mass organizations. They can organize cultural groups to learn from the toiling masses and create and present works and performances that express the demands of the people and inspire to wage revolution.

It is the task of cadres in the cultural field to keep on remolding their class outlook. They must firmly combat all erroneous ideas and their own selfish tendencies with the lucid ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism, and integrate themselves with the masses in the practical revolutionary movement.

Comrade Mao teaches us, "Our literature and art workers must accomplish this task and shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society. Only in this way can we have a literature and art that are truly for the workers, peasants and soldiers, a truly proletarian literature and art."

*3. Why is it an important task for cultural workers to be in the midst of the revolutionary mass movement?*

JMS: It is an important task to be in the midst of the revolutionary mass movement. In the course of participating in the revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants, our cadres in the cultural field will gain knowledge that they can never gain from textbooks alone. To conduct social investigation in the course of practical struggles is to gather the best material for a truly significant literature and art. One cannot write of the workers, peasants and soldiers without knowing them intimately.

By participating in the revolutionary mass movement, the cultural cadres can soonest realize their objective of inspiring the people to fight for their national and democratic rights and interests against imperialist domination and the local exploiting classes of big comprador, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

To be in the revolutionary mass movement, the cultural cadres must belong to distinctive cultural organizations independent of or associated with the people's or basic mass organizations. In any case they must be conscious of building a cultural army to complement and make more effective the mass struggles of the people and the people's army fighting to defeat the enemy. The partnership of the pen and the gun makes the revolutionary movement invincible.

Cadres in the cultural field are like commanders who lead cultural battalions—the masses in their thousands, tens of thousands and millions. The audience for revolutionary literary and art work is incalculable. A stage performance or an exhibit can be repeated so many times that it is extremely difficult to keep count of the audience. The printing capacity of a press may be limited but a good literary work nevertheless gets passed from hand to hand and discussed without end. If our cultural work truly serves the people, our readers and audience are inevitably aroused and become a tremendous force for the revolution.

We must always remember that the people will not be aroused and mobilized unless the literary and artistic work is drawn from their lives, particularly from their needs and aspirations. We bring to a higher plane the actions and thinking of the revolutionary masses so as to inspire them further to destroy and triumph over the enemy. The heroes that emerge from our work should be the people themselves and their superlative representatives who are tempered in the crucible of the revolution. The revolutionary struggle should be the essence of the organic unity of a literary or artistic work.

Chairman Mao teaches us, "(Our purpose is) to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind."

Inasmuch as culture is a reflection of economics and politics, literature and art are the finest and most sensitive ideological forms for summing up social reality. We can create revolutionary literature and art only by carefully and meticulously keeping to the revolutionary stand, viewpoint and method of the class which leads the broad masses of the people in the life-and-death struggle between progress and reaction.

Chairman Mao teaches us, "In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian art and literature are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine."

*4. How important is criticism and self-criticism with our cultural workers*

*and what are the way to conduct these?*

JMS: Criticism and self-criticism are important to identify errors and weaknesses and correct them in order to improve revolutionary cultural work, its content and style, and thereby make it more effective inspiring the oppressed masses fight and win victories. Cultural organizations can make timely sessions of criticism and self-criticism every week and after every major activity. Sessions to cover longer periods involve the analysis and evaluation of programs and campaigns of duration beyond a week or a month.

There is nothing to fear and be uneasy about criticism and self-criticism. They are meant to identify mistakes and weaknesses of individuals and the collective in order to improve the work and style of work as well as to recognize the strengths and accomplishments, to learn from positive and negative lessons, in order to advance cultural work.

We live in a society that is semicolonial and semifeudal. It is inevitable that practically all our cadres in the cultural field have at one time or another been deeply influenced by bourgeois and feudal culture and they continue to be so influenced in varying degrees. The dominant frame of mind among those educated in the present cultural system is bourgeois. In the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the bourgeois mind becomes so fantastic, regressive and desperate that it resorts to feudal mysticism in order to reinforce the most decadent influence of imperialistic culture and art.

Among the cultural workers, there is always enough practical and concrete basis for study and for criticism and self-criticism. The literary and artistic work that are created by them are subject to analysis and criticism. These are always subject to improvement. While the most advanced should be good at uniting with the less advanced cultural workers, who are willing to unite with us on the general line of the national democratic revolution, it should always be the task of the former to persuade the latter to further remold their outlook. Persuasion is our principal method of struggle with them.

We have no fear of criticism because our end is always to serve the people and therefore, we must always be ready to give them the best that we can. Among our comrades and our friends, we must be honest and modest even as to the enemy we are fierce and we must not show the least sign of obsequiousness.

Comrade Mao teaches us:

In literary and art criticism there are two criteria, the political and the artistic... There is the political criterion and there is the artistic criterion; what is the relationship between the two? Politics cannot be equated with art, nor can a general world outlook be equated with a method of artistic creation and criticism. We deny not only that there is an abstract

and absolutely unchangeable political criterion, but also that there is an abstract and absolutely unchangeable artistic criterion; each class in every class society has its own political and artistic criteria. But all classes in all class societies invariably put the political criterion first and the artistic criterion second... What we demand is the unity of politics and art, the unity of content and form, the unity of revolutionary political content and the highest possible perfection in artistic form. Works of art which lack artistic quality have no force, however progressive they are politically. Therefore, we oppose both works of art with a wrong political viewpoint and the tendency towards the 'poster and slogan style' which is correct in political viewpoint but lacking in artistic power. On questions of literature and art we must carry on a struggle on two fronts.

It is not enough to undertake criticism and self-criticism only among fellow craftsmen. Though it is necessary for those who have an interest in the same field of work to have a union, cultural workers should avoid restricting themselves to the guild mentality of the petty bourgeoisie in medieval times. We should make it a task to encourage criticism of our works by the masses. After a cultural performance or art exhibit, we should invite the audience to submit their critical remarks and suggestions for improvement. In our publications, we should also regularly call for these. Even before a piece of literary or artistic works put out, certain efforts can be made to consult the masses or their representatives.

*5. Sometimes cultural work is misunderstood as mere performing groups, etc. How can we ensure that other comrades understand the significance and tasks of cultural workers?*

JMS: We can ensure that all comrades understand the full scope of culture and cultural work, the significance and tasks of cultural workers by writing and publishing articles, staging cultural presentations and holding mass meetings in order to explain them. Revolutionary culture is the concentrated expression and reflection of revolutionary economics and politics.

It encompasses the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the general program of people's democratic revolution, the drive for a national, scientific and mass culture and people's aspirations for national and social liberation, social and environmental justice, all-round development, equality of gender, nations and races, the spirit of proletarian internationalism and international anti-imperialist solidarity.

The cultural revolution that the cultural workers seek to carry out is meant not only to become a part of the existing cultural system of imperialism and the local exploiting classes but to replace them and become dominant in a new cultural system founded on the emancipation of the exploited classes and enforced by the people's democratic state under the leadership of the proletariat.

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The need for having something to say, a clear ideological and political line, is most obvious in the essay form. There is daily a big pile of articles that may be subsumed under this form. The sheer weight of these in terms of newsprint is truly oppressive, mostly testaments as they are to the false virtues of the enemy. It is in the essay form, however, that the revolutionary mass movement has most expressed itself. It is inevitable that this form will always serve as the most explicit weapon for assaulting the enemy and defending the people.

In fiction, the short story has for quite a long time been the most popular form among Filipino creative writers. The novel form is quite neglected obviously because it requires sustained writing, something that our writers seem not to be able to cope with because they have to copywrite for an advertising firm, clerk in a government office or commercial house, work in a metropolitan newspaper or magazine or teach in a university. Short or long, fiction should be employed by revolutionary writers to serve the people.

Of the various literary forms, drama is the most in demand in the revolutionary mass movement today. The demand is stressed by the scarce quantity and low quality of the plays written for so long a period of time, and, more importantly, by the effectiveness of the drama in arousing and mobilizing the masses. This is a literary form that can be perceived and comprehended by the literate and nonliterate masses when it is already staged. It is also a form by which local cultural groups can be most easily organized and by which local acting talents can be coordinated in great numbers. It is an exceedingly important task to write and produce revolutionary drama, one-act or full-length plays.

The zarzuela and comedia or moro-moro are traditional forms of drama that may be adopted by our revolutionary writers. Replace the mawkishness and class reconciliation in the zarzuela with the revolutionary spirit and proletarian standpoint; and foolish love songs with revolutionary songs. Replace the Christian chauvinism and the anti-Muslim line in the comedia or moro-moro with the tenets and values of a people's war waged by a people's army led by the proletarian party; and the thunder and lightning of the medieval crusade with the thunder and lightning of people's war. Of course, it is necessary to give these traditional forms of drama the compactness of modern drama.

There are other indigenous forms which can be as effective as the drama in promoting revolution. These are the balagtasán, the duplo and that indigenous and yet so universal form, poetry, that lends itself to singing. These can be performed to precede or serve as intermission numbers when a dramatic presentation is done. These can also be presented exclusively on their own account.

It is worthwhile to go into scriptwriting for the movies, radio-TV drama

and the comics. It is difficult to get a revolutionary movie script filmed at the moment because of the technical and financial requirements. But it is relatively easier to turn out comics and to produce drama over the radio. The movies, radio drama and the comics can be turned into our weapons. It is the overriding task of revolutionary writers to infuse revolutionary class content into the various forms of literature and to make the workers, peasants and revolutionary soldiers the heroes under the red flag of the proletariat.

*6. Can you share some concrete examples in how cultural work is integrated in the tasks of the New People's Army? What is their practice in this field?*

JMS: If we talk about culture in the largest sense, it encompasses the work of social investigation to learn from the masses their social, economic, political and cultural conditions, needs and demands, the ideological and political courses of study and mass meetings, the literary and artistic works, publications and performances of the cultural workers.

All commands and units of the New People's Army, from the level of squads and propaganda teams to the level of the National Operational Command are required to have their own educational and cultural life and have definite educational and cultural formations to enlighten and raise the fighting spirit of both the Red commanders and fighters and the broad masses of the people in the guerrilla fronts and in the areas of expansion. Cultural performances and publications are of course the most conspicuous kind of cultural work.

*7. As cultural workers, we have a lot of tasks besides producing art. How do we ensure that we produce more cultural workers and that they can have the time to work on the quality of the art that they produce?*

JMS: There are Party cadres and members, Red fighters and mass activists who must be able to participate in cultural work as instructors, creative writers, singers, music instrumentalists, researchers, directors and technicians. They devote more time to cultural work than the rest of the revolutionary movement. They can also use cultural products done previously by revolutionary writers, artists and formations in the Philippines and abroad. Awareness and appreciation of their cultural work and products through presentations and circulation of video recordings can generate interest among the revolutionaries in cultural work.

Calls can be made for participation in cultural work and study sessions and workshops can be organized to attract and break in those who wish to participate and join a particular cultural formation. It is through actual cultural productions and evaluation of these through the appreciation and criticism of audiences and the criticism and self-criticism of the cultural workers that the quality of the cultural product can be raised in terms of content and style.

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The national democratic cultural revolution, under the leadership of the proletariat, has advanced brilliantly. So many writers have come to the forefront in the revolutionary struggle in the cultural field. They have come forward with works into which they have infused revolutionary class content as best as they could. It is of basic importance to analyze and sum up the concrete situation in the field of literature from one stage to another. The purpose is to improve current literary stock, choose the exemplary works for popularization and set the tasks for raising the quantity and quality of further literary output.

At this stage, it is important for revolutionary writers to band together and make a conscious effort to create and promote literary and artistic models or outstanding works. These works should prove that revolutionary class content can be heightened and at the same time aesthetic standards can be raised. We must debunk all arguments of the bourgeoisie that only its ideas and notions can satisfy the demands of the various forms of literature.

The best way to do the debunking is to create and promote brilliant proletarian revolutionary literature and art. It is our task to make these literary models reach the factories, farms, schools and everywhere else in the country. By doing this, we promote the upsurge of revolutionary literature in our country.

*8. Are there any lessons from past mistakes from the Philippine experience of cultural work from the past that cultural workers today can learn from?*

JMS: Because of the more than 50 years of cultural work done by the cadres under the Communist party of the Philippines in the cultural field, there are many negative lessons to learn from past mistakes just as there are many positive lessons. I can mention a few. But others, especially those involved in cultural work, can certainly mention more.

Overdependence on one or a few writers, artistic directors can prejudice the development of cultural work. It is best to distribute responsibility among more cadres in order to produce more and better results. Cultural workers must be conscious of belonging to a cultural army engaged in a cultural revolution. They must be determined to be active and productive members of this army.

It is an army for organizing, organizing and mobilizing a great mass of cultural workers and audiences to defeat the counterrevolutionary cultural army that flings all kinds of lies and slander against the revolutionary movement and has the advantage of controlling the mass media, social media and the all the theatres of propaganda and entertainment.

While the proletarian revolutionary cadres must lead the revolutionary cultural army, they have made mistakes in failing to do united front work with other patriotic and democratic forces in order to avail of greater human



and material resources and larger audiences.

*9. Are there any tasks specific to the cultural workers organizing outside the Philippines?*

JMS: Filipinos are well-known to be good articulators of ideas and also to have abundant cultural talents. The existing various types of Filipino organizations in every country, every city or even in every neighborhood must form their respective cultural groups. Cultural formations independent of the various types of organizations can also be formed. They hold periodic and special cultural festivals on the scale of a whole country, region or a city.

I propose that national democratic movement of overseas Filipinos can establish TV and radio broadcast stations by using a digital platform. The various types of Filipino mass organizations as well as their foreign friends can supply informative, educational cultural and entertainment content. The important point is that all these cultural associations uphold and promote the national and democratic rights interests of the overseas Filipinos and the Filipino people in the motherland.

*10. What is your advice to cultural workers who are challenged to fulfill their tasks amidst the current situation of the pandemic, as well as rising fascism?*

JMS: I have participated in so many webinars in this long time of the Covid-19 pandemic. The digital media can be a powerful and effective medium during and after the pandemic. Let us do more webinars on culture and art and even far more presentations of cultural and artistic performances with a revolutionary character, including songs and instrumental music, dances poetry reading, display of painting and other works, drama, comedy, parodies and others.

There can be as many cultural and artistic formations as possible, of varying sectoral or geographic scales. But the directors, producers and other participants must present the best they can so that they can be effective in enlightening and inspiring the people and even serve as models for emulation by cultural workers in the Philippines and abroad. The video tapes can serve to propagate these cultural and artistic presentations. Karaoke versions of all the revolutionary songs should be produced so that these can be more easily popularized among the masses and the general public.

The national democratic movement has become so large and strong in the Philippines, with many millions as adherents. I propose now, as I have long proposed, that an initiative be taken to establish a digital platform for a TV network to be fed with informative, educational, cultural and entertainment content (in the form of video productions and instant telecommunications) from the many types of mass organizations of the national democratic movement as well as from friendly parties and mass

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movements abroad.



## **“Oppressors tell people to bow their heads. Now they are raising their fists.”**

**Interview with Marco L. Valbuena, Chief Information Officer,  
Communist Party of the Philippines**

**October 27, 2020**

### *1. How does the CPP define terrorism?*

For purposes of 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 wilful disregard of international humanitarian law and rules of war as stipulated in such instruments as the Geneva Conventions which were framed for the protection of civilians and those who are not taking part in armed hostilities. Recall that these international conventions were forged in the 1930s by the international community in the hope of preventing the kind of brutality and sufferings suffered during the Holocaust and abuses during World War I.

### *2. What is your stand on terrorism?*

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

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 its strength from the wellspring of support of the masses because they steadfastly uphold the interests and well-being of the broad masses.

### *3. 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

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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 peasant uprisings and armed resistance of the Katipunan and armed revolutionary movements since then. 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.

In the countryside, the peasant masses are left with no choice in the face of massacres, killings and gross rights abuses by the AFP who serve the interests of the despotic landlords, as well as foreign big economic aggressors. The Party and the NPA help them discover their strength in unity. They were told to bow their heads. Now, they have learned to raise their fists.

### *4. 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.

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.

*5. 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 come 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 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 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 AFP formed the so-called Investment Defense Force (IDF) which receive large funding from these capitalists.

*6. Have there not been incidents in the past where civilians were hurt in NPA military actions? Is this not terrorism? Do you consider this as collateral damage?*

There have been past incidents where civilians were 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 ICRC, in accordance to international rules of war.

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

When errors do occur and civilians get hurt, the NPA takes extra effort to correct its mistakes. In addition to internal self-corrections and disciplinary actions, the NPA makes public self-criticism and tries to recompense the family of the victims.

The CPP and NPA, however, distinguish civilians from paramilitary forces, vigilantes 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.

*7. What is your view of the Anti-Terror Law?*

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Duterte's Anti-Terror Law 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 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 ATL 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.

Duterte's military officials are itching to use the ATL 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.

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."

### *8. 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 spur 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 against the 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.

*9. 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. Lawyers and other interested parties can also question 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.

*10. Under the ATA, the government can designate organizations listed as terrorist by the United Nations, 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 CPP 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 for 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.

*11. 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 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

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wage war in defense 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. 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 or subdued 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.

*12. 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, specifically the Ottawa Treaty. This treaty prohibits only anti-personnel land mine that explode upon contact. 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, likely because US companies are among the manufacturer of these type 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 employ 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.

*13. What is your reaction to AFP claims the NPA is losing support of the people? What about the "surrenderers"?*

These AFP claims are not new and are simply not true. Successive AFP leaderships have sung 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 thousands of peasants and minority people paraded by the AFP as "surrenderers" 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 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 simple 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 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.

The AFP intimidate local officials to steer the priorities of village and town councils towards counterinsurgency. 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.” They are disgruntled that military officers are meddling in all aspects of civil governance. Funds for so-called “community integration programs,” “housing” and other projects are being diverted to the pockets of military officers leaving the people hanging dry.

The question that should really be asked is: “Why the AFP and Duterte’s NTF-ELCAC continue to fail to earn the support for its campaign against the NPA?”

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 are counterproductive in the long run.

*12. 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

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and intimidate the opposition in the vain hope of securing his power and continuing his reign of corruption and national treachery.

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## Duterte Regime Engages in Red-Tagging and Setting Up Victims for Mass Murder<sup>29</sup>

October 30, 2020

The Duterte terrorist regime and its rabid military running dogs in the National Task Force-ELCAC and the so-called Anti-Terrorism Council are trying to red-tag and malign as “communist terrorists” the many Filipino patriotic and progressive organizations that have joined the International League of Peoples’ Struggle (ILPS) and have formed the Philippine chapter of the ILPS since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Using the malicious notion of “guilt by association”, the state terrorists of the Philippines like Generals Año and Parlade and the anti-communist asset Rigoberto Tiglao claim that the aforesaid Philippine organizations must be “communist terrorists” because they joined the ILPS while I was the chairperson of the ILPS from 2001 to 2019 and that I myself exposed and in effect red-tagged them by inviting or letting them to join the ILPS. The fascist rascals make the numbskull innuendo that the ILPS and I are “communist terrorists” and that any organization joining the ILPS and me is likewise automatically “communist terrorist”.

It is the height of stupidity and malice for the state terrorists headed by Duterte to slander as “communist terrorists” organizations and individuals that are legally, peacefully and democratically engaged in political and social activism and work together to deliberate on major issues, make decisions and launch legal campaigns and actions along the anti-imperialist and democratic line. This line is in consonance with the Filipino people’s aspirations for national and social liberation.

The Duterte regime is today carrying out state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism. Taking advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has railroaded the enactment of the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law which violates the civil and political rights of the Filipino people and denies them the democratic right to think and speak freely, to assemble and make petitions, to due process and to be presumed innocent until proven guilty before a court of law.

Under the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law, which is a fascist law, any organization or individual can be arbitrarily tagged and listed as communist terrorist by the political agents of the regime, the military, police and paramilitary. And they become subject to arrest without judicial warrant,

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<sup>29</sup>Issued as Chairperson of Emeritus International League of Peoples’ Struggle

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deprived of bank account and detained for as many 24 days without access to lawyer and family. This is enough time to torture and murder the captives and destroy the corpses and any evidence of wrongdoing by the captors.

The same methods used in Oplan Tokhang in the bogus war on drugs to kill tens of thousands of drug suspects are being used under the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law. The "law enforcement agencies" and the political agents of the regime in the local communities and at various levels of government list down the names of organizations and individuals who are social activists, critics and opponents of the regime. Then the mass murder follows with impunity emboldened by presidential protection for the murderers in authority and by rewards in cash and promotion in rank.

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## On the Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

Questions by Marianne Cadiz of Anakbayan-Europa in the Engels Series  
Answers by Jose Maria Sison

November 1, 2020

1. *Can you tell us a bit about the background of Engels' Origin of Family, Private Property and State? And why is it important to study now, decades after?*

JMS: Following the death of Marx in 1883, Engels came across in early April 1884 the synopsis and annotations of Marx on Lewis H. Morgan's anthropological book titled *Ancient Society: Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery, Through Barbarism to Civilization*, first published in London in 1877. After reading the notes, Engels thought that Marx had wished a treatise to be written.

Thus, he set out to write *The Origin of Family, Private Property and State*. He recognized immediately the importance of writing a book on the prehistory of the family, private property and the state by applying dialectical materialism on the evolution of primitive communal society towards civilization, elaborating on the notes of Marx and evaluating the findings and conclusions of Morgan and other anthropologists.

As the literary executor of Marx, Engels considered it a duty and a delight to write *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. He was gratified that Morgan's researches provided solid material for further study and development. In less than two months, he was able to publish the book on May 26, 1884.

2. *The development of family takes a parallel course as society. Can you discuss briefly what Henry Morgan's categorizations of prehistoric cultures are and how family looked like in those times?*

JMS: Morgan traced the development of society from the stage of savagery through barbarism to civilization in terms of the evolution of the family, the scale of the community, the mode of production and the political life of the community. For every stage of development in savagery and then barbarism, he described the lower, middle and upper levels or phases of development. But for a start, let me just sum up the general characteristics of each stage.

He stated that at the stage of savagery, the family was consanguine, matriarchal and engaged in group marriage. The scale of the community was the gens or the clan. One can marry only within one's own family

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or clan. The married woman and all her sisters were in charge of the household and the activities in and around the house and had a position superior to the menfolk. Children could be identified as those of the mother but not always of which man as father.

The scale of the community was that of the clan. The clans were autonomous and were quite far apart from each other. Thus, in my view, the term savagery should not be understood as frequent wars among the clans and frequent acts of cannibalism. Though there was supposed to be the practice of this from the middle phase of savagery onward, the term refers more to the mode of production limited to the use of crude tools like stones, wooden clubs, spears, igniting fire by friction and the bow and arrow and mainly gathering fruit, digging tubers, fishing along streams and hunting.

The clan society was communal. Anyone elected as leader and anyone elected as the one in charge of defense could easily assemble the clan council or entire clan for deliberation and decision making on issues. Conversely, the entire clan can call on the leader and ask for the council or entire clan to assemble. There was direct democracy. No bureaucracy. Anyone could speak up and everyone listened to the speaker. And the women had authority in the meetings inasmuch as they were in charge of the households in the matriarchal society.

In the stage of barbarism, the pairing family emerged. This meant having one husband as head of the family and a No. 1 wife usually among several wives because the practice of group marriage continued either in form of polygamy or polyandry. The key element in the rise of the pairing family was the assertion of male superiority over the wife as a result of the advance of the mode of production and male presumption of owning the land, the cattle and the metal tools of production. Mother-right was overthrown by father-right. The man gained the prior claim over the children for bequeathing his property. This overruled the previous presumption that the woman knew best who were her children.

The scale of the community was tribal, consisting of several clans and phratries or brother tribes. Marriage among siblings became taboo and could be endogenous as well as exogenous. The social and political life was still communal and highly democratic. Any member of the tribe could still stand up in an assembly to speak up and listened to. But it became more necessary for the council of clan representatives to meet between the meetings of the entire tribe. The differentiation of the well-to-do from those who were not began because of the emergence of private ownership of land and animals.

The most essential advances in the mode of production in the upper level of barbarism was making use of metal tools, from bronze to iron. The use of the iron ploughshare expanded agriculture. Cattle breeding also

expanded. Tribes could go to war over hunting or grazing grounds or over some other issues. They could confederate to fight other tribes. They still used the primitive weapons like spears, bows and arrows but this time they used hatchets, iron knives and swords. Captives in wars were at first killed in the style of barbarism but eventually the war victors thought it wiser to spare the lives of captives and turn them into slaves. Waging war became a way of taking slaves. Thus, barbarism paved the way for slave society and the start of civilization.

In civilization, the advances in the mode of production have been so much greater from slave society through feudalism to capitalism. The owners of the means of production have accumulated wealth and further entrenched the system of monogamous marriage and patriarchy to make sure that the men bequeathed their properties to their children. But they have engaged in adultery and have sex with as many women as they please because of their power and wealth. And their own monogamous marriages have not been characterized by sex love but prostituted by property preconditions. In contrast, the sexual love among the proletarians is not motivated and bound by such preconditions.

*3. Marx and Engels discuss a lot about consanguinity. What does "consanguinity" mean and what is meant by the "consanguine family"? What are some examples of Morgan's observation of the "systems of consanguinity"?*

JMS: In his study of the Seneca Iroquois tribe, Morgan could only observe vestiges or traces of the consanguine family. In the consanguine family, there was inbreeding within the same nuclear family. Siblings could be married and procreate. What was taboo was sexual relations between parents and children. In his study of the Punaluan family in Hawaii, he saw more manifestations of group marriage. The women ran a house to which the men could come and go. But the Punaluan family prohibited the sexual intercourse among siblings as well as among cousins. In ancient Athens, women could be known as the heterai who engaged in free love for free or for a fee.

Marx commented that the marriage of siblings was moral in the primitive past and should not be judged as immoral from the viewpoint of later societies in civilization. Engels also criticized the viewpoint of the Philistine pedants and moralists of his time to deride the practice of group marriage in primitive communal times. He saw such marriage as a phenomenon due to the material and socioeconomic conditions then obtaining, was characterized by sex love and was bereft of property and class preconditions as in exploitative class society.

Both Marx and Engels differentiated group marriage in primitive society from what are derided as adultery and prostitution in exploitative class society. On the other hand, they considered as prostitution the arranged

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marriages among the propertied exploitative class. Engels was glad about individual sex love among the proletarians in which the man is for the woman and equally the woman is for the man. He welcomed the prospect of women liberating themselves from the bondage of household chores by participating in industrial production after they lost their mother right-right or matriarchal position in primitive society, with their previous control over the household being turned against them as a way of subjugation.

*4. Do systems of consanguinity as well as group marriage amount to promiscuous sexual intercourse?*

JMS: When the consanguine families and group marriage occurred in the stage of savagery in primitive times, they were not seen by the people themselves as promiscuous sexual intercourse. They were phenomena determined by the mode of production or the economic and social conditions that I have already described. They did not yet have the kind of mode of production and the superstructure in civilization that the people now have. What some people may consider now as aberrant or immoral was quite natural, normal and moral in the stage of savagery.

Take note that the stage of savagery may be retrospected to as early as one million years ago in the time of *Australopithecus homo erectus* or 100,000 years ago when *homo sapiens* emerged. The civilization characterized by institutionalized private ownership of the means of production, the use of metallurgy, the existence of classes and class struggle, urbanization, literacy and the development of philosophy, religion, jurisprudence, the natural and social sciences emerged only since 3500 BC. in Mesopotamia, less than 6000 years ago in contrast to the long, long span of the stages of savagery and barbarism.

*5. What, according to Engels, determines family structure? How/why did they develop these forms?*

JMS: The mode of production or the economic system determined the family structure and the system of reproduction. The consanguine family, mother right and group marriage resulted from the economic system of gathering the fruit of nature in the stage of savagery. The pairing family and the overthrow of the mother-right resulted from the further development of the economic system and the emergence of private ownership of alienable property in the stage of barbarism. The monogamous family and patriarchy became far more entrenched in civilization with the far more developed economic systems and dominance of private ownership of the means of production in the slave, feudal and capitalist systems.

*6. Why and how did the Greek gens decline as the Athenian state arose? Did the same cause and process occur in the case of the gens and state in Rome?*

JMS: The gentile constitution among the Greek tribes declined as commodity production and trade resulted in the urbanization and expansion



of Athens and in the formation of the state of Athens. The city was divided into districts in which there was a mixture of Greeks from various tribes and an even larger numbers of artisans, slaves and foreigners. The state was formed to protect the slave-owning class and keep the slaves and the rest of the population under control as well as to conduct maritime trade and wage war.

A similar cause and process occurred in the case of the gens and the state in Rome. The city of Rome became a huge melting pot of people from various tribes and the gentile constitution declined as Rome further expanded and built an empire of unprecedented scale. The population included the state personnel, the artisans domestic and foreign traders, the plebeians and a huge number of slaves acquired through wars and trade. The state of Rome was fortified as a class instrument of the slave-owning class to keep the social order and to wage wars to maintain and expand the Roman empire.

*7. What about the Gens among the Celts and Germans? How was the German state formed?*

JMS: From the fourth century onward, the Roman empire disintegrated as a result of the revolts of the subjugated peoples and slaves in Europe. In previous centuries, the Celts and the Germans were the most widespread and strongest tribes and had entered the Iron Age in the upper level of barbarism. The protracted struggle against the Roman empire impelled the confederation of tribes leading ultimately to the consolidation of feudal states and economies in the Middle Ages. Christianity played a key role in the consolidation of the feudal states and in the merging of Romanized communities and those communities that had resisted Roma rule.

The Germans had the largest population and fought the fiercest on the largest battlefield against the Roman army. Rome could not subdue what it called Germania, the German tribes that had retreated to the east bank of the Rhine. These became the base for prolonged resistance and the ultimate defeat of Rome. After the collapse of Rome, the German state steadily took shape with the guidance of the Christian priests and the integration of the non-Romanized and Romanized Germanic communities. After Charlemagne and the Gauls of France consolidated Christendom in Europe, the German state under King Otto I took the lead in the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages.

*8. What kind of family structure, laws and state structures grew out of the industrialized capitalism of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries?*

JMS: Patriarchalism and the monogamous marriage characterized the family structure of the industrialized capitalist society in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of the writing and publication of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Victorian England brimmed with the ultra-conservatism that celebrated male supremacy and the male

idols of British imperialism in sharp contrast to the subjugation of women in the industrial capitalist country and in the colonies and semicolonies dominated by British imperialism.

9. *What, according to Engels, is the relation between monogamy and the overthrow of mother-right?*

JMS.: The overthrow of mother right by monogamy has meant the victory of patriarchy, the private ownership of the means of production and the series of such exploitative ruling systems as slavery, feudalism and capitalism. The natural division of labor between man and woman, such as the biological function of pregnancy and child birth, has been turned into a worsening social relation of man subjugating, and degrading the woman since the advent of the private ownership of the means of production.

In the imperialist countries today, both men and women of the working class suffer capitalist exploitation and oppression. The women suffer the additional exploitation and oppression of being either discriminated against in the workplace and overburdened by household chores, especially when neoliberalism took its toll in terms of declining employment and real incomes. In the semicolonial and semifeudal countries like the Philippines, the women suffer the triple oppression and exploitation by imperialism, feudalism and male chauvinism.

10. *What did Engels mean by "The first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male."?*

JMS: The rise of private ownership of alienable property by the husband and the tradition of father bequeathing such property to the children disempowered women by requiring a switch to patrilocal residence and patrilineal descent. It began with the pairing family in the stage of barbarism. Indeed, it became the first class opposition, with the male sex oppressing the female.

The monogamous marriage imposed on women by patriarchy has pushed them down for millennia in exploitative class society. At the same time, the slave masters have imposed themselves on great numbers of women such as the slave women, the feudal lords on the womenfolk of the serfs and the capitalists on the women in the factories.

11. *What conditions brought about the subjugation of women and what would be the basis for women's liberation?*

JMS: The subjugation of women began with the termination of their mother right upon the imposition of monogamous marriage. The men used their ownership of the means of production to assert their authority.

The liberation of women is not through the restoration of the matriarchy but the conscious and determined realization of gender equality in which

man and woman can freely agree to marry on the basis of mutual sex love and the common cause of fighting all kinds of oppression and exploitation. They must join the revolutionary movement and work together in order to change the ruling system and establish socialism in transition to communism.

They must enjoy all the basic democratic rights and fundamental freedoms. They must have equal rights and duties to each other and to their offspring. They must have the right to co-ownership of conjugal property. At the same time, women must have the distinct rights arising from pregnancy and nursing their children, which must be served by their husbands and the social system.

*12. How will family look like after the fall of capitalism?*

JMS: There will be gender equality, mutual respect and solidarity between man and woman without the divisiveness and subjugation resulting from property preconditions and from class oppression and exploitation. The publicly-owned means of production and state planning in socialist society shall provide expanding opportunities for women to earn their own income and liberate themselves from male domination, for them to give full play to their creative capabilities and to share responsibilities with the menfolk on equal terms.

Socialism shall provide the material, social and cultural conditions for the liberation and independence of women. Having their own income and doing what they could in the public interest, they shall no longer be dependent on the men and shall no longer be bound to take all the burden of household chores. The right to one's own integrity, equality and independence in relation to the husband extends to demanding what it takes to keep the marriage sound and healthy or otherwise rescinding the marriage on grounds of incompatibility, oppression and exploitation, with due care for the children if any.





# Discussion on Anti-Dühring by Friedrich Engels

Questions by Host Marianne Cadiz of Anakbayan-Europa

Answers by Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson Emeritus,  
International League of Peoples' Struggle

November 8, 2020

**1. General.** *What is the importance of Anti-Dühring? What is the main content of the book? Briefly, who was Dühring?*

JMS: Anti-Dühring was written by Friedrich Engels in 1877 and was published in book form in 1876. It is a masterpiece of Marxist literature which has educated generations of communists in the last 130 years on the fundamental ideas of scientific socialism. Lenin highly recommended the book as a 'text book' of scientific socialism.

The original title was Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science but later became known as Anti-Dühring. It was the first comprehensive presentation in a single book the three components of Marxism: philosophy, political economy and socialism.

It was written to refute the book of Eugen Dühring, a German revisionist, that attacked the fundamental principles of Marxism and proposed his own supposedly 'scientific' theories within the Social Democratic Party of Germany. In the process, Engels explained clearly the revolutionary theories of Marxism.

I am ready to present the position of Dühring on every major issue and the corresponding refutation made by Engels. I shall quote their respective words directly very often, thus making my presentation quite easy. Due to the time limit for the discussion, I shall try make the most essential quotations.

**2. Dühring's Self-Advertisement & Promises.** *How does Dühring present himself and his philosophy? How, according to him, should people regard his work and why? And what do Engels and Marx have to say about this?*

JMS: Mr. Dühring introduces himself as the man who represented the power of philosophy in his age and its immediately foreseeable development. He proclaimed himself to be the only true philosopher of today and of the "foreseeable" future. Whoever departed from him departed from truth.

He called his philosophy "the natural system or the philosophy of reality... In it, reality is so conceived as to exclude any tendency to a visionary and subjectively limited conception of the world". Engels said: This philosophy

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is therefore of such a nature that it lifts Herr Dühring above the limits he himself can hardly deny of his personal, subjective limitations. And this is in fact necessary if he is to be in a position to lay down final and ultimate truths although so far, we do not see how this miracle should come to pass.

Engels quotes the very words of Dühring to show the pomposity and vacuity of his claims. According to Dühring himself, his "natural system of knowledge which in itself is of value to the mind" has, "without the slightest detraction from the profundity of thought, securely established the basic forms of being". From its "really critical standpoint" it provides "the elements of a philosophy which is real and therefore directed to the reality of nature and of life, a philosophy which cannot allow the validity of any merely apparent horizon, but in its powerfully revolutionising movement unfolds all earths and heavens of outer and inner nature". It is a "new mode of thought", and its results are "from the ground up original conclusions and views ... system-creating ideas... established truths". In it we have before us "a work which must find its strength in concentrated initiative" — whatever that may mean; an "investigation going to the roots... a deep-rooted science ... a strictly scientific conception of things and men ... an all-round penetrating work of thought {... creative evolving of premises and conclusions controllable by thought {6} ... the absolutely fundamental".

