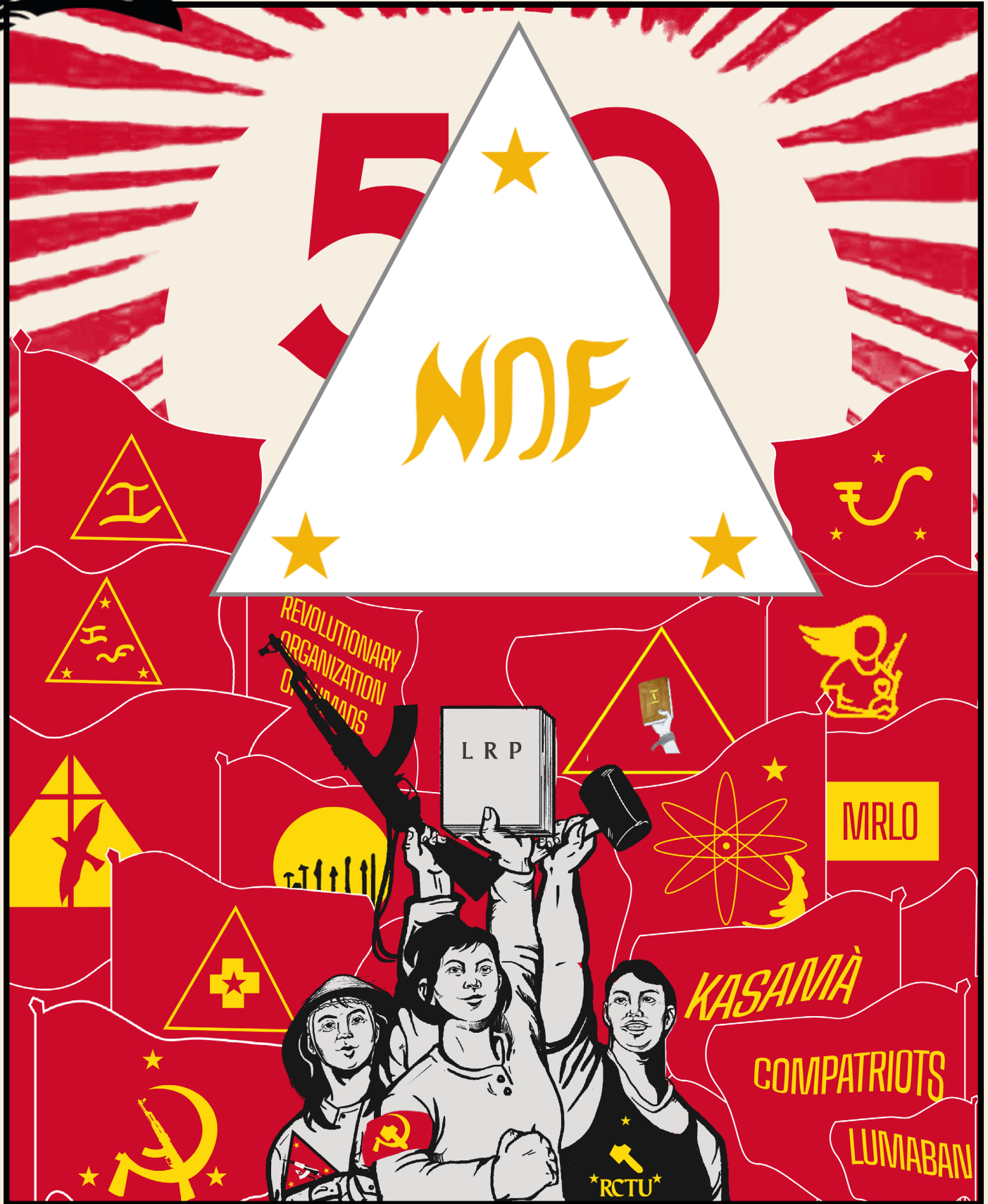


LIBERATION

VOLUME XL NO. 3 | Published by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines | September 2023





The NDFP is the revolutionary united front organization of the Filipino people fighting for national freedom and for the democratic rights of the people. Established on April 24, 1973, the NDFP seeks to develop and coordinate all progressive classes, sectors and forces in the Filipino people's struggle to end the rule of US imperialism and its local allies, and attain national and social liberation.



ABOUT THE COVER

NOT OUR USUAL 'RED FLAGS'

These are not the usual red flags we know i.e., the daily oppression and exploitation the people experience from the ruling classes in pursuit of their interests and that of their imperialist masters.

These are the red revolutionary flags of the mass organizations of the NDFP which the people are determined to raise as they make bigger strides to advance the national democratic revolution. Raising the red revolutionary flags symbolizes how the people are lifted from the shackles of the semicolonial and semifeudal system by overthrowing US-imperialism, feudalism, and beaurucrat capitalism.

(The artwork is from the poster used in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the NDFP in April 2023 by Julia Makabayan of ARMAS-Parts Bagani.)

LIBERATION

is the official publication of the NDFP

 liberation.ndfp.info

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THE SEEDS OF THE FUTURE

Hope springs eternal despite today's worsening social and economic crisis.

The celebration of the 50th anniversary of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in April this year not only heralded the sacrifices of the martyrs of the revolution. It also celebrated the fruits of the seeds they had sown through decades—the empowerment of the masses as shown by the development and expansion of the revolutionary mass organizations and the barrio revolutionary committees.

Alongside the people's army and under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), these organizations now comprise the organs of political power in the countryside.

The organs of political power are the seeds of the future people's republic. They embody how the NDFP 12-point program has come to life, embryonic as it may be, at this stage of the people's war. The program continues to evolve and advance as the revolutionary movement and the masses put into practice the new insights that they acquire in advancing their daily lives.

The various celebrations around the country underscored the relevance of—and the need for—the NDFP 12-point program as a viable alternative to the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal Philippine society that has persisted, from one puppet regime to another, to mire the majority of the people in poverty and despair.



The unresolved crisis, during the first year of the current Marcos Jr regime, is manifested in various ways in how the people's standard of living continues to fall. Majority of the people still live below the poverty line, suffering various degrees of hunger and deprivation.

The regime attacks the masses from all sides:

- It suppresses the wages of workers and denies or dispossesses the peasants of lands;
- Its over-reliance on imports of food and other basic necessities, foreign investments, and foreign loans continue to weigh heavily on the shoulders of the people;
- It plunders the people's money through billions of so-called confidential and intelligence funds spent without accountability, the Maharlika Investment Fund, frequent junkets abroad by the Marcos family and cohorts;
- Continued pursuance of so-called "localized peace talks" through inducements of "amnesty" among rebels and forced surrender of rural folk and others perceived as supporters of the revolutionary movement; and
- Aggravated fascist attacks against the people—aerial bombings and artillery bombardments of hinterland communities in sustained counterinsurgency campaigns, filing of non-bailable

trumped-up charges against suspected rebels, political repression among activists using the draconian provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020.

The Marcos Jr. regime may do worse than its predecessor even as it employs the same means devised by all previous administrations. All have failed, because they refused to acknowledge the basic problems that have spawned sustained popular struggles—both armed and unarmed over more than half a century—seeking fundamental socio-economic reforms.

The Marcos Jr regime, a certified puppet of US imperialism, pursues the same neoliberal policies of the past regimes amid recession and slow economic growth. This has exacerbated the backward agrarian, non-industrial economy of the country. Moreover, Marcos Jr's more than a year's presidency is marked by continuing violations of people's democratic rights.

These democratic rights are the same rights enshrined in the NDFP 12-point program, which the revolutionaries uphold and present to the Filipino people in the struggle for national democracy.

The revolutionary movement may not be in power yet but in its revolutionary bases, the masses are empowered and are harvesting the gains of the revolutionary struggle.

In the guerrilla fronts, for example, steps are taken to better the lives of the poor especially through land reform—

the main substance of the national democratic revolution. No other political entity in the Philippines can claim to have distributed land for free to the landless tillers; the benefits of which are far more reaching than the reactionary government's bogus program. Hundreds of thousands more have benefited from the minimum land reform program such as lowering of land rent, abolition of usury, lowering of the prices of farm tools, implements and other agricultural products.

Like all other US imperialist puppet regimes, the Marcos Jr regime resorts to force and deceit in another futile attempt to crush the revolutionary movement—his father's biggest failure at the time the CPP was still at its inception stage.

Futile as it is, the Marcos Jr regime clings on to age-old US-directed "counterinsurgency" program instead of addressing the roots of the armed conflict—a formula that had crashed as early as during Marcos Sr's dictatorship.

Instead of taking measures to at least alleviate the plight of the masses, the regime spends the people's money to oil its war machinery, pursuing a bombing and killing frenzy in the countryside, destroying people's lives and livelihood and the already fragile environment. To complement its killing machinery, the Marcos Jr regime makes full use of the legacy of the previous Duterte regime: the "Anti-Terror" Law and the nefarious NTF-ELCAC to attack the members of progressive people's organizations, activists, and the opposition.