In the economic and political sphere Dühring promised to give us not only "historical and systematically comprehensive works", of which the historical ones are, to boot, notable for "my historical depiction in the grand style", while those dealing with political economy have brought about "creative turns", but he would even finish with a fully worked-out socialist plan of his own for the society of the future, a plan which is the "practical fruit of a clear theory going to the ultimate roots of things" and, like the Dühring philosophy, is consequently infallible and offers the only way to salvation; for "only in that socialist structure which I have sketched in my *Cursus der National- und Social ökonomie* can a true Own take the place of ownership which is merely apparent and transitory or even based on violence". And the future has to follow these directions.

Engels quoted Marx to cut down immediately the size of Dühring: "Narrowness of conception ... his works and achievements in and by themselves, that is, regarded from a purely theoretical standpoint, are without any permanent significance in our domain" (the critical history of socialism), "and in the general history of intellectual tendencies they are to be cited at most as symptoms of the influence of one branch of modern sectarian scholastics ... impotence of the faculties of concentration and systematisation ... deformity of thought and style, undignified affectation of language ... anglicised vanity ... duping {497} ... barren conceptions which in fact are only bastards of historical and logical fantasy ...

deceptive twisting {498} ... personal vanity {499} ... vile mannerisms ... snotty ... buffoonery pretending to be witty ... Chinese erudition {506} ... philosophical and scientific backwardness" {507}

### ***Part I: Philosophy***

**3. A Priorism.** *What is Dühring's definition or view of philosophy? And what is Engel's comment?*

JMS: According to Dühring, philosophy is the development of the highest form of consciousness of the world and of life, and in a wider sense embraces the principles of all knowledge and volition. Wherever a series of cognitions or stimuli or a group of forms of being come to be examined by human consciousness, the principles underlying these manifestations of necessity become an object of philosophy. These principles are the simple, or until now assumed to be simple, constituents of manifold knowledge and volition. Like the chemical composition of bodies, the general constitution of things can be reduced to basic forms and basic elements. These ultimate constituents or principles, once they have been discovered, are valid not only for what is immediately known and accessible, but also for the world which is unknown and inaccessible to us. Philosophical principles consequently provide the final supplement required by the sciences in order to become a uniform system by which nature and human life can be explained. Apart from the fundamental forms of all existence, philosophy has only two specific subjects of investigation — nature and the world of man {1. Accordingly, our material arranges itself quite naturally into three groups, namely, the general scheme of the universe, the science of the principles of nature, and finally the science of mankind. This succession at the same time contains an inner logical sequence, for the formal principles which are valid for all being take precedence, and the realms of the objects to which they are to be applied then follow in the degree of their subordination.

Engels refuted Dühring's apriorism in the following words: What he (Dühring) is dealing with are therefore principles, formal tenets derived from thought and not from the external world, which are to be applied to nature and the realm of man, and to which therefore nature and man have to conform. But whence does thought obtain these principles? From itself? No, for Herr Dühring himself says: the realm of pure thought is limited to logical schemata and mathematical forms (the latter, moreover, as we shall see, is wrong). Logical schemata can only relate to forms of thought; but what we are dealing with here is solely forms of being, of the external world, and these forms can never be created and derived by thought out of itself, but only from the external world. But with this the whole relationship is inverted: the principles are not the starting-point of the investigation,

but its final result; they are not applied to nature and human history, but abstracted from them, it is not nature and the realm of man which conform to these principles, but the principles are only valid in so far as they are in conformity with nature and history. That is the only materialist conception of the matter, and Herr Dühring's contrary conception is idealistic, makes things stand completely on their heads, and fashions the real world out of ideas, out of schemata, schemes or categories existing somewhere before the world, from eternity — just like a Hegel.

It goes without saying that no materialist doctrine can be founded on such an ideological basis. Later on we shall see that Herr Dühring is forced more than once to endow nature surreptitiously with conscious activity, with what in plain language is called God.

However, our philosopher of reality had also other motives for shifting the basis of all reality from the real world to the world of thought. The science of this general world schematism, of these formal principles of being, is precisely the foundation of Herr Dühring's philosophy. If we deduce world schematism not from our minds, but only through our minds from the real world, if we deduce principles of being from what is, we need no philosophy for this purpose, but positive knowledge of the world and of what happens in it; and what this yield is also not philosophy, but positive science. In that case, however, Herr Dühring's whole volume would be nothing but love's labour lost.

The perception that all the processes of nature are systematically connected drives science on to prove this systematic connection throughout, both in general and in particular. But an adequate, exhaustive scientific exposition of this interconnection, the formation of an exact mental image of the world system in which we live, is impossible for us, and will always remain impossible. If at any time in the development of mankind such a final, conclusive system of the interconnections within the world — physical as well as mental and historical — were brought about, this would mean that human knowledge had reached its limit, and, from the moment when society had been brought into accord with that system, further historical development would be cut short — which would be an absurd idea, sheer nonsense.

As with the basic forms of being, so also with the whole of pure mathematics: Herr Dühring thinks that he can produce it a priori that is, without making use of the experience offered us by the external world, can construct it in his head. In pure mathematics the mind deals "with its own free creations and imaginations"; the concepts of number and figure are "the adequate object of that pure science which it can create of itself", and hence it has a "validity which is independent of particular experience and of the real content of the world".

That pure mathematics has a validity which is independent of the



particular experience of each individual is, for that matter, correct, and this is true of all established facts in every science, and indeed of all facts whatsoever. The magnetic poles, the fact that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen, the fact that Hegel is dead and Herr Dühring alive, hold good independently of my own experience or that of any other individual, and even independently of Herr Dühring's experience, when he begins to sleep the sleep of the just. But it is not at all true that in pure mathematics the mind deals only with its own creations and imaginations. The concepts of number and figure have not been derived from any source other than the world of reality. The ten fingers on which men learnt to count, that is, to perform the first arithmetical operation, are anything but a free creation of the mind.

But why all this prolixity? After Herr Dühring has enthusiastically sung the independence of pure mathematics from the world of experience, its apriority, its preoccupation with the mind's own free creations and imaginations, he says: "It is, of course, easily overlooked that those mathematical elements (number, magnitude, time, space and geometric motion) are dealt only in their form,... absolute magnitudes are therefore something completely empirical, no matter to what species they belong", ... but "mathematical schemata are capable of characterization which is adequate even though divorced from experience."

The last statement is more or less true of every abstraction, but does not by any means prove that it is not abstracted from reality. In world schematism pure mathematics arose out of pure thought — in the philosophy of nature it is something completely empirical, taken from the external world and then divorced from it. Which are we to believe?

**4. World Schematism.** *According to Dühring, all-embracing being is one. What does he mean by this? What is the world schematism of Dühring? How does Engels describe and debunk it?*

JMS: Dühring declares: "All-embracing being is one in its self-sufficiency it has nothing alongside it or over it. To associate a second being with it would be to make it something that it is not, namely, a part or constituent of a more comprehensive whole. Due to the fact that we extend our unified thought like a framework, nothing that should be comprised in this thought-unity can retain a duality within itself. Nor, again, can anything escape this thought-unity... The essence of all thought consists in bringing together the elements of consciousness into a unity ... It is the point of unity of the synthesis where the indivisible idea of the world came into being and the universe, as the name itself implies, is apprehended as something in which everything is united into unity".

Thus far Herr Dühring. This is the first application of the mathematical method: "Every question is to be decided axiomatically in accordance with simple basic forms, as if we were dealing with the simple ... principles of

mathematics”.

Engels comments: “All-embracing being is one.” of tautology, the simple repetition in the predicate of what is already expressed in the subject — if that makes an axiom, then we have here one of the purest water. Herr Dühring tells us in the subject that being embraces everything, and in the predicate, he intrepidly declares that in that case there is nothing outside it. What colossal “system-creating thought”!

This is indeed system-creating! Within the space of the next six lines Herr Dühring has transformed the oneness of being, by means of our unified thought, into its unit. As the essence of all thought consists in bringing things together into a unity, so being, as soon as it is conceived, is conceived as unified, and the idea of the world as indivisible; and because conceived being, the idea of the world, is unified, therefore real being, the real world, is also an indivisible unity. And with that “there is no longer any room for things beyond, once the mind has learnt to conceive being in its homogeneous universality”.

This last statement is simply untrue. In the first place, thought consists just as much in the taking apart of objects of consciousness into their elements as in the putting together of related elements into a unity. Without analysis, no synthesis. Secondly, without making blunders thought can bring together into a unity only those elements of consciousness in which or in whose real prototypes this unity already existed before. If I include a shoe-brush in the unity mammals, this does not help it to get mammary glands.

The most comical part of the business is that Herr Dühring, in order to prove the non-existence of God from the idea of being, uses the ontological proof for the existence of God. This runs: when we think of God, we conceive him as the sum total of all perfections. But the sum total of all perfections includes above all existence, since a non-existent being is necessarily imperfect

Engels asserts: “The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved not by a few juggled phrases, but by a long and wearisome development of philosophy and natural science.”

But we shall see very soon that Herr Dühring's universe really starts with a being which lacks all inner differentiation, all motion and change, and is therefore in fact only a counterpart of the idea of nothing, and therefore really nothing. Only out of this being-nothing develops the present differentiated, changing state of the universe, which represents a development, a becoming; and it is only after we have grasped this that we are able, even within this perpetual change, to “maintain the conception of universal being in a self-equal state”.

My comment is that Dühring bound himself to the Absolute Idea of Plato and hard put to explain the differentiation and development of ideas

as reflection of material reality he resorts to borrowing from Hegel. Engels exposes Dühring as drawing from Hegel after denouncing Hegel: This is precisely the Hegelian nodal line of measure relations, in which, at certain definite nodal points, the purely quantitative increase or decrease gives rise to a qualitative leap; for example, in the case of heated or cooled water, where boiling-point and freezing-point are the nodes at which — under normal pressure — the leap to a new state of aggregation takes place, and where consequently quantity is transformed into quality.

Engels state: Our investigation has likewise tried to reach down to the roots, and it finds the roots of the deep-rooted basic schemata of Herr Dühring to be — the “delirious fantasies” of a Hegel, the categories of Hegelian Logic, Part I, the Doctrine of Being, in strictly old Hegelian “succession” and with hardly any attempt to cloak the plagiarism!

And not content with pilfering from his worst-slandered predecessor the latter's whole scheme of being, Herr Dühring, after himself giving the above-quoted example of the leap-like change from quantity into quality, says of Marx without the slightest perturbation: “How ridiculous, for example, is the reference” (made by Marx) “to the Hegelian confused, hazy notion that quantity is transformed into quality!”

What Hegel calls the doctrine of essence Herr Dühring translates into “logical properties of being”. These, however, consist above all in the “antagonism of forces” {31}, in opposites. Contradiction, however, Herr Dühring absolutely denies; we will return to this point later. Then he passes over to causality, and from this to necessity. So that when Herr Dühring says of himself: “We, who do not philosophise out of a cage”, he apparently means that he philosophises *na* cage, namely, the cage of the Hegelian schematism of categories.

## ***Part II: Philosophy of Nature***

**5. Time and Space.** *Can pure mathematics explain infinity of time and space? Why or why not?*

JMS: Engels declares that pure mathematics cannot explain infinity: The whole deception would be impossible but for the mathematical usage of working with infinite series. Because in mathematics it is necessary to start from definite, finite terms in order to reach the indefinite, the infinite, all mathematical series, positive or negative, must start from 1, or they cannot be used for calculation. The abstract requirement of a mathematician is, however, far from being a compulsory law for the world of reality.

For that matter, Herr Dühring will never succeed in conceiving real infinity without contradiction. Infinity is a contradiction, and is full of contradictions. From the outset it is a contradiction that an infinity is composed of nothing but finites, and yet this is the case. The limitedness of the material world

leads no less to contradictions than its unlimitedness, and every attempt to get over these contradictions leads, as we have seen, to new and worse contradictions. It is just because infinity is a contradiction that it is an infinite process, unrolling endlessly in time and in space.

Let us pass on. So time had a beginning. What was there before this beginning? The universe, which was then in a self-equal, unchanging state. And as in this state no changes succeed one another, the more specialized idea of time transforms itself into the more general idea of being in the first place, we are here not in the least concerned with what ideas change in Herr Dühring's head. The subject at issue is not the idea of time, but real time, which Herr Dühring cannot rid himself of so cheaply. In the second place, however much the idea of time may convert itself into the more general idea of being, this does not take us one step further. For the basic forms of all being are space and time, and being out of time is just as gross an absurdity as being out of space.

An initial impulse must therefore have come from outside, from outside the universe, an impulse which set it in motion. But as everyone knows, the "initial impulse" is only another expression for God. God and the beyond, which in his world schematism Herr Dühring pretended to have so beautifully dismantled, are both introduced again by him here, sharpened and deepened, into natural philosophy. Further, Herr Dühring says: "Where magnitude is attributed to a constant element of being, it will remain unchanged in its determinateness. This holds good ... of matter and mechanical force".

**6. Cosmogony, Physics, Chemistry.** *What is the relationship of matter and motion? And what is Dühring's analysis of matter as opposed to Engels and other materialists?*

JMS: Matter, Herr Dühring says, is the bearer of all reality; accordingly, there can be no mechanical force apart from matter. Mechanical force is furthermore a state of matter. In the original state, when nothing happened, matter and its state, mechanical force, were one. Afterwards, when something began to happen, this state must apparently have become different from matter. So we are to let ourselves be dismissed with these mystical phrases and with the assurance that the self-equal state was neither static nor dynamic, neither in equilibrium nor in motion. We still do not know where mechanical force was in that state, and how we are to get from absolute immobility to motion without an impulse from outside, that is, without God.

Engels state as follows the position of materialists: The materialists before Herr Dühring spoke of matter and motion. He reduces motion to mechanical force as its supposed basic form, and thereby makes it impossible for himself to understand the real connection between matter and motion, which moreover was also unclear to all former materialists.

And yet it is simple enough. Motion is the mode of existence of matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. Motion in cosmic space, mechanical motion of smaller masses on the various celestial bodies, the vibration of molecules as heat or as electrical or magnetic currents, chemical disintegration and combination, organic life — at each given moment each individual atom of matter in the world is in one or other of these forms of motion, or in several forms at once. All rest, all equilibrium, is only relative, only has meaning in relation to one or other definite form of motion.

On the earth, for example, a body may be in mechanical equilibrium, may be mechanically at rest; but this in no way prevents it from participating in the motion of the earth and in that of the whole solar system, just as little as it prevents its most minute physical particles from carrying out the vibrations determined by its temperature, or its atoms from passing through a chemical process. Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself; as the older philosophy (Descartes) expressed it, the quantity of motion existing in the world is always the same. Motion therefore cannot be created; it can only be transferred. When motion is transferred from one body to another, it may be regarded, in so far as it transfers itself, is active, as the- cause of motion, in so far as the latter is transferred, is passive. We call this active motion force, and the passive, the manifestation of force. Hence it is as clear as daylight that a force is as great as its manifestation, because in fact the same motion takes place in both.

**7. The Organic World.** *Why does Dühring attack Darwin? So what if Darwin's theory of evolution and struggle of the fittest is akin or similar to the Malthusian theory in political economy?*

Dühring pours a lot of vitriol over Darwin's theory of evolution and struggle of the fittest by describing it as an attack on our sense of humanity and by linking it with the Malthusian theory that the population outgrows the economy. But the actual reason is that Dühring's opposes materialism and dialectics. To cope with the assertiveness of material reality and development, he resorts to stealing from Hegel "the nodal line of measure relations".

According to Engels, Mr. Dühring tries to assure himself that by saying "A single and uniform ladder of intermediate steps leads from the mechanics of pressure and impact to the linking together of sensations and ideas", he saves himself the trouble of saying anything further about the origin of life, although it might reasonably have been expected that a thinker who had traced the evolution of the world back to its self-equal state, and is so much at home on other celestial bodies, would have known exactly what's what also on this point.

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Engels adds: For the rest, however, the assurance he gives us is only half right unless it is completed by the Hegelian nodal line of measure relations which has already been mentioned. In spite of all gradualness, the transition from one form of motion to another always remains a leap, a decisive change. This is true of the transition from the mechanics of celestial bodies to that of smaller masses on a particular celestial body; it is equally true of the transition from the mechanics of masses to the mechanics of molecules — including the forms of motion investigated in physics proper: heat, light, electricity, magnetism. In the same way, the transition from the physics of molecules to the physics of atoms — chemistry — in turn involves a decided leap; and this is even more clearly the case in the transition from ordinary chemical action to the chemism of albumen which we call life. Then within the sphere of life the leaps become ever more infrequent and imperceptible. — Once again, therefore, it is Hegel who has to correct Herr Dühring.

The concept of purpose provides Herr Dühring with a conceptual transition to the organic world. Once again, this is borrowed from Hegel, who in his *Logic*— the Doctrine of the Notion — makes the transition from chemism to life by means of teleology, or the science of purpose. Wherever we look in Herr Dühring we run into a Hegelian “crudity”, which he quite unblushingly dishes out to us as his own deep-rooted science. It would take us too far afield to investigate here the extent to which it is legitimate and appropriate to apply the ideas of means and end to the organic world. In any case, even the application of the Hegelian “inner purpose” — i.e., a purpose which is not imported into nature by some third party acting purposively, such as the wisdom of providence, but lies in the necessity of the thing itself — constantly leads people who are not well versed in philosophy to thoughtlessly ascribing to nature conscious and purposive activity. That same Herr Dühring who is filled with boundless moral indignation at the slightest “spiritistic” tendency in other people assures us “with certainty that the instinctive sensations were primarily created for the sake of the satisfaction involved in their activity”.

So we get common descent after all, but only “second class”. We must rejoice that after Herr Dühring has attributed so much to it that is evil and obscure, we nevertheless find it in the end readmitted by the backdoor. It is the same with natural selection, for after all his moral indignation over the struggle for existence through which natural selection operates we suddenly read: “The deeper basis of the constitution of organisms is thus to be sought in the conditions of life and cosmic relations, while the natural selection emphasized by Darwin can only come in as a secondary factor”.

So we get natural selection after all, though only second class; and along with natural selection also the struggle for existence, and with that also the priestly Malthusian overpopulation! That is all, and for the rest Herr

Dühring refers us to Lamarck. My comment is that what he rejects in the first place he accepts, when material reality and development shouts back at him, but regards this in the Platonic mode of thinking that it is secondary to the "reality" of ideas. He cannot budge from this position even when proven false by material reality and development. He pontificates:

In conclusion he warns us against the misuse of the terms: metamorphosis and development. Metamorphosis, he maintains, is an unclear concept, and the concept of development is permissible only in so far as laws of development can be really established. In place of both these terms we should use the term "composition", and then everything would be all right. It is the same old story over again: things remain as they were, and Herr Dühring is quite satisfied as soon as we just alter the names. When we speak of the development of the chicken in the egg, we are creating confusion, for we are able to prove the laws of; development only in an incomplete way. But if we speak of its' "composition" everything becomes clear. We shall therefore no longer say: This child is developing finely but: It is composing itself magnificently. We can congratulate Herr Dühring on being a worthy peer of the author of the Nibelungen ring not only in his noble self-esteem but also in his capacity of composer of the future.

**8. The Organic World. (Conclusion).** *Can mathematics be the basis of knowing the organic world as claimed by Dühring?*

According to Dühring: "Ponder ... what positive knowledge is required to equip our section on natural philosophy with all its scientific premises. Its basis is provided firstly by all the fundamental achievements of mathematics, and then the principal propositions established by exact science in mechanics, physics and chemistry, as well as the general conclusions of natural science in physiology, zoology and similar branches of inquiry".

Engels answers Dühring: Such is the confidence and assurance with which Herr Dühring speaks of the mathematical and naturalistic erudition of Herr Dühring. It is impossible to detect from the meager section concerned, and still less from its even more paltry conclusions, what deep-rooted positive knowledge lies behind them. In any case, in order to create the Dühring oracle on physics and chemistry, it is not necessary to know any more of physics than the equation which expresses the mechanical equivalent of heat, or any more of chemistry than that all bodies can be divided into elements and combinations of elements. Moreover, a person who can talk of "gravitating atoms", as Herr Dühring does, only proves that he is completely "in the dark" as to the difference between atoms and molecules. As is well known, it is only chemical action, and not gravitation or other mechanical or physical forms of motion, that is explained by atoms. And if anyone should read as far as the chapter on organic nature,

with its vacuous, self-contradictory and, at the decisive point, oracularly senseless meandering verbiage, and its absolutely futile final conclusion, he will not be able to avoid forming the opinion, from the very start, that Herr Dühring is here speaking of things of which he knows remarkably little. This opinion becomes absolute certainty when the reader reaches his suggestion that in the science of organic beings (biology) the term composition should be used instead of development. The person who can put forward such a suggestion shows that he has not the faintest suspicion of the formation of organic bodies.

Life is the mode of existence of albuminous bodies, and this mode of existence essentially consists in the constant self-renewal of the chemical constituents of these bodies. The term albuminous body is used here in the sense in which it is employed in modern chemistry, which includes under this name all bodies constituted similarly to ordinary white of egg, otherwise also known as protein substances. The name is an unhappy one, because ordinary white of egg plays the most lifeless and passive role of all the substances related to it, since, together with the yolk, it is merely food for the developing embryo. But while so little is yet known of the chemical composition of albuminous bodies, this name is better than any other because it is more general.

Our definition of life is naturally very inadequate, inasmuch as, far from including all the phenomena of life, it has to be limited to those which are the most common and the simplest. From a scientific standpoint all definitions are of little value. In order to gain an exhaustive knowledge of what life is, we should have to go through all the forms in which it appears, from the lowest to the highest. But for ordinary usage such definitions are very convenient and in places cannot well be dispensed with; moreover, they can do no harm, provided their inevitable deficiencies are not forgotten.

But back to Herr Dühring. When things are faring badly with him in the sphere of earthly biology, he knows where to find consolation; he takes refuge in his starry heaven. Dühring states: "It is not merely the special apparatus of an organ of sensation, but the whole objective world, which is adapted to the production of pleasure and pain. For this reason, we take it for granted that the antithesis between pleasure and pain, and moreover exactly, in the form with which we are familiar, is a universal antithesis, and must be represented in the various worlds of the universe by essentially homogeneous feelings.... This conformity, however, is of no little significance, for it is the key to the universe of sensations.... Hence the subjective cosmic world is to us not much more unfamiliar than the objective. The constitution of both spheres must be conceived according to one concordant type, and in this we have the beginnings of a science of consciousness whose range is wider than merely terrestrial"

What do a few gross blunders in terrestrial natural science matter to



the man who carries in his pocket the key to the universe of sensations?

### **Part III: Morality and Law**

**9. Eternal Truths.** *What is the basis of Dühring's claim that there are eternal truths in morality and law? What does Engels react to it? What are the conditions and factors that determine and shape morality and law?*

According to Dühring: The world of morals, "just as much as the world of general knowledge", has "its permanent principles and simple elements". The moral principles stand "above history and also above the present differences in national characteristics... The special truths out of which, in the course of evolution, a more complete moral consciousness and, so to speak, conscience are built up, may, in so far as their ultimate basis is understood, claim a validity and range similar to the insights and applications of mathematics, Genuine truths are absolutely immutable... so that it is altogether stupid to think that the correctness of knowledge is something that can be affected by time and changes in reality". Hence the certitude of strict knowledge and the adequacy of common cognition leave no room, when we are in possession of our senses, for doubting the absolute validity of the principles of knowledge. "Even persistent doubt is itself a diseased condition of weakness and only the expression of hopeless confusion, which sometimes seeks to contrive the appearance of something stable in the systematic consciousness of its nothingness. In the sphere of ethics, the denial of general principles clutches at the geographical and historical variety of customs and principles, and once the inevitable necessity of moral wickedness and evil is conceded, it believes itself so much the more to be above the recognition of the great importance and actual efficacy of concordant moral impulses. This mordant skepticism, which is not directed against particular false doctrines but against mankind's very capacity to develop conscious morality, resolves itself ultimately into a real Nothing, in fact into something that is worse than pure nihilism {194} ... It flatters itself that it can easily dominate within its utter chaos of disintegrated ethical ideas and open the gates to unprincipled arbitrariness. But it is greatly mistaken: for mere reference to the inevitable fate of reason in error and truth suffices to show by this analogy alone that natural fallibility does not necessarily exclude the attainment of accuracy" {195}.

Moral truths, in so far as their ultimate bases are understood, claim the same validity as mathematical insights. And does not Herr Dühring assert that, working from his really critical standpoint and by means of those researches of his which go to the root of things, he has forced his way through to these ultimate foundations, the basic schemata, and has thus bestowed final and ultimate validity on moral truths? Or, if Herr Dühring does not advance this claim either for himself or for his age, if he only

meant to say that perhaps someday in the dark and nebulous future final and ultimate truths may be ascertained, if therefore he meant to say much the same, only in a more confused way, as is said by “mordant skepticism” and “hopeless confusion” — then, in that case, what is all the noise about, what can we do for you, Herr Dühring? [Goethe, Faust, Act I, Scene III] (“Faust’s Study”)

Engels refutes Dühring by referring to the development of three co-existing moralities in his time: But how do things stand today? What morality is preached to us today? There is first Christian-feudal morality, inherited from earlier religious times; and this is divided, essentially, into a Catholic and a Protestant morality, each of which has no lack of subdivisions, from the Jesuit-Catholic and Orthodox-Protestant to lose “enlightened” moralities. Alongside these we find the modern-bourgeois morality and beside it also the proletarian morality of the future, so that in the most advanced European countries alone the past, present and future provide three great groups of moral theories which are in force simultaneously and alongside each other. Which, then, is the true one? Not one of them, in the sense of absolute finality; but certainly, that morality contains the maximum elements promising permanence which, in the present, represents the overthrow of the present, represents the future, and that is proletarian morality.

But when we see that the three classes of modern society, the feudal aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, each have a morality of their own, we can only draw the one conclusion: that men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their ethical ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based — from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange

But nevertheless, there is great deal which the three moral theories mentioned above have in common — is this not at least a portion of a morality which is fixed once and for all? — These moral theories represent three different stages of the same historical development, have therefore a common historical background, and for that reason alone they necessarily have much in common. Even more. At similar or approximately similar stages of economic development moral theories must of necessity be more or less in agreement. From the moment when private ownership of movable property developed, all societies in which this private ownership existed had to have this moral injunction in common:

**10. Equality.** *Is there absolute equality? Where did the idea of equality come from? How do Dühring and Engels differ in their stand on absolute equality?*

According to Dühring on the basis of his hypothetical germinal society of two men: “Two human wills are as such entirely equal to each other, and in the first place the one can demand nothing positive of the other”. This

“characterizes the basic form of moral justice” {2, and also that of legal justice, for “we need only the wholly simple and elementary relation of two persons for the development of the fundamental concepts of law”.

Engels refutes Dühring in the following words: The idea of equality, both in its bourgeois and in its proletarian form, is therefore itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical conditions that in turn themselves presuppose a long previous history. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth. And if today it is taken for granted by the general public — in one sense or another — if, as Marx says, it “already possesses the fixity of a popular prejudice”, this is not the effect of its axiomatic truth, but the effect of the general diffusion and the continued appropriateness of the ideas of the eighteenth century. If therefore Herr Dühring is able without more ado to let his famous two men conduct their economic relations on the basis of equality, this is so because it seems quite natural to popular prejudice. And in fact, Herr Dühring calls his philosophy natural because it is derived solely from things which seem to him quite natural. But why they seem natural to him is a question which of course he does not ask.

**11. Freedom and Necessity.** *How do objective conditions relate to freedom? What is the relation of freedom to necessity?*

According to Engels: Freedom does not consist in any dreamt-of independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends. This holds good in relation both to the laws of external nature and to those which govern the bodily and mental existence of men themselves — two classes of laws which we can separate from each other at most only in thought but not in reality. Freedom of the will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject. Therefore, the freer a man’s judgment is in relation to a definite question, the greater is the necessity with which the content of this judgment will be determined; while the uncertainty, founded on ignorance, which seems to make an arbitrary choice among many different and conflicting possible decisions, shows precisely by this that it is not free, that it is controlled by the very object it should itself control. Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature, a control founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development. The first men who separated themselves from the animal kingdom were in all essentials as unfree as the animals themselves, but each step forward in the field of culture was a step towards freedom. On the threshold of human history stands the discovery that mechanical motion can be transformed into heat: the production of fire by friction; at the close of the development so far gone through stands the discovery that heat can be transformed into mechanical motion: the steam-engine. — And, in spite of the gigantic liberating revolution in the

social world which the steam-engine is carrying through, and which is not yet half completed, it is beyond all doubt that the generation of fire by friction has had an even greater effect on the liberation of mankind. For the generation of fire by friction gave man for the first time control over one of the forces of nature, and thereby and thereby separated him for ever from the animal kingdom. The steam-engine will never bring about such a mighty leap forward in human development, however important it may seem in our eyes as representing all those immense productive forces dependent on it — forces which alone make possible a state of society in which there are no longer class distinctions or anxiety over the means of subsistence for the individual, and in which for the first time there can be talk of real human freedom, of an existence in harmony with the laws of nature that have become known. But how young the whole of human history still is, and how ridiculous it would be to attempt to ascribe any absolute validity to our present views, is evident from the simple fact that all past history can be characterized as the history of the epoch from the practical discovery of the transformation of mechanical motion into heat up to that of the transformation of heat into mechanical motion.

True, Herr Dühring's treatment of history is different. In general, being a record of error, ignorance and barbarity, of violence and subjugation, history is a repulsive object to the philosophy of reality; but considered in detail it is divided into two great periods, namely (1) from the self-equal state of matter up to the French Revolution, (2) from the French Revolution up to Herr Dühring; the nineteenth century remains "still in essence reactionary, indeed from the intellectual standpoint even more so" (!) "than the eighteenth". Nevertheless, it bears socialism in its womb, and therewith "the germ of a mightier regeneration than was fancied" (!) "by the forerunners and the heroes of the French Revolution".

The philosophy of reality's contempt for all past history is justified as follows: "The few thousand years, the historical retrospection of which has been facilitated by original documents, are, together with the constitution of mankind so far, of little significance when one thinks of the succession of thousands of years which are still to come... The human race as a whole is still very young, and when in time to come scientific retrospection has tens of thousands instead of thousands of years to reckon with, the intellectually immature childhood of our institutions becomes a self-evident premise undisputed in relation to our epoch, which will then be revered as hoary antiquity" {302}.

### **Part IV: Dialectics**

**12. Quantity and Quality.** *What is the position of Dühring regarding contradiction and dialectics? How does Engels explain qualitative change*

*as a consequence of quantitative change?*

According to Dühring: "The first and most important principle of the basic logical properties of being refers to the exclusion of contradiction. Contradiction is a category which can only appertain to a combination of thoughts, but not to reality. There are no contradictions in things, or, to put it another way, contradiction accepted as reality is itself the apex of absurdity... The antagonism of forces measured against each other and moving in opposite directions is in fact the basic form of all actions in the life of the world and its creatures. But this opposition of the directions taken by the forces of elements and individuals does not in the slightest degree coincide with the idea of absurd contradictions... We can be content here with having cleared the fogs which generally rise from the supposed mysteries of logic by presenting a clear picture of the actual absurdity of contradictions in reality and with having shown the uselessness of the incense which has been burnt here and there in honor of the dialectics of contradiction — the very clumsily carved wooden doll which is substituted for the antagonistic world schematism"

This is practically all we are told about dialectics in the *Cursus der Philosophie*. In his *Kritische Geschichte*, on the other hand, the dialectics of contradiction, and with it particularly Hegel, is treated quite differently. "Contradiction, according to the Hegelian logic, or rather Logos doctrine, is objectively present not in thought, which by its nature can only be conceived as subjective and conscious, but in things and processes themselves and can be met with in so to speak corporeal form, so that absurdity does not remain an impossible combination of thought but becomes an actual force. The reality of the absurd is the first article of faith in the Hegelian unity of the logical and the illogical.... The more contradictory a thing the truer it is, or in other words, the more absurd the more credible it is. This maxim, which is not even newly invented but is borrowed from the theology of the Revelation and from mysticism, is the naked expression of the so-called dialectical principle".

We have already seen earlier, when discussing world schematism, that in connection with this Hegelian nodal line of measure relations — in which quantitative change suddenly passes at certain points into qualitative transformation — Herr Dühring had a little accident: in a weak moment he himself recognized and made use of this line. We gave there one of the best-known examples — that of the change of the aggregate states of water, which under normal atmospheric pressure changes at 0° C from the liquid into the solid state, and at 100°C from the liquid into the gaseous state, so that at both these turning-points the merely quantitative change of temperature brings about a qualitative change in the condition of the water.

Now in order that he may live twice as well as an ordinary laborer, and

turn half of the surplus-value produced again into capital, he would have to be able to employ eight laborers, that is, he would have to possess four times the sum of values assumed above. And it is only after this, and in the course of still further explanations elucidating and substantiating the fact that not every petty sum of values is enough to be transformable into capital, but that in this respect each period of development and each branch of industry has its definite minimum sum, that Marx observes: "Here, as in natural science, is shown the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel in his Logic, that merely quantitative changes beyond a certain point pass into qualitative differences."

And now let the reader admire the higher and nobler style, by virtue of which Herr Dühring attributes to Marx the opposite of what he really said. Marx says: The fact that a sum of values can be transformed into capital only when it has reached a certain size, varying according to the circumstances, but in each case definite minimum size — this fact is a proof of the correctness of the Hegelian law. Herr Dühring makes him say: Because, according to the Hegelian law, quantity changes into quality, "therefore an advance, when it reaches a certain size, becomes capital". That is to say, the very opposite.

**13. Negation of the Negation.** *What does Dühring say about negation of the negation? How does Engels see it as problematic?*

According to Dühring: "This historical sketch" (of the genesis of the so-called primitive accumulation of capital in England) "is relatively the best part of Marx's book, and would be even better if it had not relied on the dialectical crutch to help out its scholarly crutch. The Hegelian negation of the negation, in default of anything better and clearer, has in fact to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past. The abolition of 'individual property', which since the sixteenth century has been effected in the way indicated above, is the first negation. It will be followed by a second, which bears the character of a negation of the negation and hence of a restoration of 'individual property', but in a higher form, based on the common ownership of land and of the instruments of labour. Herr Marx calls this new 'individual property' also 'social property', and in this there appears the Hegelian higher unity, in which the contradiction is supposed to be sublated, that is to say, in the Hegelian verbal jugglery, both overcome and preserved... According to this, the expropriation of the expropriators is, as it were, the automatic result of historical reality in its materially external relations... It would be difficult to convince a sensible man of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital, on the basis of credence in Hegelian word-juggling such as the negation of the negation {D. K. G. 502-03}... The nebulous hybrids of Marx's conceptions will not however appear strange to anyone who realizes what nonsense can be concocted with Hegelian

dialectics as the scientific basis, or rather what nonsense must necessarily spring from it. For the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with these artifices, it must be pointed out expressly that Hegel's first negation is the catechismal idea of the fall from grace and his second is that of a higher unity leading to redemption. The logic of facts can hardly be based on this nonsensical analogy borrowed from the religious sphere {504}... Herr Marx remains cheerfully in the nebulous world of his property which is at once both individual and social and leaves it to his adepts to solve for themselves this profound dialectical enigma" {505}

Engels answers Dühring in the following words: Marx says: "It is the negation of negation. This re-establishes individual property, but on the basis of the acquisitions of the capitalist era, i.e., on co-operation of free workers and their possession in common of the land and of the means of production produced by labour. The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, arduous, and difficult, than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialised production, into socialised property." That is all. The state of things brought about by the expropriation of the expropriators is therefore characterized as the re-establishment of individual property, but on the basis of the social ownership of the land and of the means of production produced by labour itself. To anyone who understands plain talk this means that social ownership extends to the land and the other means of production, and individual ownership to the products, that is, the articles of consumption. And in order to make the matter comprehensible even to children of six, Marx assumes "a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labor-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labor-power of the community", that is, a society organized on a socialist basis; and he continues: "The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion amongst them is consequently necessary." And surely that is clear enough even for Herr Dühring, in spite of his having Hegel on his brain.

Once again, therefore, it is no one but Herr Dühring who is mystifying us when he asserts that the negation of the negation is a stupid analogy invented by Hegel, borrowed from the sphere of religion and based on the story of the fall of man and his redemption. Men thought dialectically long before they knew what dialectics was, just as they spoke prose long before the term prose existed. [An allusion to Molière's comedy *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, Act II, Scene 6 —Ed.] The law of negation of the negation, which is unconsciously operative in nature and history and, until it has

been recognized, also in our heads, was only first clearly formulated by Hegel. And if Herr Dühring wants to operate with it himself on the quiet and it is only that he cannot stand the name, then let him find a better name. But if his aim is to banish the process itself from thought, we must ask him to be so good as first to banish it from nature and history and to invent a mathematical system in which  $-a \times -a$  is not  $+a^2$  and in which differentiation and integration are prohibited under severe penalties.

**14. Conclusion.** *What was the overall judgement of Engels on Dühring regarding philosophy? What is the use of studying these differences in philosophy?*

What did Herr Dühring promise us? Everything. And what promises has he kept? None. "The elements of a philosophy which is real and accordingly directed to the reality of nature and of life", the "strictly scientific conception of the world", the "system-creating ideas", and all Herr Dühring's other achievements, trumpeted forth to the world by Herr Dühring in high-sounding phrases, turned out, wherever we laid hold of them, to be pure charlatanism. The world schematism which, "without the slightest detraction from the profundity of thought, securely established the basic forms of being", proved to be an infinitely vulgarized duplicate of Hegelian logic, and in common with the latter shares the superstition that these "basic forms" or logical categories have led a mysterious existence somewhere before and outside of the world, to which they are "to be applied". The philosophy of nature offered us a cosmogony whose starting-point is a "self-equal state of matter" — a state which can only be conceived by means of the most hopeless confusion as to the relation between matter and motion; a state which can, besides, only be conceived on the assumption of an extramundane personal God who alone can induce motion in this state of matter. In its treatment of organic nature, the philosophy of reality first rejected the Darwinian struggle for existence and natural selection as "a piece of brutality directed against humanity", and then had to readmit both by the back-door as factors operative in nature, though of second rank. Moreover, the philosophy of reality found occasion to exhibit, in the biological domain, ignorance such as nowadays, when popular science lectures are no longer to be escaped, could hardly be found even among the daughters of the "educated classes". In the domain of morality and law, the philosophy of reality was no more successful in its vulgarization of Rousseau than it had been in its previous shallow version of Hegel; and, so far as jurisprudence is concerned, in spite of all its assurances to the contrary, it likewise displayed a lack of knowledge such as is rarely found even among the most ordinary jurists of old Prussia. The philosophy "which cannot allow the validity of any merely apparent horizon" is content, in juridical matters, with a real horizon which is coextensive with the territory in which Prussian law exercises



jurisdiction. We are still waiting for the “earths and heavens of outer and inner nature” which this philosophy promised to reveal to us in its mighty revolutionizing sweep; just as we are still waiting for the “final and ultimate truths” and the “absolutely fundamental” basis. The philosopher whose mode of thought “excludes” any tendency to a “subjectively limited conception of the world” proves to be subjectively limited not only by what has been shown to be his extremely defective knowledge, his narrowly construed metaphysical mode of thought and his grotesque conceit, but even by his childish personal crotchets. He cannot produce his philosophy of reality without dragging in his repugnance to tobacco, cats and Jews as a general law valid for all the rest of humanity, including the Jews. His “really critical standpoint” in relation to other people shows itself by his insistently imputing to them things which they never said and which are of Herr Dühring’s very own fabrication.

And now that we have finished the book we are just as wise as we were at the start; and we are forced to admit that the “new mode of thought”, the “from the ground up original conclusions and views” and the “system-creating ideas”, though they have certainly shown us a great variety of original nonsense, have not provided us with a single line from which we might have been able to learn something. And this man who praises his talents and his wares to the noisy accompaniment of cymbals and trumpets as loudly as any market quack, and behind whose great words there is nothing, absolutely nothing whatsoever — this man has the temerity to say of people like Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, the least of whom is a giant compared with him, that they are charlatans. Charlatan, indeed! But to whom had it best be applied?

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## **The Filipino People Must Rely on Themselves In the Struggle for National and Social Liberation<sup>30</sup>**

**November 9, 2020**

Quite a number of Filipinos, especially those belonging to the conservative opposition, are happy that Trump has been frustrated in his reelection bid and are hopeful that Duterte can likewise be stopped from continuing to rule the Philippines through elections in 2022.

But by all indications, there is no certainty that presidential elections would be held in 2022 in accordance with the 1987 Constitution. Even if such elections would be held, they would be rigged for the benefit of Duterte's presidential proxy. Duterte controls the Comelec in any vote count for presidential elections or ratification of charter change.

The Duterte scheme of charter change has not been canceled or withdrawn. To advance the scheme further, there is now the Anti-Terrorism Law by which the Duterte gang can use state terrorism to install a fascist dictatorship under the pretext of charter change. Duterte is still on the path of fascist dictatorship.

Even if presidential elections were to be held in 2022, Duterte will be able to install his daughter Sara or some other presidential proxy because he will be able to rig the elections as he did the 2019 mid-term elections. Because by 2022 all the Comelec officials shall be his appointees and he shall be able to rig the automated electoral vote count.

Since 2016, Duterte has been given so much leeway by the US under Trump in engaging in gross and systematic human rights violations and in selling out the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the West Philippine Sea in the course of his playing off China against the US and in enriching himself and his dummies in the process.

It remains to be seen whether the newly elected US president Biden will act in any way different from that of Trump, even only on such matters that concern the conservative opposition most, such as respect for the 1987 Constitution, especially civil and political rights, the end of state terrorism and assertion of sovereign rights over the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea.

The conservative opposition might, however, try to find out whether Biden is willing to junk Duterte. In all circumstances, the broad masses

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<sup>30</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

of the Filipino people must rely on themselves in their own struggle for national and social liberation and must not depend on any illusion that there will be any policy shift in Washington in favor of human rights and democracy.

The bloodthirsty tyrant Duterte has been waging an all-out war against the people since 2016. It has terminated the peace negotiations and has compelled the people to wage armed revolution. Now, it is wildly red-tagging, intimidating and murdering social activists and making it necessary for so many activists of the legal democratic forces to join the armed revolution.

It is the sovereign right of the Filipino people to wage a revolution against an oppressive and exploitative ruling system, aggravated by the tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal and extremely corrupt Duterte regime. They are fortunate to have built a nationwide revolutionary movement that is deeply rooted among the toiling masses of workers and peasants and that is capable of protracted struggle until total victory is won.

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# On Red-Tagging in the Philippines and Abroad

## Tsikahan with Tito Jo under the auspices of Anakbayan Europe and ND Online School

November 15, 2020

### *1. What is red-tagging?*

JMS: Red-tagging means labeling a person or organization as communist and at the same time as terrorist. The Duterte regime and its political and military agents misrepresent communists as terrorists through propaganda and by the enactment of a fascist law like the Anti-Terrorism Law which targets the Communist Party of the Philippines and the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people for national and social liberation.

### *2. What makes red-tagging dangerous and deadly?*

JMS: Red-tagging is dangerous and deadly because it works like the arbitrary listing of drug suspects in the bogus war on drugs. For the Red-tagging or listing alone, the military and police officers pocket public money under the guise of intelligence operations. And then they use the list of those red-tagged for intimidation and extortion, for staging fake surrenders and worst of all for extrajudicial killings. They further pocket the reward money for fake surrenders and for the extrajudicial killings.

What is called military pork barrel keeps on growing under the pretext of anti-communism and anti-terrorism, whereas in fact it is the Duterte regime's state terrorism that reigns in the Philippines. At the expense of economic development and social services as in health, education and public housing, huge amounts of money are appropriated for the military, police and intelligence services.

Duterte and his favorite military and police officers engage in graft and corruption through overpriced local and foreign purchases of equipment and supplies, imaginary intelligence, psywar and combat operations, fake surrenders and fake community projects. Military pork barrel is now competing with infrastructure pork barrel as big rackets of those in power.

### *3. How do you think legal activists differ from actual Red Fighters?*

JMS: The difference between legal activists and the Red fighters of the New People's Army is very obvious. The Red fighters carry firearms and are with units of the NPA in the countryside. They are committed to wage the armed revolution and are prepared to make sacrifices in the battlefield. They are ready to make the supreme sacrifice of martyrdom.

The legal activists do not belong to the NPA and still go home to their

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families, go to school, their offices or workplaces aside from speaking up and holding mass actions on issues of public interest. They express views that reflect the needs, demands and aspirations of the people for their own good against the oppressive and exploitative conditions and against the Duterte regime's reign of greed and terror.

*4. Reactionary government tags national democratic organizations as recruiters of New People's Army, and defenders of CPP-NPA-NDF, Is this true? What really pushes people to join the revolutionary groups then?*

JMS: It is perfectly legal for national democratic organizations to assert and exercise their civil and political rights to express themselves and assemble, to make protests and demands in the interest of the people. If they manifest patriotic and democratic ideas and views like those of the CPP, NPA and NDFP, it does not mean that they are recruiters and defenders of these revolutionary organizations.

Those who join the revolutionary organizations are driven to do so by the oppression and exploitation that they suffer from imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These are problems suffered by the more than 90 per cent of the people. Thus, there is widespread desire among the people to rid the country of these.

And it is therefore not surprising that there is a sharing of ideas, views and aspirations among a broad range of people, including the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the middle social strata and even among those who have social conscience in the upper classes.

*5. What is really the objective of the Duterte regime in terminating the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, designating the CPP and NPA as terrorists and engaging in red-tagging and in enacting the Anti-terror Act during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic?*

JMS: Duterte's real objective is to impose a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. By engaging in state terrorism and all-out war, he can freely engage in intimidating the people, kill people who oppose him and plunder the natural and social wealth of the country in collaboration with foreign monopolies and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

He wants to rule beyond 2022 or install his daughter as presidential proxy and ensure that he is not hailed to the International Criminal Court to account for his gross and systematic violations of human rights, especially the extrajudicial killing of tens of thousands of people.

*6. What do you think of the Senate hearings by the committee headed by Panfilo Lacson? How come General Parlade and a certain Jeffrey Celiz are star performers in these hearings? What are the Senate hearings for?*

JMS: The Senate hearings are for the purpose of red-baiting and anti-communist witch hunt. It is a cheap revival of the long-discredited McCarthyism in US history. Senator Lacson who is head of the committee

is the principal author of the Antiterror Bill. He wants to imitate Senator McCarthy. Thus, wild characters like General Parlade and the impostor Jeffrey Celiz have free play to red-tag people.

They do not have evidence to bring to court against those whom they malign for any act of terrorism and so they use the Senate hearings in order to engage in an anticommunist witchhunt and subject their victims to trial by publicity and to threats of punitive measures, indefinite detention, freezing of bank accounts, torture and murder.

*7. Is red-tagging really effective in preventing dissent? Why do you think government invest in such propaganda?*

JMS: Red-tagging is not really effective in preventing dissent. It is so absurd and abusive that that it actually provokes or challenges people to resist. In my own youth in the 1950s, I became an activist precisely because the red-tagging demonstrated how anti-national and how antidemocratic were the imperialists and the local reactionaries in using it.

Currently, the organizations and individuals that are being red-tagged are fighting back to expose the red-taggers as antinational and antidemocratic reactionaries in the service of imperialism and the local exploiting classes. More people will become activist and more people will become revolutionary because of the red-tagging. In this sense, Duterte and his reactionary agents are the best recruiters of the CPP, NPA and the NDFP.

*8. Is red-tagging evident even outside the country?*

JMS. Yes, of course. The Duterte regime has dispatched psywar and intelligence agents like General Parlade and Lorraine Baduy to foreign capitals in order to red-tag and malign people opposed to the regime. There are also psywar and intelligence agents posted in various foreign countries to surveil the overseas Filipinos and to red-tag those they consider as critics of the regime.

These psywar and intelligence agents of Duterte are paid from the intelligence and discretionary funds of the Office of the President and various departments and agencies of the reactionary government. The Duterte agents who call themselves DDS use the social media to slander and threaten the critics and opponents of the Duterte regime.

*9. The National Task Force-ELCAC and its highest officials are circulating the propaganda that you yourself red-tagged Filipino organizations and called them "front organizations" of the CPP. How true is that claim?*

JMS: That is a big lie of Duterte and his political and military agents. What I did exactly in a speech in Belgium in 1987 was to differentiate the legal democratic forces and the armed revolutionary organizations. Whenever I speak of national and democratic forces among the people, I do not say that they are members of the National Democratic Front.

The 18 member-organizations of the NDFP are well-known. The NDFP

table of organizations is well-publicized. The propagandists and military minions of Duterte pretend not to know it or they really do not know it because they are too lazy to know. Certainly, I do not refer to any legal democratic force as a "front" or facade organization of the CPP or NDFP. I do not use that kind of language. It is the language of the red-baiters.

*10. There is also one patently ridiculous claim against you. How do you react to the attack on you that in effect you red-tagged Philippine organizations by inviting them to join the International League of Peoples' Struggle when you were the chairperson from 2001 to 2019?*

JMS: Indeed, that is a patently ridiculous claim. It is absolutely clear that the ILPS is not neither a communist nor a terrorist organization. It is an international united front formation of anti-imperialist and democratic mass organizations. It has hundreds of member-organizations in several scores of countries. Anticommunists like General Esperon and others of the NTF-ELCAC and the Anti-Terrorism Council and hirelings like Rigoberto Tiglao are absolutely stupid in red-tagging the ILPS or slandering it as terrorist.

*11. How do we stop and fight red-tagging?*

JMS: In the Philippines, the organizations and individuals being red-tagged are fighting the red-taggers in every possible legal way and have been successful despite the enactment of the Anti-Terror Act and the growing threat of fascism. They can serve as examples for the overseas Filipinos in fighting back. You have relatively more democratic space in Europe even if there are also chauvinist, racist and even fascist currents here.

You have to strengthen your patriotic and democratic Filipino organizations and develop solidarity with the host people and other foreign minorities in order to assert and exercise your democratic rights abroad. At the same, you and other people in solidarity with you can support the struggle of the Filipino people for national independence democracy, economic development, cultural progress and peace.

*12. The CPP and NPA are never known and have never been accused of committing any act of terrorism abroad, why are they listed as terrorist organizations by the US, EU and some other countries?*

JMS: It was upon the request of Gloria M. Arroyo, General Esperon and Norberto Gonzales that the US designated the CPP and NPA and even myself as "terrorist" in 2002. And other countries followed the US in designating the aforesaid as "terrorist". In my case, I have succeeded in having my name removed from the EU terrorist list since 2009 by filing a court case before the European Court of Justice.

It is indeed anomalous that the CPP and NPA are designated as terrorists despite the fact that they have never been known or have been accused of committing any act of terrorism abroad. They adhere to the international conventions on human rights and humanitarian conduct as



co-belligerents in the civil war in the Philippines. They are also bound by the GRP-NDFP Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

But they have been unable to undertake legal action like I have done. They are preempted from making representations before authorities abroad by certain factors and conditions. Filipino organizations abroad and those organizations in solidarity with the Filipino people should expose the injustice done to the CPP and NPA and demand their removal from so-called terrorist lists. After all these lists are administrative acts by executive entities. They are subject to inquiry and changes upon the demand of the people.

They have emboldened the Duterte regime to terminate the peace negotiations with the NDFP and to make its own designation and listing of the CPP and NPA as terrorists since 2017. With their baseless listing of the CPP and CPP as terrorists, they are practically encouraging Duterte to engage in anticommunist witchhunts and engage in state terrorism.

*13. The newly-elected US president Biden has expressed interest in promoting human rights and democracy in countries that the US supports and has referred negative trends towards authoritarianism specifically in the Philippines, Turkey and Hungary. What can the Filipino people expect and demand?*

JMS: The Filipino people expect Biden to keep his word. Somehow Duterte should be advised to give up his scheme of fascist dictatorship and ruling the Philippines beyond 2022 as well as his scheme to rig the 2022 presidential elections to install his daughter or any of his stooges as his proxy. Especially now Duterte has bankrupted the Philippine economy and his own government, he has become more dependent on the US for the military and economic assistance and on pro-US military and police officers. The US can actually tell him to stop being a tyrant or else he loses the US assistance that he begs for from year to year.

The US can also advise Duterte to stop selling out the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the West Philippine Sea and favoring China's political and economic interests in the Philippines. China has now seven military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines, controls the national power grid and erects communications towers in the same military camp where the US has its own personnel and facilities under the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Enhanced defense Cooperation Agreement. Both imperialist powers violate the national sovereignty of the Filipino people.

*14. By all indications, the Duterte regime has failed to destroy the CPP, NPA and the revolutionary movement in accordance with the promise he made to US President Trump when he was in the Philippine on November 13, 2017. Now, he is trying to intimidate the urban populations with state*

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*terrorism. Will it be helpful to the people if calls for the resumption of GRP-NDFP peace negotiations are made? Will such calls help to discourage from carrying out his scheme of fascist dictatorship?*

JMS: Duterte is already too deeply involved in his own scheme of fascist dictatorship. He has committed so many grave crimes of treason, tyranny, mass murder and plunder against the people that he knows the people will never believe any pretense that he makes at negotiating peace with the revolutionary movement. He is hell-bent on attacking the revolutionary movement and the people. And there is too little time for him to step back from his lurch to an ignominious end.

But it is good for the peace advocates to call for peace negotiations as a goal for the broad united front and the broad masses of the people against the Duterte tyrannical regime. Such a call can rally the entire people, unite them for bringing about a change of administration and encourage the incoming administration to engage in peace negotiations and lay the basis for a just and lasting peace by addressing the roots of the armed conflict.

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## Discussion on Political Economy: Part III of *Anti-Dühring* By Friedrich Engels

Questions by Host Anghelo Godino of Anakbayan-Europa,  
ND Online School

Answers by Jose Maria Sison

Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

November 15, 2021

1. Engels said that political economy is a historical science. What did he mean by that? Can you briefly explain what political economy is?

JMS: According to Engels: Political economy, in the widest sense, is the science of the laws governing the production and exchange of the material means of subsistence in human society. Production and exchange are two different functions. Production may occur without exchange, but exchange — being necessarily an exchange of products—cannot occur without production. Each of these two social functions is subject to the action of external influences which to a great extent are peculiar to it and for this reason each has, also to a great extent, its own special laws. But on the other hand, they constantly determine and influence each other.

Political economy is therefore essentially a *historical science*. It deals with material which is historical, that is, constantly changing; it must first investigate the special laws of each individual stage in the evolution of production and exchange, and only when it has completed this investigation will it be able to establish the few quite general laws which hold good for production and exchange in general. At the same time, it goes without saying that the laws which are valid for definite modes of production and forms of exchange hold good for all historical periods in which these modes of production and forms of exchange prevail.

Dühring states his position as follows: The relation between general politics and the forms of economic law is determined in so definite and at the same time so *original* a way that it would not be superfluous, in order to facilitate study, to make special reference to this point. The formation of *political* relationships is, *historically, the fundamental fact*, and the *economic* conditions dependent on this are only an *effect* or a particular case, and are consequently always *facts of the second order*.

2. Dühring believes that the political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic situation. According to him, all economic phenomena must be explained by political causes, that is, by force. What does Engels have to say about this theory?

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JMS: To arrive at his theory of force, Dühring hypothesizes that the cooperative relations between Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday, who are stranded on an island, can become oppressive and exploitative, characterized by Crusoe's use of force against Friday. There is no apparent condition, motive or rationale why there is the resort to force, except as arbitrary or even malicious will, which either one of the two stranded men could have. At any rate, Dühring arbitrarily blames Crusoe for committing the original sin of using force. And this is supposed to be the beginning of all subsequent oppression and exploitation in society. The implication is that the state as organized violence came ahead before the development of unequal and exploitative relations in the mode of production.

Dühring argues: Nothing more than this simple dualism is required to enable us accurately to portray some of the most important relations of distribution and to study their laws in germ in their logical necessity.... Cooperative working on an equal footing is here just as conceivable as the combination of forces through the complete subjection of one party, who is then compelled to render economic service as a slave or as a mere tool and is maintained also only as a tool.... A universal survey of the various historical institutions of justice and injustice is here the essential presupposition.

Engels refutes Dühring as follows: [The question arises: how did Crusoe come to enslave Friday? Just for the pleasure of doing it? No such thing. On the contrary, we see that Friday "is compelled to render economic service as a slave or as a mere tool and is maintained only as a tool." Crusoe enslaved Friday only in order that Friday should work for Crusoe's benefit. And how can Crusoe derive any benefit for himself from Friday's labor? Only through Friday producing by his labor more of the necessities of life than Crusoe has to give him to keep him in a fit state to work...

The childish example specifically selected by Herr Dühring in order to prove that force is "historically the fundamental fact," in reality, therefore, proves that force is only the means, and that the aim is economic advantage. And inasmuch as the aim is "more fundamental" than the means to secure it, so in history the economic side of the relationship is much more fundamental than the political side. The example therefore proves precisely the opposite of what it was supposed to prove.

*3. Was force the root of slavery and private property? Why or why not? How about the development of capitalism from feudalism - was it the political or the economic development that was decisive?*

JMS: Engels asserts that production and its development take precedence over the emergence of force as a means of social control. He declares: In order to make use of a slave, a man must possess two kinds of things: first, the instruments and material for his slave's labor;

and secondly, the minimum necessities of life for him. Therefore, before slavery becomes possible, a certain level of production must already have been reached and a certain inequality of distribution must already have appeared.

Engels proceeded to show how inequality can arise in society without force: Historically, private property by no means makes its appearance as the result of robbery or violence. On the contrary. It already existed, even though it was limited to certain objects, in the ancient primitive communes of all civilized peoples. It developed within these communes, at first through barter with strangers, till it reached the form of commodities. The more the products of the commune assumed the commodity form, that is, the less they were produced for their producers' own use, and the more for the purpose of exchange, the more the primitive natural division of labor was replaced by exchange also within the commune, the more inequality developed in the property of the individual members of the commune.

The use of iron tools, the growth of agriculture and animal breeding and the emergence of a patriarchal system of private property in the late barbaric stage of the primitive communal society prepared the means for keeping captives as slaves instead of killing them and for instituting the slave system. The slave masters adopted feudalism as the more favorable system for them when the landed estates expanded to an extent it was difficult to manage the slaves and prevent them from running away. Thus, the slaves were converted to serfs due to the economic considerations.

Capitalism grew within the womb of feudalism, with the development of handicrafts, manufacturing, machines, commerce and the growth of towns and cities before the bourgeoisie raised the flag of revolt against the feudal monarchy and aristocracy in France. In England and some other European countries, the bourgeoisie and the feudalists could compromise on a domestic balance of power and even collaborate in colonial adventures in the furtherance of mercantile capitalism and further primitive accumulation of capital.

*4. According to Engels, force is conditioned by the economic situation, which furnishes the means for the equipment and maintenance of the instruments of force, such as the army and the navy. What examples did he state to elaborate on this?*

JMS: Engels takes note of the following: "Crusoe enslaved Friday 'sword in hand.' From where did he get the sword? Even on the imaginary islands of Crusoe stories, swords have not, up to now, grown on trees, and Herr Dühring gives us no answer whatever to this question." If it's just a matter of finding a weapon, then Friday might just as easily have become the master and not the slave had he found a sword first—or better yet, a pistol!

So, then, the revolver triumphs over the sword; and this will probably

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make even the most childish axiomatician comprehend that force is no mere act of the will, but requires very real preliminary conditions before it can come into operation, that is to say, instruments, the more perfect of which vanquish the less perfect; moreover, that these instruments have to be produced, which also implies that the producer of more perfect instruments of force...vanquishes the producer of the less perfect instrument, and that, in a word, the triumph of force is based on the production of arms, and this in turn on production in general—therefore on “economic power,” and on the “economic order,” on the material means which force has at its disposal.

To make further fun out of Dühring's silly society of two men, let me comment that even if Friday could not find a pistol to overpower the sword all that Friday needed was to exercise his will, pretend to sleep and keep awake until he could grab the sword when Crusoe would already be in deep slumber. It takes more than the will to use force to be able to dominate a certain society or a number of countries as in colonialism and imperialism. There is the prior requirement of having an army and navy, which are equipped with the instruments of war produced by the economic system.

At any rate, Engels declares: Relations of domination arose not because someone decided one day to forcibly enslave someone else, but as a product of material changes. The growth of human productivity, particularly with the rise of agriculture, both required and made possible a surplus that could sustain larger, more sedentary populations and a greater division of labor. The most significant division of labor was that between those who performed work and those entrusted by the society as a whole with guardianship over the surplus and over the maintenance of the necessary conditions of production. At some moment, however, these functions aimed at serving society at large were transformed into positions of *lordship* over society; the guardians and dispensers of the surplus became the *controllers and appropriators* of the surplus, who then employed coercive means, when necessary, to maintain their control.

Engels also berates Dühring for considering force as an “absolute evil,” the “original sin” by which all problems of society can be explained. He points out that force can also play a positive role, as “the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one, that it is the instrument with the aid of which social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized political forms.” Engels scolds Dühring in the following manner: It is only with sighs and groans that [Dühring] admits the possibility that force will perhaps be necessary for the overthrow of an economic system of exploitation—unfortunately, because all use of force demoralizes the person who uses it. And this in spite of the immense moral and spiritual impetus which has been given by every victorious revolution!

5. *What is the Marxist theory of value? And what is Dühring's theory of*

*value if any?*

JMS: Like Adam Smith and David Ricardo before them, Marx and Engels teach us that the value of a commodity is the average labour-time embodied by it or imparted to it by the workers. Dühring gives us as many as five theories of value: the production value, which comes from nature; or the distribution value, which man's wickedness has created and which is distinguished by the fact that it is measured by the expenditure of energy, which is not contained in it; or thirdly, the value which is measured by labour-time; or fourthly, the value which is measured by the costs of reproduction; or lastly, the value which is measured by wages.

You do not have to remember all or any these five conflicting theories and be confused by Dühring's too many theories which he offers like wild shots. He seems to hit the mark with one of the shots by mentioning "value which is measured by labour time". But Engels points out: In so far as there is a meaning in this, it is: The value of a product of labour is determined by the labor-time necessary for its production; and we knew that long ago, even without Herr Dühring. Instead of stating the fact simply, he has to twist it into an oracular saying.

It is simply wrong to say that the dimensions in which anyone invests his energies in anything (to keep to the bombastic style) is the immediate determining cause of value and of the magnitude of value. In the first place, it depends on what thing the energy is put into, and secondly, how the energy is put into it. If someone makes a thing which has no use-value for other people, his whole energy does not produce an atom of value; and if he is stiff-necked enough to produce by hand an object which a machine produces twenty times cheaper, nineteen-twentieths of the energy he put into it produces neither value in general nor any particular magnitude of value.

*6. Why is Dühring's critique of Marx on simple and compound labor incorrect?*

JMS: According to Dühring, Marx's theory of value is "nothing but the ordinary ... theory that labour is the cause of all values and labour-time is their measure. But the question of how the distinct value of so-called skilled labour is to be conceived is left in complete obscurity. It is true that in our theory also only the labour-time expended can be the measure of the natural cost and therefore of the absolute value of economic things; but here the labour-time of each individual must be considered absolutely equal, to start with, and it is only necessary to examine where, in skilled production, the labour-time of other persons ... for example in the tool used, is added to the separate labour-time of the individual.

Engels refutes Dühring as follows: Marx is examining what it is that determines the value of *commodities* and gives the answer: the human labour embodied in them. This, he continues, "is the expenditure of simple

labour-power which, on an average, apart from any special development, exists in the organism of every ordinary individual... Skilled labour counts only as simple labour intensified, or rather, as multiplied simple labour, a given quantity of skilled being considered equal to a greater quantity of simple labour. Experience shows that this reduction is constantly being made. A commodity may be the product of the most skilled labour, but its value, by equating it to the product of simple unskilled labour, represents a definite quantity of the latter labour alone. The different proportions in which different sorts of labour are reduced to unskilled labour as their standard, are established by a social process that goes on behind the backs of the producers, and, consequently, appear to be fixed by custom”.

Marx is dealing here first of all only with the determination of the value of *commodities*, i.e., of objects which, within a society composed of private producers, are produced and exchanged against each other by these private producers for their private account. In this passage therefore there is no question whatever of absolute value;—wherever this may be in existence—but of the value which is current in a definite form of society. This value, in this definite historical sense, is shown to be created and measured by the human labour embodied in the individual commodities, and this human labour is further shown to be the expenditure of simple labour-power.

But not all labour is a mere expenditure of simple human labour-power; very many sorts of labour involve the use of capabilities or knowledge acquired with the expenditure of greater or lesser effort, time and money. Do these kinds of compound labour produce, in the same interval of time, the same commodity values as simple labour, the expenditure of mere simple labour-power? Obviously not. The product of one hour of compound labour is a commodity of a higher value—perhaps double or treble — in comparison with the product of one hour of simple labour. The values of the products of compound labour are expressed by this comparison in definite quantities of simple labour; but this reduction of compound labour is established by a social process which goes on behind the backs of the producers, by a process which at this point, in the development of the theory of value, can only be stated but not as yet explained.

*7. How does Dühring misrepresent Marx? And how does Engels explain what is capital and how it grows by extracting surplus value?*

JMS: Dühring misrepresents Marx in the following words: “To begin with, Herr Marx does not hold the accepted economic view of capital, namely, that it is a means of production already produced; on the contrary, he tries to get up a more special, dialectical-historical idea that toys with metamorphoses of concepts and history. According to him, capital is born of money, it forms a historical phase opening with the sixteenth century, that is, with the first beginnings of a world market, which presumably



appeared at that period.

Engels refutes the misrepresentation of Marx by Dühring by explaining what is capital and surplus value: In the analysis which Marx makes of the economic forms within which the process of the circulation of commodities takes place, money appears as the final form. "This final product of the circulation of commodities is the *first form in which capital appears*. As a matter of history, capital, as opposed to landed property, invariably takes the form at first of money; it appears as moneyed wealth, as the capital of the merchant and of the usurer... We can see it daily under our very eyes. All new capital, to commence with, comes on the stage, that is, on the market, whether of commodities, labour, or money, even in our days, in the shape of money that by a definite process has to be transformed into capital." Here once again Marx is stating a fact. Unable to dispute it, Herr Dühring distorts it: Capital, he has Marx say, is born of money!

Marx then investigates the processes by which money is transformed into capital, and finds, first, that the form in which money circulates as capital is the inversion of the form in which it circulates as the general equivalent of commodities. The simple owner of commodities sells in order to buy; he sells what he does not need, and with the money thus procured he buys what he does need. The incipient capitalist starts by buying what he does *not* need himself; he buys in order to sell, and to sell at a higher price, in order to get back the value of the money originally thrown into the transaction, augmented by an increment in money; and Marx calls this increment *surplus-value*.

Whence comes this surplus-value? It cannot come either from the buyer buying the commodities under their value, or from the seller selling them above their value. For in both cases the gains and the losses of each individual cancel each other, as each individual is in turn buyer and seller. Nor can it come from cheating, for though cheating can enrich one person at the expense of another, it cannot increase the total sum possessed by both, and therefore cannot augment the sum of the values in circulation. "The capitalist class, as a whole, in any country, cannot over-reach themselves."

And yet we find that in each country the capitalist class as a whole is continuously enriching itself before our eyes, by selling dearer than it had bought, by appropriating to itself surplus-value. We are therefore just where we were at the start: whence comes this surplus-value? This problem must be solved, and it must be solved in a *purely economic* way, excluding all cheating and the intervention of any force—the problem being: how is it possible constantly to sell dearer than one has bought, even on the hypothesis that equal values are always exchanged for equal values?

The solution of this problem was the most epoch-making achievement

of Marx's work. It spread the clear light of day through economic domains in which socialists no less than bourgeois economists previously groped in utter darkness. Scientific socialism dates from the discovery of this solution and has been built up around it.

*8. How does Dühring distort Marx's theory on capital and surplus value?*

Dühring describes as earnings of capital the entirety of the surplus value created by labor power and he proceeds to misinterpret surplus value in the following way: "In Herr Marx's view, wages represent only the payment of that labor-time during which the laborer is actually working to make his own existence possible. But only a small number of hours is required for this purpose; all the rest of the working-day, often so prolonged, yields a surplus in which is contained what our author calls 'surplus-value', or, expressed in everyday language, the earnings of capital. If we leave out of account the labour-time which at each stage of production is already contained in the instruments of labour and in the pertinent raw material, this surplus part of the working-day is the share which falls to the capitalist entrepreneur. The prolongation of the working-day is consequently earnings of pure exploitation for the benefit of the capitalist".

Engels immediately tells Herr Dühring that Marx's surplus-value is not just profit or the earnings of capital. It includes profit but includes other parts, such as rent and interest. He quotes from Marx: "The capitalist who produces surplus-value—i.e., who extracts unpaid labour directly from the labourers, and fixes it in commodities, is, indeed, the first appropriator, but by no means the ultimate owner, of this surplus-value. He has to share it with capitalists, with landowners, etc., who fulfil other functions in the complex of social production. Surplus-value, therefore, splits up into various parts. Its fragments fall to various categories of persons, and take various forms, independent the one of the other, such as profit, interest, merchants' profit, rent, etc."

Marx also points out as one of Ricardo's main shortcomings in his study of value that he "has not {...} investigated surplus-value as such, i.e., independently of its particular forms, such as profit, rent, etc.", and that he therefore lumps together the laws of the rate of surplus-value and the laws of the rate of profit.

*9. What is the particularity of land rent in England in that time? What is Dühring's idea on land rent and how does it differ from Engels'?*

JMS: Engels points out that the theory of land rent is a part of political economy which is specifically English, and necessarily so, because it was only in England that there existed a mode of production under which rent had in fact been separated from profit and interest. In England, as is well known, large landed estates and large-scale agriculture predominate. The landlords lease their land in large, often very large, farms, to tenant-farmers who possess sufficient capital to work them and, unlike our peasants, do

not work themselves but employ the labour of hands and day-laborers on the lines of full-fledged capitalist entrepreneurs. Here, therefore, we have the three classes of bourgeois society and the form of income peculiar to each: the landlord, drawing rent of land; the capitalist, drawing profit; and the labourer, drawing wages.

It has never occurred to any English economist to regard the farmer's earnings as a kind of wages, as *seems* to Herr Dühring to be the case; even less could it be *hazardous* for such an economist to assert that the farmer's profit is what it indisputably, obviously and tangibly is, namely, profit on capital. It is perfectly ridiculous to say that the question of what the farmer's earnings actually are has never been raised in this definite form. In England there has never been any necessity even to raise this question; both question and answer have long been available, derived from the facts themselves, and since Adam Smith there has never been any doubt about them.

Engels make fun of the so-called "fundamental laws" that Mr. Dühring claimed to have discovered: Law No. 1. "The productivity of the economic instruments, natural resources and human energy is increased by *inventions* and *discoveries*"; Law No. 2. Division of Labour: "The cleaving of trades and the dissection of activities raises the productivity of labour"; Law No. 3. "*Distance and transport* are the chief causes which hinder or facilitate the co-operation of the productive forces"; Law No. 4. "The industrial state has an incomparably greater population capacity than the agricultural state"; and Law No. 5. "In the economy nothing takes place without a material interest".

Engels dismisses these so-called laws as mere platitudes referring to facts that have been known, recognized and spelled out by so many long before Dühring could claim them as his original discoveries. And Engels ridicules them as axioms that cannot serve as the foundation of the scientific study of political economy as previously proclaimed by Dühring.

He then proceeds to expose Dühring's ignorance of English capitalist farming and his misunderstanding of the concept and theory of land rent: Herr Dühring comes up against both English farmer's profit and the division, based on English farming and recognised by all classical political economy, of that surplus-product into rent of land and farmer's profit, and hence against the *pure*, precise conception of rent. What does Herr Dühring do? He pretends not to have the slightest inkling of the division of the surplus-product of agriculture into farmer's profit and rent, and therefore of the whole rent theory of classical political economy; he pretends that the question of what farmer's profit really is has never yet been raised "in this definite form", that at issue is a subject which has never yet been investigated and about which there is no knowledge but only illusion and uncertainty.