Disinformation such as rebel "surrenderers" and the impending defeat of the revolutionary forces are dished out regularly, the loss of NPA guerrilla fronts, and the offer of "amnesty"

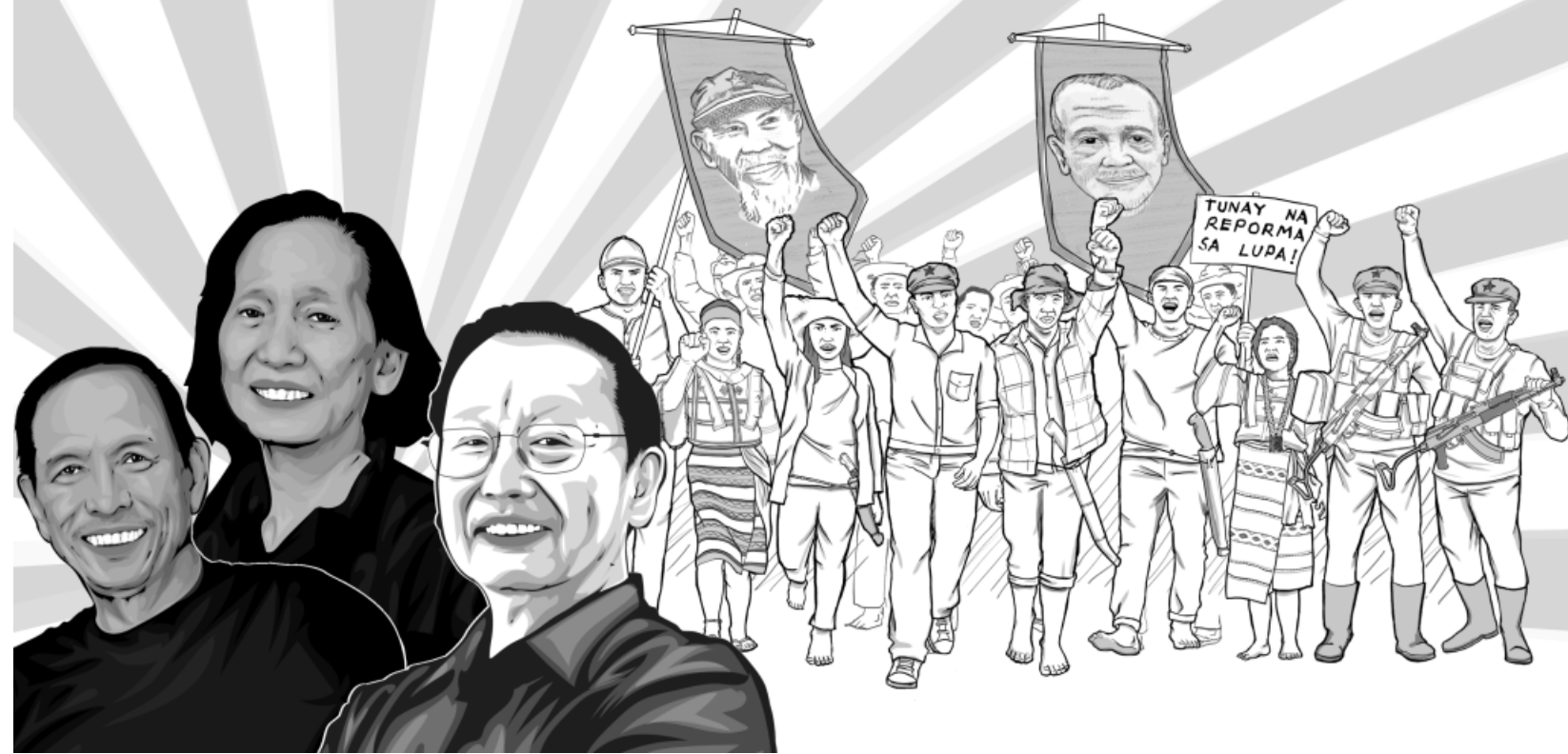
to justify the billions that go into its E-CLIP program and the Barangay Development Fund (BDF). Both the E-CLIP program for "surrenderers" and the BDF are big-time source of racket for government and military officials.

Whatever setbacks and losses the revolutionary movement may have suffered from government attacks are all but temporary. The fact remains that in the last five decades the seeds sown by the revolution have grown and expanded.

As the revolutionary movement gradually destroys the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system, it also builds the people's democratic government, starting in the countryside. The gains of the revolutionary movement further erode the foundations of this fast-decaying system which the reactionary governments, past and present, tried to prop up and save.

Some members of the revolutionary masses may have been portrayed in the mass media as "surrenderers." They may have signed blank sheets of papers that would later be presented by the military as proof of surrender. They may have been photographed taking an oath of "allegiance" to the reactionary government. But as decades of experience have shown, the masses have never wavered from their commitment to the revolution.

The revolution and its gains remain in their hearts, firing up their desire to advance the national democratic revolution to its completion. They have offered their best sons and daughters to the revolution to secure their future. In this sense and more, the masses constitute the revolution. 



REVOLUTIONARY AND PROGRESSIVE FORCES SALUTE THE NDFP AND ITS HEROES AND MARTYRS ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

by Iliya Makalipay

To honor the heroes and martyrs of the national democratic revolution, April 17-24 has been declared by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) as a week-long commemoration of the lives of those who offered their lives for the liberation of the Filipino masses from the clutches of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism.

The declaration was part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the National

Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). Hence, from this year onward, the friends and allies, affiliate organizations of the NDFP, solidarity groups, and the progressive movement are encouraged to pay tribute to the men and women who spent their lives serving the people.

A statement issued by the CPP in behalf of its members and Red fighters, the Party recognized the crucial role of the NDFP "in the coming period of revolutionary resurgence." The CPP said it is "confident that all the NDFP's forces will continue to exert all efforts to rouse the people and shoulder the difficult tasks in waging all forms of patriotic and democratic resistance, generating widespread support for the people's war and carrying forward the national democratic revolution." (Read: CPP's full statement on page 9)

This year's celebration of NDFP's 50th year hailed the achievements of the various regions and NDFP allied organizations, highlighted the significance and urgency of the 12-point program in today's crisis, and paid tribute to the contributions of revolutionary leaders and

NDFP Peace panel members and consultants Prof. Jose Maria Sison, Benito Tiamzon, Wilma Austria-Tiamzon, Julius Giron, Fidel Agcaoili, and Antonio Zumel, among many other martyrs.

Heeding the call of the CPP, the New People's Army (NPA) conducted a silent 21-gun salute in the regions of Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Panay, Negros, North Central Mindanao at Northeastern Mindanao in honor of Benito Tiamzon (Ka Laan), deceased Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee, and Wilma Austria-Tiamzon (Ka Bagong-tao), General Secretary of the Party.

In the international front, celebrations hosted by the NDFP International office centered on the importance of the united front against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and in strengthening fostered solidarity with fraternal organizations and solidarity groups. Held for two days, the events were attended by friends from The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Norway, Spain, France, Kurdistan, Turkey, Palestine, China, the US, Canada, Asia-Pacific, Korea, New Zealand, Colombia and Eritrea.



In her speech, Juliet de Lima, interim head of the NDFP Negotiating Panel stressed that “revolutionary solidarity is a key to defeating US imperialism.” The same point was emphasized by NDFP Chief International Representative Luis Jalandoni when he said “the strategic importance of sharing revolutionary reciprocal solidarity.” Ka Louie stressed the need “to learn from each other’s struggle” because of a “common enemy, which is US Imperialism.”

ASSEMBLIES

In the Philippines as well as in other parts of the globe, revolutionary mass organizations allied with the NDFP from the barrios to the urban centers also held their own celebrations for the NDFP anniversary and in honor of Ka Laan and Ka Bagong-tao and for the heroes and martyrs among their ranks.

In Ilocos region, for example, members of the *Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid* (PKM) and Christians for National Liberation (CNL) honored Ka Laan and Ka Bagong-tao during an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-fascist conference of revolutionary farmers, fishermen, national minorities and members of churches. The participants resolved to advance the “fight for the sovereignty and security of the Philippines against the US-driven war against China.”



The CNL also celebrated the 50th year of the NDFP and its own 51st anniversary by giving tribute to its revolutionary martyrs who contributed to the advance of the national democratic revolution. (*Read: CNL celebrates 51st anniversary, page 18*)

The *Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid* (PKM), *Liga ng Agham para sa Bayan* (LAB), *Pambansang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper*, *Katipunan ng mga Samahang Manggagawa* (KASAMA), *Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan* (MAKIBAKA), *Kabataang Makabayan* (KM), the Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF), *Compatriots*, *Christians for National Liberation* (CNL), *Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan* (KAGUMA) all issued statements hailing the achievements of the national democratic revolution amid the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system.

A conference on national liberation movements was one of the activities of the celebration in The Netherlands. Some of the speakers came from West Papua, Burma (who sent video messages), Latin America and the Carribean, and Kurdistan. They tackled their struggles in their own countries—the dictatorships, repression and militarization, and the armed struggle they are waging.

The speaker from the Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) representative, Nilufer Koc, underscored the importance of building alliances among oppressed peoples “to bring down the enemy.” In addition, Ringo Guzman of the Association of Latin American and Caribbean Refugees’ (ARLAC) warned against peace deal framed within demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of the guerrillas. Guzman cited the experience of FARC’s (Revolutionary Armed Forces of

Colombian Army) with the Colombian government who were “disarmed, which meant they could not defend themselves... resulting to the killings and assassinations of guerrillas.”