10. *What is the overall and final result of Engels' analysis of Dühring's "very own system" of political economy?*

JMS: Engels declares the following conclusively: What, then, is the final result of our analysis of Dühring's "very own system" of political economy? Nothing, except the fact that with all the great words and the still more mighty promises we are just as much duped as we were in the *Philosophy*. His theory of value, this "touchstone of the worth of economic systems", amounts to this: that by value Herr Dühring understands five totally different and directly contradictory things, and, therefore, to put it at its best, himself does not know what he wants.

The "natural laws of all economics", ushered in with such pomp, prove to be merely universally familiar and often not even properly understood platitudes of the worst description. The sole explanation of economic facts which his "very own" system can give us is that they are the result of "force", a term with which the philistine of all nations has for thousands of years consoled himself for everything unpleasant that happens to him, and which leaves us just where we were.

Instead of investigating the origin and effects of this force, Herr Dühring expects us to content ourselves gratefully with the mere word "force" as the last final cause and ultimate explanation of all economic phenomena. Compelled further to elucidate capitalist exploitation of labour, he first represents it in a general way as based on taxes and price surcharges, thereby completely appropriating the Proudhonian "deduction" (*prélèvement*), and then proceeding to explain it in detail by means of Marx's theory of surplus-labor, surplus-product and surplus-value. In this way he manages to bring about a happy reconciliation of two totally contradictory modes of outlook, by copying down both without taking his breath.

And just as in philosophy he could not find enough hard words for the very Hegel whom he was so constantly exploiting and at the same time emasculating, so in the *Kritische Geschichte* the most baseless calumny of Marx only serves to conceal the fact that everything in the *Cursus* about capital and labour which makes any sense at all is likewise an emasculated plagiarism of Marx.

His ignorance, which in the *Cursus* puts the "large landowner" at the beginning of the history of the civilised peoples, and knows not a word of the common ownership of land in the tribal and village communities, which is the real starting-point of all history — this ignorance, at the present day almost incomprehensible, is well-nigh surpassed by the ignorance which, in the *Kritische Geschichte*, thinks not little of itself because of "the universal breadth of its historical survey", and of which we have given only a few deterrent examples. In a word: first the colossal "effort" of self-admiration, of charlatan blasts on his own trumpet, of promises each

surpassing the other; and then the “result” —exactly nil.

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# **On Socialism: Part III of Anti-Dühring by Friedrich Engels**

**Questions by Host Anghelo Godino of Anakbayan-Europa,  
ND Online School**

**Answers by Jose Maria Sison, ILPS Chairperson Emeritus**

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*1. Can you give us an overview of Part III of Anti-Dühring on socialism?*

JMS: In Part III of Anti-Dühring, Engels gives us the materialist history of the development of the ideas of socialism. This is the focus on Chapter 1 (on the Historical). In Chapter 2 (on the Theoretical), he presents the materialist conception of history and of the contradictions in capitalism. And in Chapter 3 on Production, Chapter 4 on Distribution and Chapter on the State, Family and Education, he refutes Dühring's fantasy conception and plans for a "new socialitarian system" detached from history and social reality.

*2. According to Engels, what did the philosophers of the French Enlightenment envision? How far did the French revolution realize the Rule of Reason?*

JMS: Engels states: the French philosophers of the 18th century, the forerunners of the Revolution, appealed to reason as the sole judge of all that is. A rational government, rational society, were to be founded; everything that ran counter to eternal reason was to be remorselessly done away with. We saw also that this eternal reason was in reality nothing but the idealised understanding of the eighteenth-century citizen, just then evolving into the bourgeois. The French Revolution had realised this rational society and government.

Engels states further: But, the new order of things, rational enough as compared with earlier conditions, turned out to be by no means absolutely rational. The state based upon reason completely collapsed. Rousseau's Social Contract had found its realisation in the Reign of Terror, from which the bourgeoisie, who had lost confidence in their own political capacity, had taken refuge first in the corruption of the Directorate, and, finally, under the wing of the Napoleonic despotism. The promised eternal peace was turned into an endless war of conquest.

The society based upon reason had fared no better. It became the rule of bourgeois reason, bringing about the antagonism between rich and poor, instead of dissolving into general prosperity. This had become intensified by the removal of the guild and other privileges, which had to

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some extent bridged it over, and by the removal of the charitable institutions of the Church. The development of industry upon a capitalistic basis made poverty and misery of the working masses conditions of existence of society. The number of crimes increased from year to year.

*3. How does Engels treat the disappointing events in the French Revolution? And how does he present the conditions of the French revolution and the extent of capitalist development as limitations on the views of the utopian socialists even if well-meaning?*

JMS: Engels observes: All that was wanting was the men to formulate this disappointment and they came with the turn of the century. In 1802 Saint-Simon's Geneva letters appeared; in 1808 appeared Fourier's first work, although the groundwork of his theory dated from 1799; on January 1, 1800, Robert Owen undertook the direction of New Lanark.

At this time, however, the capitalist mode of production, and with it the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, was still very incompletely developed. Modern industry, which had just arisen in England, was still unknown in France. But modern industry develops, on the one hand, the conflicts which make absolutely necessary a revolution in the mode of production, conflicts not only between the classes begotten of it, but also between the very productive forces and the forms of exchange created by it. And, on the other hand, it develops, in these very gigantic productive forces, the means of ending these conflicts. If, therefore, about the year 1800, the conflicts arising from the new social order were only just beginning to take shape, this holds still more fully as to the means of ending them.

The propertyless masses of Paris, during the Reign of Terror, were able for a moment to gain the mastery. But, in doing so, they only proved how impossible it was for their domination to last under the conditions then obtaining. The proletariat, which then for the first time evolved itself from these propertyless masses as the nucleus of a new class, as yet quite incapable of independent political action, appeared as an oppressed, suffering estate, to whom, in its incapacity to help itself, help could, at best, be brought in from without or down from above.

This historical situation also dominated the founders of socialism. To the crude conditions of capitalist production and the crude class conditions corresponded crude theories. The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain. Society presented nothing but wrongs; to remove these was the task of reason. It was necessary, then, to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and, wherever it was possible, by the example of model experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as utopian; the more completely they were worked out in



detail, the more they could not avoid drifting off into pure fantasies.

4. *What is the Engels' comment on Dühring's view of the utopian socialists? What is Engels' evaluation of the utopian socialists Saint Simon, Fourier and Owen?*

JMS: Engels dismisses as quibbling Dühring's remarks of contempt for the fantasies of the utopian socialists and his failure to recognize their concern for the poor and oppressed, their honestly good intention and efforts: We can leave it to the literary small fry à la Dühring to solemnly quibble over these fantasies, which today only make us smile, and to crow over the superiority of their own bald reasoning, as compared with such "insanity". For ourselves, we delight in the stupendously grand thoughts and germs of thought that everywhere break out through their fantastic covering, and to which these philistines are blind.

Engels evaluates each of the utopian socialists Saint Simon, Fourier and Owen. He appreciates them for striving to make a better use of reason in the service of the oppressed and exploited working men and women even as he noted the utopian character of their ideas of socialism.

Engels gives to Saint Simon credit for recognizing the French Revolution as a class war between nobility, bourgeoisie, and the non-possessors, was, in the year 1802, a most pregnant discovery. In 1816, he declares that politics is the science of production, and foretells the complete absorption of politics by economics. The knowledge that economic conditions are the basis of political institutions appears here only in embryo. Yet what is here already very plainly expressed is the idea of the future conversion of political rule over men into an administration of things and a direction of processes of production — that is to say, the "abolition of the state", about which recently there has been so much noise.

If in Saint-Simon we find a comprehensive breadth of view, by virtue of which almost all the ideas of later Socialists, that are not strictly economic, are found in him in embryo, we find in Fourier a criticism of the existing conditions of society, genuinely French and witty, but not upon that account any the less thorough. Fourier takes the bourgeoisie, their inspired prophets before the Revolution, and their interested eulogists after it, at their own word. He lays bare remorselessly the material and moral misery of the bourgeois world. He confronts it with the philosophers' dazzling promises of a society in which reason alone should reign, of a civilization in which happiness should be universal, of an illimitable human perfectibility, and with the rose-colored phraseology of the bourgeois ideologists of his time.

Still more masterly is his criticism of the bourgeois form of the relations between the sexes, and the position of woman in bourgeois society. He was the first to declare that in any given society the degree of woman's emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation. But Fourier is at his greatest in his conception of the history of society. He

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divides its whole course, thus far, into four stages of evolution — savagery, the patriarchate barbarism, civilisation.

Fourier, as we see, uses the dialectic method in the same masterly way as his contemporary, Hegel. Using these same dialectics, he argues against the talk about illimitable human perfectibility, that every historical phase has its period of ascent and also its period of descent, and he applies this observation to the future of the whole human race. As Kant introduced into natural science the idea of the ultimate destruction of the earth, Fourier introduced into historical science that of the ultimate destruction of the human race.

Robert Owen had adopted the teaching of the materialistic philosophers: that man's character is the product, on the one hand, of heredity; on the other, of the environment of the individual during his lifetime, and especially during his period of development. In the industrial revolution most of his class saw only chaos and confusion, and the opportunity of fishing in these troubled waters and making large fortunes quickly.

He saw in it the opportunity of putting into practice his favourite theory, and so of bringing order out of chaos. He had already tried it with success, as superintendent of more than five hundred men in a Manchester factory. From 1800 to 1829, he directed the great cotton-mill at New Lanark, in Scotland, as managing partner, along the same lines, but with greater freedom of action and with a success that made him a European reputation.

His advance in the direction of communism was the turning-point in Owen's life. As long as he was simply a philanthropist, he was rewarded with nothing but wealth, applause, honor, and glory. He was the most popular man in Europe. Not only men of his own class, but statesmen and princes listened to him approvingly. But when he came out with his communist theories, that was quite another thing. Three great obstacles seemed to him especially to block the path to social reform: private property, religion, the present form of marriage.

He knew what confronted him if he attacked these — outlawry, excommunication from official society, the loss of his whole social position. But nothing of this prevented him from attacking them without fear of consequences, and what he had foreseen happened. Banished from official society, with a conspiracy of silence against him in the press, ruined by his unsuccessful communist experiments in America, in which he sacrificed all his fortune, he turned directly to the working class and continued working in their midst for thirty years.

Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen. He forced through in 1819, after five years' fighting, the first law limiting the hours of labour for women and children in factories. [He was president of the first congress at which all the Trade Unions of England united in a single great trade

association.]

The utopians, we saw, were utopians because they could be nothing else at a time when capitalist production was as yet so little developed. They necessarily had to construct the elements of a new society out of their own heads, because within the old society the elements of the new were not as yet generally apparent; for the basic plan of the new edifice, they could only appeal to reason, just because they could not as yet appeal to contemporary history. But when now, almost eighty years after their time, Herr Dühring steps on to the stage and puts forward his claim to an “authoritative” system of a new social order — not evolved out of the historically developed material at his disposal, as its necessary result — but constructed in his sovereign head, in his mind, pregnant with ultimate truths.

*5. In Dühring’s “new socialitarian system”, the capitalist mode of production is quite good, and can remain in existence, but the capitalist mode of distribution is of evil, and must disappear. Why is this statement wrong and harmful according to Engels?*

JMS: A priori Dühring draws from his head the “universal principle of justice” to draw up his “new socialitarian system.” But in fact, he considers as good the capital mode of production in which the workers are exploited, with the capitalist extracting the surplus value. He does not mind that the capitalist exploits the workers and does not say how the latter can free themselves from exploitation. He completely ignores the fact that the value of the commodity is created by the labor power of the workers in the work place.

It is the capitalist mode of distribution which he considers evil and he asserts that the workers have the right to consume all that they produce and must be compensated accordingly. He wishes that the capitalist does not extract anything and the enterprise always remains where it begins with the capitalist standing by to watch the means of production depreciate and become exhausted. In the socialitarian system, there are no savings to be made for simple or expanded reproduction and for other requirements to maintain the enterprise. Dühring builds a pure fantasy world.

Engels points out: Accumulation is completely forgotten. Even worse: as accumulation is a social necessity and the retention of money provides a convenient form of accumulation, the organization of the economic commune directly impels its members to accumulate privately, and thereby leads it to its own destruction.

Engels further states: We now find that Herr Dühring’s “socialitarian” system is nothing more than the carrying through of this principle in fantasy. In fact, it turned out that Herr Dühring has practically nothing to take exception to in the mode of production — as such — of capitalist society, that he wants to retain the old division of labour in all its essentials,

and that he consequently has hardly a word to say in regard to production within his economic commune.

6. *How does Engels explain the value of the commodity and the functions of production and distribution in the economy?*

JMS: According to Engels: The only value known in economics is the value of commodities. What are commodities? Products made in a society of more or less separate private producers, and therefore in the first place private products. These private products, however, become commodities only when they are made, not for consumption by their producers, but for consumption by others, that is, for social consumption; they enter into social consumption through exchange. The private producers are therefore socially interconnected, constitute a society. Their products, although the private products of each individual, are therefore simultaneously but unintentionally and as it were involuntarily, also social products.

In what, then, consists the social character of these private products? Evidently in two peculiarities: first, that they all satisfy some human want, have a use-value not only for the producers but also for others, and secondly, that although they are products of the most varied individual labour, they are at the same time products of human labour as such, of general human labour. In so far as they have a use-value also for other persons, they can, generally speaking enter into exchange; in so far as general human labour, the simple expenditure of human labour-power is incorporated in all of them, they can be compared with each other in exchange, be assumed to be equal or unequal, according to the quantity of this labour embodied in each.

In two equal products made individually, social conditions being equal, an unequal quantity of individual labour may be contained, but always only an equal quantity of general human labour. An unskilled smith may make five horseshoes in the time a skillful smith makes ten. But society does not form value from the accidental lack of skill of an individual, it recognizes as general human labour only labour of a normal average degree of skill at the particular time. In exchange therefore, one of the five horseshoes made by the first smith has no more value than one of the ten made by the other in an equal time. Individual labour contains general human labour only in so far as it is socially necessary.

Therefore when I say that a commodity has a particular value, I say (1) that it is a socially useful product; (2) that it has been produced by a private individual for private account, (3) that although a product of individual labour, it is nevertheless at the same time and as it were unconsciously and involuntarily, also a product of social labour and, be it noted, of a definite quantity of this labour, ascertained in a social way, through exchange; (4) I express this quantity not in labour itself, in so and so many labor-hours, but *in another commodity*.

Money is already contained in embryo in the concept of value; it is value, only in developed form. But since the value of commodities, as opposed to the commodities themselves, assumes independent existence in money, a new factor appears in the society which produces and exchanges commodities, a factor with new social functions and effects. We need only state this point at the moment, without going more closely into it.

The concept of value is the most general and therefore the most comprehensive expression of the economic conditions of commodity production. Consequently, this concept contains the germ, not only of money, but also of all the more developed forms of the production and exchange of commodities. The fact that value is the expression of the social labour contained in the privately produced products itself creates the possibility of a difference arising between this social labour and the private labour contained in these same products.

Once the commodity-producing society has further developed the value form, which is inherent in commodities as such, to the money form, various germs still hidden in value break through to the light of day. The first and most essential effect is the generalization of the commodity form. Money forces the commodity form even on the objects which have hitherto been produced directly for self-consumption; it drags them into exchange.

*7. What is the material basis of socialism? How does socialism arise from the contradictions within capitalism?*

JMS: Engels teaches us that socialism is not an ideal but is based on the actual contradictions of capitalism: The new forces of production have already outgrown the bourgeois form of using them; and this conflict between the productive forces and the mode of production is not a conflict which has arisen in men's heads, as for example the conflict between original sin and divine justice; but it exists in the facts, objectively, outside of us, independently of the will or purpose even of the men who brought it about. Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex in thought of this actual conflict, its ideal reflection in the minds first of the class which is directly suffering under it—the working class.

As exploiting class, the capitalists extract surplus value from the working class. On their path of advance, working people who own their *means* of production are swept away. Engels explains: [A]s soon as the means of production had become social and were concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, this situation changed. Both the means of production and the products of the small, individual producer lost more and more of their value; there was nothing left for him to do but to go to the capitalist and work for wages. Wage labor, hitherto an exception and subsidiary, became the rule and the basic form of all production; hitherto an auxiliary occupation, it now became the laborer's exclusive activity. The occasional wage worker became the wage worker for life. (304–5)

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The laws of commodity production dominate society. Competition also reigns in the marketplace competition, unplanned and anarchic beyond any individual's control. Engels explains: These laws...enforce themselves on the individual producers as compulsory laws of competition. At first, therefore, they are unknown even to these producers, and have to be discovered by them gradually, only through long experience. They assert themselves apart from the producers and against the producers, as the natural laws of their form of production, working blindly. The product dominates the producers.

The laws of the market compel each capitalist to constantly revolutionize the means of production, turning "the infinite perfectibility of the machine in large-scale industry into a compulsory commandment for each individual industrial capitalist to make his machinery more and more perfect, under penalty of ruin." These improvements in machinery, "the most powerful instrument for shortening labor-time," which under different conditions would be a means to free the mass of people from long hours of toil, under capitalism become "the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the laborer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist."

Engels points out that that the resulting explosion of human productivity lays the real, *material foundation* for a planned society based on the free development of all human beings. Instead of working *more*, increased productivity can mean that we all work *less*. He states: Today this is no longer a fantasy, no longer a pious wish. The present development of the productive forces is already adequate as the basis on which the increase in production which must follow from the socialization of the productive forces—the abolition of the barriers and disturbing factors and of the waste of products and means of production—can reduce the time required for labor, with every individual taking his share, to what on our present conceptions would be a small amount.

Capitalist economic expansion enslaves workers to the machine, and creates unplanned disruptions. The capitalist system goes periodically into crisis as the wage conditions depress the market and the profit rate tends to fall, as the "expansion of the market cannot keep pace with the expansion of production." "By degrees the pace quickens; it becomes a trot; the industrial trot passes into a gallop, and the gallop in turn passes into the mad onrush of a complete industrial commercial, credit, and speculative steeplechase, only to land again in the end, after the most breakneck jumps—in the ditch of a crash."

Thus, the idea for solving these crises through socialist transformation comes from capitalism's own tendency to *socialize* production. Engels points out: Both the period of industrial boom, with its unlimited credit inflation, and the crisis itself through the collapse of great capitalist establishments, urge forward towards that form of the socialization of

huge masses of means of production which we find in the various joint-stock companies.

The capitalist system socializes the character of production and also creates and enlarges the modern industrial proletariat which has the motive and opportunity to revolutionize society through their collective action. Engels declares: By more and more transforming the great majority of the population into proletarians, the capitalist mode of production brings into being the force which, under penalty of its own destruction, is compelled to carry out this revolution.... *The proletariat seizes the State power, and transforms the means of production in the first instance into State property.*

8. *Does state ownership of industry necessarily mean the emergence of socialism? What more ought to be done to arrive at socialism?*

JMS: Of course, the capitalist class can use the capitalist state to shore up the crisis-stricken capitalist economy with financial bailouts and stimulus packages and even go as far as to acquire ownership of failing enterprises. Engels points out that state ownership of industry in and of itself did not constitute socialism:

The modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine; it is the state of the capitalists, the ideal collective body of all capitalists. The more productive forces it takes over, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme.

Engels teaches us that even though states always present themselves as representatives of the *whole* society, in truth every state has a *class* character. The state actually arose "for the forcible holding down of the exploited classes in the conditions of oppression...determined by the existing mode of production." And he put forward the prognosis that after the working-class revolution establishes and develops socialism the road is paved for the withering of the state in the absence of any class to be held in subjection. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not "abolished," *it withers away.*

9. *How does Engels differentiate the Marxist world view from the viewpoints of Dühring?*

JMS: Engels refutes Dühring's idealist thinking and a priori propositions which are detached from history and reality. Engels lays out the Marxist world view: historical materialism. In doing so, he *uses* a dialectical and materialist method to explain the development of their ideas and those of the socialist movement generally. Unlike Dühring, who arrogantly looks down on all other thinkers, Marx and Engels acknowledge their debt to

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their predecessors.

Hegel appreciate Hegel in the following words: The whole natural, historical, and spiritual world was presented as a process, that is, as in constant motion, change, transformation, and development; and the attempt was made to show the internal interconnections in this motion and development. From this standpoint the history of mankind no longer appeared as a confused whirl of senseless deeds of violence...but as the process of development of humanity itself.

While appreciating the dialectical kernel of Hegel's thought as a great step forward, Engels points out the idealist character of Hegels' philosophy: The realization of the incorrectness of previous German idealism led necessarily to materialism, but it must be noted, not to the simple metaphysical and exclusively mechanical materialism of the eighteenth century. Instead...modern materialism sees history as the process of the evolution of humanity, and its own problem as the discovery of the laws of this process.

*10. What are the Dühring's ideas on things like religion, education, and family? What are Engel's critical comments?*

JMS: The constitution of the future *Dühringian* state provides: In the free society there can be no religious worship; for every member of it has got beyond the primitive childish superstition that there are beings, behind nature or above it, who can be influenced by sacrifices or prayers". A "socialitarian system, rightly conceived, has therefore ...to abolish all the paraphernalia of religious magic, and therewith all the essential elements of religious worship".

Engels comments: Religion is being prohibited. Herr Dühring, however, cannot wait until religion dies this, its natural, death. He proceeds in more deep-rooted fashion. He out-Bismarcks Bismarck; he decrees sharper laws not merely against Catholicism, but against all religion whatsoever; he incites his gendarmes of the future against religion, and thereby helps it to martyrdom and a prolonged lease of life. Wherever we turn, we find specifically Prussian socialism.

After Herr Dühring has thus happily destroyed religion, "man, made to rely solely on himself and nature, and matured in the knowledge of his collective powers, can intrepidly enter on all the roads which the course of events and his own being open to him". Let us now consider for a change what "course of events" the man made to rely on himself can intrepidly enter on, led by Herr Dühring.

Regarding the family, Dühring prescribes the following: The first course of events whereby man is made to rely on himself is: being born. Then, for the period of natural minority, he remains committed to the "natural tutor of children", his mother. "This period may last, as in ancient Roman law, until puberty, that is to say, until about the fourteenth year." Only when badly



brought up older boys do not pay proper respect to their mother's authority will recourse be had to paternal assistance, and particularly to the public educational regulations to remedy this. At puberty the child becomes subject to "the natural guardianship of his father", if there is such a one "of real and uncontested paternity" {293, 294}; otherwise, the community appoints a guardian.

Engels comments critically: Just as Herr Dühring at an earlier point imagined that the capitalist mode of production could be replaced by the social without transforming production itself, so now he fancies that the modern bourgeois family can be torn from its whole economic foundations without changing its entire form. To him, this form is so immutable that he even makes "ancient Roman law", though in a somewhat "ennobled" form, govern the family for all time; and he can conceive a family only as a "bequeathing", which means a possessing, unit.

Here the utopians are far in advance of Herr Dühring. They considered that the socialisation of youth education and, with this, real freedom in the mutual relations between members of a family, would directly follow from the free association of men and the transformation of private domestic work into a public industry. Moreover, Marx has already shown (*Capital*, {Vol. I,} p. 515 *et seqq.*) that "modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the socially organized process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes".

Dühring preaches: "Every dreamer of social reforms naturally has ready a pedagogy corresponding to his new social life". Engels comments critically: If we are to judge by this thesis, Herr Dühring is "a veritable monster" among the dreamers of social reforms. For the school of the future occupies his attention at the very least as much as the author's rights, and this is really saying a great deal. He has his curricula for school and university all ready and complete, not only for the whole "foreseeable future" but also for the transition period. But we will confine ourselves to what will be taught to the young people of both sexes in the final and ultimate socialitarian system.

*11. How did Engels express concisely the synthesis made by Marx? And what were his two great discoveries?*

JMS: Engels declares: It was the work of Marx to synthesize German dialectics, English economics, and French materialism into an analysis of the inner process of capitalism. "This was done by the discovery of surplus value. It was shown that the appropriation of unpaid labor is the basic form of the capitalist mode of production."

He states further: These two great discoveries, the materialist conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalist production by means

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of surplus value, we owe to *Marx*. With these discoveries, socialism became a science, which had in the first place to be developed in all its details and relations.

*12. Have the teachings of Marx and Engels on socialism been proven in history after their deaths? In view of the success of modern revisionism subverting and overthrowing the proletariat, what is the socialist future?*

JMS: The teachings of Marx and Engels have been proven in history, mainly with the socialist revolutions in the Soviet Union and China. These came about as a result of the economic crisis and wars in the era of modern imperialism and the proletarian-socialist revolution. They proved that socialism could arise from conditions of capitalist oppression and exploitation and that it could be established and developed as state and society ruled by the working class.

Although the Soviet and Chinese socialist societies have been subverted by modern revisionism, the addition of China and Russia as two major imperialist powers to the world capitalist system is now rapidly intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions and is generating the conditions for the rise of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles throughout the world and the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.



## **Socialism: Utopian and Scientific**

Questions from host Seyra Rico of Anakbayan-Europa, ND Online School

Answers by Jose Maria Sison

Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

November 29, 2020

*1. Please tell us briefly the context of the time Engels wrote Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. What was the political context at the time that pushed him to write it?*

JMS: As background, let me cite the fact that in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, Marx and Engels had already differentiated Scientific Socialism from Utopian of three kinds:

a. The first kind is Reactionary Socialism which includes the Feudal Socialists, the Petty-Bourgeois Socialists, and the German, or "True" Socialists; all of these groups hanker for a return to the life of the monastery and the guild and reverse the rise of the bourgeoisie and modern Industry, without recognizing the historical process the bourgeoisie represents.

b. The second kind of Socialism is Conservative, or Bourgeois, Socialism. It reflects the desire of a segment of the bourgeois to redress social grievances, in order to guarantee the continued existence of bourgeois society and promote the mutual interest of the workers and the bourgeoisie.

c. The third kind is Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism. It originated with the first attempts of the proletariat to achieve its own class interest. The attempts were limited by the fact that the proletariat had not yet reached the maturity and economic conditions necessary for emancipation. These socialists therefore looked for social laws, projects and movements to free the proletariat.

It was 1880 when Engels wrote *Socialism; Utopian and Scientific* or extracted parts of Anti-Dühring in order to compose it, with the definite purpose of popularizing Scientific Socialism among the workers. Marx agreed with Engels on the need to popularize Scientific Socialism in view of the difficulty of reading the abstract or complex text of *Das Capital* and other works of Marx and the commonplace or average notions about socialism circulating which did not distinguish scientific from utopian socialism.

Engels considered it necessary for him to popularize Scientific Socialism because Dühring gained a following within the German Social Democratic Party with his kind of utopianism and fantasies most detached from material reality and social history and yet posing as scientific and

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mocking the fantasies of the utopian socialists. Engels therefore wrote the *Anti-Dühring* in 1876 to smash the eternal truths from the brain of Dühring and to preempt that someone would someday pose as Moses to interpret the works of Marx.

But *Anti-Dühring* was still difficult reading for the workers. Thus, Engels decided to write *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* for easier reading. And this became overwhelmingly popular among the workers and the intelligentsia from 1880 to 1910 and had great influence among the German and Russian socialists. It was instrumental in promoting Marxism as the main current in the working class movement of Europe from the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward.

*2. What were the sociopolitical conditions that brought philosophers to develop the philosophy of socialism?*

JMS: First of all, let us consider the economic aspect of the sociopolitical conditions that induced philosophers to develop the philosophy of socialism. In the time when the utopian socialists came up, the capitalist mode of production was not as yet developed as when Marx and Engels came up to put forward Scientific Socialism. What the utopian socialists observed was the early period of the Industrial Revolution when the peasants were being rapidly dispossessed and together with the urban poor were being turned into factory workers, made to work for as long as 16 hours daily and lived in dismal conditions. They could not yet see the workers as a class capable of struggling against the bourgeoisie and taking power.

In the time of Marx and Engels from the 1840s onward, the capitalist mode of production had developed to such an extent that the great number of workers could be easily perceived as having the potential of becoming a class for itself against the bourgeoisie through the trade union movement and the revolutionary party of the proletariat, *The Communist Manifesto* signalled the advent of Scientific Socialism and proclaimed that the bourgeoisie had created its own grave diggers as it could not prevent itself from capitalist competition and the cycles of the crisis of overproduction and concentration of capital.

In the lifetime of Marx and Engels, they saw the rise of the trade union movement, the uprisings of workers Europe-wide in 1848, the Paris Commune of 1871 and the accelerated spread of Marxism in the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the century, the class contradictions between the capitalists and the workers and between the monarchs and the landed aristocracy on the one side and peasants and farm workers on the other side.

*3. There were three main Utopians: Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen. What were their philosophies, briefly, and what do they have in common?*

JMS: Saint Simon, Fourier and Owen were the greatest of the utopian socialists for being the closest to material reality, most critical of the

bourgeoisie, most cognizant of the dismal conditions of the workers and most partisan to them and most interested in ameliorating their working and living conditions, but they were still bound by idealist philosophy and did not yet know how the proletariat could overthrow the bourgeoisie and build socialism. The influences on them ranged from the rationalism of the French Enlightenment to Hegelian philosophy.

Of these three who were relatively the best of the utopian socialists, Saint-Simon was critically most cognizant of classes and class struggle. He saw the bourgeois revolution as the conquest of political power by the propertied bourgeoisie, leaving the workers and peasants to the continuing condition of exploitation, chiefly by the capitalist class. But he could not yet propose the revolutionary solution to the capitalist domination of the working class.

Fourier had a wide range of knowledge like Saint Simon, studied and learned dialectics from his contemporary Hegel and understood the development of society from savagery and barbarism to civilization. Like Saint Simon, he was sharply critical of the capitalism and the bourgeoisie for the exploitation of the working class. And he recognised the development of history through ceaseless change and contradiction as the reflection and realization of the prior self-development of thought in the sense of Hegelian dialectics.

Robert Owen was himself a successful capitalist entrepreneur and shared with the workers whatever gains were made by the enterprise he ran. He adopted a materialist philosophy short of dialectical materialism. As he became more vocal against the capitalists, he was shunned by the European bourgeoisie. He set up experimental Communist communities but these failed. After going financially bankrupt, he devoted himself to the trade union movement and was successful in this field of work.

#### *4. What is dialectics and why was it important in the development of philosophy?*

JMS: According to Engels, dialectics consists of understanding the world as a mass of interconnections, changes and contradictions. In the fullness of his writings on dialectics, he presented the three laws of contradiction, such as the law of change from quantitative to qualitative, the interpenetration of opposites and the negation of the negation.

Together with Marx, Engels recognized the rudimentary beginning of materialist dialectics with Heraclitus in ancient Greece who had observed the process of change in things. They also recognized the highest development of idealist philosophy in Hegel's dialectics. This is the rational kernel of Hegelian philosophy which Marx and Engels adopted and applied directly on material phenomena and processes to turn the idealism of Hegel upside down.

It is useful to contrast materialist dialectics with metaphysics. Materialist

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dialectics can focus on a physical phenomenon but always as something interconnected with other phenomena and subject to the process of change. Metaphysics takes individual phenomena and places them under isolated examination, separating them out and contrasting them with all other things.

But it is inadequate on its own because it does not appreciate the connections between things in their change and motion. Natural science makes extensive use of metaphysics by isolating a phenomenon, studying its composition and deriving a formula for its existence but does not show its changeability and its interconnection with all other phenomena.

### *5. What were the shortcomings of the Hegelian system?*

JMS: What is wrong with Hegelian philosophy is its presumption that the self-development of thought precedes actual development in material reality and that the real development of things and processes is merely the reflection and realization of what has been previously thought. Hegelian dialectics seems to be correct and neat because it is applied on what has in fact materialized before the application of the formulaic sequence of thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

The synthesis is a dead end or it is celebrated as the highest point of development. Thus, Hegel considered the Prussian state as the highest and final point of historical development. In contrast, materialist dialectics assumes that all things are in a constant process of motion and change. And there is no state or condition of a material object or a material system that is not subject to change or development.

Even as Hegelian dialectics is wrong for being idealist and metaphysical in presumption, it is an advance in idealist philosophy for seeking to account for change in nature and society and for accepting that previous change has occurred, despite the presumption that it has come to be because of prior thought. Materialist dialectics is capable of looking into the contradictory aspects of things to discover their changeability.

### *6. What were the discoveries that paved the way of making socialism a science?*

JMS: Engels said that socialism became a science, open for study and working out its details and relations after the two great discoveries he credited to Marx; namely, the materialist conception of history and the secret of capitalist production through surplus-value. The extraction of surplus value results in the accumulation of capital and the further socialization of the forces of production.

The materialist conception of history does away with all idealist and subjectivist illusions about the status and changeability of things and presumes that everything changes and that there is nothing permanent but change. In the capitalist mode of production, the capitalists extract surplus value from the workers in order to accumulate capital and cause

further developments that eventually run counter to the capitalist mode of production.

In the accumulation of capital by competing capitalists, they increase the number of workers as their potential grave diggers; they push down the wages, raise the organic composition of capital and cause the crisis of overproduction; they further concentrate capital to cause another and more serious crisis; and the trend of events make the bourgeois owners become superfluous with the increasing role of the managers and the state in running the enterprises as well as the increasing socialization of the forces production in contradiction with the system of private appropriation.

*7. What is historical materialism?*

JMS: Historical materialism is the application of materialist dialectics in the study of any society and its social development. The political and cultural superstructure of society and the entirety of a certain society are best understood by studying and understanding the material economic base or mode of production of that society.

According to Engels, historical materialism consists of the understanding that the forces of production are the basis of all social structure. The seeds of the capitalist economy were present in the womb of the feudal economy. The capitalist forces of production grew to run against the dominant feudal relations of production. Through the bourgeois revolutions, the bourgeoisie asserted itself politically over the feudal order.

*8. What are some of the contradictions inherent to the capitalist mode of production?*

JMS: As pointed out by Engels, the contradictions within economic systems lead inevitably to social contradictions. In the capitalist system, the major economic contradiction is between socialised production and private appropriation and is manifested in the social contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. There is the further contradiction between organization in the individual workplace and anarchy in production as a whole lead to greater proletarianisation as capitalism develops, through machinery and capital expansion in a country and on a global scale.

The contradictions become intense and sharp when bourgeois relations of production become fetters to the forces of production that they have spawned. The economic and therefore social crisis bursts out. The only way to resolve this is to recognize the socialised nature of production and replace the system of private appropriation with a socialized one. The socialist revolution comes to the fore, with the working class seizing political power and placing the productive forces under their control to be planned, organized and used to their full potential by the proletariat and people.

*9. While the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates*

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*the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish the revolution. Why is the revolution of the proletariat different from the revolution of other classes before?*

JMS: The revolution of the proletariat is quite different from the revolution of other classes. For the first time in human history, an exploited class becomes the most productive and progressive political force and takes power to establish a nonexploitative social system. It emancipates not only itself but all other exploited classes, builds socialism as transition to communism and creates the conditions for the withering of the state and the attainment of a classless society in communism. Engels describes socialism as the ascent of mankind from the realm of necessity to that of freedom.

*10. Lastly, could you sum up the historical evolution laid out by Engels?*

JMS: When civilization emerged from barbarism, it was on the basis of a definite mode of production characterised by such people in production as the freemen, artisans, tillers, herdsmen and slaves and such means of production as iron tools, agricultural land and animal husbandry and by the relations of production dominated by the slave-owning class that acquired and accumulated the large the amount of surplus product yielded by the slaves. This surplus product was used to maintain the needs and luxury of the slave masters as well as slave state as the highest form of political institution and the cultural institutions and activities in the superstructure.

Feudalism grew within the womb of slave society as the agricultural land expanded, mainly with the use of slaves in opening and cultivating land. But ultimately the very expansion of agricultural land made it more difficult to control the slaves who either ran away, rebelled or joined rebellious tribes. Thus, the "enlightened" slave owners decided to become landlords and convert the slaves into serfs. As feudalism persisted, it would also pave the way for the rise of the bourgeoisie through the growth of handicrafts, commerce and the rise of towns and cities in the midst of the wide feudal estates.

Within the womb of feudalism, the capitalist mode of production grew in three stages, that of the handicrafts, manufacturing and the beginnings of machine-based industrial capitalism. As early as the stage of manufacturing from 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the feudal monarchies of Europe collaborated with the merchant capitalists in warring on each other or in carrying out colonial expeditions. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the French revolution in which the bourgeoisie raised the rags of the poor (the poor plebeians and peasants) to revolt against the feudal system.

The bourgeoisie prevailed in France despite the twists and turns which saw the Reign of Terror, the Thermidorian reaction, the Napoleonic empire building, the restoration of the monarchy and the eventual reassertion of bourgeois democracy at home and acquisition of colonies abroad under the



auspices of a well-developed capitalist economy and society. As industrial capitalism grew in certain countries in Europe and in the US and gave rise to monopoly capitalism, the class struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie developed and revolutionary parties of the proletariat guided by Marxism grew in importance.

The first general crisis of monopoly capitalism led to World War II and the rise of the first socialist country, the Soviet Union in 1917. The second general crisis led to rise of fascist powers and a more destructive World War II, which resulted in the rise of China and several other socialist countries and the liberation of many colonies and semicolonies. In 1956, it could be said that one third of humanity was already governed by communist and worker's parties. But in combination with the relentless aggression and pressures in the Cold War, the modern revisionists succeeded in undermining socialism in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China.

As a result of Russia and China becoming capitalist powers, the crisis of the world capitalist system has been more frequent, more prolonged and worse. The neoliberal economic policy of imperialist globalization has unraveled, state terrorism and wars of aggression are rampant and global warming is worsening due to the plunder of the environment by monopoly capitalism. All major contradictions are intensifying: among the imperialist powers themselves, between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples, between the imperialist powers and countries that defend national independence and their socialist aspirations and between labor and capital in the capitalist countries.

We now observe and welcome the rise of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles all over the world and the foreseeable resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. The rapid adoption of higher technology in the capitalist mode of production has brought about graver crises of overproduction and inter-imperialist contradictions. The broad masses of the people in various types of countries are suffering from the rapid accumulation of capital in the hands of a few countries and the monopoly capitalist ruling class and from the aggravation of unemployment, low income, mass poverty and lack of social services. The revolutionary consciousnesses of the proletariat and people is rising and they have the means to communicate instantly and launch mass actions and other forms of struggle.

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## On the Question of Ideology and Political Power<sup>31</sup> Reply to the Tyrant Duterte

December 1, 2020

In his TV appearance in the Philippines last night, Duterte attacked me in a simplistic and demagogic way that I am in the movement for revolutionary change merely because of ideology and personal desire for power and not because of the people's just cause and revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, especially now that it is run by his extremely traitorous, brutal and corrupt regime.

Duterte is stupid or out of his mind by implying that I have an ideology while he has none. Any individual or organization that is politically significant as friend or enemy of the people has an ideology in the plain sense of having a set of ideas. Duterte has an ideology of rabid anti-communism and fascist terrorism in the service of foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists like himself.

In sharp contrast, my ideology is the universal theory of the international proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and is applied on the concrete social conditions of the Philippines. I adhere to the program of people's democratic revolution which seeks to realize full national independence, genuine democracy, social justice, economic development through land reform and national industrialization, a patriotic and scientific culture; and international solidarity against imperialism, and for world peace.

The issue now in the Philippines is neither socialism nor communism. The Filipino people and the revolutionary forces are fighting for national liberation and democracy against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They need to win the new democratic revolution in order to have any hope for a socialist future.

By harping on their rabid anti-communism, Duterte and his political and military agents are covering up their servility to US and Chinese imperialism and the local reactionary forces. Thus, they fail to destroy the revolutionary movement. The revolutionary movement is ever growing in strength because it is addressing the basic problems of the people or the root causes of the armed conflict, especially because Duterte has chosen to terminate the peace negotiations in order to use anti-communism and

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<sup>31</sup>Issued as NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

state terrorism to pursue his ambition of fascist dictatorship.

Since the age of 19, I have committed myself to continuing the unfinished Philippine revolution started by Andres Bonifacio in 1896. To make this kind of commitment, one must be ready to be imprisoned, tortured or outrightly killed in the course of struggle. One cannot last long in the struggle if one is simply motivated by a personal desire for power. Such an ambition belongs to those who wish to climb the political and social ladder in the unjust ruling system and at the most to join the series of puppet presidents in what is a rogues' gallery.

Some people have told me that I have had the advantages of upper class origin, networks of influential relatives, friends and former schoolmates of high standing, some outstanding personal abilities and achievements and sociability and that I could have become president as early as at the age of 40 to 50, especially because I have been a national news maker alongside Marcos and Aquino since I was 23 years old. But I just laugh off the speculations because I knew even when I was only 18 years old that to become president you become corrupt in the rotten ruling system on the way up to highest position of power.

In contrast to me, Duterte with mediocre qualities far below the level of the statesman has become president because of his extraordinary abilities as a demagogue, pretending to be honest even if he is extremely corrupt, pretending to be brave even if he is a coward in using superior force to kill poor people, pretending to be Left and socialist even if he is a rabid anti-communist and ultra-reactionary, pretending to be against illegal drugs even if he merely wants to become supreme drug lord and pretending to be for independent foreign policy even if he wants to serve any imperialist power from which he can personally benefit.

My current desire now is to contribute whatever I can to the patriotic and democratic struggle of the broad masses of the people and the broad united front to end the tyrannical, traitorous, brutal, corrupt and swindling Duterte regime, oust Duterte from his throne and create the conditions for a patriotic and democratic kind of government to arise and pave the way for the resumption of peace negotiations to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the basis for a just and lasting peace.



## **On Practice and On Contradiction**

### **In First Episode of Mao Serye of the ND Online School of Anakabayan-Europa**

**December 6, 2020**

*“On Practice” and “On Contradiction” were written by Mao Zedong in order to expose the subjectivist errors of dogmatism and empiricism in the Party. Could you briefly explain the position of the Chinese communist party at the time it was written and what kind of errors the party suffered from?*

JMS: Mao wrote *On Practice* in 1937 in Yanan soon after the Long March and delivered it in a series of lectures on Marxist philosophy. It clarifies its epistemology by explaining the interaction and wave-like advance of social practice and knowledge. It is one of Mao’s major philosophical works in which he made a major contribution to the development of dialectical materialism by elaborating on the unity of opposites in social practice.

It is a companion piece of another major philosophical work of Mao, *On Contradiction*. Having reached Yanan, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party found the opportunity to consolidate its position by promoting theoretical and political education, and to prepare for revolutionary struggle not only against the Guomindang but also against the Japanese fascist threat,

Mao wrote *On Contradiction* also in 1937. It elaborates on the unity of opposites as the most fundamental law of contradiction and raises to a new and higher development dialectical materialism. The essay has several sections: the two world outlooks, the universality of contradiction, the particularity of contradiction, the principal contradiction and principal aspect of contradiction, the identity and struggle of aspects of contradiction, the place of antagonism in contradiction, and finally the conclusion.

#### ***On Practice / Where do Correct Ideas Come From?***

*1. Before Marx, materialism examined the problem of knowledge apart from the social nature of man and apart from his historical development. How did Marx change this? What does it mean that people’s knowledge depends mainly on their activity in material production?*

JMS: Indeed, the ancient rudimentary materialists in Greece observed natural objects and speculated on their essential composition and changeability but did not extend their philosophical concern to the social

nature of man. Even in the rise of humanism and science in the periods of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the mechanical materialists did not extend their philosophical concern or theory of knowledge to the social nature of man. At the most Descartes presumed the existence of God who left the material universe alone to exist autonomously.

Together with Engels, Marx formulated the philosophy of dialectical materialism to encompass nature and society and further formulated historical materialism to concentrate on human society and its stages of developments. He focused on the critique of the capitalist mode of production as the foundation, as the material base, of the entire capitalist society and its political and cultural superstructure.

### *2. Why is social practice the only criterion of truth?*

JMS: Social practice is the only criterion of truth because it is the only process by which any assertion or proffer of truth on the same basis of some knowledge can be tested, verified and proven as the truth. Mao teaches us that social practice encompasses production, class struggle and scientific experiment and these are the sources of knowledge. There is an interaction of social practice and knowledge and there is a wave-like advance in this interaction. Raising the level of one leads to raising the level of the other.

### *3. What is the process of development of knowledge?*

JMS: At a certain given time, you have a certain level of knowledge through reading and direct investigation and you apply this knowledge in your practice, this practice leads to a higher level of knowledge which you can apply to carry out a higher level of practice, and then this higher practice leads to a higher knowledge. This goes on indefinitely in a wave-like manner of advancing. It is the process of developing knowledge. Previously, the spiral was the favorite Marxist diagram of the advance of social practice and knowledge. Mao preferred the wave-like advance.

*4. The perceptual and the rational are qualitatively different, but are not divorced from each other; they are unified on the basis of practice. Is it possible to gain knowledge with only one way - perception alone, or logic alone? What is the relationship of Rational knowledge and perceptual knowledge?*

JMS: The interaction between perceptual knowledge and rational knowledge and their wave-like advance is always necessary for a determined dialectical materialist ever ready to raise the level of knowledge. Otherwise, your knowledge will stagnate and you will fail to understand changes in the situation and make the necessary decision for solving problems and advancing the revolutionary cause.

Perceptual knowledge is what you gain by using your senses and personal experience in order to gather the facts in social investigation. This kind of knowledge is necessary for one to start building one's factual

base of information but it is limited and is not the end of knowing. By using class analysis and collective discussions with comrades on a wider range of social investigation, you can arrive at rational knowledge by which you make conclusions, judgments and formulate tasks.

If you limit yourself to perceptual knowledge and do not advance to rational knowledge, you are liable to fall into the error of empiricism, limited to narrow, fragmentary and short-range knowledge. If you limit yourself to rational knowledge and cease to expand your factual or empirical base, you are liable to fall into the error of dogmatism, much given to using jargon and generalizations with outdated and dwindling facts. The errors of empiricism and dogmatism are errors of subjectivism which are anathema to dialectical materialism.

*5. Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. How is this dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge significant in the revolutionary tasks and practices of activists?*

JMS: The wave-like advance of practice, higher knowledge based on practice, higher knowledge to higher practice in the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge signifies or means the correctness or validity of the revolutionary tasks and practice of activists and the achievement of revolutionary advances and victories. If you depart from the interaction and wave-like advance of practice and knowledge, you are liable to stagnate and degenerate and cease to do your work well.

### ***On Contradiction***

*1. Throughout the history of human knowledge, there have been two conceptions concerning the law of development of the universe, the metaphysical conception and the dialectical conception, which form two opposing world outlooks. Please explain these two opposing world outlooks.*

JMS: This question presumes that there is a differentiation of the materialist and idealist world outlooks. If you are a materialist, your starting point is matter and the idea follows. If you are an idealist, your starting point is the idea as cause and matter is the result and you can go so far as to say that a supernatural being created the material universe. But I think your question focuses on the conception of change as in epistemology (study of knowledge) rather than on the ontology (study of the nature of things).

The metaphysical conception of the world may be the result of an outrightly idealist world outlook or from a mechanical materialist outlook. The former kind of metaphysics is easy to understand but the latter kind requires a more extended explanation because the mechanical materialists often assert that they are scientific and some of them (like the

followers of empirio-criticism and logical positivism) accuse the dialectical materialists of being metaphysical for using generalizations like matter no less, despite Engels' extensive studies of the works in his time in the natural sciences and his effort to integrate these within the framework of dialectical materialism.

Mechanical materialists are like frogs in a well who perceive the water and walls of the well and see immediately the sky when they look but they not see the environment and interconnections of the well. Indeed, in scientific investigation, the natural scientist isolates the object under study and contrasts it from all other objects. Without rejecting the results of scientific investigation done with the metaphysical method of isolating an object under study, the dialectical materialist always takes into account the interconnections and interactions of one object with all other objects.

Quite a number of physicists spiritualized the light for a long time. And even after the discovery and development of quantum mechanics, the wave was still spiritualized and idealized to demean and degrade the photon particles or even at worst to make the particles "disappear". But Einstein and other scientists proved that in fact, photon, as an elementary particle in constant motion with zero mass has its energy transformed into mass when it impacts another particle, with the total sum of mass and energy remaining constant throughout the interaction. Thus, photon is matter and energy with the wave as its mode of existence in accordance with the dialectical materialist definition of motion as the mode of existence of matter."

### *2. What is meant when Mao speaks of the universality of contradiction?*

JMS: The law of contradiction is universal in the sense that it encompasses and operates in all material objects in nature and society, including the process of cognition and the development of knowledge in the natural and social sciences. Marxist-Leninist-Maoist proletarian revolutionary thinks and leaders have focused on the study of the political economy and class struggle in order to advance the revolution towards socialism and communism.

But there are also among them as well as scientists who have focused on the the law of contradiction in the various branches of the natural sciences within the framework of the materialist-scientific philosophy. It is the aim of the proletariat and its revolutionary party to free science and technology from the clutches of monopoly capitalism and put them in the service of society and nature after so much damage to them by monopoly capitalism.

### *3. How about the particularity of contradiction?*

JMS: We refer to the universality of the law and to the law of the unity of opposites as the most fundamental law of contradiction. This is the biggest generalization that we can make. But there are particular forms of



contradictions correspondent to particular forms of matter and to particular fields of study thereof. Particular forms of contradictions in particular forms of natural and social phenomena are investigated and unfolded in various fields of study in the natural and social sciences which are focused on various forms of contradictions.

*4. Processes change, old processes and old contradictions disappear, new processes and new contradictions emerge, and the methods of resolving contradictions differ accordingly. Can you give a concrete example to describe what Mao meant by this?*

JMS: Revolutionary class struggle is a process to seize political power by armed force from the ruling class in order to emancipate the proletariat and other exploited people in capitalist society. After the proletariat seizes political power, it can build socialism peacefully, handle correctly the contradictions among the people with nonantagonistic methods and take the steps towards the ultimate aim of communism even as the socialist state needs to exist for as long there as the threat from imperialism and reactions from the outside.

*5. What does it mean and why is it important to understand each aspect of a contradiction?*

JMS: It is important to understand each aspect of a contradiction, such as the proletariat as exploited class and the monopoly bourgeoisie as the exploiting class in a capitalist society so that the proletariat and its revolutionary party would know the balance of strength and know how to conduct the revolutionary class struggle from stage to stage. The more important it is to understand each aspect of a contradictions when there is a complex set of class contradictions in society.

We need to recognize the principal and secondary aspects in contradiction. The bourgeoisie is the principal aspect and the proletariat is the secondary aspect in a capitalist society. In analyzing a complex set of contradictions, we can determine the principal and secondary contradictions.

In the semicolonial and semifeudal social system in the Philippines currently, as in China before the revolutionary victory in 1949, there is a complex set of exploiting classes like the big compradors and landlords and exploited working people like the workers and peasants and there was therefore a complex set of class contradictions, involving the national struggle against imperialism and the democratic struggle against feudalism.

*6. Why is it important to pay attention to the stages in the process of development of a thing?*

JMS: Even in a well-developed industrial capitalist country, there can no immediate big leap from capitalism to socialism just because the forces of production are well developed and have a social character. The capitalist class has the state power and other means to suppress

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the movement of the proletariat and the people to seize political power. As the Communist Manifesto has long declared, the proletariat must win the battle for democracy before being able to seize political power and establish socialism.

In a semicolonial and semifeudal country like the Philippines, the Filipino proletariat and people need to undergo the stage of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war as a way of building the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's armed, the mass movement, the necessary alliance and the organs of political power constituting the people's democratic revolution. The people's democratic revolution is basically completed upon the overthrow of the state power of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class. Consequently, the stage of socialist revolution can begin.

### *7. How do we determine the principal contradiction?*

JMS: When there is a complex set of contradictions, the principal contradiction is determined according to what is the main enemy in a war situation, is it a foreign aggressor or is it the reactionary state? If it is a foreign aggressor, all efforts at achieving national unity need to be exerted in order to wage a war of national liberation. If it is the reactionary carrying a war of suppression, without full scale deployment of foreign aggressor troops, the people's democratic revolution carries out the protracted people's war as in a civil war.

There is a contradiction between the Filipino nation and US imperialism together with other imperialist powers, using the local exploiting classes. When an imperialist power unleashes a war of aggression against the Philippines, as Japan did in 1941 to 1945, the Filipino people wage a war of national liberation. US imperialism is always engaged in military intervention, short of full-scale aggression which becomes highly probable when the people's war reaches the stage of the strategic stalemate, unless the US military power is bogged down elsewhere.

When there is yet no war of aggression and the civil war is the sole or main character of the struggle between the exploited and exploiting classes, the revolutionary party of the proletariat wages protracted people's war on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance in order to encircle the cities from the countryside and accumulate political and armed strength to be able to seize power from the exploiting classes based in the cities.

*8. All contradictory things are interconnected; not only do they coexist in a single entity in given conditions, but in other given conditions, they also transform themselves into each other. Can you give an example to explain what Mao meant by this?*

JMS: Like Mao in China when he was engaged in the people's democratic revolution, I have already explained how in the current semicolonial and semifeudal Philippine society as a single entity there can be a complex

set of contradictions. In the course of the people's democratic revolution, the class struggle between the exploited and exploiting classes can take the form of a civil war between the reactionary state and the armed revolutionary movement of the people.

If US imperialism unleashes all-out aggression against the Filipino people in order to save the puppet reactionary state, the civil war becomes transformed into a war of national liberation by the Filipino people. If the war of aggression is defeated, it means either the total victory of the people's democratic revolution or it still has to carry out a civil war against local reactionary forces. Usually, as in the case of the defeat of the US imperialism in Vietnam, the reactionary classes have no more strength to wage a civil war against the revolutionary forces of the people.

*9. Why are the laws of contradiction important to be studied by activists?*

JMS: The laws of contradiction must be studied by activists so that they can understand the exploiting and exploited classes as contradictory forces in Philippine society, the character of this society and the strategy and tactics to carry out the revolutionary change. With the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class still ruling and exploiting the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the character of the Philippine society is semifeudal and can be changed in a fundamental way by the people's democratic revolution through the protracted people's war.

The unity and equilibrium of any society like that of the Philippines is relative and temporary. Within that society, the class struggle between the exploited and exploiting classes is absolute and lasting and enables the exploited class to grow in strength and overthrow the exploiting class and establish a new and fundamentally just and better society is built by the Filipino people.

The reactionaries, especially the fascists, are terrified and yet try to belittle the victories and advances of the people's democratic revolution just because this has not yet overthrown the reactionary state based in the cities by more than 50 years of protracted people's war. But the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the pseudo-democratic regimes and now the Duterte terrorist regime have failed to suppress the armed revolutionary movement.

The revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the national united front and the people's democratic movement are nationwide and deeply rooted among the toiling masses. They continue to grow in strength and advance because they are led by the revolutionary party of the proletariat that correctly applies dialectical materialism in carrying the out the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

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# On the Correct Handling of Contradictions

## Second Episode in the Mao Serye of the ND Online School of Anakbayan-Europa

### Initial Questions by Angelo Godino

### Answers by Jose Maria Sison

December 12, 2020

*1. In our last episode, we discussed Mao's On Contradiction. Today we will discuss On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People. Can you please provide us the context of the time that this speech was delivered by Mao?*

JMS: Mao wrote "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" in 1957. China had won total victory in the people's democratic revolution in 1949 and passed through the period of consolidation and rehabilitation from 1942 to 1952 and had carried out the first five-year plan for the basic socialist transformation of Chinese economy.

Mao pointed out that there were still classes and class struggle in China. The class contradictions among the people are nonantagonistic and must be handled correctly so that they do not become antagonistic. The term people encompassed the basic toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata, including the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. There were contradictions among these social classes and strata as well as within every class and within every stratum on ideas and methods of developing socialism.

At the same time, there are antagonistic contradictions between the people and the counterrevolutionaries. There must be clear evidence against them for criminal activity so that mistakes can be avoided. There are only a few counterrevolutionaries because of the achievements of China in socialist revolution and construction. Criminal activity of counterrevolutionaries or enemies of the people must be differentiated from the free and honest expression of ideas and views among the people.

*2. In this speech, Mao tackles the contradictions that existed even after the party has seized political power. One such contradiction is the contradiction between the national bourgeoisie and the working class. It is one between exploiter and exploited, and is by nature antagonistic. How can this be transformed into a non-antagonistic one in the transformation to socialism?*

JMS: Before 1957 the national bourgeoisie there was a state policy to accommodate their investments and entrepreneurial and managerial

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skills in joint state-private corporations and to allow them to earn dividends according to their investments. But in 1957 there was already a policy for the national bourgeoisie in the joint-private corporations to receive fixed interest on their investments and no longer dividends as their share of corporate profits.

Contradictions involved differences regarding the disposition of the profits of the joint state-private corporations and the role of national bourgeois entrepreneurs and managers who were retained to run the enterprises efficiently. The national bourgeoisie had a dual class character. It retained its exploitative class character and yet complied with state policy. There were contradictions arising from the dual class character of the national bourgeoisie but they were nonantagonistic and could be resolved through nonantagonistic methods, such as discussions, reasoning, persuasion and education.

The policy of the socialist state was to integrate the productive assets and entrepreneurial and managerial abilities of the national bourgeoisie, to dissolve the national bourgeoisie with its exploitative character in stages and to prevent it from increasing its exploitative character. In the meantime, the socialist state made sure that the profits made would be divide for the following purposes: fixed interest payment to the national bourgeois, improvement of the wage and living conditions of the workers, accumulation fund for the expansion of the enterprise, provision of social services, administration and tax for the state.

The Communist Party and the trade unions made sure that the rights and interests of the working class were upheld, protected and promoted first of all even while the entrepreneurial and managerial abilities of the national bourgeois were availed of, subject to their reeducation in socialism and also subject to the education and training of more Party cadres and the workers in socialist management and the students in science and engineering and other related fields in order to become the Reds experts in socialist construction.

*3. The dictatorship of the Proletariat is needed to safeguard socialist construction. It uses democratic centralism as a form of governance. Could you discuss democratic centralism? How does it work and why is this type of leadership important in paving the way to socialism?*

JMS: The dictatorship of the proletariat is upheld in the socialist constitution and is needed to guarantee the building of socialism and the continuance of socialist revolution and construction to achieve the ultimate goal of communism. With the Communist Party leading the socialist state in the form of the people's democratic revolution, it follows and applies the principle and method of democratic centralism in making and implementing decisions.

Democratic centralism is centralized leadership on the basis of

democracy. The establishment of the facts, reports and recommendations come from the basic level of the Party, the Party branches and the masses. Decisions move up from lower to higher levels of the Party organs of leadership, Party organization and state organs for further consideration and decision-making until they reach the central levels of Party and state leading organs where decisions are taken in the making national policies and plans.

The policies and plans are carried out and tested in practice by the lower levels of the Party, state and the people and on varied territorial scales. All the time the Party at all levels study and learn from the developing situation and is open to the reports, advice, criticism and supervision of the masses and the allies among the people. The democratic basis for centralized decision-making never stops.

*4. The formula of "unity -- criticism -- unity" is the democratic method of resolving contradictions among the people. Can you give an example of how contradictions are resolved through this formula?*

JMS: In making criticisms, we should be motivated by a desire to strengthen unity and improve the work and style of work for the benefit of the people along the revolutionary line of socialism. The criticism is meant to advance the revolutionary work and struggle and bring about a higher level of unity among the people, within the Party and the socialist state.

Criticisms arise when there are problems that need to be resolved because they are hampering or damaging revolutionary work and struggle. They are meant to present problems that must be analyzed and solved in order to improve the work and accelerate the advance of the revolutionary struggle. Criticisms can also arise from contradictions or problems on how to raise the level of development to a new and higher level.

When criticisms are made, these must be subjected to discussion and the methods of analysis, reasoning and persuasion are used. They therefore result both in the advancement of work and struggle and in raising the level of revolutionary consciousness and education. Raising the level of knowledge through criticisms and discussions means raising the level of practice. This is in accordance with materialist dialectics.

*5. Contradictions in socialist society are fundamentally different from those in the old societies, such as capitalist society. What are the basic contradictions in a socialist society?*

JMS: In socialist society, there are nonantagonistic class contradictions between the working class and the peasantry and within each of these classes with regard to benefits and deployment of resources. There are also class contradictions between the proletariat and the urban petty bourgeoisie and within this social stratum.

Especially among the intellectuals, the culture of the old society and the international bourgeoisie can still exercise an influence on them.

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Within the Communist Party, there can be petty bourgeois elements who have not fully remolded themselves as communists and they are liable to express subjectivist and opportunist ideas. If not properly restricted and directed towards dissolution, the national bourgeoisie can enlarge its exploitative interest.

It has been demonstrated in the rise of modern revisionism and subversion of socialist societies that the influence of the old exploitative classes can persist or be revived if the intelligentsia and the Party cadres themselves do not engage in continuous proletarian revolutionary education concerning classes and class struggle and thus degenerate because they become alienated from the masses and become obsessed with increasing their bureaucratic privileges and emulating the international bourgeoisie.

*6. Does exploitation still exist in a socialist society? What kind of exploitation and how does it differ in a capitalist society? How do we gradually eradicate exploitation?*

JMS: So far in history, socialism has arisen as a result of armed revolution and armed counterrevolution in countries not as advanced economically as the most powerful imperialist powers. Thus, after the revolutionary proletariat overthrows the bourgeois state, it has to adopt transitory measures, like the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union from 1922 onward and China from 1949 onward to give concessions to the lesser types of exploiters.

The commanding heights of the economy like the landed estates, strategic industries, the main sources of raw materials and the principal means of transport and communications, are immediately taken over by the state. But to revive and maintain the economy, concessions are made to certain elements in society that have an exploitative character, like the small and medium entrepreneurs and traders and the rich peasants.

Concessions were given to these under the NEP in the Soviet Union until socialist industrialization and the cooperativization of agriculture were carried out through the series of five year-plans under Stalin. In China, concessions were also made to such lesser types of exploiters after the properties of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists were confiscated. The national bourgeoisie were accommodated in joint state-private corporations.

And capitalist-roaders like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping wanted to prolong the concessions to the national bourgeoisie indefinitely. In fact, after the defeat of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the Dengist capitalist-oriented reforms and opening up to the world capitalist system restored capitalism in China and aggrandized the bourgeoisie as the ruling class.

*7. According to Mao, counterrevolutionaries must be eliminated wherever found, mistakes must be corrected whenever discovered. What*



*are the ways to eliminate counter-revolutionaries?*

JMS: Indeed, counterrevolutionaries must be eliminated so that the socialist state is secure and consolidated. But the revolutionary party and the people must be judicious in carrying out the policy of eliminating the counterrevolutionaries. They must be arrested, detained, tried and punished for criminal acts on the basis of evidence.

The mass movement is necessary to isolate the counterrevolutionaries. But due process must be followed in trying and punished counterrevolutionaries. The Communist Party, the state organs and the people must be able to distinguish those who criticize and speak honestly against certain policies and actions and those who are really counterrevolutionaries. Mistakes must be avoided and when they occur these must be corrected immediately and the victims must be rehabilitated.

*8. With the rural population comprising the majority, the role of peasants has a most important bearing on the development of our economy and the consolidation of our state power. China had successes in peasant cooperatives. Can you tell us what are cooperatives and how important is this in building socialism?*

JMS: Indeed, the peasants have a decisively important role in the development of the socialist economy and consolidation of state power. They are the majority of the people and are the main democratic force. And they are the producers at the agricultural base of the socialist economy which ensures the food supply of the entire people and also provides major raw materials for light industry. Cooperativization is used by the socialist society to raise the level economic and social development of agriculture and the peasant masses.

Starting in 1952, the development of agricultural cooperatives went through three stages in China. The first stage was characterized by mutual aid teams, involving the temporary sharing of labor and some capital by individual households as the basic unit of ownership and production. The mutual aid teams were further organized in 1954 into agricultural producers' cooperatives. The tools, draft animals, and labor were shared on a permanent basis. Cooperative members retained their land ownership but contributed this to a common land pool.

By the end of 1956 the transformation of mutual aid teams into agricultural cooperatives was completed. Most of the cooperatives had become advanced producers' cooperatives or collectives. The members of the cooperatives no longer earned on the basis of shares of land owned. Instead, collective farm net income was divided among members mainly on the basis of labor contributions. The average cooperative was made up of 170 families and more than 700 people.

The third stage of cooperativization was the organization of the people's communes during the Great Leap Forward. The people's communes were

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successful in overcoming the imperialist embargo, the abandonment of projects by the Soviet Union and the natural calamities. They fulfilled the objective of the Great Leap Forward in developing collectivized agriculture as the complement of socialist industry and they also stimulated then growth of rural industries and capital construction in the rural areas. But the imperialists and the Dengist counterrevolutionaries attack the Great Leap Forward as a complete disaster.

*9. In consolidating cooperatives, there are certain contradictions that remain to be resolved, such as those between the state and the co-operatives and those in and between the co-operatives themselves. What are these and how do we resolve them?*

JMS: The Chinese socialist state recognized the uneven development of the cooperatives and differences in the productivity of advanced, middle and backward cooperatives and thus adjusted its tax and requisition policy accordingly. The purpose of the tax policy was to support state operations, assist the backward cooperatives and the development of industry. And the requisitioning of agricultural products had the purpose of having sufficient stocks as raw materials for manufacturing as well as sufficient food supply to cover shortfalls due to natural disasters. The state made sure that the tax and requisitions allowed the peasant masses to improve agricultural production and raise their standard of living.

The Communist Party and the socialist state provided the direction, the planning and the financial and technical means for developing a certain level of cooperativization to a new and higher level. They also developed state farms. They made it a point to develop agriculture as the base of the socialist economy to produce food for the growing Chinese population and raw materials for light industry even as the development of heavy and basic industries as the leading factor in the development of the entire socialist economy.

*10. What will happen to landlords after the Party has seized political power? How about small landlords and rich peasants?*

JMS: After the Communist Party wins state power in a semicolonial and semifeudal country like China of the past and the Philippines at present, the people's democratic revolution is basically completed and the socialist revolution can begin. But the Communist Party proceeds at an accelerated rate to complete land reform as a bourgeois democratic measure in order to satisfy the peasant hunger for land and institute cooperativization as a socialist measure at the soonest possible time in connection with completing land distribution to the landless peasants.

The land of the landlords is confiscated for free distribution to the landless peasants. In the exceptional case of the enlightened landlords who have supported the revolution, they can be given the opportunity to earn a decent living and live a comfortable life commensurate to their

ability and education. The rich peasants can be given the opportunity to contribute their land and means of production to the cooperatives and become cooperative members according to the rules.

*11. In the building of a socialist society, everybody needs remoulding -- the exploiters and also the working people. How do we ensure the remoulding of the bourgeoisie? How about the intellectuals?*

JMS: Of course, the toiling masses of workers and peasants must continue to remould themselves. It is in their class interest that they raise the level of their revolutionary consciousness and activity in order to uphold, defend and carry forward the socialism revolution and construction. It is their own duty as well as the duty of the Communist Party to make sure that they further remould themselves through further revolutionary education and mass mobilization, especially because they own and control all instruments of education and culture.

It is a matter of course that those who belong to the exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists are deprived of the right to be voted and to vote for others as well as of other civil rights that can allow them to regain political power. But if they have not committed crimes, they are tolerated, allowed to earn a living and own nonexploitative property and they can opt to be educated to support socialism.

The national bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and the rich peasants are encouraged to remould themselves. There are study courses on socialism outside of the universities and in various places and fields of social activity. The educational system is required to provide socialist education to all the students at various levels. The mass media and so many types of cultural activities can be instruments of socialist education and culture.

*12. What kind of contradictions exist with the national minorities, and how should we resolve them? This is also important in the Philippines with a lot of national minorities.*

JMS: The national minorities have managed to retain their autonomy, ancestral domain and their cultural characteristics by resisting effectively previous social systems and regimes. The socialist state has to respect their right to self-determination, ancestral domain and culture. It must give them the time and opportunities to raise their own level of economic, social, political and cultural development.

The national minorities occupy and live in large areas which are fertile and rich in natural resources. The socialist state should not be like the foreign corporations, the reactionary puppet state and the local exploiting classes that grab land and the natural resources from the national minorities. With their full knowledge and consent, the availment of the land and resources in their ancestral domain must benefit them first, ahead of the rest of the Filipino nation. *13. "Let a hundred flowers blossom, let a hundred schools of thought contend" and "long-term coexistence and*

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*mutual supervision". What do these slogans mean?*

JMS: According to Mao himself, "Literally the two slogans -- let a hundred flowers blossom and let a hundred schools of thought contend -- have no class character; the proletariat can turn them to account, and so can the bourgeoisie or others. Different classes, strata and social groups each have their own views on what are fragrant flowers and what are poisonous weeds." But the variety of schools of thought and works of art and culture can contend and flourish so long as the principles of China's socialist constitution is the basis and framework.

The principles are as follows: 1) Words and deeds should help to unite, and not divide, the people of all our nationalities; 2) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to socialist transformation and socialist construction; 3) They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, the people's democratic dictatorship; 4) They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, democratic centralism; 5) They should help to strengthen, and not shake off or weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party; and 6) They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to international socialist unity and the unity of the peace-loving people of the world.

Mao also explains "long-term co-existence and mutual supervision" in the following words: The slogan "long-term coexistence and mutual supervision" is also a product of China's specific historical conditions. It was not put forward all of a sudden, but had been in the making for several years. The idea of long-term coexistence had been there for a long time. When the socialist system was in the main established last year, the slogan was formulated in explicit terms. Why should the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democratic parties be allowed to exist side by side with the party of the working class over a long period of time? Because we have no reason for not adopting the policy of long-term coexistence with all those political parties which are truly devoted to the task of uniting the people for the cause of socialism and which enjoy the trust of the people.

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## **Duterte Fakes the Destruction of the NPA While This Grows in Strength Nationwide**

**December 17, 2020**

The repeated fake propaganda of the Duterte regime and its military is that they have either killed or made the New People's Army commanders and fighters surrender in the thousands far beyond the supposed actual size of the people's army.

In fact, Duterte and his top defense officials are engaged in big-time racketeering by inventing lists of NPA casualties and surrenders in order to pocket privately huge amounts of public money. They pad the costs of military supplies and operations (psywar, intelligence and combat) and fake the expenses for Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program and community support program under various titles.

Soon after they claim to have destroyed the NPA beyond its supposed actual size, they assault the intelligence of the people by renewing the call to destroy again the NPA and asking for a bigger military budget at the expense of social services for health, education, public housing, disaster relief and other urgent needs.

In fact, the NPA is growing in size and strength because of the ever-worsening crisis of the ruling system and the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation. The red-tagging campaigns, arbitrary arrests and mass murders are actually compelling the social activists to join the NPA and fight the butchers in power.

An ever-increasing number of the Filipino people take the road of armed revolution because they wish to end the conditions of underdevelopment, high unemployment and mass poverty and punish the top brutes and crooks of the tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal, plundering and swindling Duterte regime.

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# Combat Liberalism

## Third Episode in Mao Serye of the ND Online School of Anakbayan-Europe

Questions by Edna Becher

Answers by Jose Maria Sison

December 20, 2020

*1. What is the context of Combat Liberalism. What circumstances brought Mao the need to write this?*

JMS: Mao wrote “Combat Liberalism” in 1937 in Yen-an in the course of the campaign on theoretical and political education. There were conditions of truce between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang after the signing of the Second United Front Against Japan in December 1936. It was republished in 1942 in connection with the Rectification Movement in Yen-an.

The short article focuses on the individualistic conduct and selfish behavior of some Party members who run afoul of the collective and the principle of democratic centralism. The social basis of this unhealthy phenomenon within the Communist Party is the petty bourgeoisie. Certain members join the Party but continue to carry with them petty bourgeois “tails” and need further remoulding as proletarian revolutionaries.

Some commentators expect a critique of the liberal philosophy. But in very concrete terms Mao hits the mark by criticizing individualism which is the core of petty bourgeois ideology of various types. Thus, the article is disliked or even condemned by liberals, anarchists, Trotskyites and other individualist and subjectivist trends that oppose collectivity, democratic centralism and the mass line in the revolutionary struggle.

*2. Liberalism may have different meaning to some people. Can you clear up what liberalism is that Mao is tackling in this pamphlet? What is meant by that liberalism rejects ideological struggle?*

JMS: Mao discusses as many as eleven manifestations of liberalism which include the following:

1) To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship, when a person has clearly gone wrong; to refrain from argument because he is an old acquaintance...