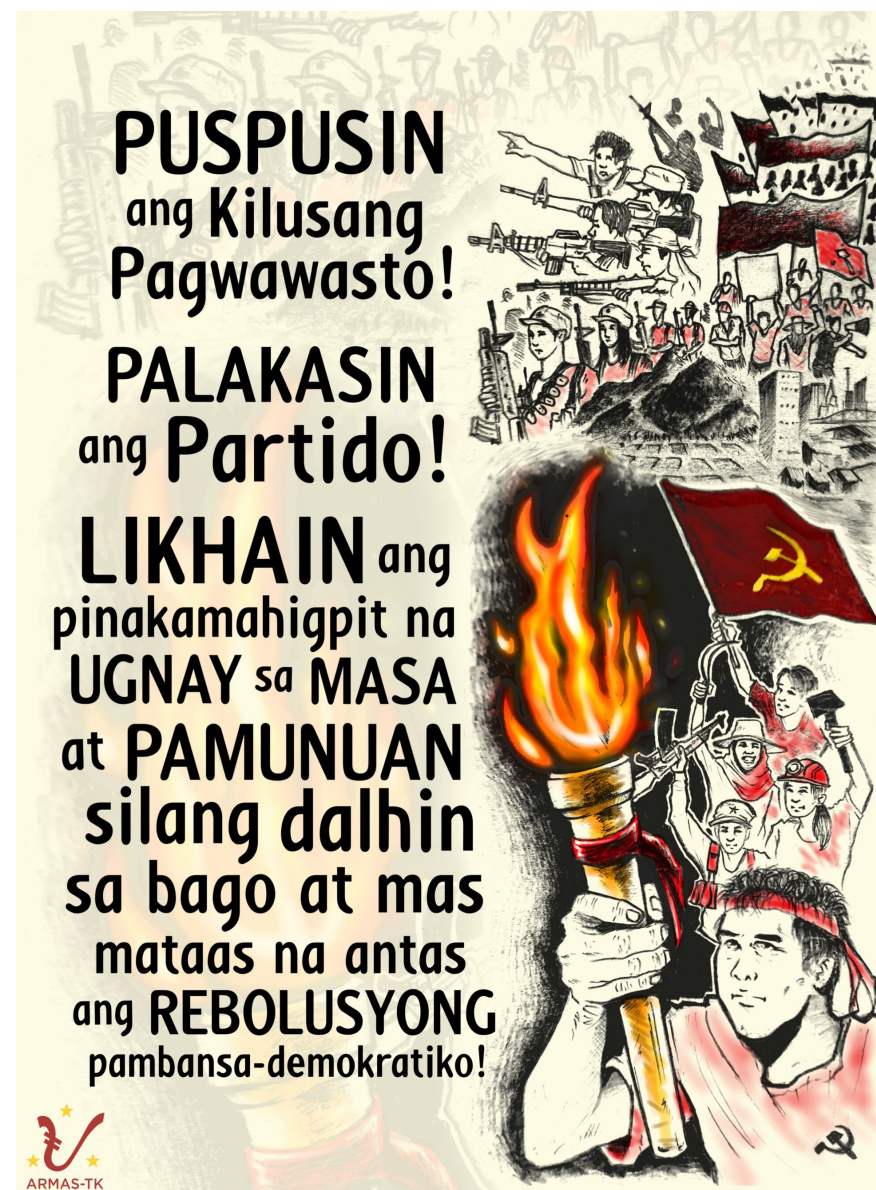
LIGHTNING RALLIES, POSTERING, AND STICKER BOMBS

On April 17, members of underground organizations affiliated with the NDFP cordoned the intersection of EDSA and Aurora Blvd. in Cubao, Quezon City in a lightning rally. Earlier in March, KAGUMA also held its own lightning rally in Divisoria in Manila to commemorate its founding anniversary and to gather people’s interest on the NDFP.

Also as part of the build-up activities leading to the April 24 celebration, LAB, Kaguma, and CNL members, among other revolutionary forces put up posters and stickers bearing the flag of the NDFP and images of the people’s revolution in various places in Metro Manila. LAB members also initiated a twitter rally to engage social media users on the April 24 event. Elsewhere in the country, similar activities were also conducted.

PROPAGANDA AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The golden anniversary celebration showcased the revolutionary movement’s creative prowess—from the production of printed and audio and visual materials to the cultural events and tributes and performances held by various organizations. Creativity was also at work in dodging state forces to be able to hold and pull off the various activities, and despite efforts to block these materials on social media.



First off was a logo of the 50th celebration produced by *Ang Bayan* and another by the various revolutionary organizations based in Metro Manila.

A song, “Viva NDFP” by ARMAS-Parts Bagani chapter was specially produced for the occasion and from this, three music videos were made by KM-Southern Tagalog, ARMAS-Parts Bagani chapter, and *Liberation*.

Posters on the anniversary and publications came out both in print and online. *Ang Bayan* came out with a promotional kit while *Liberation* and *Liberation International* produced special anniversary editions of the publications. The NDFP 12-Point Program was also reproduced with artworks on each of the 12-point program done by artists who are members of the ARMAS-Felix Salditos (Maya Daniel) chapter. NDFP-Southern Tagalog came out with an online publication “50 Reasons to celebrate the NDFP anniversary,” enumerating the gains of the NDFP and its allied organizations through its 50 years of existence.

In The Netherlands, a cultural workshop on theater, dance, rap, and poster-making was integrated in the two-day celebration, where output from the workshops became part of the celebration.

Every event held to celebrate NDFP’s golden anniversary promoted revolutionary arts and literature— showing that propaganda and cultural work are intrinsic in the revolution. This underscores their importance in

honing the revolutionary attitude, and in raising the ideological level, of the people especially amid the imperialist offensive in this field, notwithstanding its impositions on the economic and political life of the neocolonies.

It is along this line that the CPP, in its statement stressed the need for the NDFP to “carry out widespread efforts to promote the people’s patriotic spirit, and unite, galvanize and mobilize the broadest section of the people to defend the country against rising imperialist rivalries and threats of wars. Amid intensifying US imperialist military intervention and worsening forms of oppression and exploitation under the neoliberal policy regime, the NDFP must exert all efforts to more vigorously advance the national democratic revolution and the cause of national freedom and democracy.”





CPP-CC'S MESSAGE TO ALL ALLIES AND FRIENDS ON NDFP'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

In behalf of the entire membership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), as well as all Red fighters and commanders of the New People's Army (NPA), the Central Committee of the CPP extends militant revolutionary greetings to all its allies and friends in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines on the historic and most joyous occasion of the NDFP's 50th anniversary.

We propose to the National Council that the NDFP and its allied organizations carry the

following theme during this entire year of celebration:

Strengthen the NDFP! Unite the Filipino people to fight for Philippine sovereignty amid heightening foreign intervention and rising threats of imperialist war! Carry out militant struggles to fight for the people's national and democratic interests against the US-Marcos fascist regime! Carry forward the national democratic revolution to victory!

On this occasion, let us remember and pay tribute to all the heroes and martyrs of the Philippine revolution. Let us give special honors to Comrades Jose Ma. Sison, Benito Tiamzon, Wilma Austria, Fidel V. Agcaoili, Antonio Zumel, Julius Giron, as well as other key leaders of the Party and the NDFP, as well as peace consultants who passed away or were killed by the reactionary state terrorists. Let us express our gratitude to the countless allies of the NDFP who continue to serve the national democratic revolution.

There is urgent need to strengthen and further invigorate the NDFP as the Filipino people face a worsening crisis of the ruling system and growing threats of getting caught in

the vortex of imperialist wars, with the Marcos regime and the AFP being used by the US in its war provocations, while remaining spineless against Chinese aggression.

In the coming period, the NDFP must carry out widespread efforts to promote the people's patriotic spirit, and unite, galvanize and mobilize the broadest section of the people to defend the country against rising imperialist rivalries and threats of wars. Amid intensifying US imperialist military intervention and worsening forms of oppression and exploitation under the neoliberal policy regime, the NDFP must exert all efforts to more vigorously advance the national democratic revolution and the cause of national freedom and democracy.

THE CPP AND THE NDFP

On the initiative of the Party, the NDFP was formed on April 24, 1973, less than a year after the declaration of martial law by the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship. On that day, the NDFP Preparatory Commission issued the Manifesto "Unite to Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship" which included its 10-point program. Since then, the Filipino people have possessed three powerful weapons: the Party, the NPA and the NDFP.

During the entire course of the anti-dictatorship struggle, the NDFP and its program served as one of the most powerful beacons that guided the broad masses of the people in their march against the fascist regime and in their overall revolutionary resistance. Through the NDFP, a wide underground network of national democratic forces was built which served as solid core of the broad mass struggles against the dictatorship.

The manifesto and 10-point program of the NDFP quickly gained traction among the broad sections of the Filipino people and galvanized them to get organized and take action against the fascist regime. The NDFP initially brought together a number of organizations of youth and students,

women, peasants and other classes and sectors which were forced to go underground with the imposition of open fascist rule. Since 1973, the NDFP steadily expanded and is now composed of 18 underground organizations, namely: Communist Party of the Philippines, New People's Army, Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions, *Katipunan ng mga Samahang Manggagawa*, *Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid*, *Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan*, *Kabataang Makabayan*, *Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan*, *Makabayang Samahang Pangkalusugan*, *Liga ng Agham para sa Bayan*, *Lupon ng Manananggol para sa Bayan*, *Artista at Manunulat para sa Sambayanan*, *Makabayang Kawaning Pilipino*, *Compatriots – Revolutionary Organization of Overseas Filipinos and their Families*, *Christians for National Liberation*, *Cordillera People's Democratic Front*, *Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization*, and *Revolutionary Organization of Lumads*.

The NDFP is the most consolidated united front organization of the Filipino people. It binds together all the progressive classes and sectors in support of the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It is the political center of gravity of the various levels and forms of united front organization against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

In the course of waging protracted people's war, organs of political power at village or inter-village levels, as well as at municipal and inter-municipal and even district levels, have been built based on the organized strength of revolutionary mass organizations, the local Party organizations and armed strength of the New People's Army. These perform state functions including implementing land reform policies and programs, dispensing justice and resolving contradictions among the people, conducting education and health services. These organize and mobilize the people to wage widespread armed resistance against the reactionary state.

Taken together, all these comprise the embryo of the future People's Democratic Government of the Philippines, a united front of all progressive and patriotic classes based on the basic alliance of workers and peasants, and under the leadership of the proletariat. Until it is established on a nationwide scale, the PDG is represented by the NDFP.

Representing the PDG, the NDFP has established political, economic, military and proto-diplomatic relations with other entities. It has actively promoted international solidarity among anti-imperialist forces. Directly or indirectly, the NDFP has received quasi-state recognition by other governments or international entities.

Presently, two governments exist in the Philippine countryside: the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the PDG represented by the NDFP. The PDG is Red and revolutionary; the GRP is White and reactionary. Both sides are belligerents in the civil war of the past 54 years.

The NDFP has been conducting peace negotiations with the GRP since 1987. It has firmly and excellently represented the national and democratic interests of the

Filipino people, and frustrated the GRP's scheme to use peace negotiations as an instrument of deception and pacification. The negotiations have produced important agreements, foremost of which is the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The NDFP has clearly demonstrated its dedication to addressing the socioeconomic and political roots of the civil war, and in doing so, has drawn the support of broad segments of society to the cause of just and lasting peace.

RELEVANCE AND URGENCY OF THE NDFP'S 12-POINT PROGRAM

The 12-point program of the NDFP is a systematic expression of the Filipino people's collective aspiration for national freedom and democracy. It is the most superior of all programs of political parties and organizations in the Philippines.