2) To indulge in irresponsible criticism in private instead of actively putting forward one’s suggestions to the organisation. To say nothing to people to their faces but to gossip behind their backs...

3) To let things drift if they do not affect one personally; to say as little

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as possible while knowing perfectly well what is wrong, to be worldly wise and play safe and seek only to avoid blame.

4) Not to obey orders but to give pride of place to one's own opinion. To demand special consideration from the organisation but to reject its discipline. This is a fourth type.

5) To indulge in personal attacks, pick quarrels, vent personal spite or seek revenge instead of entering into an argument and struggling against incorrect views for the sake of unity or progress...

6) To hear incorrect views without rebutting them and to hear counter-revolutionary remarks without reporting them, but instead to take them calmly as if nothing had happened. This is a sixth type.

7) To be among the masses and fail to conduct propaganda and agitation or speak at meetings... Forgetting that one is a Communist and behaving as if one is an ordinary non-Communist.

8) To see someone harming the interests of the masses and yet not feel indignant or dissuade or stop him but allow him to continue.

9) To work half-heartedly without a definite plan or direction; to work perfunctorily and muddle along...

10) To regard oneself as having rendered great service to the revolution, to pride oneself on being a veteran [yet] to be slipshod in work and slack in study. This is a tenth type.

11) To be aware of one's own mistakes and yet make no attempt to correct them, taking a liberal attitude towards oneself.

As Mao has correctly pointed out, all the foregoing acts of liberalism within the Party express or manifest the rejection of ideological struggle. And I wish to add that those who practice liberalism actually peddle their petty bourgeois ideology and try to obscure their own need for Marxist education. They are not humble enough to acknowledge their need for further Marxist education if they are indeed sworn to develop themselves as Party members.

At one point in the article, Mao refers to some Party members who think that they can adhere to liberalism and Marxism at the same time. They presume that they can flip from one to the other or even mix them up. There are such eclectics who even presume that they are smarter than others because of their eclecticism. But it is not really possible to be a consistent, systematic and profound Marxist by not discarding and combating liberalism.

*3. Liberalism manifests itself in various ways. One example is to let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship when a person has clearly gone wrong, and refrain from principled argument because of personal relationships. This is particularly difficult in practice. There are comrades who do criticize and argue every wrong point. In organizing, it is tricky to point out every wrong view and opinion of the masses immediately,*



*because we don't want them to distance themselves in the start. How do we balance this and how do we weigh which is liberalism and which is not?*

JMS: I do not agree that there is any wrong idea or any wrong factual claim from comrades and the masses that cannot be answered and explained in a respectful, friendly and persuasive way. In the first place, we propagate the line that in the revolutionary movement we learn from each other. It is wrong to let a wrong idea stand or pass just to avoid offending the one who expressed it.

The Marxist knows how to answer or explain how wrong an idea or claim is in a reasonable and persuasive way without insulting or running down the other side in the discussion. I have had so many students who even express rabid anti-communist ideas. But they have been intelligent enough to learn from what I explain. Sometimes, even the apparently most rabid anticommunist becomes eventually an activist or even a comrade and devoted student of Marxism.

*4. Mao talks about irresponsible criticism. What does he mean by that? In our organizations, what are methods we use to conduct responsible criticisms?*

JMS: Even among those who are already presumed to know the decisive importance and necessity of democratic centralism and collectivity in Party life there are some members who act and speak liberally or individualistically by making irresponsible criticisms at the expense of comrades who are absent or at the expense of decisions taken by collective organs and units of work

Those who come across such irresponsible comrades should admonish them immediately to bring the criticism before the proper organ or collective. They should also be reported accordingly. Thus, the criticism is looked into before any disunity arises that obscures the issue if there is any serious one that exists.

*5. Not to obey orders but to give pride of place to one's own opinions. To demand special consideration from the organization but to reject its discipline. This is also a form of liberalism. What do we do in cases that we do not agree with the orders given from us? How do we ensure democracy in our organization?*

JMS: When a lower organ or a lower collective does not agree with an order from above it must send up promptly the reasons and facts why the order is wrong and should be corrected. It is wrong for any individual or even a lower organ or organization of the Party to become swell-headed and break discipline.

There is a dialectical and interactive relationship between higher and lower levels of organs and organizations. The higher level is ever appreciative of timely and more accurate reports, recommendations, criticisms and new proposals. It shuns bureaucratic centralism and

commandism. The communist principle and style is to work through the collective and follow democratic centralism.

6. *To be among the masses and fail to conduct propaganda and agitation or speak at meetings. This is also a form of liberalism. Can you elaborate on this and give examples?*

JMS: Every time a communist is among the masses, he must avail of the opportunity to conduct propaganda and agitation. There are always burning issues to take up. And there is always the need to raise the level of revolutionary consciousness and militancy among the masses. To waste the opportunity is to fail to perform a duty. It is a form of liberalism, a way of taking it easy and neglecting to carry out a task.

7. *What does the saying "So long as one remains a monk, one goes on tolling the bell." mean and why is that harmful to our organization?*

JMS: This means doing the routine all by oneself and not taking a new initiative with other comrades in order to raise the level of revolutionary work to a new and higher level. Being daily satisfied with the status quo and doing the same chores day in and day out run counter to the constant need for arousing, organizing and mobilizing more people for the strengthening and advance of the revolutionary movement.

8. *To regard oneself as having rendered great service to the revolution, to pride oneself on being a veteran, to disdain minor assignments while being quite unequal to major tasks, to be slipshod in work and slack in study. This is liberalism. How do we ensure that comrades don't fall to this kind of liberalism?*

JMS: This is a case of liberalism in which someone thinks so highly of himself that he would disdain to do anything below his imagined self-importance even as he is actually short of what he can accomplish or does slipshod work and is wanting in further education. Such comrades who overrate themselves and underperform should come under the supervision and direction of the appropriate organs and collectives as well as of the masses

9. *Mao named eleven principal manifestations of liberalism in his pamphlet, and mentions there are more. We recommend that listeners read the whole text. Ka Joma, can you explain where liberalism stems from.*

JMS: Mao declares, "Liberalism stems from petty-bourgeois selfishness, it places personal interests first and the interests of the revolution second, and this gives rise to ideological, political and organizational liberalism . . . Liberalism is a manifestation of opportunism and conflicts fundamentally with Marxism. It is negative and objectively has the effect of helping the enemy; that is why the enemy welcomes its preservation in our midst. Such being its nature, there should be no place for it in the ranks of the revolution."

*10. To conclude, can you elaborate why liberalism is extremely harmful to the revolutionary collective and how can we battle and overcome it?*

JMS: Mao teaches us: "Liberalism is extremely harmful in a revolutionary collective. It is a corrosive which eats away unity, undermines cohesion, causes apathy and creates dissension. It robs the revolutionary ranks of organisation and strict discipline, prevents policies from being carried through and alienates the Party organisations from the masses the Party leads. It is an extremely bad tendency..."

We must use Marxism, which is positive in spirit, to overcome liberalism, which is negative... All loyal, honest, active and upright Communists must unite to oppose the liberal tendencies shown by certain people among us and set them on the right path. This is one of the tasks on our ideological front."

We can combat and overcome liberalism by studying Mao's Combat Liberalism, raising our level of consciousness about it and being vigilantly and militantly critical of it every time it is manifested. Mao prescribes the following: "We stand for active ideological struggle because it is the weapon for ensuring unity within the Party... But liberalism rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace, thus giving rise to a decadent attitude and bringing about political degeneration in certain Party individuals and revolutionary organizations."

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# **On the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution**

## **Fourth Episode of the Mao Series of the ND Online School of Anakbayan-Europe**

**Questions by host Crisanto Kempendorff**

**Answers by Jose Maria Sison**

**January 3, 2021**

*1. What is the historical significance of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) to China and to the world?*

JMS: Mao launched the GPCR in 1966 in line with his theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through cultural revolution in order to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism.

This theory was the result of his study of the class contradictions in Soviet socialist society and his critique of the Soviet political economy and the rise of the Soviet modern revisionism under Khrushchov as well as the circumstances of China from 1949 to 1966, especially from 1957 to 1966.

Mao had also observed that there were already revisionists or capitalist roaders within the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist state since the planning and preparation of the Second Five Year Plan in 1957; and that the Soviet revisionists headed by Khrushchov had influence on the Chinese revisionists since the rise of Khrushchov.

Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping sent study teams to the Soviet Union to learn from the revisionist reforms instituted by Khrushchov for application in China. They came into sharp conflict with the planning and preparation for the Second Five-Year Plan or the Great Leap Forward of China.

*2. How did Mao take notice of the capitalist roaders in the Chinese Communist Party? And why did he launch the GPCR only in 1966 if he noticed them 10 years earlier?*

JMS: Mao and the Central Committee had to observe first the pronouncements and behavior of the capitalist roaders, let them unfold themselves first and do only what was warranted at a given time. Peng Dehuai who was defense minister and was well-known as close to the Soviet Union was the most brazen in opposing The Great Leap Forward at the Lushan conference in 1959 and was promptly made to account for his position.

In criticizing certain points or features of the Great Leap Forward, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Zhao Ping, Chen Yun and Zhou Enlai were more prudent than Peng Dehuai. But Liu and Deng were systematic in taking advantage

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

of contradictions and difficulties to undermine the entire Second Five Year Plan and not to solve them for the purpose of advancing socialist revolution and socialist construction.

They were for prolonging and enlarging concessions to the bourgeoisie in state-private corporations and to the rich peasants and private merchants. They were for the development of a "national democratic economy" instead of socialist construction. They exaggerated the need for private accumulation to run counter to the socialist drive for collective accumulation. In the name of using material incentives, they were for bigger wage differentials and for the piece-rate wage system.

Before and after the formation of the communes in the Great Leap Forward, Liu and Deng pushed the "Three Freedoms and One Contract" scheme to sabotage the advanced coops and the communes. The three freedoms were the freedoms: 1) to enlarge private lots, 2) to promote free-markets, and 3) for each individual household to be responsible for its own profit or loss. The one contract was to have each individual household sign a contract with the State for the production of a pre-set amount of crops. After the pre-set amount was met, the peasant would be free to sell everything on the free market.

*3. What was the Great Leap Forward all about? According to the anticommunists as well as the Dengist capitalist-roaders, it was entirely or mostly a catastrophe like the GPCR.*

JMS: After the basic socialist transformation of the Chinese economy in the First Five Year Plan from 1952 to 1957, the Great Leap Forward was planned and implemented to develop rapidly heavy and basic socialist industries as the lead factor in building socialism, agricultural collectivization through the communes as the base of the socialist economy and light industry as bridge factor to provide for the immediate consumer and producer needs of households, especially among the peasants. This was supposed to learn from the overinvestment in heavy industry at the expense of agriculture in the Soviet experience under Stalin.

The Soviet revisionists and their Chinese followers were most vociferous in saying that agricultural collectivization was a certain failure if the agricultural machines were not yet provided everywhere. But the Great Leap Forward was successful in rapidly the economy self-reliantly through the wise and planned utilization of the available productive forces, through collective efforts, despite the continuing imperialist embargo, the Soviet abandonment of ongoing projects and the natural calamities which hit hardest in 1960 to 1961. The bumper crop came in 1962.

From then on, even the Chinese revisionists could not deny that the Great Leap Forward was greatly successful and that the Chinese people were enjoying stability and initial prosperity from year to year. Without the Great Leap Forward, China would not have developed its socialist

economy self-reliantly on the two legs of industry and agriculture and would have succumbed to the imperialist embargo, the Soviet revisionist abandonment and the natural calamities.

Because of the Great Leap Forward, China scored major victories in developing socialist industry and the communes. Mao and the proletarian revolutionaries could not allow the Chinese capitalist roaders to get away with all the vitriolic attacks on his leadership when difficulties were misrepresented as insurmountable failures. Thus, he launched the Socialist Education Movement in 1963. But this was misdirected and sabotaged by Liu and Deng by promoting revisionism and they unwittingly laid the ground for the GPCR.

*4. How did the GPCR begin and develop until the Ninth Congress of the CPC in 1969?*

JMS: Liu and Deng themselves took part in the decision in January 1966 to explore the launching of the cultural revolution and to let Beijing Mayor Peng Zhen investigate how so much revisionist propaganda had run under the very noses of the responsible organs Chinese Communist Party, especially the Propaganda Department.

Peng Zhen came out with the "February Outline" to dismiss as merely academic the issue over what his vice mayor Wu Han had written against the decision of the Party to dismiss Peng Dehuai from his position because of his opposition to the Great Leap Forward. He tried to suppress Yao Wen-yuan's criticism of Wu's satirical piece which compared Mao to a tyrannical emperor for dismissing Peng from office.

When faculty members and students in Beijing rose up against the "February Outline", Liu and Deng dispatched "work teams" to quell them. The intervention from above merely outraged the university population. The chain of events led to the formation of the Central Cultural Revolution Group of the CPC, the drawing up of the August 18, 1966 16-point Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the spread of the Red Guards Movement among the youth and the workers and Mao praising the youth as the successors of the revolution and calling on the Red Guards to bombard the bourgeois headquarters within the CPC and on the People's Liberation Army to support the Left.

The exemplary theatrical works began to roll out and be performed in theatres, on the streets, on various forms of transport, in offices, factories and farms. They celebrated as heroes of the Chinese revolution the workers, peasants and soldiers. They promoted the line of the proletarian-socialist revolution and socialist construction. They condemned the Chinese capitalist roaders and upheld the line of proletarian cultural revolution against the old ideas, old culture, old habits, and old customs.

The Red Guards Movement was described as the most extensive and

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intensive manifestation of democracy in the history of mankind, arousing, organizing and mobilizing hundreds of millions of people all over China and utilizing huge assemblies, big character posters, slogans on walls and other forms of propaganda that the people could easily make against officials taking the capitalist road. In accordance with the Constitution of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company, the right of the workers to strike was spelled out and exercised to assert the leading role of their class.

The January Storm broke out in Shanghai in 1967. The workers overthrew the Municipal Party Committee and took power in the name of the Shanghai Commune. This was renamed the Revolutionary Committee the following month and became the model for forming revolutionary committees to take power all over China. They consisted of representatives of the Party, the people's army and masses. They became the base for delegates to the Ninth Party Congress in 1969.

*5. How did the Chinese revisionist or capitalist roaders fight back against the forces of the GPCR?*

JMS: Of course, the highest of the revisionists or capitalist roaders within the CPC resisted the GPCR. I have already mentioned the work teams deployed by Liu and Deng and maneuvers of Peng Zhen. There were those who used their high positions at various levels to maneuver and spread intrigues in order to counter the mass movement before they lost their positions. There were also those who pretended to be remorseful and pretended to be for the GPCR.

The worst enemies of the GPCR were those who created their own factions of Red Guards and worker rebels and took an ultra-Left line and carried out actions to discredit the GPCR. They were then denounced as those who raised the Red flag to attack it. They engaged in fighting the real Red Guards and carrying out physical actions and acts of vandalism against China's cultural legacy.

The objective of the Rightists in whipping up ultra-Left slogans and actions was to discredit the GPCR and conjure the demand for stopping the mass movement and stabilizing the situation by the authorities. The Rightists spread the intrigue that even Mao had been repelled by the unruliness of the Red Guards and they also sought to split the Left.

*6. After the Ninth Congress in 1969, what happened to the Left and to Lin Biao after being hailed as "closest comrade in arms" of Mao and "universally accepted successor"?*

JMS: Soon after the Ninth Congress, reports circulated that there was a falling out between Lin Biao and Chen Boda on one side and the Shanghai Group of Four (Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen), that Lin Biao was in a hurry to become President and that he and his 24-year old son were plotting to overthrow Mao or to assassinate him.



Many outsiders express disbelief that Lin Biao could be rumored as plotting a coup for a long period of time before he was supposed to have botched his plot and taken a plane to fly to his Soviet foes with his top brass followers and with no sufficient fuel to reach the Soviet Union. After Lin Biao and his key followers were killed, the Group of Four would undertake a campaign to condemn Lin Biao and Confucius (a reference to Zhou Enlai).

It became apparent that the Left for which Mao called on Lin Biao and the PLA to support at the beginning of the GPCR was breaking up. It was reminiscent of how the top followers of Stalin (like Molotov, Malenkov and so on) had also split in the years before Krushchov took full power in 1956 in comparison to the re-ascent of Deng Xiaoping to power as Vice Premier and PLA Chief of Staff with the open support of Zhou Enlai.

*7. But it looked like the Group of Four was still on the rise up to the Tenth Congress of 1973 and even thereafter. How much was the weight of this Left group in relation to the entire Left, Middle and Right section of the Chinese Communist Party?*

JMS: Indeed, the Group was apparently on the rise as propagandists and icons of the cultural revolution up to the Tenth Party Congress in 1973 and even thereafter. Wang Hongwen became the Vice Chairman of the Central Committee, the third highest official after Mao and Zhu Enlai. He and other group members were raised to the Politburo.

Most of the time they enjoyed the support of Mao. Their strength was pushing the pen and doing propaganda pertaining to issues in culture, academia, education and similar matters. But by themselves they carried little or no weight within the Party, state and PLA. Without Mao to support them, they were ineffectual.

At any rate, they were able to launch the campaign to criticize Lin Biao and "Confucius" in late 1973 under the direction of Jiang Qing. The name of Confucius was used to refer to Zhou Enlai who was also pointedly alluded to as Zhou in the criticism of the novel, *Water Margin*.

The Group of Four were known to be on the same Left side with the Politburo member Kang Sheng in opposing the reascendancy of Deng and in targeting Zhou for criticism as the Centrist figure responsible for rehabilitating and promoting Deng Xiaoping. But subsequently, there would be falling out between the Group of Four and Kang Sheng who died of illness in 1975.

*8. What were the accomplishments of the GPCR before it dwindled in effect and was finally defeated?*

JMS: The GPCR put into practice Mao's theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through cultural revolution in order to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism. This theory is supposed to be Mao's greatest

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contribution to the development of Marxism-Leninism, thus making Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism the third stage of development in the revolutionary theory and practice of the proletariat.

Mao had the opportunity to study the continued existence of classes and class struggle and the emergence of modern revisionism in the Soviet Union and China. He confronted revisionism as a growing threat already embedded in the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese state. He hoped to succeed in preventing capitalist restoration and consolidating socialism through cultural revolution and in revolutionizing the political and cultural superstructure to promote the socialist mode of production against the one-sided revisionist and mechanical theory of "productive forces".

He succeeded in leading and generating the GPCR as the most extensive and intensive manifestation of democracy not only in the entire history of China but also of the entire mankind. The GPCR created the Red Guards movement among the youth, the three-in-one revolutionary committees as organs of political power, the three-in-one leading organs in factories, farms and institutions and the principle of mutual supervision between the cadres and masses.

The GPCR educated the cadres and masses in Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the creation, created the exemplary literary and theatrical works and other artistic works, brought up the requirement for the youth to do mass work as part of their education and for the masses to evaluate their fitness for further education, systematically deployed teams of educated youth, scientists and technologists to raise the level of production in factories and farms, generated rural clinics and barefoot health workers, scientific experiment and technological innovations flourished archeological works expanded, and so on.

Contrary to the claims of the Dengist capitalist roaders that the GPCR was an economic catastrophe, the Chinese economy had an annual growth rate of 10 per cent despite the attempts to bring down the figures for certain years. Socialist industry and the communes advanced at an accelerated rate, inspired by the examples Daqing and Dachai. The high growth rate was accomplished self-reliantly in the direction of socialism and communism and not with the influx of foreign direct investments and loans for the purpose of capitalist restoration and integration of China with the world capitalist system.

*9. How did Deng Xiaoping and the like undermine and defeat the GPCR? How did they use the three worlds theory and call for modernization, reforms and opening up for the purpose?*

JMS: Since the Xunyi Conference in the Long March, Zhou had always or in the main supported the leadership of Mao. And he was known to consult Mao on every major issue in his line of work. Especially because of his deteriorating health, Mao relied on Zhou to keep the ship of state

stable amidst the twists and turns of the cultural revolution and agreed with him when he recommended the rehabilitation of Deng to stabilise the situation after the fall of Lin Biao.

It is an interesting subject for study whether and how Zhou became a Centrist collaborator of Deng Xiaoping in the ultimate defeat of the GPCR. Did Zhou have his own reasons and initiative in collaborating with Deng or the Group of Four pushed him to collaborate with Deng to prevent the Group of Four from running him down.

Ultimately, the Group of Four was impotent in the face of the Centrist-Rightist combination against the GPCR no less within the CPC, the state and the PLA. Within the month after the death of Mao on September 9, 1976, the Group of Four was easily arrested under orders by officials close to the late Zhou and Deng, like Hua Guofeng, Yeh Jianying, Li Xiannian and Wang Dongxing .

At the highest levels of policy-making by the Party and the state, the capitalist-roaders harped without cease on the line that GPCR had been chaotic and catastrophic and that therefore there was a need for stability and peace. Long before the arrest of Jiang Qing, Deng Xiaoping was also spreading the intriguing misogynistic joke that it would be a big tragedy if the Central Committee had come under the skirt of a woman.

But of course, in the most serious deliberations of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau or its standing committee, the Centrists and Rightist made use of the threats of Soviet social imperialism, the Zhenbao island incident in the Wusuli River and deployment of one million Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border as the pretext for drawing closer to the US, make a rapprochement with it as early as during the Nixon visit in 1972 and justify friendly relations with the US as the way to “modernization”.

The struggle between the two superpowers, US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism, was utilized by the capitalist roaders to favor US imperialism instead of playing off one imperialist enemy against the other. The friendly relations of China with the US became ultimately the highway for capitalist-oriented reforms and China’s reintegration in the world capitalist system. The US welcomed such relations with China in order to support the advancement of capitalism in China and abandonment of socialism and proletarian internationalism by China.

*10. In the decisive year of 1976 how did Deng get overthrown and bounce back?*

JMS: Zhou Enlai was the main patron and protector of Deng in his rehabilitation and reascendancy to power after the death of Lin Biao. When Zhou died of cancer in January 1976, the Left in general and the Group of Four in particular, had Deng removed from power for proposing “modernization” as a big comprador scheme for integrating China into the world capitalist system.

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But when Mao died in September 1976, the Rightists and Centrists combined to bring Deng back to power and once more and arrest the Group of Four and thousands of cadres who adhered to the GPCR. And they expelled Party members by the millions and replaced them with those opposed to the GPCR.

There was a total reorganization of the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese state and the PLA in favor of the capitalist roaders. The proletariat was definitively overthrown. And the Dengist counterrevolutionaries succeeded in carrying out capitalist-oriented reforms and the integration of China in the world capitalist system.

*11. What did the GPCR prove and what are the lasting lessons from it? Are you not dismayed that China has become capitalist and imperialist power contending for the No. 1 position?*

JMS: The GPCR proved that there were capitalist roaders within the Chinese Communist Party, the state and the people's army. They were in control of major portions of state power and grew in strength to overthrow the socialist state of the proletariat. After the 1976 coup, it became obvious that China was taking the capitalist road after the GPCR was condemned as a complete catastrophe, the commune system was dismantled, the bourgeoisie was given access to the state banks to finance capitalist enterprises, the privatization of rural industries and departments of the Party, state agencies and people's army were financed to go into business and make acceptable to Party cadres "going into business".

The GPCR successfully exposed the existence and growth of the bourgeoisie in China and combatted modern revisionism at least for some three to five years but it failed ultimately to prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism. After 1976, China proceeded to become an unabashed oppressor and exploiter of the Chinese proletariat and other working people. Still further, it became the main partner of the US imperialism in propagating neoliberal globalization, especially after the Dengists crushed the mass movement against corruption and inflation in 1989 and the US steered China towards its entry into the WTO in 2001. Now, they have become the biggest contending imperialist powers.

Of course, it is dismaying that the two biggest socialist countries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have become capitalist. But by becoming capitalist, after building a socialist industrial base, they have made the world capitalist system far more fraught than ever with the crisis of overproduction and the dangers of fascism, wars of aggression and destruction of the environment by monopoly capitalism. All basic contradictions in the world are sharpening, between capital and labour in the industrial capitalist countries, between the imperialist countries and oppressed peoples and nations and among the imperialist powers themselves.

The current intensification of inter-imperialist contractions, especially

those between the US and China, are escalating the conditions of oppression and exploitation and driving the proletariat and the people to wage anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and aim for the resurgence of world proletarian-socialist revolution. The epochal struggle between capitalism and socialism, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, continues. Great revolutionary struggles are developing fast and great revolutionary victories of their proletariat and people are in the horizon.

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## **III. Messages and Letters**





# On the Filipino People's Revolutionary Struggle for National and Social Liberation

## New Year's Message<sup>32</sup>

January 1, 2020

The evil forces of US imperialism and local reaction are escalating the oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people with the use of neoliberalism and state terrorism. They make the people suffer but goad them to fight back and aim for revolutionary change. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Filipino people are engaged in the new democratic revolution against the semicolonial and ruling system, now chiefly represented by the Duterte regime.

This regime is traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and mendacious. It has tried and failed to intimidate and deceive the people and suppress their revolutionary forces. But it has succeeded in further inciting them to wage all forms of revolutionary struggle, especially people's war. Once more I congratulate the Filipino people for their victories in their revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation.

By offering peace negotiations to the revolutionary movement, Duterte has the burden of proving that he is willing to change the anti-national and anti-democratic character of his regime and to make agreements on social, economic and political reforms to address the roots of the civil war and lay the basis for a just peace. He can only delude himself by boasting that the revolutionary movement has no choice but to surrender or be destroyed.

He is now in the lameduck years of his term and his grievous crimes are weighing down heavily on him and his entire regime. He is increasingly being isolated by his own crimes and by a broad united front of patriotic and progressive forces. The broad masses of the people detest his regime for imposing extreme and intolerable oppression and exploitation on them and are desirous of rising up against his reign of terror and greed.

The Duterte regime cannot save itself from a disgraceful end by depending on US or Chinese imperialism or on both. These imperialist powers have no interest in the Philippines but to gain hegemony. The US wants to retain its overall hegemony and China takes advantage of the corrupt character of the Duterte regime to gain strategic footholds in the

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<sup>32</sup>Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and NDFP Chief Political Consultant

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

West Philippine Sea and in the entire Philippine archipelago.

The two imperialist powers are now locked in an escalating struggle for a redivision of the world to the detriment of the people of the world. The crisis of the world capitalist system continues to worsen and to generate the conditions for the resurgence of the anti-imperialist movements of peoples and for the world proletarian-socialist revolution. The strategic decline of US imperialism has led to its cut-throat competition with Chinese imperialism.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces (the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the mass organizations and the local organs of political power) are highly confident that they will continue to gain strength and advance amidst the crises of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

They are certain that they will win greater victories in the new year and advance the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. They enjoy the solidarity and abundant support of the peoples of the world. Their revolutionary victories are not only for their own benefit but also for the anti-imperialist and socialist movements of the proletariat and peoples of the world.

Long live the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces!

Advance the people's democratic revolution towards socialism!

Long live the anti-imperialist solidarity of peoples and proletarian internationalism!

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## Greetings to Participants in the Launch of *Reflections on Revolution and Prospects*

February 6, 2020

Dear Friends,

I wish to convey my warmest greetings to all who are present in this gathering to launch the book, *Reflections on Revolution and Prospects*. I thank all of you for coming.

I wish to give special thanks to Bayan-National, Bayan-National Capital Region, College Editor's Guild and the Congress of Teachers and Educators for Nationalism and Democracy for organizing this event in collaboration with the publisher International Newt work for Philippine Studies.

I also wish to give special thanks to Prof. Sonny San Juan, who wrote the foreword to the book, for gracing this occasion and sharing his wisdom; and to the distinguished book reviewers, Prof. Bobby Tuazon and Prof. Larissa Mae Suarez of the UP Department of English and Comp. Literature and former editor in chief of the UP Philippine Collegian.

Thirty years ago, I did a structured interview book titled *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View* with my German friend Dr. Rainer Werning, translator of the German edition of *Philippine Society and Revolution*. He is a steadfast solidarity activist in support of the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation. Once more

Once more we have collaborated to produce *Reflections on Revolution and Prospects*. This book tries to give a comprehensive coverage of my views on Philippine and global issues and of how I have lived and worked in most of my lifetime. It might give you the impression that I am already making a final summing up of my life.

But I am optimistic that I still have some years of active life. I will continue to contribute what I can to the struggle of the people for a better life. I intend to see the end of the Duterte tyranny, the continuing advance of the new democratic revolution in the Philippines and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution against imperialism and all reaction.

In the Philippines, we confront the recrudescence of Marcos-type tyranny and corruption in the Duterte regime. This manifests the continuous decomposition of the semicolonial and semi-feudal ruling system. Once more an unabashedly bloodthirsty regime of terror and greed is driving the people to wage armed revolution.

At the same time in the world, we are in transition to the resurgence

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

of anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution. From the past year to the current one, we see the unprecedented scale and intensity of people's mass protests in all continents against neoliberalism, fascism, imperialist plunder, wars of aggression and destruction of the environment.

I hope that you enjoy this book launch as an occasion to be with friends who have a common interest in the Filipino people's struggle for full national independence, democracy, social justice, all-round development and just peace as well as in the struggle of all peoples of the world for a better future of greater freedom, democracy and socialism.

Thank you.

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## Continuing Tasks of the Filipino Youth under the Inspiration of the FQS of 1970<sup>33</sup>

February 6, 2010

Dear Fellow Activists,

I wish to express warmest greetings of solidarity to all who are participating in this forum to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Quarter Storm of 1970, including the sponsoring organizations, the UP Mindanao University Student Council and All-UP Academic Employees Union-Mindanao Chapter, and the distinguished speakers, Prof. Lualhati Milan Abreu, Khyle Caballero of Gabriela Youth-SMR, and Jayvie Cabajes of Kabataan Party List.

I salute all of you for holding this forum. I feel honored and pleased to be a part of it. It is a meaningful way of celebrating the FQS of 1970 and drawing inspiration from its historic significance and continuing relevance.

The FQS started on January 26, 1970 and spread nationwide. It roused to action the youth in many provincial capitals and cities, including Davao City. The battlecries of the national democratic movement resounded here: Makibaka, huwag matakot! Ibagsak ang imperyalismo, pyudalismo at burukrata kapitalismo! Digmang bayan ang sagot sa batas militar! [Fight, fear not! Down with imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism! People's war is the answer to martial law!]

I think that the significance and relevance of the FQS are well covered by Prof. Abreu who is tasked to speak on the history of the FQS and subsequent struggles, by Ms. Caballero on the current attacks on student rights and welfare and Mr. Cabajes on the role and situation of the Filipino. However, I join them in trying to answer the questions posed by the organizers:

1. What were the tasks that the youth performed during the FQS and how relevant are these tasks to the current time, especially among the youth in Mindanao?

The basic tasks of the youth during the FQS were to arouse, organize and mobilize themselves to demand and struggle for full national independence and real democracy against US imperialism; feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Because the basic problems of the Filipino people persist, the Filipino youth of today must continue to perform the tasks of realizing and enabling the national democratic movement to change the

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<sup>33</sup>Founding Chairman of Kabataang Makabayan and NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The tyrant that now rules the Philippines comes from Davao City but acts against the interests of the toiling masses of workers, peasants and indigenous people of Mindanao and the entire Philippines. He is trying in vain to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people in order to deliver the land and natural resources of Mindanao to foreign and local exploiters. He serves the interests of both US and Chinese imperialists. As chief oligarch, he collaborates with his fellow oligarchs and uses his political power to amass his ill-gotten wealth at a rapid rate like Marcos did.

2. Why is it important for the youth to continue taking the road of struggle, both armed and parliamentary?

It is important that the Filipino youth, including the students and the young workers, peasants, indigenous people, professionals and social activists, continue the people's struggle for national and social liberation because the basic problems of the people persist and are aggravated by a traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and deceptive regime that is reminiscent of the Marcos regime which worships and emulates.

The importance of the various forms of struggle against the current regime and the ruling system is well emphasized to the youth and people of Mindanao by the escalating conditions of exploitation and oppression under a de facto fascist dictatorship by virtue of Proclamation No. 55 and Executive Order No. 70 and by the actual heroic resistance of the youth and people, be it in the form of legal democratic struggles or armed revolution. I understand that the repressive measures being unleashed by the regime are goading the youth to join the people's war.

3. What is the challenge to the new generation of the Filipino youth?

The imperialist powers, the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and their political and military agents claim that the Filipino youth have lost interest in the national democratic movement. And yet those who express patriotic and progressive views are subjected to red-baiting, threats to life, limb and liberty and brutal acts of military suppression, including extrajudicial killings in the name of anti-communism, anti-terrorism or anti-drugs.

The challenge to the youth is to fight the evil forces that impose the reign of fascist terror and neoliberal greed on the Filipino nation. You must repudiate all the vicious attempts of those in power to suppress the national democratic movement and you must be resolute and militant in fighting for full national independence, democracy, social justice, all-round development and a just peace.

I hope that you can draw from this forum further inspiration to continue the struggle for a new and better Mindanao and Philippines.

Long live the memory of the First Quarter Storm of 1970!

*Continuing Tasks of the Filipino Youth under the Inspiration of the FQS of 1970*

Long live the patriotic and progressive youth of Mindanao!  
Continue the struggle for national liberation and democracy!  
Long live the Filipino youth!  
Long live the Filipino people!

★ ★ ★





## Solidarity Message to the Conference to the Internationalist Alliance in Germany<sup>34</sup>

February 16, 2020

Dear Comrades,

I wish to convey warmest greetings of comradeship and international solidarity to all the progressive and revolutionary organizations and their delegations that are participating in this Conference of the Internationalist Alliance in Germany.

Your Conference is of high and urgent importance in the face of fascist and imperialist threats from the monopoly capitalist system in Germany, which is now stricken by severe economic and political crisis. This is linked to the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system.

An alarming situation has arisen in Thuringia with Christian Democrats and Liberals setting up a Minister president with the votes of the proto-fascist of AfD<sup>35</sup>. It is therefore necessary that all anti-imperialist and democratic forces build a united front and prepare for coming challenges.

Recognizing the importance of your Conference, the International League of Peoples' Struggle and the International Coordination of Revolution have sent representatives to your Conference in order to discuss with you the project of the Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Fascist United Front.

I hope that your Conference will achieve the utmost success in building the Internationalist Alliance in Germany and in contributing to the building of the International Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Fascist United Front which the ILPS and ICOR are initiating.

Long the Internationalist Alliance!

Build the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist united front!

Long live internationalist solidarity!

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<sup>34</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle

<sup>36</sup>Alliance of Free Democrats, a center right proto-fascist coalition in Thuringia, the fief of the AfD's most notorious far-right leader, Björn Höcke.



## **Tribute to Ka Judy Taguiwalo on the Occasion of her 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

**February 18, 2020**

Julie and I admire Judy Taguiwalo for all her outstanding attributes and achievements. But I admire most her high sense of service to the Filipino people and her firm commitment and significant contributions to their struggle for national and social liberation.

Born of parents who were educators, Judy has always recognized the high value of formal education. At the same time, she has always sought to learn from the social realities outside of the classroom and to act in concert with the people to change conditions that exploit and oppress them.

Thus, she joined the national democratic movement and subsequently co-founded in 1970 the Malayang Kilusan ng Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) in order to uphold gender equality and the role of women in revolutionary change. She combined well her academic studies with her activism as she finished the degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work with honors at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

She was inspired by the revolutionary youth movement and participated in campaigns to learn from the masses. She seriously took the calls of the First Quarter Storm of 1970: Makibaka, Huwag Matakot! Isulong ang rebolusyong Pilipino! Digmang bayan ang sagot sa batas militar! She understood that the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system can be done away with only by the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

She was not afraid of the threats of martial rule. She was not afraid of sacrifice or death. And thus, she joined the armed revolutionary movement to fight the Marcos fascist dictatorship. She participated in organizing the regional organization of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army in Western Visayas. She excelled at leading the Organization Department of the CPP.

She was captured in 1973, subjected to physical and mental torture and detained until she escaped from prison in 1974. She remained resolute and militant. She was integrated in the Ilocos-Montañosa-Pangasinan regional organization of the CPP and then went up to the Cordillera and stayed there from 1975 onward.

I had the good fortune of personally meeting Ka Judy in 1975 in San Miguel, Bulacan. I vividly remembered how she expressed enthusiasm

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

over the new guide to social investigation and class analysis at the level of rural communities. which I had just drafted and which was circulating in the various regions.

When I was arrested in November 1977, I was confident that cadres like Ka Judy would persevere and advance the revolutionary struggle. Many other comrades who worked with her can testify on how well she carried out her tasks. While I was in prison, she was captured for the second time and was detained until Marcos was overthrown in 1986.

It was while I was visiting the apartment of the family of Bernabe Buscayno soon after my release from prison that I would meet Ka Judy again in a nearby apartment. We had a happy reunion. We were jubilant over the downfall of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. From then on, Julie and I could monitor how she excelled as a leader of the women's movement, educator, writer, organizer and administrator.

Judy went back to UP Diliman in order to teach as a professor in the College of Social Work and Community Development's Department of Women and Development Studies. She became well-known for training her students well in social investigation and mass work. She developed further professionally. She took her Master of Arts in Public Administration in 1992 from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada and then finished her doctorate degree in Philippine Studies from UP Diliman.

Ka Judy chaired the IBON Research Foundation. She led the University for Women's and Gender Studies. She was Founding National President of the All UP Academic Employee Union and a founder of All UP Workers' Alliance. She served as Director of UP Center for Women's Studies. She became a member of the UP Board of Regents from 2009-2010 representing the faculty.

She has won the highest awards that her UP colleagues and co-alumni can give. She is a recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award in Gender Equality/Women Empowerment, the 2010 CSWCD Outstanding Alumna Award, as well as the 2009 "Gawad Pagpupugay". Take note of her recognition as an outstanding leader of women and academic and non-academic employees.

Recognized as a social worker, social activist and educator, she was appointed Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development upon the recommendation of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in 2016.

But the following year, her appointment was not confirmed by the Commission on Appointments because she refused to let her department be used as a vehicle for pork barrel by the corrupt members of Congress. After a year in office, the Duterte regime was exposing its brutal and corrupt character.

Ka Judy has lived a fruitful life of high initiative, creativity and struggle

*Tribute to Ka Judy Taguiwalo on her 70th Birthday*

in seven decades. It is a colorful revolutionary epic that is inspiring to the current and future generations. I suggest that she write her memoirs during reflective moments between the public events that she engages. I am confident she will find comfort and further fulfillment in sharing her experiences and wisdom.

Knowing how small and weak was the national democratic movement in the 1960s, we are gratified that it has become so much bigger and stronger. The last fifty years of struggle have laid the ground for the revolutionary forces and the people to overcome the current challenges in the effort to change the current ruling system of foreign and feudal domination for a new and better system of full national independence, genuine democracy, social justice, all-round development, international solidarity and peace.

Mabuhay ka Ka Judy!

Mabuhay ang rebolusyong Pilipino!

Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!

★ ★ ★



## **Tribute to Atty. Dominador Alaba Lagare, Sr.**

**March 12, 2020**

I wholeheartedly greet Atty. Dominador Alaba Lagare, Sr., wise, brave and militant lawyer of the people, defender of human rights and loyal servant of the Filipino people.

It is an honor for me to join you in paying tribute to a hero like Atty. Lagare. He first became known to the people through his stand and action against the Marcos dictatorship. He became a defender of the victims of martial law and he frequently visited and gave advise to political prisoners.

It was not enough for him to merely defend the victims of oppression legally. He became active in the mass movement and fought for the rights and interests of the Filipino people in principal issues. He was a convenor of alliances that cover the vast masses of his region.

Illustrious and praiseworthy is the life of Atty. Lagare. He performed many tasks: as a student, a trial lawyer, a patriotic activist, a professor of law, mayor and councilor of General Santos City and as adviser to other officials.

In the past years, he has performed well and with great results his duties as Chairperson of the Regional Council of New Patriotic Alliance (Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-BAYAN) in SOCKSARGEN, as Chairperson of the Union of People's Lawyer in Mindanao (UPLM) Socskargen Chapter and as Adviser of the UPLM Socskargen.

He was successful in fulfilling his public duties, as well as his duty as a father to his family. He saw to it that his children finished their education from different courses and they are now active professionals. He is a paragon of one who rose up from poverty through education.

We are grateful to Atty. Lagare for his continuing endeavors for the people in the face of intensifying exploitation and oppression in our country by foreign monopolies, landlords and local corrupt bureaucrat capitalists.

He is an unwavering proponent of the national-democratic movement. His legacy to the people is of great value. He is an ideal and inspiration to the present and future generation in the struggle for national and social liberation in our country.

Long live Atty. Lagare!

Let us honor his service to the people!

Long live the Filipino people!

★ ★ ★





## In Honor of Ka Julius Soriano Giron<sup>36</sup>

March 18, 2020

As Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, I honor Comrade Julius Soriano Giron with the Red salute and express the highest respect and commendation for his martyrdom and for his long record as a communist leader and revolutionary fighter in the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation and democracy.

I convey sincerest condolences to his family and to all his comrades, relatives and friends. I share with them profound grief over his demise and at the same the pride and joy for his lifelong and fruitful service to the people in their noble cause and struggle for national and social liberation from foreign monopoly capitalism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Comrade Julius served the people in the best way that he could and in the most exemplary way, died as a martyr and will therefore live forever in the hearts and minds of the people and in the continuance of the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. His murder in the hands of the armed minions of the traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and mendacious Duterte regime outrages the people and incites them to intensify their revolutionary struggle.

When the fascists butchers came to murder him, he was sleeping in the house where he was under treatment for his illness resulting from his advanced age and hard work. It is not true that he was able to fight back, contrary to claims of the reactionary government and military. He was murdered together with his medical doctor, Dr. Maria Lourdes Tangco, and an aide who, like him, were awakened only by the ramming down of the door and the barrage of fire from the murderers.

These murders are in clear violation of the International Humanitarian Law (Geneva Conventions) and the GRP-NDFP Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and also in particular the GRP-NDFP Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees inasmuch as Comrade Julius was a political consultant of the NDFP in GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. It is appropriate and necessary for human right organizations, peace advocates and health workers to pay attention to the aforesaid murders and give due respect and honors to the victims of the brutal regime.

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<sup>36</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

Like me, as a child and in his grade school years, Comrade Julius had religious tutelage from his mother and served as a sacristan to the Catholic priests. In high school, he was a bright and sociable person, with plenty of friends. He was charismatic because he was intelligent and had a talent for singing and dancing. He also excelled at numbers and hoped to become an engineer. He enrolled in the course of Engineering in the University of the Philippines in Baguio but was able to finish only the first two years because of his heavy responsibilities as a leading activist.

He joined the Kabataang Makabayan in 1970 and was therefore a product of the First Quarter Storm of 1970. He led the KM in Baguio City. During FQS, he often delighted and inspired the mass protests by reciting Amado Hernandez's "Kung Tuyo Na ang Luha Mo, Aking Bayan" to the music of "Ang Gabing Mapanglaw". He helped build the Samahan ng mga Anak Pawis (SaAnPa) in Baguio City in 1970. He became an outstanding activist of the national democratic movement as he engaged in organizing workers in the transport, energy, and mining sectors.

He became a member of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1971 and assumed major responsibilities. He served with the Trade Union Bureau and participated in the organization of the Northern Luzon Regional Party organization. He was designated a staff member of the Instructor's Bureau of the CPP under the Education Department. He served as team leader of an armed propaganda unit in Ifugao. He went to Isabela to instruct Political Officers of the New People's Army for regional and national deployment.

When he was illegally arrested without warrant during the early part of the Marcos martial law period, he was physically and mentally tortured, administered electric-shock and truth serum. He withstood and overcame the torture because of his firm commitment to the revolutionary movement of the people and profound love for the people. Subsequently, he was able to escape from detention.

He immediately rejoined the revolutionary movement with increased fervor to fight the oppressive and exploitative semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Since then, he assumed higher responsibilities in the CPP, NPA and the National Democratic Front. Other comrades at the level of the Central Committee of the CPP can best present his responsibilities and accomplishments as a communist cadre and revolutionary fighter since the 1970s.

I issue this tribute to Comrade Julius as an immediate declaration to honor him in connection with his impending burial. We can expect a more authoritative and informative declaration of the CC of the CPP. I have based my declaration on the basis of information that I have gathered immediately from mutual friends and his relatives who are accessible.

I am confident that when a more comprehensive declaration is issued

by the appropriate authority of the CPP the greatness of Comrade Julius as a revolutionary patriot and communist fighter will be amplified and will shine even brighter to inspire the current generation of the revolutionary cadres and masses and future generations to achieve the total victory of the people's democratic revolution and proceed to the socialist revolution.

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## **Message of Solidarity to the Palestinian Political Prisoners and to the Palestinian People in their Liberation Struggle<sup>37</sup>**

**Palestinian Prisoners Day, April 17, 2020**

On my personal behalf as Chairperson Emeritus of the International League of Peoples' Struggle and as Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and on behalf of the NDFP and the Filipino people, I wish to convey through the Samidoun warmest greetings of revolutionary solidarity to the Palestinian political prisoners and to the Palestinian people in their struggle for national and social liberation against US imperialism and Israeli Zionism.

We join you in celebrating the Palestinian Prisoners Day, in honoring all the Palestinian political prisoners together with all martyrs and heroes for their self-sacrificing and noble struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people, in condemning the violations of their democratic rights and fundamental freedoms and in demanding humane treatment for the political prisoners and their freedom from their unjust imprisonment.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces share a strong sense of solidarity with the Palestinian people and revolutionary forces because they are waging a common struggle against US imperialism and its reactionary puppets such as Israeli Zionism and the big comprador-landlord regime in the Philippines. We are all inspired by the sacrifices made by the political prisoners and all the martyrs and heroes in order to advance the struggle for national and social liberation.

We take this occasion to thank the Samidoun for expressing the solidarity of the Palestinian political prisoners with the Filipino political prisoners and of the Palestinian people with the Filipino people and for joining the campaign to demand the freedom of political prisoners in the Philippines. We have a special concern for the release of all the student political prisoners who have been arrested and imprisoned for exercising their democratic rights.

All political prisoners in the world, especially the sick and elderly and the social activists who have exercised their democratic rights in defense of the people, must be freed in the face of the extremely contagious and deadly Covid-19. It is unjust to continue imprisoning them and serving

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<sup>37</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle and Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

them to the jaws of death. The imperialists and their reactionary puppets can only prepare their doom in the long course of history as they refuse to respect the just cause of the oppressed people and heed the just demands for their freedom.

Long live the solidarity of the Palestinian and Filipino political prisoners!

Release all political prisoners at this time of the Covid-19 pandemic!

Long live the solidarity and common struggle of the Palestinian and Filipino peoples!

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## Honoring Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez<sup>38</sup>

April 22, 2020

Julie and I wish to convey to Cecile and her children Hexilon and Xilca our sincerest condolences over the demise of the former Senator Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez. We also wish Cecile to recover fully soon. We share your grief and at the same time we celebrate his brilliant achievements in life and his enduring legacy.

We were Sonny’s contemporaries in the University of the Philippines and we became close personally, intellectually and politically through the “university within the university,” which the Student Cultural Association of the UP (SCAUP) created by setting up study groups on Marxism and the people’s democratic revolution.

The SCAUP sought to recruit the best and brightest of the UP Diliman students, in terms of academic excellence, writing ability and organizational skills from 1959 onward. We belonged to various colleges, fraternities, sororities and other campus organizations.

While I was the Chairman of SCAUP, Sonny rose to the executive position of president after the success of the rally of 5000 students on March 15, 1961 against the Committee of Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA) which invoked the Anti-Subversion Law to conduct an anti-communist witch hunt.

We stood for the academic freedom of the university and defended the democratic rights of UP faculty members and students who had written and published patriotic and progressive articles in campus publications. And we were successful at scuttling the witch hunt and further inspire the academic community to think and speak for the national and democratic rights of the people.

Sonny was outstanding as a charismatic leader, a consensus builder among the campus organizations and an orator par excellence. He learned well from the study meetings to discuss the issues before the protest mass actions and before he sallied forth into inter-university debating contests. He became a champion debater in the Philippines and abroad.

I knew Sonny closely enough and trusted him with my own life when I would let him know in advance where we could meet and talk whenever I was in Isabela in the years from 1969 to 1972. I was then the target of a manhunt by the reactionary armed forces as I engaged in revolutionary

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<sup>38</sup>Issued by Jose Maria Sison and Julie de Lima

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

work among the masses in the forest region and plains of Isabela.

Sonny was an excellent campaigner when he ran for the constitutional convention in 1971. He was certain to be elected because he had rapport with the masses and was known as a friend of the revolutionary movement. In addition, our mutual friendships with anti-Marcos mayors helped him to get elected.

We admired Sonny when he opposed the scheme of Marcos to use the constitutional convention as an instrument for legitimizing his fascist dictatorship. He was in the forefront of protest mass actions to uphold and defend the civil and democratic rights of the people. For this reason, Marcos and his agents threatened him with arrest and detention, which forced him to go on exile.

He worked effectively in the US to strengthen the movement against the martial law regime and the fascist dictatorship of Marcos. He worked closely with Manglapus and then with Ninoy Aquino. At the same time, he kept in touch with the more progressive forces in the Filipino community.

After the downfall of Marcos, he returned from exile and became the secretary of agrarian reform. I came out from military detention. And we met a number of times to discuss the new circumstances and further prospects. We exchanged friendly advice.

Our personal contact with Sonny became less after I went abroad at the end of August, 1986. But I observed his work in government and appreciated his patriotic and progressive stand on issues. But we never had the chance to discuss his vote concerning the US military bases.

But subsequently he took positions which I appreciated and admired, such as his active cooperation with Anakbayan and other forces in the movement for the ouster of the Estrada regime. He also took sound positions on energy, the environment and climate change.

A few years ago, he expressed his wish to visit us in the Netherlands. For some reason he could not come. But, of course, we remained friends and we were in touch with each other via email and Facebook and through occasional travellers between the Philippines and The Netherlands.

Julie and I regard Sonny as among the best of the leaders of the Philippine ruling system by adhering as closely as he could to the principles and mode of conduct that he learned from SCAUP, the youth movement, the struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship and further experiences.

He was among the alumni of the SCAUP who rose to high positions in the professions, in the government and in the national democratic movement.

The late former Senator Heherson "Sonny" Alvarez accomplished much that is exemplary and commendably in the service of the people and inspiring to the youth and all other people. Goodbye, Sonny. Rest in



peace. We will always respect and honor your memory and recount your deeds in the advancement of the national and democratic rights of the people.

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## Tribute to Edel Garcellano: Poet and Literary Critic

April 23, 2020

Julie and I are deeply saddened by the passing away of Prof. Edel Garcellano and express our condolences to his family.

We had the good fortune of having known him and his wife when in their years as students they shared an apartment with the sisters of Julie on Bohol Avenue in Quezon City.

We have always appreciated and admired the patriotic and revolutionary viewpoint and high quality of both his critical and creative works and his devotion to the study and teaching of literature and literary criticism.

He has left us a legacy of a meaningful and well-lived life and a body of writings that express his ideas, sentiments and aspirations of liberation for the people under foreign and class oppression and exploitation.

Such a legacy is enlightening and inspiring and keeps him alive in the memory of his people from one generation to another. Thank you, Edel. Take a blissful rest.

★ ★ ★



# Message of Solidarity to the Italian Proletariat and People on the day of Liberation from Fascism and German Occupation<sup>39</sup>

April 25, 2020

To Fronte Popolare  
Thru: Alessio Arena, Central Secretary

Dear Comrades,

As Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines and on behalf of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Filipino people, I wish to convey through Fronte Popolare warmest greetings of international solidarity to the proletariat and people of Italy on the occasion of the celebration of Liberation Day on April 25 when in 1945 the Resistance ended the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini and the German occupation.

We understand fully the significance of your Liberation Day because it was also in 1945 when the Filipino people liberated themselves and ended the Japanese fascist occupation and the puppet government. We feel a deep sense of solidarity with you because of our historic struggles against imperialism and fascism and because of the continuing need to wage an anti-imperialist and anti-fascist struggle for a socialist future.

We are confident that the common struggle and solidarity of the proletariat and people of the world will prevail over the world capitalist system that is plunging from one crisis to another. The current pandemic serves to expose and aggravate the neoliberal rule of unbridled greed, the depression of wages and erosion of social services and the growing danger of fascism. All these arouse the proletariat and people to rise up and wage revolutionary struggle.

Long live the memory of the revolutionary martyrs and heroes!

Long live the revolutionary cause of the Italian proletariat and people!

Long live the revolutionary solidarity of the Italian and Filipino peoples!

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<sup>39</sup>Delivered as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines



## Honor of Comrade Juanito (Ka Juaning) Rivera<sup>40</sup>

July 6, 2020

I wish to express sincerest condolences to the family of Comrade Juanito (Ka Juaning) Rivera and to all the comrades who have worked closely with him, loved him and are now saddened by his passing away.

This is a time of grief. But it is also the time for honoring Ka Juaning and celebrating all his achievements in serving the people, especially the proletariat and the peasant masses, as a communist, a Red commander and mass leader of vast experience.

As Chairman of the Central Committee and Military Commission of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), I had the honor of co-founding the New People's Army with Ka Juaning on March 29, 1969 in Talimundok (Sta. Rita), Capas, Tarlac.

We were also together in the Plenum of the CPP Central Committee in May 1969 when he, together with other peasant cadres and veterans of the old Communist Party and the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan were elevated to membership in the Central Committee of the CPP.

Being a peasant himself and having led the peasant masses as a revolutionary cadre and barrio captain, he understood very well the problems of the peasant masses in the haciendas of Tarlac and in the entire Philippines.

He excelled at arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses in carrying out land reform and raising production, undertaking social programs and training mass activists for Party membership, mass work and service in the people's army.

We worked together in providing politico-military training to the revolutionary activists from the national capital region and the expansion teams of the NPA for Isabel, other provinces of Central Luzon and for the Southern Tagalog and Western Visayas regions.

Thus, he made significant contributions to building the foundation and immediate expansion of the CPP, the NPA, the mass organizations and the local organs of political power. At the same time, he was always mindful of the concrete improvement of the lives of the people.

He made sure that the peasant masses built better houses and ate better as a result of their gains from land reform. He was strict at banning drinking and gambling places. And he promoted cultural activities that spread the revolutionary message among the youth and the people.

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<sup>40</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

When the headquarters of the CPP shifted to the Isabela forest region, Ka Juaning came for meetings of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee and always contributed substantial reports and recommendations and participated in deliberations and decision-making.

Up to the time of my capture in 1977, I knew Ka Juaning as a dedicated, competent and effective proletarian revolutionary fighter and ever loyal servant of the people. Thus, he assumed higher responsibilities in the CPP, the NPA and revolutionary movement while I was in prison.

I am aware that after his imprisonment his health condition did not permit him to go back to the armed revolutionary movement. He went back to farming and was always proud of the lasting effects of land reform carried by the revolutionary movement. And he devoted himself to promoting agricultural cooperatives.

I was pleased when then Rep. Jose Yap (Mang Aping) informed me that he had engaged Ka Juaning as a peace consultant at the time explorations and preparations for peace negotiations were being done in the period of 1989 to 1992.

Mang Aping and I always wished that Ka Juaning could travel to The Netherlands. But his health condition did not allow him to take a long flight. From a distance, I continued to admire him for his continuing service to the peasant masses and the interviews that he gave to journalists, social researchers and peace advocates.

Ka Juaning has lived a long and rich life of service of the people, faced grave risks and dangers to his life and surmounted tremendous odds in fighting for the people's just cause and struggle for national and social liberation against foreign and feudal domination. He is an outstanding and inspiring historical revolutionary figure whose example is worthy of emulation by the people and the revolutionary movement.

Long live the memory of Comrade Juanito (Ka Juaning) Rivera!

Emulate his revolutionary service to the Filipino people!

Carry out the people's democratic revolution until total victory!

★ ★ ★



## Message of Solidarity to the KMP on its 35th Anniversary<sup>41</sup>

July 25, 2020

Dear colleagues in Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas,

I extend my militant greetings and solidarity with you on the 35th anniversary of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP-Peasant Movement of the Philippines). It was a great honor for me to be able to give a message of solidarity at the establishment of the KMP although I was still in prison but looking forward to the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

It is fitting on this occasion for you to celebrate your anniversary and the accumulated victories in struggle, consolidate the unity and action of the peasantry for land and justice, defend the victories achieved in the struggle, fight and defeat impediments for continued advance, such as the Duterte regime's terrorism law.

The principal task and content of the democratic revolution in our country is responding to the grievances of the peasantry against landlessness and feudal and semifeudal exploitation. This is the priority in the realization of democracy, social justice and economic development.

Up to now, the peasantry is the largest block of the basic productive force although the imperialists and local reactionaries minimize the number of peasants and the value of agricultural products. The industrial sector of the economy is run by the imported machinery and the service sector bloated by borrowing under neoliberal policy, is unsustainable.

Democracy and economic development will not prosper if there is no just and genuine land reform accompanied by national industrialization in a unified program. Without implementing such a program, unemployment will rise and those treading the path of the new democratic revolution through people's war will increase.

Duterte's enormous treachery of Duterte is his rejection of the offer of the National Democratic Front for a program on genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization as the basis for a just peace to be funded by the income from the country's natural wealth of gas and oil in the exclusive economic zone of the West Philippines Sea estimated at USD 26 trillion.

Duterte chose to betray the people and did not pursue the victory of the Philippines in the Permanent Court of Arbitration in accordance with the

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<sup>41</sup>Delivered as Chairperson Emeritus International League of Peoples' Struggle

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

UN Convention on the Law of the Sea during his four years on the throne. Instead, he chose to sell the people's sovereign rights to China and like a beggar asked for high-interest loans for infrastructure projects of inflated value. China bans and uses force on Filipino fisherfolks fishing in their own sea.

Duterte's main interest is the accumulation of power and its use in plunder within the ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt officials. His obsession is to be a fascist dictator and have a license to plunder like his idol Marcos. Therefore, he blocked the peace talks so that he can carry out state terrorism and complete the fascist dictatorship.

Duterte is concurrently a puppet to two imperialist masters because of his greed for power and plunder. Despite his pretensions of an independent foreign policy, he rode on Oplan Pacific Eagle-Philippines to be able to continue receiving military equipment from the US. At the same time, he wants to continue making money from Chinese loans and from allowing the entry of drugs and casinos in collusion with Chinese criminal triads.

Because Duterte treaded the path of neoliberalism and fascism, he accelerated the aggravation of the crisis of the ruling system. He bankrupted the economy and his own government due to the rapid accumulation of superprofits by the foreign monopolies and big compradors, the corruption and pouring money to the military and police. Simultaneously the crisis of the local ruling system and the global capitalist system are further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to intensifying oppression and exploitation, the Filipino people are further resisting the Duterte regime and the entire ruling system. Because of the regime's blatant and rampant crimes, it has been isolated to a corner and has become a narrow target of the broad united front of workers, peasants, middle strata and anti-Duterte conservative forces. The movement to oust Duterte is growing stronger and he is even riper for ousting when he further uses state terrorism and fascist dictatorship.

Long live the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas!

Implement genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization!

Long live the peasants and farm workers!

Advance the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people!

★ ★ ★

## **In Honor of Ka Fidel Agcaoili: A Great Filipino Patriot and Communist Fighter<sup>42</sup>**

July 24, 2020

As Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and on behalf of my family, I express the deepest grief over the unexpected demise of Ka Fidel Agcaoili and convey sincerest condolences to his widow and children, all his comrades, relatives and friends.

Ka Fidel has been my close comrade since the early 1960s when he joined the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines, the Kabataang Makabayan and the Communist Party of the Philippines. We advanced together in our development ideologically, politically and organizationally in pursuit of the people's democratic revolution in the context of the world proletarian revolution.

Ka Fidel deserves to be honored as a great Filipino patriot and outstanding communist fighter even only on the basis of what is publicly known about him. He has accomplished far more than this in the service of the Filipino people and their revolutionary movement within the context of the epochal struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, a struggle of the oppressed and exploited for a fundamentally new and better world than one dominated by imperialism and all kinds of reaction.

He became a revolutionary without ever boasting or feeling sorry that he had sacrificed so much for the people and the revolution. He came from an upper class family and could have easily attained an endless series of high positions in the ruling system. But he chose to side with the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, in their just revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation.

He was outraged by the unjust semicolonial and semifeudal system and was determined to contribute what he could to develop the revolutionary movement for overthrowing it and establishing a people's democratic state under the leadership of the proletariat. He was never afraid of the tremendous odds and the risks to life, limb and liberty. He did not expect any kind of material reward for all his work and sacrifices.

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<sup>42</sup>Delivered as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and Chief Political Consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

When he was sent out by his parents to study in the US and keep him away from social activism in the UP, he joined the mass protests in California and soon he was back in the Philippines on time for the preparations and establishment of the Kabataang Makabayan in 1964.

Even while he was a high executive of his family's insurance company, he helped organize studies and produce publications and performed the lowly tasks that had to be undertaken in the underground in support of the mass movement and in the establishment and development of the CPP. He also carried out important missions that required a high level of knowledge and negotiating skills in dealing with domestic allies and with fraternal parties abroad. He put facilities and connections available to someone of his class origin in the service of the people and the revolution.

Anywhere the Communist Party of the Philippines had its headquarters, be it in Central Luzon or Northern Luzon, he attended the meetings of leading organs in order to participate in deliberations and make reports on matters he was responsible for and made recommendations on what policies and courses of action to take. He shared with his comrades all the discomfort and risks of travelling to and staying in rural huts and forest camps.

It was sometime in 1972 that it became untenable for Ka Fidel to work aboveground and he had to go underground. He and his wife with their two young children were on the manhunt list of the enemy. They had to face a far higher level of discomfort and risks than ever before. In 1974 he and his wife Chit were arrested, together with their two small children Eric and Joseph. He was subjected to severe physical and mental torture by the minions of the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

He became the political prisoner with the longest duration of detention (more than 10 years) during the Marcos fascist regime and earned the deep respect of many other political prisoners in the common struggle against the autocratic regime. He over served the penalty for the political offense of rebellion. And he was never tempted to take advantage of the fact that his father was a classmate and friend of Marcos at the UP College of Law to ask for much earlier release from prison.

He was released from prison as a result of his dropping the appeal of his unlawful conviction for rebellion and asserting that he had even overserved the sentence. He proved to be a steadfast proletarian revolutionary fighter with an unyielding moral stamina and complete dedication to the revolutionary cause of the people.

He helped to establish and became Chairperson of Samahan ng Ex-detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA) to work hard for the release of all political prisoners. He also helped organize Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND) in 1985 and became its Executive Director.

After the overthrow of Marcos in 1986, Ka Fidel and I worked together in laying the ground for peace negotiations upon the request of the Aquino regime through Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo. But later on, Aquino would scale down the projected peace negotiations to ceasefire negotiations as prelude to setting the agenda for peace negotiations.

Ka Fidel and I were in the Preparatory Committee which established the Partido ng Bayan (PngB) on August 30, 1986. In November 1986, the first PngB Chairman Ka Rolando Olalia and his driver Ka Leonor Alay-ay were kidnapped and murdered by ultra-reactionary elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines under Oplan God Save the Queen.

Ka Fidel had the high sense of duty and courage to take the place of Ka Lando as PngB Chairman and further organize the Partido ng Bayan for the 1987 senatorial elections. He was also uncowed by the related assassination of BAYAN secretary general Lean Alejandro and the coup and murder plans of the Enrile-RAM faction of the AFP.

Conditions became untenable for Ka Fidel to stay in Manila when he was targeted for arrest and the Aquino and Enrile-RAM factions were competing to attack the patriotic and democratic political forces. Thus, he accepted employment in a Spanish nongovernmental organization, Instituto de Estudios Políticos para América Latina y Africa (IEPALA) in 1988.

Subsequently, he joined exploratory talks for the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations since 1989 when President Cory Aquino sent Rep. Jose Yap to The Netherlands. He became the Vice Chairperson of the NDFF Negotiating Panel when the GRP and NDFF adopted the The Hague Joint Declaration as the framework for the GRP-NDFF peace negotiations.

He played a key role in the GRP-NDFF peace negotiations and in the drafting and finalization of major agreements, especially the GRP-NDFF Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, the first item in the substantive agenda of the negotiations signed by the GRP and NDFF Negotiating Panels in 1998, with him as Chairperson of the Reciprocal Working Committee of the NDFF and then Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello as Chairperson of the RWC of the GRP. He co-chaired the GRP-NDFF JMC (Joint Monitoring Committee) upon its formation in 2004.

In connection with the GRP-NDFF peace negotiations, Ka Fidel like Ka Luis Jalandoni, then Chairperson of the NDFF Negotiating Panel, had the privilege of going to the Philippines to consult with Philippine presidents, from Estrada to Duterte. It was Ka Fidel who met Duterte as often as six times in 2016 and 2017. Ka Louie turned over the position of Chairperson of the NDFF Negotiating Panel to Ka Fidel in 2017.

Since he became a member of the Central Committee of the CPP in 1970, Ka Fidel successfully carried out missions of the highest importance

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

in representation of the highest organs of either the CPP or the NDFP in relations of practical cooperation with major political forces in the Philippines and with fraternal parties and revolutionary movements abroad.

Ka Fidel had the good fortune to become well-informed about the Second National Congress of the CPP and to see with his own eyes the high level of achievement that the revolutionary movement had reached nationwide when he traveled to the Philippines in 2016 and 2017 and visited a number of major guerrilla fronts in connection with the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. He saw the vibrant strength of the CPP, the NPA, the revolutionary mass organizations and the people's democratic government in meetings and in activities among the people.

Ka Fidel easily endeared himself to comrades and allies because he was really modest and had an infectious sense of humor even if at certain times he looked stern. He explained complex issues patiently and persuasively to comrades and friends and dished out an alternation of serious talk and a certain amount of jokes and light banter. He firmly held on to revolutionary principles and explained complex issues patiently and persuasively to comrades and friends. He gave his opinions frankly. And he welcomed objections, corrections and additions to his explanations.

He never flaunted his high level of knowledge. He was an avid reader and observer of national and global events and freely shared his views with others. His amiable characteristics will be sorely missed by many comrades and friends who knew him at close quarters and loved him.

There are more achievements of Ka Fidel that other comrades and allies in various sectors of the national democratic movement as well as in the armed revolutionary movement can narrate in memorial meetings in his honor. I yield to their direct knowledge and more detailed narratives. May all the testimonies be put together and his biography be written in order to inspire this generation and further generations of Filipinos to follow his patriotic and revolutionary example.

The revolutionary spirit, ideas and deeds of Ka Fidel are now flowing in the growing body and blood of the people's struggle for national and social liberation and for a socialist future. All the efforts and sacrifices that he has made in his lifetime will live after him in the hearts and minds and collective will and actions of the people in the people's democratic revolution and in the subsequent socialist revolution.

Revolutionaries never die, they continue to live through their revolutionary successors. Let us turn our grief to revolutionary courage. Let us celebrate the revolutionary achievements of Ka Fidel, honor him for these and emulate his example in serving the people and the revolution.

Long live the memory of Ka Fidel Agcaoili!

Celebrate his spirit, ideas and deeds as a Filipino patriot and communist fighter!

*In Honor of Ka Fidel Agcaoili*

Long live the Filipino people and the Philippine revolution!

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## **Highest Respects to Comrade Nina Alexandrovna Andreeva<sup>43</sup> and Profound Condolences to Her Family and the Bolshevik Party**

**July 27, 2020**

To the Family of Comrade Nina Alexandrovna Andreeva and the Central Committee, All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks

Dear Comrades:

As Founding Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and on behalf of all Filipino proletarian revolutionaries, I wish to express the highest respects for Nina Alexandrovna Andreeva, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks (BKVP), who passed away last July 24. At the same time, we express profound condolences to her family and to the Central Committee and all her comrades in the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks.

My Filipino comrades and I had the good fortune of having met Comrade Nina, listened to her and conversed with her several times in the course of the annual Brussels Communist Seminar since the 1990s in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union which had resulted from the betrayal of socialism by the modern revisionists from Khrushchov to Gorbachov. We learned a great amount of insights from Comrade Nina and we were inspired by the determination of herself and her party to reassert the proletarian revolutionary legacy of the great Bolsheviks, Lenin and Stalin, and rebuild the Soviet Union.

We have held the highest respect for her as a devoted patriot of her Soviet Motherland, a steadfast Bolshevik and Marxist-Leninist, an outstanding communist fighter against opportunism and revisionism and an uncompromising adversary of imperialism and all reaction. From the time that she stood up to defend Marxism-Leninism and socialism against the Gorbachov regime, she became respected as a brilliant leader of the Soviet proletariat and people as well as of the international communist and workers' movement.

We are aware that from the time she joined the Communist Party of

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<sup>43</sup>Issued as Founding Chairman of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

the Soviet Union in 1966 she stood for the revolutionary principles of the Bolsheviks. She came from a working class family and her father died as a Soviet hero against the fascists in 1941. She was loyal to the working class and socialism and had the wisdom and courage to fight Gorbachov's perestroika when the revisionist traitors attacked the foundations of socialism. The content of her famous letter, "I Can't Give Up My Principles", which was published in the newspaper Soviet Russia on March 13, 1988 reverberated throughout the Soviet Union and the whole world.

From then on, she became the rallying figure for the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union. Thus, on May 18-20, 1989, the All-Union society "Unity-for Leninism and Communist ideals" was founded under the leadership of Comrade Nina A. Andreeva. At the third conference of the All-Union society, it demanded the expulsion of Gorbachov and his clique from the CPSU but of course to no avail because these had an iron grip on the revisionist party. It was therefore inevitable that the Founding Congress of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks (VKPB) was held in Leningrad on November 8, 1991.

The main purpose of the VKPB has been the revival of the Bolshevism, the proletarian revolutionary and socialist legacy of Lenin and Stalin. It is a legacy of defeating Tsarism and the bourgeois opportunists, carrying out the socialist revolution and socialist construction, fighting the fascists and making great sacrifices in order to defeat them, confronting US imperialism after World War II and supporting further socialist revolutions, newly-independent countries and the national liberation movements.

From 1991 when the VKPB was founded to revive Bolshevism, Comrade Nina wrote and published several works titled, *Unpaired Principles, For Bolshevism in the Communist Movement, The Future is for Socialism*", to illumine the road of proletarian revolution and socialism in the former Soviet Union and in the world, especially in the last 30 years when the revisionist betrayal of socialism in the Soviet Union and China and the neoliberal offensive instigated by US offensive took a heavy toll on the communist and workers' movement as well as on the newly-independent countries and national liberation movement.

But the tide is now turning against US imperialism and the world capitalist system, since the financial crash of 2008 and the subsequent so-called Great Recession. After becoming the sole superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US has accelerated its strategic decline by outsourcing consumer manufacturing from China, overly favoring the military-industrial complex, stepping up war production and overspending for more than 800 overseas military bases and for endless wars in Central Asia and the Middle East. The restoration of capitalism of China, Russia and Eastern Europe has exacerbated the crisis of the world capitalist system.

Inter-imperialist contradictions have surfaced and are intensifying due to the rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. Since 2018, the US Trump regime has been shaking down and upsetting the main neoliberal partnership between the US and China which has lasted for some four decades since the Dengist counterrevolution. The US now resents the rise in the economic and military capacity of China and regards it as its chief economic competitor and chief political rival despite China's protestations that they ought to maintain cooperation for mutual benefit.

The imperialist powers have failed to solve the crisis that has been called the Great Recession. Before it can be solved, a new level of crisis has overtaken it by what some US economic pundits have called the Great Lockdown to signify its aggravation by the COVID-19 pandemic. The rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions inflicts grave suffering on the proletariat and the people and poses the danger of war. But these same conditions require the communist and workers' parties to Bolshevize themselves, intensify the struggle of the masses and prepare for revolutionary war.

It is important to adhere to Bolshevism, adhere to the legacy of Lenin and Stalin and apply their teachings on current circumstances. While the imperialist powers are still avoiding a direct war between any of them because of the fear of mutual destruction with nuclear weapons, the proletariat and people in imperialist countries can work to undermine and weaken the war capacity of the monopoly bourgeoisie and prepare for revolutionary war against the rise of fascism and, of course, the less developed countries already targeted by imperialist wars of imperialism have no choice but to counter these with revolutionary wars.