The NDFP program is the anti-thesis of the neoliberal, anti-Filipino and anti-democratic policies and programs of the ruling Marcos fascist and puppet regime, as well as all previous regimes whether pseudo-democratic or tyrannical. It represents the interests of workers, peasants and all other exploited and oppressed classes of Philippine society as well as all progressive and patriotic forces, which are diametrically opposed to the interests of US imperialism, and the local ruling classes of big bourgeois compradors and big landlords.

The sharpening crisis of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system underscores the relevance and urgency of implementing the NDFP's 12-point program. Fifty years or so since the NDFP's program was drawn up, the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions in the Philippines remain qualitatively unchanged. It has only worsened quantitatively, with the Filipino



people suffering from conditions of oppression and exploitation far worse than ever before.

In the countryside, the problem of landlessness has become even more acute in the face of various forms of land grabbing and land dispossession by new and old type landlords, big bourgeois compradors and multinational corporations in mining, plantations, infrastructure, real estate, and so on. All over the country, the broad masses experience increasingly intolerable socioeconomic conditions amid low wages, loss of income, skyrocketing prices of fuel, food and basic commodities, joblessness, and dispossession. The ruling reactionary state has resorted to more brutal

fascist measures to suppress the people's resistance and preserve the ruling system.

Amid their gross economic conditions and political repression, the Filipino people are continually being drawn to the 12-Point Program of the NDFP as the most viable and direct solution to their pressing problems. The demand for genuine land reform and national industrialization is even more urgent in the face of the widespread destruction of productive forces in both cities and rural areas. The demand for a comprehensive and progressive social program is even more relevant amid the aggravation of the crisis of public health and public education. Every other item in the NDFP program is

in sharp contrast to the dark facets of the ruling system.

The prospect of establishing a new country where people enjoy genuine freedom and true democracy, and where they themselves benefit from the fruits of their labor, infuses them with revolutionary fervor and optimism and invigorates them to wage revolution.

The NDFP's program is a general reflection of the program for a people's democratic revolution of the Communist Party of the Philippine. In pursuing the Filipino people's struggle for genuine national freedom, the NDFP's 12-point program is historically linked to the old democratic revolutionary program of the Katipunan.

It serves to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution, and thus, create the conditions to carry forward socialist revolution and construction.

CURRENT BURNING ISSUES OF THE DAY UNDER THE MARCOS FASCIST AND PUPPET REGIME

The *de facto* Marcos fascist and puppet regime is currently the most concentrated expression of the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. It embodies the interests of US imperialism and that of the ruling exploiting classes; more specifically, that of the Marcos-Duterte ruling clique. Amid the crisis of the ruling system, the ruling Marcos-Duterte clique has become obsessed with monopolizing economic and political power, causing its isolation from the people, and generating rifts and rivalries within.

The current US-Marcos regime is causing the further aggravation of the economic and political crisis of the ruling system. Its anti-national and anti-democratic policies are most clearly demonstrated in the following four key issues:

- a. Heightening US military intervention in the Philippines. This is marked by US plans to build at least four more military bases and facilities under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). This is in addition to the already existing five military bases and facilities where the US prepositions weapons and stations American troops in the Philippines. The new military bases will be part of US plans to build a \$27.1 billion network of missile stations in the so-called “First Island Chain” of countries nearest China. This also forms part of continuing war provocations against China, centered on undermining the One China Policy and stoking calls for Taiwan Independence.

At the same time, the US is intensifying its counterrevolutionary war in the Philippines for suppressing the national democratic revolution by supplying weapons, funding and supporting the AFP’s counterinsurgency operations. The vain hope of the US imperialists is to crush the revolutionary armed struggle so that it can fully utilize or maximize its puppet armed forces in a possible armed confrontation with its imperialist rival China.

- b. Intensifying fascist suppression and state terrorism under the US-directed counterinsurgency operations. There is rampant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the AFP and Philippine National Police (PNP), including hamletting of communities, food blockades, indiscriminate firing of weapons, aerial and artillery bombing, extrajudicial killings, abductions, unlawful and unjust arrests, torture and other brutalities against civilians or non-combatants.
- c. Increasingly aggressive push for neoliberal policies and measures which worsen mass poverty and aggravate the socio-economic conditions of the people. These policies subject people to more severe forms of oppression and exploitation. The heightened drive to expand the operations of multinational corporations are causing widespread dispossession of peasants and fisherfolk, economic dislocation and destruction of productive forces. These further deepen the backward, agrarian and pre-industrial state of the Philippine economy, resulting in acute unemployment, low wages amid high prices, dependence on imports and foreign borrowing; and so on.



- d. Deepening crisis of the ruling political system. In the rush to maximize bureaucratic privilege, the ruling Marcos-Duterte clique is aggressively pushing efforts to monopolize political and economic power. The plan to amend the 1987 constitution clearly falls into the schemes to do away with provisions restricting powers to impose martial law and perpetuate the ruling clique in power. These machinations deepen rifts and rivalries among various cliques of the ruling classes. At the same time, conflicts between the Marcos and Duterte camps are also deepening as they rival over control of bureaucrat capitalist loot including control of the military, police and other key government agencies, pocketing bribes from government contracts, collection of protection money from smuggling and drug trafficking, and so on.

These issues underscore the moribund state of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system. Any of these or a combination of two or more factors can form the fulcrum of a sharp turn in the economic and political crisis, which in turn can stir the broad masses of the people and heighten their democratic and militant mass movement.

The explosive and destructive potency of these issues are also heightened by the continuing crisis of the international capitalist system, and growing prospects of another round of financial crisis, recessions and economic depression. Across the world, a surge in mass demonstrations is steadily developing in both the capitalist centers and in less developed semicolonial countries as oppressed and exploited classes resist worsening policies and imperialist wars.



THE ROLE OF THE NDFP IN THE DEVELOPING REVOLUTIONARY SURGE

The Communist Party of the Philippines continues to lead the Filipino people in waging national democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It is gratified to have as its allies the organizations and members affiliated with the NDFP.

Amid the sharp deterioration of the ruling system, rising inter-imperialist rivalries and increasing possibility of inter-imperialist war, the Party sees a forthcoming period of surge in the revolutionary armed struggle, mass movement in both the cities and countryside, and building the NDFP and other united front organizations. There are bright prospects for the revolutionary forces to achieve unprecedented strength in the coming period of growth.

The New People's Army is more than ever determined to carry out protracted people's war in the countryside. It has preserved and persevered along the path of revolutionary armed struggle, and continues to wage extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare on an ever widening and deepening mass base.

The revolutionary mass movement is bound to surge forward in the coming months and years. After a period of militarist lockdown during the pandemic, there is now a conspicuous rise in the level of economic and political

struggles of various sectors. There is the increasing tempo of workers' strikes and mass actions to demand higher wages, oppose gross working conditions and fight contractualization and other oppressive flexible labor schemes. The clamor to end agricultural liberalization and other oppressive neoliberal policies that cause land dispossession, rural bankruptcy and economic dislocation continue to unite and rouse peasant mass struggles alongside their demand for genuine land reform. The struggle against dams and other infrastructure projects, expansion of mining and plantation operations across the different regions continue to intensify. The broad masses of fisherfolk are coming together to resist destructive reclamation plans, and underwater mining by big foreign companies that cause their economic dislocation. The recent strike of jeepney and public utility drivers highlight how the semiproletarian masses are resisting oppressive socioeconomic policies and programs that take away their

livelihood. The militant and patriotic students and youth movement is bound to rise amid rising costs of education and state abandonment, as well as against heightened imperialist intervention.

Political repression and violations of civil and political rights continue to incite the people's outrage, condemnation and resistance. The responsibility of the US imperialists behind the war of suppression is being thoroughly exposed. The Filipino people's anger continue to rise against foreign plunder and destruction of the environment and people's livelihood by multinationals and its local agents, and against widespread corruption by big bureaucrat capitalists led by the Marcos-Duterte clique.

The NDFP and all its allied organizations must serve as the core of all-out efforts to unite, organize and rally all revolutionary, progressive and positive forces to build the broadest united front against US-Marcos regime as the most concentrated expression of all the social evils being suffered by the Filipino people, and to advance the people's war for national and social liberation.

We urge the NDFP and its allied organizations and other affiliates to carry out the

following tasks, campaigns, struggles and activities in the coming year, with the aim of broadening and strengthening the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal united front:

- a. Build the broadest alliance against the US-Marcos fascist regime. Expose and oppose Marcos' subservience to foreign economic interests. Expose, oppose and isolate the ruling Marcos-Duterte clique in its schemes to monopolize economic and political power. Expose the corruption of the ruling clique, including the machinations to recover the Marcos dynasty's ill-gotten wealth, diverting public funds to big bourgeois operations, smuggling behind the facade of import liberalization, and other schemes.
- b. Wage a campaign to expose and demand the dismantling of US military bases in the Philippines, the withdrawal of US troops, an end to US military intervention and war exercises, war provocations against China and funding of brutal counterinsurgency operations that violate the principle of non-interference. Call for the abrogation of the EDCA, the Visiting Forces Agreement, the Mutual Defense Treaty and all other unequal military treaties with the US. Demand the dismantling of Chinese military facilities and withdrawal of military forces, and a stop to the plunder of Philippine marine resources.
- c. Generate widespread support for the economic struggles against neoliberal policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization, especially for the workers' demand for wage increases. Draw broad support for the struggles for genuine land reform in the countryside, and against the entry of mining companies, expansion of plantations, ecotourism, dams and energy projects, and other programs that destroy the environment and people's livelihood. Oppose the imposition of onerous taxes and burdensome foreign debt payments.
- d. Build a broad anti-fascist united front. Expose widespread state terrorism, violations of human rights and attacks against civilians and civilian communities in violation of international humanitarian law,

especially violation of women and child rights. Demand a stop to indiscriminate and disproportionate use of aerial bombing and artillery shelling which endangers the lives of civilians. Expose the link between rising fascist repression and the aggressive neoliberal push to pave the way for foreign companies to plunder the country's resources, further pull down wages, grab land and dispossess the people.

e. Vigorously promote and carry out the NDFP's 12-Point Program through all possible forms and venues—from the academe to the slums, the factories and workplaces to the countryside. Actively develop a mass education, propaganda and cultural movement to reach out to the broad masses in their millions. Raise the people's knowledge and consciousness about the victories they have won in the past 54 years of revolutionary struggle, and the need

to bring forward the national democratic revolution to fruition to end their sufferings.


- f. Develop a vigorous organizing movement to achieve unprecedented expansion and growth of all NDFP allied organizations, and build new ones to represent other oppressed classes and sectors. Hold study meetings and special conferences and build their organizational structure. Produce new mass leaders capable of rousing the people in their numbers. Strengthen the revolutionary underground and ensure the formation of self-defense committees to secure all revolutionary forces.
- g. Strengthen the NDFP as an alliance. Raise the consciousness of the membership of allied organizations by carrying out internal education about the NDFP, its history and its work. Develop coordination and cooperation among the NDFP's allied

organizations. Strengthen their links with the NDFP's overseas office and support the work of the NDFP's international representatives.

- h. Generate widespread political and material support for the New People's Army. Actively recruit Red fighters from among workers, students, women and other sectors. Mobilize self-defense units to extend material, political, and intelligence assistance to local people's militia units and guerrilla units of the NPA.
- i. Continue to promote and represent the People's Democratic Government. Carry out an international campaign to promote the NDFP as representative of

the Filipino people. Continue to gather international support for the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation. Continue to build proto-diplomatic relations with countries and other international entities. Continue to promote the NDFP's commitment to a just and lasting peace.

- j. Help efforts in building and expanding anti-imperialist solidarity networks and alliances. Help build broad international alliances against imperialist wars. Extend solidarity support to the democratic mass struggles of workers, peasants and other toiling people, as well as revolutionary armed resistance in other countries.

The Central Committee of the CPP sees the NDFP playing a crucial role in the coming period of revolutionary resurgence. We are confident that all the NDFP's forces will continue to exert all efforts to rouse the people and shoulder the difficult tasks in waging all forms of patriotic and democratic resistance, generating widespread support for the people's war and carrying forward the national democratic revolution. 



**LONG LIVE THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC
FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES!
LONG LIVE THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY!
LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE PHILIPPINES!
LONG LIVE THE FILIPINO PEOPLE!**



CNL CELEBRATES 51ST YEAR AND NDFP'S 50TH YEAR WITH RENEWED VIGOR IN MAKING FAITH SERVE THE PEOPLE

by Pinky Ang

Mid-April, the height of feverish summer in the Philippines, groups with both young and old members from the religious sector started gathering since early in the morning inside a lush religious enclave in a big city. They came armed with food, statements from their groups, and memories and tributes for their departed comrades. In the gardens, the heavenly voices of a choir practising songs of the Philippine revolution greeted the arriving celebrants.

“Sister, are we in a guerrilla base? Is this a liberated area?” someone was heard joking. The singing went on until the hall prepared for the occasion became full of the expected participants. The “altar” in front was adorned with the Holy Cross, the Holy Bible, leafy plants, cloth, placards, and some books on the revolution released by the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The participants came to party or hold an unusual “holy” mass. They represented various groups whose members could not be present because they decided to limit the size of the gathering. After all, this is not a guerrilla base. The occasion: 51st anniversary celebration of CNL (Christians for National Liberation).

While living the revolution is no picnic, still, an anniversary celebration naturally entailed a happy sharing of food and conversation. A simple but loaded banquet filled a long table as everyone who arrived brought something. Pretty soon the half-day party turned into a celebratory mass, not just for the anniversary of CNL but also for the 50th anniversary of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). The CNL was founded on February 17, 1972, while the NDF was on April 24, 1973.

The CNL is a one of a kind organization—it is a revolutionary group of Christians with cells in the Philippines and abroad supporting armed struggle for national democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. The CNL is a founding member and a strong pillar of the NDFP. Its members come from Church people and lay persons in the cities and the countryside. Right at the start of the anniversary program, the CNL called its ranks to: Unite the Filipino people to fight for Philippine sovereignty amid heightening foreign intervention and rising threats of imperialist war! Carry out militant struggles to fight for the people’s national and democratic interests against the US-Marcos fascist regime!

As the celebration honored the CNL heroes and martyrs, the altar soon gained more flowers as participants gave tribute to comrades, lit candles as the chorale sang, and the youth chanted militant slogans in the crowd.

The celebration marked CNL’s 51 “years of journey” and was proud of what it has accomplished. Everyone was reminding each other to brace themselves and to go forth and multiply to better respond to threats and calls of the times. Mixed feelings

of joy and pride were shared alongside grief and inspiration for the honored comrades who gave their time, resources, and life to the revolution. The occasion included a summary discussion of CNL’s summing-up of its more than five-decade experience.

Cited in the summing-up were CNL’s significant contributions to the revolution along the lines of preparing guerrilla zones, instilling strong advocacy for human rights, encouraging more people to embrace the armed struggle, deploying members to be Red fighters, doing campaigns and organizing, and providing sanctuaries.

THE MASSES, REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIAN'S BROAD SOURCE OF BIBLE

In the ensuing discussions about their experiences, the members of CNL affirmed that as an institution the Church is basically reactionary and has aligned its interests with the ruling classes. Yet CNL has also found in the Bible the key to organizing among Church people and lay persons, bringing them to the side or path of revolution.

The CNL has sought links with basic sectors—the peasants, workers, urban poor—“without these we wouldn’t have turned revolutionaries,” they had said at the celebration.

“The masses of people are the broad source of the Bible. Christians can contextualize the teachings of the Bible to the here and now and actively work for the Kingdom of God on earth not just through attending holy masses,” said Renmin Malaya, spokesperson of CNL.



The CNL unfolded its experiences through the years, from the early years of the Marcos dictatorship to the time CNL rapidly expanded—with continuous “exposure” to the plight of the masses and in building of “church ministries” and various “desks” that advocate the issues of the basic sectors. Church people not only joined protests to oust the Marcos dictatorship; they also joined the New People’s Army and the NDFP.

Sr. Alice, a nun and long-time member of CNL who died in April 2022, was often heard saying, “*Huwag mo ihiwalay taong simbahan sa mahihirap* (Don’t separate the Church from the poor). The religious sector has multiple options; our convents offer us comfort and safety, but the flock is out there. And so we should go out to be with them.”

“*Hindi makatiis religious pag nasa harap na niya ang mga inaapi,*” this is a line comrade Sr. Alice was remembered, “Let them always have contact with the poor.”

To mark this year’s NDFP and CNL anniversaries, CNL held many forums and discussion groups across the country that tackled the NDFP 12-Point Program. Members also joined the lightning rally organized to celebrate the NDFP’s 50th year.

A representative of a CNL chapter could not have said this any better: “this is a celebration of our victories—in our Churches, in successfully establishing, maintaining or expanding our advocacies and services for the masses, and in giving tribute to our comrades who gave up their lives to the national democratic struggle.”



NARIRINIG KO MGA SINASABI NG MAGSASAKA, NAGPAPASALAMAT SA KANYA. LUMUBOG SIYA TALAGA SA MAGSASAKA.

I hear the farmers saying thanks to her. She truly immersed herself with the farmers.

At the double celebration of 51st anniversary of Christians for National Liberation (CNL) and 50th anniversary of the National Democratic Front (NDFP) held by members of CNL from various

chapters in Metro Manila, they remembered and honored their comrades. One of them was Sr. Laida, whose past was described above. Her life example was like a thread that also wove through the life stories of other CNL members honored that day. They died but were not yet collectively given tribute by the CNL members due to the lockdown and other restrictions imposed because of the pandemic.

In a program akin to collectively praying together, the CNL members recalled how, for much of her life as a nun, Sr. Laida trekked mountain trails to be in peasant communities. Having taken their struggles as her own, Sr. Laida helped organize women and coconut farmers in Batangas. For this, she was arrested in the 80s. After her release, the

injustice and further threats of that arrest did not stop her from doing mass work. On the contrary, it prodded her to help establish a human rights organization. Later, she helped facilitate and organize the victims of Martial Law to demand for indemnification from the Marcoses.

She continued organizing the farmers, helped resolve the issues arising from the coco levy fund, and joining campaigns for land reform. Sr. Laida died early this year still praying for justice for the farmers who were blatantly swindled and nearly bled dry with exactions by the Marcoses. The Marcoses and their cronies only used the funds for their own aggrandizement to the detriment of the coconut farmers.

With every fallen CNL member remembered and honored at the double anniversary celebration, the makeshift altar soon had more lit candles and flowers.

Another nun, Sr Roja, was like the famed movie character Sister Stella L to her comrades. She was a beauty even when she got older. She was a “free spirit” who loved people and being with the environment. She shared a lot of her experiences, stories, and insights that fellow

nuns said helped form the storyline of Sr Stella L, the movie.

Sr. Roja loved to remind her fellow religious about “always siding with the basic sector.” She was present when the religious sector supported the first workers’ strikes in 1975 that challenged the enforced silence in urban sector and labor movement during the first years of Martial Law. Her room at the convent was filled to the brim with books. She was fond of sharing books to friends especially when she found a really good read. Sr. Roja inspired her fellow nuns and members of CNL because she was someone who would strive to take the needed steps to be there no matter how far or how difficult the way was. Even when she got older and looked frail and was frequently dissuaded from going out due to health concerns, she managed to “escape” the convent to join protest actions against the Anti-Terror Act.

“To be a prophet of our times,” this, among others, are the memorable lines which the fallen CNL comrades had lived by including, too dramatically so, Sr. Puah—the first woman national leader of CNL. The gathered CNL members hailed her, recalling how they

“REVOLUTION IS A MASS UNDERTAKING”

called her a modern-day Apolinario Mabini when she attended the 8th General Assembly of the CNL and she was forced at some point to be carried by comrades on a hammock.

When Sr. Puah entered the convent, she did so driven by her strong love for the people and as preached by the Holy Bible. She practiced that love for her fellow men and women indeed. As a nun she actively joined the struggles of farmers, fisherfolk, and women, hoping their lives would get better.