Since last year, there have been anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles in so many countries of various types on a wide scale. These are manifestations of the people's resistance to the escalating conditions of exploitation under the neoliberal policy regime and under increasingly repressive regimes. They signal a transition to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. As boldly predicted by Comrade Nina A. Andreeva and proletarian revolutionaries, there is no bright and better future but socialism as once more the crisis of the world capitalist system is rapidly worsening and the inter-imperialist contradictions are intensifying.

We are aware of the growing outrage and resistance of the proletariat and people of the former Soviet Union against the monopoly bourgeoisie and their longing for the far better economic, social, political and cultural conditions brought about by the Bolshevik leadership of Lenin and Stalin. The popularity of Stalin has risen against the lies, falsifications and malicious distortions of Soviet history by the revisionists and monopoly bourgeoisie. We are happy to know that the VKBP is growing in strength and advancing towards the goal of a new socialist revolution.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

We thank Comrade Nina for raising high the red banner of Lenin and Stalin. Like them, she will never die but will continue to live through the ever-increasing ranks of Bolsheviks and revolutionary masses who emulate her example, learn lessons from her writings and deeds and engage in revolutionary struggles. We dare to predict that the new socialist revolution in her Soviet homeland, the USSR, will be a major part of the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

Long live the memory of Comrade Nina Alexandrovna Andreeva!

Long live Leninism and Stalinism and all Bolsheviks!

Long the VKBP and the Soviet people!

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## In Honor of Comrade Vicente Clemente<sup>44</sup>

July 28, 2020

Julie and I and other comrades are deeply saddened by the passing away of Comrade Vicente Clemente, an outstanding Filipino patriot and proletarian revolutionary fighter. We convey our condolences to his beloved family (his wife Becky and children, Renmin Roberto, Nika and Cynthia) and to all his comrades and friends who are close to him and love him.

Julie and I met Ka Vic, Becky and Cynthia several times in Utrecht only last November 30 to December 6 last year. They were on their way from the Philippines to the US for the medical checkup of Ka Vic. Due to his high sense of duty, he came to Utrecht first to discuss the book project on environment and Philippine social issues, a major project which he had initiated.

It was discovered in the US that he was at stage 4 of the cancer of the esophagus. He underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatments, but the cancer had already metastasized and spread to his lungs and spine. So typical of his character as a hard worker in the service of the people, up to the last time that he could communicate, he urged and directed his comrades to complete the book project.

Comrade Vic was highly respected as a serious activist from the time that he joined the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines. He studied and imparted to others what he learned about the revolutionary history of the Filipino people, their current problems and the need for the new democratic revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. And he proceeded to the study of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

Even as a student activist, he was among the most resolute and militant in joining workers' strikes and in carrying out social investigation and mass work in rural areas close to Manila. He was exemplary in heeding the call for the Second Propaganda Movement and the subsequent call for linking with the toiling masses of workers and peasants in preparation for the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

After joining the Kabataang Makabayan, he became ever more resolute and militant and proved himself an effective leader and organizer of the youth in the urban poor communities, especially in Makati where he

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<sup>44</sup>Delivered as Founding Chairman of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

resided. He was elected to the KM National Council and was one of its chief organizers. South of the Pasig, he led the largest community-based youth contingent that consistently participated in the First Quarter Storm of 1970. By then, he had proven himself as a reliable and tireless cadre of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

He was among the first batch of youth and labor activists who came for politico-military training in Tarlac in 1969. He wanted to be integrated in the New People's Army immediately but he was advised to stay for a while in the national capital region. He was assigned to a team that went to a friendly country for political and technical training in 1971. Upon his return to the Philippines, he was attached to the Military Research Department of the CPP Central Committee.

It was while he was underground under conditions of the 1971 suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and the 1972 that he manifested his great talent for painting in addition to performing his political and organizational work. He was arrested and tortured by the armed minions of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. While in prison, he developed further his artistic talent.

After he was released from prison, he could not connect with his previous CPP collective and he went to the US in order to work. He was active in Marxist-Leninist study circles and in the campaign against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. And he excelled publicly as painter of gigantic murals. Until now, the public can appreciate his *Ang Lipi ni Lapu-Lapu* on the side of a seven-floor Dimasalang Senior Housing Building in San Francisco. This mural which he painted in 1984 still stands today as the tallest mural in the city.

After the fall of Marcos, he was in the forefront of plaintiffs in the human rights case against the Marcos estate. In the course of pursuing the case to its successful conclusion, he came to Utrecht for our first reunion since we last saw each other in the 1970s. Subsequently, he came back a number of times to discuss the situation of the Filipino communities in the US and the need for arousing, organizing and mobilizing them in defense of their rights abroad and in support of the national democratic movement in the Philippines.

In 1992 he was assigned to take a leading role in the US organization of the CPP. He broke a long spell of scarce or absent Philippine revolutionary literature in the Philippine community. He directed the re-publication of the issues of *Liberation*, *Rebolusyon* and other revolutionary periodicals and circulated these throughout the US. He was chiefly responsible for the publication of the second US edition of *Philippine Society and Revolution* in 1992.

Ka Vic was a firm advocate of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary principles. Even when he had differences with other comrades with regard to political

tactics and style of work, he was steadfastly loyal to the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and people and never found cause to oppose it. He let Party decisions stand and run their course. And he tried to do what he could in fighting the unjust ruling system and serve the people and their revolution.

He established and ran the Philippine Information Network Services, a longtime US-based nonprofit agency in solidarity with the national democratic movement in the Philippines, and the Punlaan Institute, a nongovernmental organization focused on sustainable agriculture, food security and environmental protection. We cooperated with him in the project of Punlaan Institute to translate and publish Stefan Engel's book, *Catastrophe Alert*.

Ka Vic was consistently devoted to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat and the national democratic movement of the Filipino people. To honor the great achievements and sacrifices of his comrades and the people in the long struggle for national and social liberation, he was active in the First Quarter Storm Movement and in the memorial events conducted by Bantayog Foundation.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces honor Ka Vicente Clemente for his valuable contributions in the development of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the realization of the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. All his efforts and sacrifices in the revolutionary struggle inspire the people and continue to energize and drive the revolutionary movement forward in the direction of a bright and better world of socialism.

Long live the revolutionary memory of Ka Vicente Clemente!

Emulate his service to the Filipino people and the world proletariat!

Long live the Philippine revolution and the world proletarian revolution!

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## Highest Regard to Rep. Femia Cullamat on her 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday<sup>45</sup>

August 13, 2020

Dear Ka Femia,

I wish to convey to you warmest greetings on the occasion of your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. I congratulate you for all your achievements in upholding, defending and promoting the rights and interests of the Lumad and other indigenous peoples and in contributing significantly to the Filipino people's struggle for full national independence and democracy.

I admire you for being the first Lumad representative from the grass roots in Congress and for being a brilliant and brave leader of your Lumad constituency, for taking a patriotic and progressive stand on major Philippine issues and for striving to serve the Filipino people inside and outside of Congress. We stand with you resolutely and militantly against the tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal, plundering and swindling Duterte regime.

You deserve to take a pause from your work, celebrate and enjoy your birthday and refresh yourself for more work and struggle ahead in the service of our people. I wish you further success in advancing the Lumad and Filipino people's cause of national and social liberation from foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

Mabuhay ka!

Mabuhay ang Lumad!

Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!

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<sup>45</sup>Issued as Chairperson Emeritus International League of Peoples' Struggle



# **In Honor of Zara Alvarez: Martyr and Hero of the People In Defense of Human Rights and Social Justice<sup>46</sup>**

**August 19, 2020**

We wish to express our most heartfelt condolences to the child of Zara Alvarez and her entire family as well as her fellow church workers and social activists in Negros. We share your grief and your determination to turn this into revolutionary courage and to seek justice for her murder.

We honor Zara for her selfless and fearless service to the poor and oppressed, especially for defending human rights and advocating social justice. In most of her life, she dedicated herself to social activism in support of the oppressed and exploited people.

She was a resolute and diligent member of a series of organizations: Anakbayan Negros, Bayan Negros, and the North Negros Alliance of Human Rights Advocates. She served as research and advocacy officer for the Negros Island Health Integrated Program (NIHIP) and she became campaign and education director, as well as paralegal personnel for Karapatan in Negros Island.

Her social activism earned the ire of those in power and their armed minions. She was unjustly imprisoned for two years in 2012-14 and the false charge against her was dismissed by the court. She was never cowed by her imprisonment.

She was subjected to greater risks and threats under the bloodthirsty Duterte regime. She was red-tagged and became the target of continuous death threats. She had the high distinction of being among the 600 persons listed by the regime in the case to proscribe the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

Her murder is the ultimate act of injustice to her by the tyrannical Duterte regime. But her ultimate sacrifice, her martyrdom, raises her to the highest level of honor among all mortals and makes her immortal in the hearts and minds of the people.

Her exemplary work for the people will continue to inspire them to struggle for their own rights, welfare, a better life and a brighter future. She will continue to live through the increasing numbers of people who are inspired by her example from one generation to another.

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<sup>46</sup>Delivered by Julieta de Lima, Interim Chairperson, NDFP Negotiating Panel and Jose Maria Sison, NDFP Chief Political Consultant

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

We condemn the evil regime of Duterte for the murder of Zara. Her murder is part of the current frenzied campaign of red-tagging, death threats and murders in both urban and rural areas in order to intimidate the people through state terrorism and make them submit to a full-blown fascist dictatorship.

The best way for the people to respond to the merciless murder of Zara is to turn our grief into revolutionary courage, demand justice for her murder and avail of all possible means of resistance and intensify the struggle for social justice.

We must not allow the monsters headed by Duterte impose their rule of terror and greed on us and aggravate further the conditions of oppression and exploitation in the unjust ruling system. We have had more than enough of the despicable crimes of treason, tyranny, mass murder, plunder and prevarication committed by the Duterte regime.

Even as Duterte wants to perpetuate his power with escalating brutality, the broad masses of the people and the broad united front of patriotic and democratic forces are intensifying their efforts to oust his evil regime and reassert the rights of the people to full national independence, democracy, social justice, all round development and just peace.

Long live the memory of Zara Alvarez!

Carry on her work and struggle for the people!

Defend human rights and struggle for social justice!

Strive for the ouster of the Duterte regime!

Long live the struggle for full national independence and democracy!

Long live the people of Negros and the entire Filipino people!

★ ★ ★

## **In Honor of Comrade Randall Echanis<sup>47</sup>**

**August 15, 2020**

In our respective capacities as Chairperson of the NDFP Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms and NDFP Chief Political Consultant, Julie and I wish to convey our sincerest condolences to the beloved family and to all the close comrades and friends of Comrade Randall Echanis.

We condemn the forces of state terrorism under the orders of the tyrant Duterte that murdered Ka Randy. According to witnesses, he was under surveillance for one month by the murderers who continued to use the same van up to the time of the murder and who put off the street lights and CCTV on the night before they broke into Ka Randy's apartment to murder him as well as his concerned neighbor.

Those who are now in power are gleeful that they have killed Ka Randy. But he now stands as a great hero and martyr in the revolutionary history of the Filipino people. He is an outstanding patriot, a proletarian revolutionary fighter and a peasant advocate of the highest order. Even now, the evil counterrevolutionary forces of treason, tyranny, butchery and corruption are in an ignominious position while they try to cover up their criminal responsibility and also try to demean Ka Randy's remains and name. Justice will be served in the continuing course and ultimate victory of the Philippine revolution and the Filipino people that Ka Randy served for more than five decades, so resolutely, so vigorously and so fruitfully. His adherence to revolutionary principles, his accomplishments and his sacrifices (including three stints of political detention and now his martyrdom) will continue to inspire the toiling masses of workers and peasants and keep him alive in their hearts and minds from one generation to another.

We have known Ka Randy since he was Chairman of the University of the East chapter of Kabataang Makabayan in the 1960s. We also remember him as one of the young outstanding cadres who came forward when the call was made for Ilocano-speaking cadres to join the expansion of revolutionary work of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army in Northern Luzon. He excelled at realizing the political education, organization and mobilization the peasant masses.

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<sup>47</sup>Delivered by Jose Maria Sison and Julieta de Lima as NDFP Chief Political Consultant and NDFP interim negotiating panel chairperson

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

We witnessed the development of Ka Randy as a proletarian revolutionary. He had a comprehensive and profound knowledge of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and its application in the study of Philippine history and current circumstances of the Filipino people. He had a firm grasp of the general line of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective, even as he focused on the land problem and the struggle for genuine land reform as the main content of the democratic revolution.

His long experience in studying the land problem as well as working with and learning from the peasant masses made him an expert and authority on the need for a program of genuine land reform and national industrialization as the basis for the development of the Philippine economy and for a just peace that is either the result of peace negotiations or the victory of the people's democratic revolution against the intransigent forces of foreign and feudal domination.

By dint of his lifelong advocacy of genuine land reform and rural development in concert with national industrialization, social justice and economic development as the foundation of full national sovereignty and independence, he has risen to such high positions as the Chairman of the Anakpawis Party List and deputy general secretary of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, senior consultant of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, member of the Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms and chairman of its subcommittee on agrarian reform and rural development.

Despite his high qualifications, Ka Randy was humble and unassuming. He had an amiable personality and a fine sense of humor, which endeared him to comrades and friends among the toiling masses as well as among the intelligentsia. He was highly respected for being ever ready to impart his knowledge and share information as well as learning from others. He was a model of good conduct and discipline, participated freely and frankly in deliberations and always acted in accordance with the principles, policies and collective decisions of the organizations to which he belonged.

It is a grave crime of extreme malice, stupidity and inhumanity that the tyrannical regime of Duterte decided to murder Ka Randy who had been seriously involved in peace negotiations as a sincere advocate of genuine land reform, social justice and economic development. He was in his senior years, far beyond the age of a combatant, and was supposed to be legally protected by the safety and immunity guarantees of the JASIG. According to inside reliable sources, the principal authors of the murder of Ka Randy include those most responsible for the murders of Bishop Ramento with the use of knives, Jonas Burgos, Ka Parago and others from the time of Gloria M. Arroyo to Rodrigo R. Duterte.

There are already verified facts being collected, examined and evaluated. Even now they point to certain military and police officers under

the direction of the National Task Force to eliminate the revolutionary movement in the name of anti-communism and anti-terrorism and to the notoriously immoral policy and unjust law of state terrorism which Duterte and his gang of butchers wish to impose on the people in order to realize the scheme of fascist dictatorship and unbridled corruption.

We are certain that justice will be achieved in the case of Ka Randy and other victims in the long course and ultimate victory of the people's democratic revolution!

Long live the memory of Comrade Randall Echanis!

★ ★ ★





## **Author's Preface to the Spanish Edition of *Philippine Society and Revolution***

**May 16, 2020**

As the author, I am happy and thankful to the LibrosML for publishing *Philippine Society and Revolution* in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and solidarity between the Filipino people and Spanish people and for the purpose enlightening the Spanish people regarding the Philippine revolution. I wrote this book in 1969 in my capacity as Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and under the *nom de guerre* Amado Guerrero.

Since then, it has been a basic document of the CPP and source of knowledge of the proletariat and people of the Philippines and the world about the history of the Filipino people, their basic problems consisting of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and the new democratic revolution, with the socialist perspective, as the fundamental solution to these problems and as the way to national and social liberation under the leadership of the proletariat.

To this day, the book is being widely read in the Philippines and continues to inspire the Filipino people to wage the Philippine revolution because the basic problems, which are analyzed and critiqued, continue to determine the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the Philippine ruling system and subject the Filipino people to extreme and intolerable conditions of oppression and exploitation.

This book should be interesting to the Spanish readers because Spain and the Philippines have had close relations since the 16<sup>th</sup> century until now. As a colonial power, Spain conquered and dominated the Philippines, imposed a centralized system of administration and developed a feudal economic system. In accordance with the unavoidable law of contradiction in history, Spain created a unified system of colonial and feudal system over most of the Filipino people and in the process caused them to unite and fight for national and social liberation in the old democratic revolution led by the liberal bourgeoisie in 1896.

In the course of the colonial relations between Spain and the Philippines, the Spanish and Filipino peoples developed their own relations in the direction of revolutionary change, solidarity and mutual support. Progressive Spanish leaders and people, who themselves were involved in the liberal democratic movement against absolute monarchical rule, encouraged and supported the Filipino exiles like Jose Rizal, Marcelo

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

H. del Pilar and Graciano Lopez Jaena to form the Propaganda Movement in Spain and advocate liberal democratic reforms for the Philippines since the 1880s.

But the fraternal relationship of the Spanish and Filipino peoples was not limited to the propagation of liberal democracy. My grand uncle, Isabelo de los Reyes, who was arrested in Manila for being a *filibustero* supporting the Philippine revolution, was transported to Spain for imprisonment at the Castle Montjuïc in Barcelona. While in prison, he learned about Karl Marx among the thinkers who had influenced his fellow Spanish political prisoners from the working class.

After the outbreak of the Spanish-American War of 1898, he was released from prison by the Spanish authorities and was allowed to campaign against US imperialism in Spain and other European countries. He found common cause with the Spanish people because by February 4, 1899, the Filipino-American war started because the US sought to conquer the Philippines and become the new colonial power. He was able to return to the Philippines and was the first Filipino leader to bring home the works of Marx. He proceeded to establish the modern trade union movement in the Philippines to replace the old gremio or guild system among the workers.

The fraternal solidarity and mutually supportive relations between the Spanish and Filipino peoples continued to develop into period of the Third International. Spanish and Filipino delegates to the congresses and conferences of the Comintern met and interacted. In the course of the Spanish Civil War, overseas Filipino workers in the US joined the Lincoln Brigade organized by the US communist party to fight on the side of their Spanish comrades. They also encouraged their Filipino and Spanish comrades in the Philippines to oppose the Franco fascist influence among the big compradors and landlords of Spanish ancestry and to join the revolutionary side of the Spanish Civil War.

There is a great amount of information to be told about the revolutionary solidarity of the Spanish and Filipino people and the proletarian internationalist bonds of Spanish and Filipino communists and workers. In the brevity of this preface, I can mention only some of the most outstanding manifestations of Spanish-Filipino solidarity in order to encourage others to provide more information as well as to develop further the revolutionary solidarity of the Spanish and Filipino proletariat and people.

I hope that *Philippine Society and Revolution* can serve as a key text for the Spanish readers to gain a comprehensive and profound understanding of the history, basic problems and the ongoing revolutionary movement and socialist direction of the Filipino proletariat and people, to build Spanish-Filipino solidarity formations and cultural exchanges (including study delegations) and to develop further the spirit of proletarian

*Author's Preface to the Spanish Edition of Philippine Society and Revolution*

internationalism, militant solidarity and mutual support of the Spanish and Filipino proletariat and people.

We must strengthen our unity in the common cause and struggle for greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and the socialist future against monopoly capitalism and all reaction, especially at this time when the neoliberal policy of unbridled greed is unravelling and the forces of imperialism and counterrevolution seek to perpetuate the system of oppression and exploitation by unleashing fascism, the terrorist state and wars of aggression.

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## **Create and Promote the Art to Inspire the People to Fight for their Rights<sup>48</sup>**

### **Message to the Concerned Artists of the Philippines on its 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

**August 31, 2020**

Beloved concerned artists,

We wish to convey to you warmest greetings of solidarity on the occasion of the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your organization, the Concerned Artists of the Philippines. We salute you for your determination, efforts and sacrifices to create and promote art in the service of the Filipino people in their just struggle for national and social liberation. It is appropriate that you link your anniversary celebration with the National Heroes' Day.

We congratulate you for all your achievements and we join you in the online tribute to the people's martyrs who include artists and activists of all oppressed and exploited classes and sectors of society. It is fitting that you stream the art works that reflect and further inspire the people to fight for the national and democratic rights and interests.

We are confronted today by the Duterte regime which is tyrannical, traitorous, genocidal, plundering and mendacious. In the name of anti-terrorism, it is imposing on the people state terrorism and is escalating their conditions of oppression and exploitation. We must therefore strengthen our resolve to fight and intensify our struggle for national freedom, democracy and social justice.

The evil forces of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism beset our country and use the current regime to do the worst it can to suppress the will of the people and subjugate them by violence and deception. Under these conditions, it is of high importance that concerned artists perform their duty of shedding light on the basic social problems and inspire the people to solve these with their revolutionary will and struggle. The crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the domestic ruling system are rapidly worsening. They are aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those few who are in power and rule against the people seem to thrive on the current crisis conditions. But in fact, they drive the people to desire and fight for revolutionary change. Thus, the revolutionary forces of the people are on the rise.

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<sup>48</sup>Delivered by Jose Maria Sison and Julieta de Lima

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

We wish you the utmost success in celebrating the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Concerned Artists of the Philippines, in raising your resolve to do your best in serving the people and in creating the works and performances that enrich their cultural life and inspire them to fight with all their might against the forces of foreign, feudal and fascist domination, realize their own national and social liberation and build a nation that is fully independent, democratic, socially just, prosperous and progressive.

Long live the Concerned Artists of the Philippines!

Create and promote the art to inspire the people to fight for their rights!

Long live the Filipino people!

★ ★ ★

## **Message to the Book Launch of Comrade Martyr Roger Felix Salditos (Mayamor / Maya Daniel)**

October 7, 2020

Dear comrades, I am happy to launch today the book of Comrade Martyr Roger Felix Salditos who became famous by his name Mayamor and Maya Daniel. His fifty poems in English and Tagalog are just part of his many poems, stories, essays, drawings, paintings, photography and other works of art that reflect his revolutionary life shaped by his long and deep interaction with the toiling masses and serving their rights and interests towards national and social liberation.

Ka Roger Felix Salditos was a great revolutionary who contributed greatly to various fields and methods of struggle, especially in education, training of cadres, mass work and depiction of life in the revolution. Ever since I read his works published on the internet, I have been impressed by their revolutionary importance and significance. They stand out not only in content but also in style.

At the beginning of the book, I tried to summarize the significance of the works published here. Let me quote a few verses from this: Salditos' current selection of poems expresses the high quality of his creative writing and his serious interest in the needs, grievances and revolutionary struggles of the people.

He is known as the best revolutionary poet in his native language. I hope this book will be the key for the publication of his other poems that number in the hundreds and his many narrative and artistic illustrations. "All his revolutionary political and artistic works have become part of the revolutionary movement that continues to grow and advance. They will remain a living memory in the hearts and minds of the people."

Let me take this opportunity to commend Kerima Lorena Tariman, as translator; The Filipino Language Center of the University of the Philippines-Diliman; Gerardo M. Lanuza, for Congress of Teachers and Educators for Nationalism and Democracy as Editor; Michael Francis C. Andrada, Director General of the Public Library Project; Maria Olivia O. Nueva España, Managing Director of the Public Library Project; Michael Balili, book and cover designer; Ruth Salditos, wife of Ka Felix Salditos; and Chancellor Michael Tan who enthusiastically supported the publication of this article.

I call on the participants in the launch of this book to purchase copies

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

of the book for their own collection and as a gift to colleagues and friends. Also reach out to those who are not here to buy the book because we need to spread its revolutionary content and message and raise funds to publish other works by Ka Roger Felix Salditos. Thank you very much.

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## Letter to Filipino-American and Filipino-Canadian Activists<sup>49</sup>

Hosted by Steven de Castro, Director of Revolution Selfie

October 18, 2020

Dear Compatriots in the USA and Canada,

Thank you for having me in this webinar. I convey to you my warmest greetings of solidarity and my best wishes that you stay healthy and active in the face of the worsening crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are living today in very trying and very challenging times. The world capitalist system is in a grave unprecedented crisis, with the pandemic aggravating it and exposing the worst anti-social features of monopoly capitalism.

The US-instigated policy of neoliberalism is unraveling after more than four decades of pressing down the wage and living conditions of the working people, maximizing profits and accelerating capital accumulation by the monopoly bourgeoisie and causing one severe crisis of overproduction after another.

The crisis of the world capitalist system is so severe now that the erstwhile main partners in carrying out the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization have become bitter economic competitors and political rivals. Their inter-imperialist conflicts are now at the center of all inter-imperialist contradictions.

You who are in North America are in the vortex of the growing contradictions between monopoly capital and labor. You are confronted by social, economic and political problems caused by the monopoly bourgeoisie, the state and the ultra-reactionary forces.

You need to struggle in defense of your democratic rights and well-being against inimical forces and conditions where you are and to do so in cooperation with the host people and others. At the same time, you cannot forget about the far worse conditions of oppression and exploitation in the Philippines and you also need to consider what you can do in order to help them in their struggle.

The Filipino people suffer the terrible social and economic consequences of the crisis of global capitalism and the pandemic impacting on the chronic crisis of a semicolonial and semicolonial country. And two imperialist

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<sup>51</sup>Delivered by Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

powers, the US and China, are trying to use according to their respective interests the traitorous, tyrannical, plundering and swindling character of the Duterte regime against the people.

I hope that by struggling for your democratic rights and well-being where you are, you are in a better position than otherwise to support the struggle of the Filipino people in the motherland and to bring about the solidarity and support of other peoples for them.

Right now, we can discuss the situation of Filipinos in the Philippines and abroad, what problems they face and what we can do to uphold, defend and promote their national and democratic rights and interests against inimical forces and conditions. I am ready to receive your questions and try to answer them best as I can or else the answers will arise from the discussion. Thank you.

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## Address to the Rally to Demand Freedom for the Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan<sup>50</sup>

October 30, 2020

Dear Comrades and Friends,

As Chairperson Emeritus of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I wish to convey to you warmest greetings of solidarity and admiration of our League for the heroic struggle of the Kurdish people for national and social liberation. We salute you for having undertaken a sit-in strike in front of the council of Europe since October 12. On this day, we have the honor to congratulate you for your success in calling the attention of the people of the world to the unjust imprisonment of the leader of the Kurdish people, Comrade Adullah Ocalan, to his torture by solitary confinement and other cruel and inhuman forms of punishment and to the urgent necessity of setting him free as a matter of justice and respect for human rights.

The time has come for his freedom. It is appropriate and necessary that we make this demand before the Council of Europe, which is responsible for the Prison Island Imrali where he has been held since 1999 or 21 years ago. The Council is well aware that Comrade Ocalan has been subjected to isolation for so long. This is an excruciating form of combined mental and physical torture. I know this from my own experience of solitary confinement under the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

The physical torture is in the constancy of cramped space, sensory deprivation and lack of human contact, except with the tight-lipped guards. But the consequent mental torture is incalculably far worse. It is the duty of the Council of Europe to require Turkey as a member-state to comply with the international and European conventions and standards concerning human rights. Torture is absolutely prohibited. The infliction of torture on a prisoner is sufficient ground for his immediate release as a just and necessary recompense for the grave abuse of human rights. It is therefore just and appropriate for the Kurdish people and the people of the world to demand that the Council and its Committee for Prevention of Torture require Turkey to release Comrade Ocalan or else certain sanctions would fall on this errant member-state. All efforts must be exerted to expose and oppose the systematic and gross violations of human rights being

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<sup>50</sup>Delivered by Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson Emeritus, International League of Peoples' Struggle.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

committed by the Erdogan government in the course of imposing fascism on the Turkish and Kurdish people and in carrying out expansionism and violating the Kurdish people's right to national self-determination.

The Erdogan government is swell-headed and has illusions of building an empire but in fact it is just a tool of imperialist powers for destabilizing the Middle East and the MENA region and for dividing and ruling the various peoples for the purpose of exploitation and oppression. The ILPS has already declared that this coming November is a month of global solidarity with Kurdistan and that the main slogans of the international campaign are: Free Ocalan! Free Kurdistan!

The current chairperson of the ILPS Len Cooper has declared that the ILPS stands in militant solidarity with the people of Kurdistan against the fascist oppression and occupation by the Turkish state. At the same time, the ILPS demands the immediate releases of Comrade Ocalan and all other political prisoners by the Turkish fascist state headed by Erdogan.

The ILPS international campaign of solidarity for Kurdistan will start on the 1st of November to celebrate the anniversary of the liberation of the Kurdish city of Kobane from the ISIS occupation. We unite in upholding World Kobane Day to honor the heroic Kurdish people and the volunteers from other countries. There shall be a webinar to include speakers who will explain the situation faced by the Kurdish and Turkish peoples, the role of imperialism in the region, the role of the Turkish fascist state, the situation regarding the political prisoners and other important issues.

There shall be succeeding events of various types, like webinars, film shows, cultural performances and signature-collecting. These shall be undertaken by the ILPS at the levels of the international, continental and national. The ILPS will inform the responsible Kurdish comrades and friends. You can also take the initiative of informing yourselves of these events by visiting first the international website and Facebook Page of the ILPS and then you can proceed to visit any of the websites and Facebook Pages of any global regional committee or any country chapter of the ILPS. We have a common cause of fighting for national liberation, democracy and socialism against imperialism and all reaction.

The conditions are favorable for advancing and winning revolutionary victories as the crisis of the world capitalist system is worsening, the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization is unravelling, inter-imperialist contradictions are intensifying and the imperialist and reactionary forces are unleashing state terrorism, fascism and wars of aggression.

The proletariat and people in capitalist countries are driven to fight for socialism against the monopoly bourgeoisie and so are the oppressed peoples and nations, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, against the foreign and domestic oppressors and exploiters. The anti-imperialist and democratic struggles are already intensifying

*Address to the Rally to Demand Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan*

on a global scale. The Kurdish people's struggle for national and social liberation is among those in the forefront. The resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution is foreseeable.

Free Ocalan! Liberate Kurdistan!

Down with the Erdogan fascist regime!

Long live the Kurdish people!

Long live international solidarity!

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## Tribute to Comrades Eugenia Magpantay and Agaton Topacio<sup>51</sup>

December 1, 2020

We wish to convey the deepest condolences to the children, grandchildren and family of Comrades Eugenia Magpantay and Agaton Topacio. At the same time, we pay the highest tribute to them for their martyrdom. Their supreme sacrifice crowns the decades of service that they rendered to the revolutionary cause of the Filipino, especially the oppressed and exploited toiling masses of workers and peasants.

Having served the people and the revolutionary movement as outstanding patriots and communist fighters, they became members of the CPP Central Committee and Comrade Magpantay was also a former member of the Party Political Bureau until their retirement due to their illnesses. They made significant contributions to the building of the CPP and the NPA, especially in Central Luzon.

In the strongest terms, we condemn the Philippine National Police (PNP) for the cold-blooded murder of Comrades Magpantay and Topacio. As NDFP peace consultants, they were entitled to the safety and immunity guarantees in accordance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG). They were in their late 60s and had retired from active service in the revolutionary movement due to health problems.

They were unarmed and were fast asleep at 3 a.m. when the armed minions of the Duterte regime in superior number and under cover of darkness stealthily raided the home of the couple. The cowardly raiders are patently lying by claiming that their victims resisted arrest and their home was loaded with so many weapons that actually belonged to the raiders and planted by them in the notorious Duterte-style of killing people extrajudicially.

The murder of the couple is in brazen violation of the right to due process, the JASIG, the Comprehensive Agreement of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the international law and standards of human rights and humanitarian conduct in war. The barbaric methods used in the mass murder of so many thousands of victims in Oplan Tokhang are being employed in the anti-communist campaign of state terrorism.

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<sup>51</sup>Delivered by Jose Maria Sison as Founding Chairman, Communist Party of the Philippines and Julie de Lima as Interim Chairperson, NDFP Negotiating Panel.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

The murder of the Topacio couple is similar to the murders of Randy Felix Malayao, Julius Giron Randall Echanis and others who have been targeted in the anti-communist campaign of state terrorism. The CPP has strong grounds for holding Duterte, his National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) and PNP Chief Debold Sinas as the masterminds behind the murder of the couple.

Duterte has deliberately terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, has designated the CPP and the NPA as "terrorist" organizations and has gone on an anti-people, anti-communist and counterrevolutionary killing spree in Metro Manila and the provinces in order to propel his drive for fascist dictatorship. In fact, he has already obtained the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law as the tool for realizing fascist dictatorship even without the formality of declaring nationwide martial law.

Duterte claims to have obtained the license from the outgoing US President Trump to apply the "Jakarta method" and go on an anticommunist killing rampage and he has also boasted of being able to renew the same license from the incoming US President Biden. By all indications, Duterte intends to stay in power as a fascist dictator beyond 2022 or install his presidential proxy by rigging the 2022 presidential elections as he did in the 2019 mid-term elections.

The fast-growing number of victims of the Duterte murder machine should alert the entire Filipino nation to further crimes that the tyrannical, traitorous, murderous, plundering and swindling regime is hell-bent on committing in order to keep his ruling clique in power. The Filipino people and their revolutionary have all the just reasons for intensifying their revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy against the imperialist and the local reactionaries.

The long revolutionary service of the Comrades Magpantay and Topacio and their martyrdom will inspire the people to fight ever more resolutely and militantly against the evil Duterte regime and the unjust ruling system. Their martyrdom cries out for justice. Those who are in power and commit crimes think that they can always do so with impunity. But the crisis of the ruling system is rapidly worsening, aggravated by the cruelty and corruption of the Duterte regime and the consequences of the pandemic and the natural disasters.

The conditions are extremely favorable for the advance of the revolutionary movement. As the crisis worsens, it will increasingly make impotent all the brutality and mendacity that the Duterte regime is capable of unleashing. The crimes of this regime are driving more and more people to take the road of revolutionary resistance.

Long live the memory of Comrades Magpantay and Topacio!

Justice to them and all the victims of the Duterte regime!

Intensify the people's resistance to this evil regime!



*Tribute to Comrades Eugenia Magpantay and Agaton Topacio*

Advance the revolutionary struggle for national liberation and  
democracy!

Long live the Filipino people!





## Honoring Comrade Manuel Sarmiento, Filipino Hero and Working Class Cadre<sup>52</sup>

December 19, 2020

Dear compatriots,

I extend my heartfelt condolences to the family and all close associates and friends of Comrade Manuel Sarmiento on his passing on December 11 in Vienna, Austria. We all feel its weight like the Sierra Madre. But we are all satisfied with his long and fruitful service to the working class and the Filipino people.

We now take the opportunity to give him a Red salute and the highest honor as a Filipino hero and working class cadre as a result of his brilliant, exemplary and successful activities and leadership in the labor movement in many struggles with foreign monopolies and local reactionaries, from the time of the Marcos fascist dictatorship until the new fascism of the tyrant Duterte.

From the foundation of the May First Movement on May 1, 1980, he worked as a strong and militant KMU cadre in accordance with the general line of the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. He became the third KMU general secretary, following Ka Rolando Olalia and Crispin Beltran.

At the basic level, he was the organizer and founder of FILIPRO-Nestle Philippines and the former president of the Drug, Food, and Allied Workers Federation, one of the founding organizations of KMU. He was an accountant and had high potential as a Nestle management officer. But he chose to serve as a cadre of workers.

I personally met Ka Manny when he was taking postgraduate studies at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague and when he was participating in the activities of the Filipino community. When he was assigned to Europe under Migrante International, he founded PINAS in Vienna Austria and I met him in meetings of Migrante and the International League of Peoples' Struggle.

I noticed Ka Manny's qualities as a cadre. Strong, intelligent and brave against the enemy but humble in serving the working class and the Filipino people. Quietly working, hardworking and disciplined. Focused on the process and direction of the work and of meetings. Kind, helpful and patient in explaining to others. Living imply and thriftily.

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<sup>52</sup>Message delivered as Chairperson Emeritus International League of Peoples Struggle.

## Upsurge of People's Resistance

Because of heroes and cadres like Ka Manny, the labor movement and the people's democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class continue to grow and strengthen. Although they may die from whatever cause, they remain alive in our spirit and emotions, they remain our inspiration and live in the revolutionary movement because of their concrete contributions and examples.

Long live the memory of Ka Manny!

Long live the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live Migrante International! Long live the labor movement!

Long live the Filipino people!





This book presents and analyzes the major events and issues that agitate the people in the Philippines and world in 2020 and that continue to drive them to carry out mass protest actions as well as the revolutionary armed resistance.

The perfect storm - the convergence of extreme conditions of oppression and exploitation - has already beset the Philippines and is generating the powerful resistance of the Filipino people and all their patriotic and democratic forces.