Ka Puah’s involvement and the contradictions she faced to continue with her Christian and revolutionary mission starkly revealed the distinct character of the Church. The experience and summing up of the CNL showed that it is not that easy, it can even get confusing, for the Christians to follow the Christian faith when such faith led them to join or support the national democratic revolution. On one hand,

“THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS NOT A HINDRANCE BUT AN INSPIRATION IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE.”

the Christian faith and the prophetic words do not substantially differ from the revolutionary aspirations outlined by the NDFP’s 12-Point Program. On the other hand, the Church as an institution is reactionary.

Among the CNL’s enshrined lessons learned from their summing up of experiences is: “The Christian faith is not a hindrance but an inspiration in the revolutionary struggle.” As in the experience of Jesus Christ who was taunted, tempted, and tortured on His way to leading the people toward salvation, so do the revolutionary Christians trod a challenging road. They have seen many times in experience that

despite mouthing love for the people, the Church is basically a reactionary institution because its interest has aligned with that of the ruling class. The Church itself has massive landholdings and businesses (that included schools and universities). It has interests to protect and that interest prompts it to help the masses that populate the church yet at the same time bless the masses’ oppressors and exploiters.

The tribute given to Ka Puah exemplified the Christian revolutionaries’ struggle within and outside the Church. The CNL acts on the liberating aspect of Church teachings but, conscious of its reactionary character, its mission and action include the determined efforts to bring the Church as close as possible to the people.

For having done that with large results, Ka Puah encountered a difficult ultimatum akin to what the lead heroine encountered in telenovela: she got pressured and issued an ultimatum by the strict “parents” to stop or limit her relationship with the masses. “*Kilusan o kongregasyon?* (The movement or the congregation?).”

She opted to continue fighting with the poor.

Sr. Agnes, teacher to prep students, responded to the call as early as the days of Martial Law to go out of the secure, cold walls of the convent and integrate with the masses. At first, she hesitated. The convent is synonymous to comfort. Out there is ugly and scarring poverty. But her commitment developed to the point that during Martial Law, she happily participated in mass demonstrations. She experienced running from attacking police and from time to time, inadvertently got separated from her shoes.

INTEGRATION WITH THE POOR, THE REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIAN’S BIBLE OUT THERE

Sr. Agnes was most vocal at recognizing how the multiple options and comforts in the Church could inure the sector to the plight of the poor. Hence, she would say, *“Huwag mo ihiwalay taong-simbahan sa mahihirap* (Do not separate the Church people from the poor).”

“Let them interact with the poor always.” Sr. Agnes had faith in the people and the religious sector, even as she recognized the Church’s reactionary character while continuing to work with the masses. *“Hindi makakatiis ang mga religious pag nasa harap na niya ang mga inaapi* (The religious cannot turn its back when faced by those who are oppressed).” At the same time, she recognized that they too suffer the pains of being ostracized in Church.

Sr. Agnes helped form support groups for the oppressed like the urban poor.

Reverend Joshua, a CNL and NDFP member for 39 years, was also honored by his fellow CNL members. He died late 2022, leaving not just his 10-year-plus savings to support and cherish the red fighters but also a memory of a cheerful pastor who opened his home and shared his laughter and resources to his fellow revolutionaries. (Read: *Joshua’s Treat on Page 32*)

His years as pastor and a revolutionary gave the CNL another rich trove of examples in doing their share to strengthen the national democratic revolution. There were priests and pastors, deaconesses and lay missionaries who joined mass organizations and the Red army. Brother Joshua helped organize CNL chapters in the country and abroad, and all the while, consistently strove to push for “Cherish the Army” projects.

Celebrating anniversaries of revolutionary organizations such as the CNL and the NDFP can both be solemn and fun, full of reminiscing for the years that passed, and how long they have all travelled.

GAINING STRENGTH TO BETTER WAGE THE REVOLUTION

“We celebrate our victories (victories in securing positions of authority in the Church, victories in mass campaigns), improving services for the people and fellow revolutionaries, honoring our comrades who are physically no longer with us,” a representative of a CNL chapter said during the program. All these can inspire and energize the CNL and in helping the NDFP advance its 12-Point Program. It can also help them overcome some weaknesses, tendencies that hinder their revolutionary work, fear, or succumbing to weariness.

With a salute to the religious honored at the 51st anniversary of one of the strongest underground mass organizations allied with the NDFP, a CNL chapter representative shared their group’s calls, *“Ibayo nating palakasin ang ating mga sarili hanggang makamit ang tagumpay at inaasam na paglaya* (Let us strengthen ourselves until liberation.)”



AN AWFUL REPRISE OF BUREAUCRAT CAPITALIST ABUSE

by Pinky Ang

The Filipino burcap (bureaucrat capitalism) is back to its most predictable, true-to-form mold with Ferdinand Marcos Jr at the helm. He clearly adheres to the exploitative oppressive class. Of course most of his predecessors also did. And, like them, he also pretended to be close with the masses at least from the campaign period to the start of his term.

Once in power, Marcos Jr has maintained his dynasty’s tack of deodorizing its record rights violations and plunder. He extolled his father’s regime while glossing over his own lackluster achievements. With billions of inherited loot, his stint in Malacañang is a product of his dictator father’s “legacies,” which they promoted through three decades of disinformation and patronage politics as they parried criminal charges.

They even brought bureaucrat capitalism to another worsening level: While business was usual in serving their imperialist master and their own landlord-comprador clique, they have shed a lot of its democratic pretensions and become more and more blatant.

As president, Marcos Jr still uses expensive brands, gilds himself and often flies to posh gatherings of the rich and powerful like the filthy rich second-generation scion that he is. Unlike other descendants of former puppet presidents who also made it to Malacañang, he has not waded (yet) through the floods like Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to feign being with the masses during disasters. He has not, nor can he, as of now, claim as pompously as Benigno Aquino Jr's words something that sounded like *daang matuwid* (straight path) or *walang bahid* (not tainted).

On the contrary, Marcos Jr has a task cut out for him by his dynastic family and cronies— capping the grand expunging of his parents' bloody and plundering history. Worse, going beyond whitewashing, his administration is trying to misrepresent their political record as if it was logo-certified good.

More than a year into his term as the latest chief of bureaucrat capitalists in the Philippines, what are his glaring "achievements," so far? Here, sans rank, are the most obvious that the people would punish him and his family for, had there been genuine democracy in the country.

1. BANKRUPTING, SELLING OUT THE ECONOMY AS THEY ENRICH THEIR CLIQUE

Reforms that would benefit and mobilize the people for development, for example land reform, national industrialization, independent foreign policy, wage increase, and genuine democratization as guaranteed in the 12-point program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines are all exact opposites of the programs being pursued by US-Marcos 2 regime.

Due to failed imperialist neoliberal programs, many by now already realize the worsening state of life and livelihood of the Filipino masses. No matter how puppet governments try to garnish their reports, the fact remains the Philippines is rich in resources but only a few get richer from these. Government policies frustrate industrialization in favor of compradors' and landlords' import-export ventures with imperialists or monopoly corporations. As if these aren't enough, even agriculture is currently being throttled by import liberalization.

The result: prices go up, yet wages and income stay low. Job generation is an annual failure. There is little to no affordable, accessible social and health services. Neoliberal "reforms" increasingly privatized or deregulated these for profit rather than for public service.

There is no respite from all these under Marcos Jr. On the contrary, his administration is misspending public funds just to update the branding of all the failed neoliberal programs started by his ignominiously ousted dictator father. He is merely continuing and intensifying the implementation of these neoliberal programs.

Marcos Jr's administration has already added one trillion pesos to Philippine debt on its first year. Inflation rate during its first year has, for most months, stayed at nearly 8 to 10 percent, pushed up by rising prices of vegetables, rice, fish, meat, sugar and other foodstuff, plus the ever increasing prices of deregulated oil products.

Farmers continue struggling for the land they till, but their fight is becoming harder amid incessant land use conversion and fierce price competition brought

by imported and smuggled agricultural products. For years now peasant groups have raised the alarm at the declining food security of the country, no thanks to government's import-addicted programs, onerous trade deals, and neglect.

But true to his class, Marcos Jr pursues the same track of liberalizing imports of agricultural products, selling off the minerals and forests to mining companies, expanding plantations and increasing its tax base while offering tax cuts to billionaires and big investors. His regime is ruling beyond the country's means by some four billion pesos every day, as such piling on public debts. His administration is also trying to push for constitutional change to further clear the way to selling the country's resources.



He tried to earn brownie points for approving a moratorium on land amortization by agrarian beneficiaries. However, the most crucial program the country needs is genuine agrarian reform, topbilled by free land distribution, as embodied in the NDFP 12-point program for which it continues to gather support. But Marcos Jr not only completely ignored this. He engages in what he and the imperialist US call "counter-insurgency" and sabotage the implementation of agrarian revolution in guerrilla zones led by the Communist Party of the Philippines. In urban areas, anybody who advocates genuine land reform runs the risk of being labelled as "terrorist."

Clearly the path Marcos Jr takes is headed towards further sinking the country into underdevelopment and perpetual control of imperialist countries and its corporations. This hugely benefits the few big landlords and bourgeois compradors that profit most as trade partners, agents or representatives of monopoly corporations and local cartels. There appears no limit to Marcos Jr ilk's shamelessness, insensitivity to the needs of the masses and brutality toward the people's own efforts to build a truly democratic government.

Instead, Marcos Jr boasts of "achievements" he should be ashamed of.

MAHARLIKA FUNDS FOR MARCOS PRIORITY PROJECTS

It is not without basis to assume that Marcos Jr's Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF) would be diverted into crony-desired investments. Peasant groups likened Maharlika Fund to the coco levy fund, a grand scam perpetrated by the Marcos dictatorship that enriched it and cronies such as Danding Cojuangco and Juan Ponce Enrile since the 70s. To this day the coconut farmers have yet to enjoy the fruits of their "coco"ntributions.

The MIF has been heavily criticized since it was first proposed. Yet, it was railroaded for approval before Marcos Jr's second State of the Nation Address.

Said to be a sample of Marcosian corruption, the Fund's passage reveals the utter shamelessness and parasitism of the bureaucrat capitalist class. It takes away funds from state-owned banks and finance corporations that are earmarked for the people and straight into Marcos Jr and cronies' self-aggrandizing investment projects.

Over-all, the bureaucrat capitalists led by Marcos Jr do not seem satiated with loots from commissions and *tongpats* or SOPs in government projects and brokered loans and acquisitions. They still think of myriad ways to loot the people's coffers to produce this sovereign fund.

BLOATED LUMP SUMS, CONFIDENTIAL FUNDS

Another source of corruption are confidential funds and other lump sums in the national budget that are getting bigger and bigger and beyond audit scrutiny. Misspending the country's budget on greatly bloated debt-servicing, military spending and image-building projects seemed not enough. The bureaucrat capitalists also routinely dip their hands on "special purpose funds" and lately, bigger "confidential and intelligence funds."

The president and chief bureaucrat capitalist often gets the biggest pork of all, or as one Makabayan lawmaker dubs it, "the biggest pork barrel in Philippine history." Under his discretion, Marcos Jr asked for Php 2.398 trillion special purpose funds for 2024, which is 41 percent of the entire proposed budget. In 2022, pork was 35 percent of the budget; in 2023, 38.6 percent. His ally and vice-president Sara Duterte is just as shameless in lapping up lump sums and confidential intelligence funds.

In recent years, bureaucrat capitalists were getting bolder at increasing their pork. Under Benigno Aquino Jr, the greed seemed forcibly moderated after millions of people protested against pork,

then being collected and/or repackaged under Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP). But, just a few years later, politicians charged with corruption and scams were freed one by one under Rodrigo Duterte. Then, lump sums as well as diversion of funds, also got bigger again.



2. "IRONCLAD" SERVILITY TO IMPERIALISTS, ESPECIALLY THE US

The NDFP's 12-point program unites an increasing number of Filipinos and groups behind an independent foreign policy. But the Marcos Jr's administration exhibits the worst mendicancy to the imperialists, especially the long-running master of neocolonial regimes in these shores, the United States.

The Marcos family's mutually beneficial relationship with the imperialist US is tried and tested. The Filipino people will never forget stark scenes such as the Marcoses and part of their ill-gotten wealth being hastily plucked out of Malacanang in 1986

and evacuated to Hawaii by the US while the angry people who rushed into the palace were stomping on pictures of the Marcoses.

Today the imperialist US is no longer the lone hegemonic superpower. International activists observe that it is already "in a panic mode" amid challenges from rival imperialists such as China. What media reports noted as Marcos Jr's "pivoting back" to the traditional ally, the United States, is actually Marcos Jr's unabashed rolling out of the red carpet for their imperialist master. The Marcoses never really turned their backs against the US. Even ex-president Duterte who kissed China's ass for investments and publicly lambasted the US never stopped the implementation of unequal treaties, like the Visiting Forces Agreement, with imperialist US.



To keep the US, Marcos Jr accedes more to US demands. As the US now seeks to keep its claws on the Indo-Pacific and counter rivals as China, Marcos Jr has, in his first year in office, already welcomed bigger and more frequent "joint" military exercises between US and Philippine forces.

New military deals and agreements are being forged and strengthened between the US and the Philippines. The most far-reaching so far was a new defense agreement signed in early 2023 that continues to favor the US under the 1950 Mutual Defense Treaty. The deal allows the US to almost double the number of their "military facilities" inside Philippine bases, from five since 2014 to nine. The deal also pushes the Philippines to enter into agreements or conduct war games with other US treaty partners in the region such as Japan, Australia, and South Korea.

Despite all these, the US-Marcos 2 regime has failed to defend the Philippines or its people. The fisherfolk who are mostly disadvantaged by the Chinese militarization of the West Philippine Sea get lame support from the government, if at all. Filipinos continue to lose precious fishing grounds and sovereignty. Not only is the Marcos Jr regime weakly and ineffectively countering China's intrusion in the Philippines' exclusive economic zones. It has also surrendered the country's sovereignty to the US by practically lifting the constitutional ban on foreign military basing and no-entry of nuclear arms.

Marcos Jr's servitude to the US and tacit surrender to China allow him to hold on to power and block rival dynasties of bureaucrat capitalists. However, the Filipino masses will not be sitting by and submitting blindly while they bear the loss not just of fishing grounds, marine resources and forest reserves, but also the danger of being caught between the war of contending imperialists.

Of late, the Filipino people are also losing public funds to military base-building, overpriced yet obsolete military "modernization" and the likely SOP overprice in acquisition deals. Apparently to please the US, Marcos Jr is scuttling Duterte's previous deals to acquire military hardware from non-US allies (for example, helicopters from Russia), at the cost of forfeiting billions in downpayments.

3. GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS


Increase in military spending is not only costly or a drain in the budget. Worse, it is used against the people, particularly the efforts to empower themselves and/or build their genuine democratic government. Today, the Marcos Jr regime represents the fiercest class enemy of the national democratic revolution. Guided and supported by the US through joint military operations and cooperation deals, the regime continues to target, vilify (by red-or terrorist tagging), bomb, wound or kill, imprison or weaponize the laws against the masses, revolutionaries, critics, and activists.

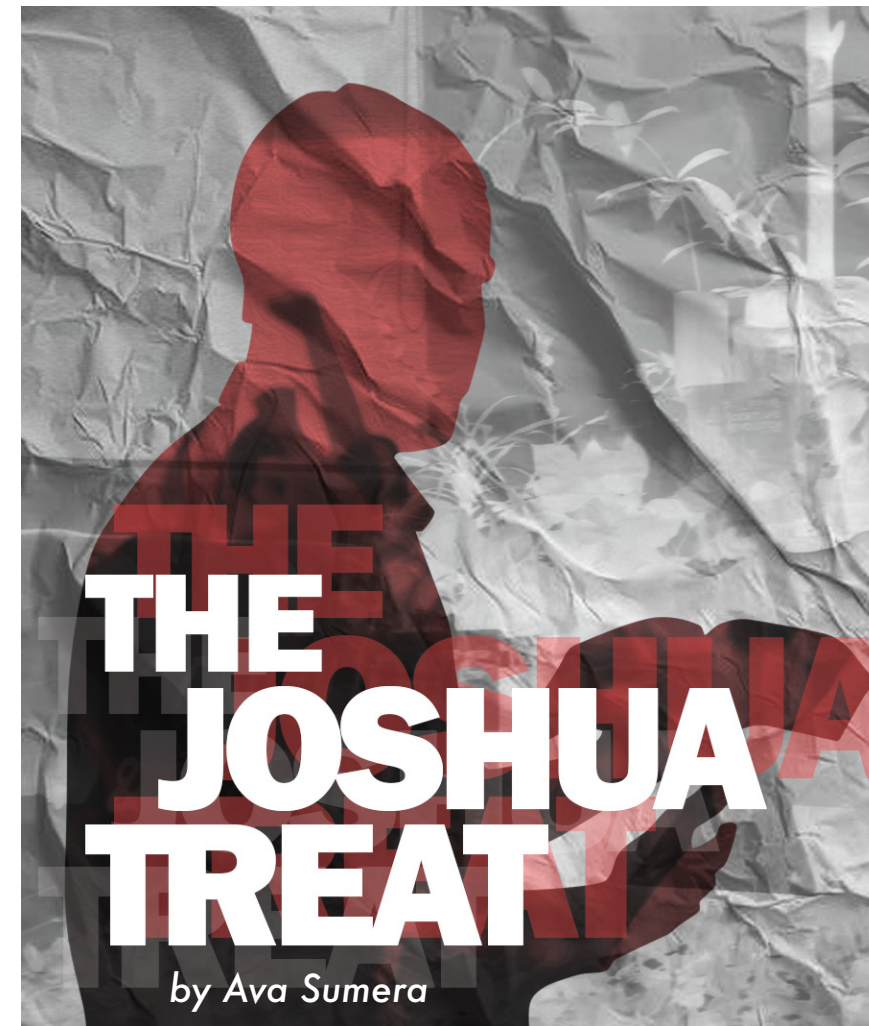
Under Marcos Jr, the vice president, who is also heir to Duterte's fascist tendency and duplicity, has also become notorious in being blatantly anti-poor and continues to enable acts of harassment, abduction and killings of activists and revolutionaries, even to the extent of bombing communities suspected as revolutionary areas, especially in her province. Like its predecessors, this regime's mantra to hide its own accountability and responsibility in the continuing

sufferings of the people is to blame the Reds. Hence, the repeated terrorist-tagging of the CPP, NPA, and the NDFP and their allied organizations. But the masses know better.

Ultimately what the Marcos Jr regime draws is the people's outrage towards its servitude and puppetry to US imperialists, its shamelessness in worsening bureaucrat capitalism, its utilization of feudalism—all to serve the needs of the ruling class. From the father to the son, Tatak Marcos is an appropriate logo for one who has not moved away nor learned from the fiasco of his dictator father and yet still dreams of nipping the revolution in the bud.

The more this regime runs roughshod over the interest of the Filipino masses, the more the masses embrace the national democratic revolution and its program. Since the revolution started in the late sixties and bloomed to where it is today, it is clearer to the masses who their real enemies are, who the real terrorists are, and the real roots of the problems besetting the country.

Like his ousted dictator father, Marcos Jr, the country's chief bureaucrat capitalist, could end up simply following the legacy of his father becoming the biggest recruiter for the revolutionary movement. 



A regional leader of Christians for National Liberation (CNL), Joshua lived and worked with his wife and children in the United States for nearly 20 years. He was a pastor for decades in the Philippines and in the US. To be with his family and pursue doctoral studies, he left the Philippines in 2003. At the time, the then President Gloria Arroyo's "war on terror"

and butcher generals exemplified by Jovito Palparan were starting to wreak a bloody trail across the country.

Despite having flown into another country, Joshua continued to organize, mobilize, and strengthen the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) through his active involvement in one of its allied organizations, the CNL. As such, even in the home territory of the

MAGBABAWI (TO RECOMPENSE OR TO RECOVER), JOSHUA TOLD LIBERATION. THIS WAS ONE OF HIS STATED MISSIONS IN COMING TO THE PHILIPPINES IN 2022.

Philippines' neocolonial master, Joshua pressed on with organizing work among Filipinos living and working there.

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

This country is regarded as the land of milk and honey, the place where the poor can get rich, according to the cultural offensives dished out 24/7 to the world by

the imperialist US. But the truth is stranger. As imperialism goes moribund, the US continues to fail in grappling with depression and financial crunches. The lives of the working class there have been worsening. The capitalists are always on the lookout for increasing their share in surplus values, depressing the workers' wages which only further deepen stagnation. For migrants, their rights and wages are worse. They are not only the imperialists' scapegoats to deflect the hatred of the domestic workers; they are also used as the imperialist's backup to

force the domestic workers to accept lower wages. "Dami nag-US na Pinoy na educated (or professional), nako-convert as worker," Joshua said. In terms of status, this represents a downward rather than an upward mobility. But, in terms of income, when compared to the uber-low wages in the Philippines, the migrant Filipinos view the hundreds of dollars as monthly wage a significant improvement.

Coming to North America, it is like "the 'ultimate dream,' thus the shift in thinking and lifestyle" of

our fellow Filipinos once they migrated. Joshua noted that in Los Angeles alone, the Philippines' flag-carrier ferries many Filipinos four times daily. That much number of Filipinos flies to the "states."

But, when they arrive in the US, even with their "ongoing chain of memories" from their home country, Joshua encountered difficulties in organizing them.

He said that their organizing work more easily finds traction with those who have also experienced being part of the national democratic

movement in the Philippines at various points in their lives.

Lack of time is the biggest hindrance in holding meetings. Because, to cope with life in the US while still sending money back home, migrants hold three to four jobs.

Even those who were organized in the Philippines before they migrated tend to get "bourgeoisified," Joshua sighed. The drive for improving credit-worthiness brought them to multiple jobs and away from meetings and conducting mass work among fellow Filipinos.

“THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE SHOULD BE REMINDED 10 TIMES A DAY TO SHED OFF THEIR PETTY BOURGEOISIE ORIGIN AND PURSUE THE PROLETARIAN WAY OF LIFE,” JOSHUA ADDED.

Still, persistence helped Joshua and his fellow revolutionaries among migrants such that in 2021, during the 48th anniversary of the NDFP, they succeeded in forming a chapter of the CNL in the US. Before long,

they expanded and consolidated their network and their members and allies have connections up to the Churches' seats of power.

FINDING HAPPINESS IN CONTINUING REVOLUTIONARY AND CHURCH WORK

Despite the challenges of finding common time to hold meetings, Joshua happily shared some achievements they had. Top of the list was their summing up of their revolutionary work in the Church. They were able to hold study sessions of revolutionary courses. Together they also celebrated anniversaries of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the NDFP.

Asked what his most memorable feeling was amid this challenging organizing work while in the US, Joshua immediately



thought of the joyful feeling he would usually get each time they welcomed a new member into the organization. How joyful? “*Nag-uumapaw pag may na-transform,*” (overflowing whenever one gets transformed).

Joshua said one of his realizations during these years of organizing and holding campaigns in the US in support of various campaigns in the Philippines is being conscious and deliberate in ensuring to organize within the more comprehensive framework of the national democratic revolution with socialist perspective. With this, comrades who have no problem understanding the revolution can also understand the links between, say, lobbying in the US and revolutionary base-building in the Philippines.

The NDFP program “makes (organizing) work easier,” said Joshua.

Looking at the experience of the CNL chapter in the US, Joshua said they have successfully generated support for the revolution in the Philippines. They have been responding to solid calls. But, Joshua hoped they can sustain a continuing support—not only during anniversaries of the NPA or the CPP.

INSIGHTS, WISHES FOR CNL

Joshua, whose father worked in a missionary school, was born in Marawi. When he was five years-old, his family moved to Cotabato where he grew up until he left for college in a state university.

“I am so blessed to have grown up in a family with a strong sense of justice and value for hard work,” Joshua said. In an interview at the sidelines of the 9th CNL

Assembly, he paid homage to his family, the Filipino masses, and the comrades who he said gave him revolutionary consciousness.

He was in high school when Ferdinand Marcos Sr imposed Martial Law. In October 1972, Joshua was shaken by events that would later be recorded in history as the Palimbang Massacre, where 1,500 people were reported killed.

In Mindanao, he saw soldiers of the Philippine government getting drunk and molesting the women everyday.

Joshua witnessed his two elder brothers being forced to jump around as soldiers rained bullets on the ground where they stood.

“Search, kill and destroy,” was the command he heard given to the soldiers, who, in turn, accosted the Muslim communities, terrorized the women and children and grabbed whatever valuables they could steal.

Joshua admired and respected his father for speaking out when he cannot tolerate the abuses being perpetrated around him.

In the 80s while in college, Joshua joined the *Kabataang Makabayan*. Decades later, Joshua was with the CNL, telling *Liberation* in an interview how the youth are more receptive to organizing; how, in the US, the women and the LGBTQ are also more active and receptive. He thus urged for more efforts to organize them.

Joshua paid homage also to what he called the new breed of comrades who are adept at using the social media. At the same time, he cautions the comrades to “properly direct” the use of social media, as there is “no substitute *sa face to face na*

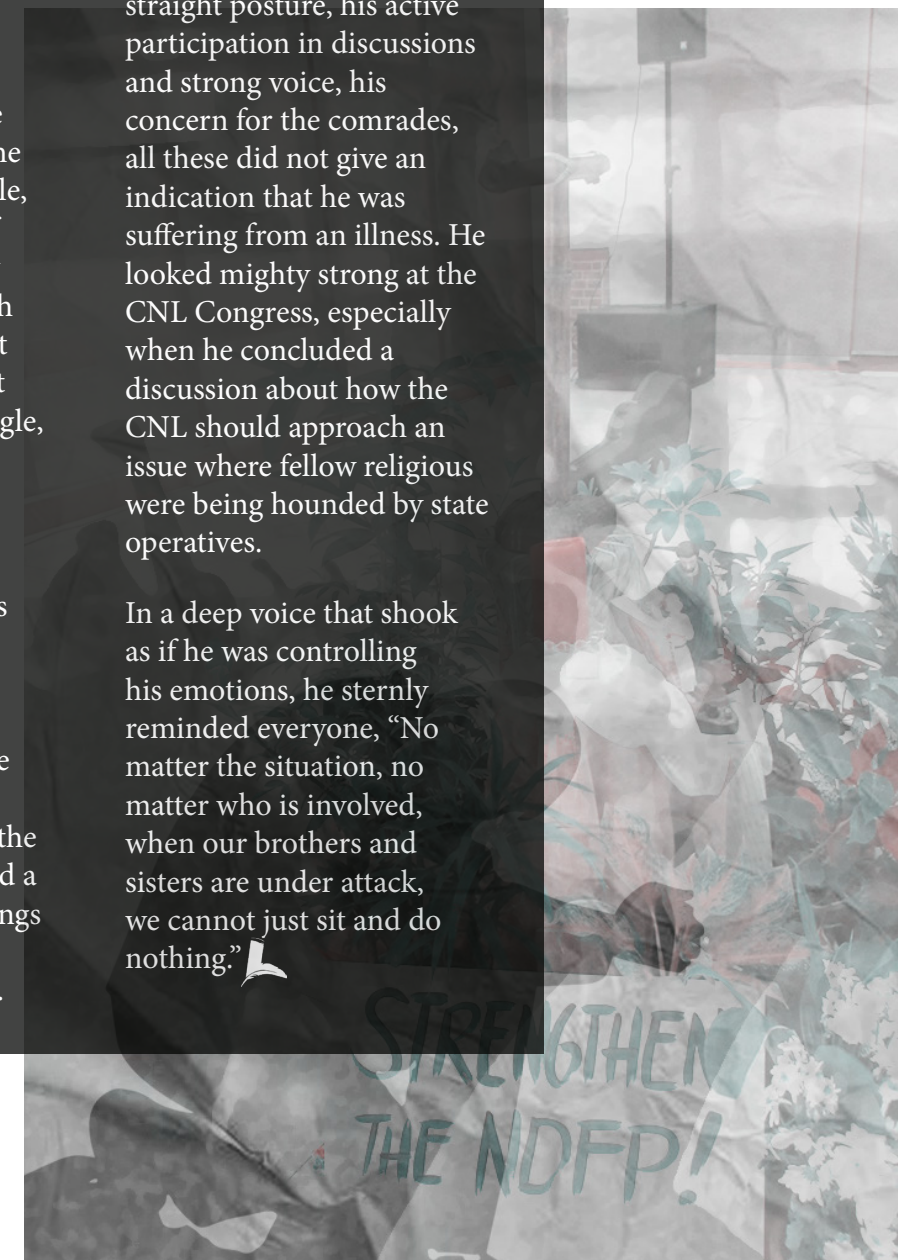
interaction *sa mga inoorganisa.*”

About the Congress of the CNL, he told us with an understanding smile, he hoped the CNL can fully interweave its theology and revolutionary ideology. He believes the people are our revolution’s no. 1 resource. “*Wala pa rin ako nakikitang iba task kundi ilapit ang Church sa mga tao, maging buhay ang pananampalataya.*” (I see no other task but bring the Church close to the people, make our faith alive.) If the Church’s faith is truly expressed, it will side with the people. It will support and join the revolution, it will help the armed struggle, and it will help generate resources for revolution.

Indeed, we heard Joshua and fellow CNL members from the US had sent resources in many ways to help comrades in the Philippines. On top of the years he devoted to help strengthen the CNL and the NDFP, he also bequeathed a huge part of his own savings through the years to the revolutionary movement.

Para magbawi? (To recompense, to recover?) Unfortunately we cannot ask for clarifications anymore how exactly to translate this? Joshua passed away months after this interview. Even if he told *Liberation* towards the end of this interview that this is to be expected, his smile, his twinkling eyes, his straight posture, his active participation in discussions and strong voice, his concern for the comrades, all these did not give an indication that he was suffering from an illness. He looked mighty strong at the CNL Congress, especially when he concluded a discussion about how the CNL should approach an issue where fellow religious were being hounded by state operatives.

In a deep voice that shook as if he was controlling his emotions, he sternly reminded everyone, “No matter the situation, no matter who is involved, when our brothers and sisters are under attack, we cannot just sit and do nothing.”





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