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BAGONG PILIPINAS, SAME OLD STORY



Editorial

Bagong Pilipinas, Same Old Story

The 2025 State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered by Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. was, as expected, a circus of illusions and empty promises meant to deodorize the rotting carcass of a state in deep crisis. Marcos Jr. touted supposed economic growth, foreign investment inflows, and infrastructure projects as signs of a “Bagong Pilipinas.” But beneath the rhetoric lies the enduring reality of a semicolonial and semifeudal state, ruled by a corrupt and fascist regime fully subordinated to US imperialist interests.

More than anything else, Marcos Jr.’s SONA was a report card to his US masters and to the local ruling classes, signaling that the Philippine reactionary state remains open for plunder and repression, and that the US-Marcos regime remains committed to its historic role as a puppet of US imperialism.

Bureaucrat capitalist corruption in full display

Marcos Jr., heir to a political dynasty that once pillaged billions from the Filipino people, stands as the current representative of the ruling class, with full use of state power to serve the interests of big landlords, comprador bourgeoisie, and transnational corporations, especially in mining, energy, and agribusiness. Since Marcos Jr. came to power, the personal wealth of the country’s top three billionaires – Manny Villar, Ramon Ang, and Enrique Razon – has surged by 50 to 100%, a staggering indicator of how state policy has been designed to concentrate wealth further into the hands of the big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie.

Massive infrastructure allocations under his “Build Better More” program primarily benefit real estate tycoons and logistics magnates through sweetheart deals, land speculation, and right-of-way arrangements. The Maharlika Investment Fund redirects taxpayer money and state pension funds into opaque ventures, likely to serve as slush funds for his cronies. Meanwhile,

public-private partnership schemes transfer risk to the state and guarantee profits for private capital. Budget allocations for military operations, intelligence, and confidential funds totaling billions of pesos, serve both to fortify the fascist machinery of the state and to grease the hands of loyal generals, legislators, and contractors. This systematic funneling of public wealth to private pockets is a defining feature of bureaucrat capitalism in full display under the Marcos Jr. regime.

At one point, Marcos Jr. dramatically castigated unnamed officials for their role in corruption-tainted and poorly executed flood control projects. As the putative head of the GPH, Marcos Jr. cannot wash his hands of his regime’s failures by scapegoating his own appointees. His finger-pointing only exposes his inability to take accountability, even as successive typhoons disproportionately affect the urban poor and rural communities left at the margins of the reactionary state’s priorities.

Marcos boasted about billions in foreign investment pledges, but did not say a word about the mass dislocation of the national minority, farmers, and urban poor communities that these projects entail. He celebrated inflation “control” and agricultural production increases while peasants suffer under rising input costs, rice import dependency, and landlessness.

Marcos also boasted of accelerating land title distribution to farmers, claiming that the administration is committed to ensuring that “those who till the land must own it.” In truth, 68% of the land titles distributed under his term fall under the parcelization of collective Certification of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) through the World Bank-funded SPLIT program which does not transfer new lands to the landless, but merely fragments previously awarded lands, weakening collective landholding and allowing more maneuver



space for landlords to reconcentrate ownership back to their hands. Meanwhile, the much-hyped New Agrarian Emancipation Act has benefited only a fraction of the country's farmers, and even then, primarily through token debt condonation rather than any substantive transfer of land ownership. None of these schemes amount to genuine agrarian reform, which demands free land distribution and sufficient support services.

Similarly hollow was Marcos Jr.'s claim of creating more employment opportunities for Filipinos. But without national industrialization, the jobs generated are largely low-wage, temporary and informal – lacking job security and social protections. Many of the country's newly graduated students find themselves either unemployed or underemployed, trapped in contractual service jobs or pushed toward informal gig work. For an increasing number of Filipinos, the only viable option remains to migrate abroad under an expanding and exploitative labor export program that commodifies Filipino labor while absolving the state of its responsibility to build a self-reliant economy.

Still a puppet of US imperialism

Despite his rhetoric of an "independent foreign policy," Marcos Jr. has firmly re-entrenched the Philippines within the neocolonial grip of US imperialism. While he waxed poetic about national sovereignty, the reality is that the Philippines today is being transformed into a forward military base for US war efforts in the Asia-Pacific.

His regime has aggressively expanded military, economic, and political ties with the US, and allowed the construction of four additional Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites (bringing the total to nine), strategically placed across Northern Luzon, Palawan, and other key areas that place the Philippines within striking distance of China. These sites are not for "humanitarian assistance" or "disaster preparedness" as they claim, but are forward-operating bases for US

military assets, prepositioned weapons, and logistical operations in preparation for future conflict in the Asia Pacific. The regime's treachery deepened further with the approval of an ammunition manufacturing facility in Subic Bay, effectively turning Philippine territory into a military production zone in service of US war efforts.

Beyond military subservience, Marcos Jr. also acted as Trump's economic lapdog. In a humiliating display of neocolonial servitude, Marcos Jr. "negotiated" with Donald Trump to reduce US tariffs on Philippine exports down from 20% to 19% - a measly 1% reduction in exchange for the entry of US cars, pharmaceuticals, wheat and soy products tariff-free into the Philippine market. While the US protects its own industries and sets the terms of "free trade," the Marcos regime willingly dismantles what little remains of the country's manufacturing, agriculture, and health sovereignty. It further opens the door for a flood of cheap US goods that will severely displace local producers, farmers, and small businesses, all while deepening dependency on imperialist supply chains.

Marcos Jr. continues to uphold the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), and other lopsided military and economic arrangements that keep the Philippines under US tutelage. While waving the flag of his so-called Bagong Pilipinas, Marcos Jr. is in fact deepening the country's role as a pawn in the brewing war between US and China. He willingly places the Filipino people at risk of inter-imperialist conflict, offering our lands, labor, and lives in service of a war that does not serve the Filipino people's interests.

Consolidation of fascist rule


Perhaps the most dangerous element of Marcos Jr.'s regime is its consolidation of fascist rule. While dressed in democratic garb, the reactionary state today is actively suppressing and criminalizing dissent, and militarizing civilian governance.

The SONA did not mention the thousands of political prisoners languishing in jails, the red-tagging of journalists, environmentalists, labor leaders, and indigenous defenders, or the continuing extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of activists. The Anti-Terrorism Council wields arbitrary powers to silence critics, and the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) is a tool of terror, corruption, and repression.

Under the gloss of “peacebuilding” and “development”, Marcos Jr.’s National Action Plan for Unity, Peace and Development (NAP-UPD) is nothing more than a rebranded blueprint modeled after the US Counterinsurgency Guide meant to crush the revolutionary armed movement. It continues the legacy of the “whole-of-nation” approach, mobilizing civilian agencies, local government units, and even schools and religious institutions as instruments of military intelligence and psychological warfare.

What made Marcos Jr.’s SONA particularly laughable (if not outright delusional) was his claim that “no more guerilla fronts exist” – which is easily disproven by the successive tactical offensives of the New People’s Army (NPA) in recent times across Mindanao, Bicol, Eastern Visayas, and Southern Tagalog, among other regions. Instead of diminishing, the armed revolutionary movement continues to expand its ranks, gain political strength, and consolidate revolutionary bases in the countryside.

Toward genuine liberation

The revolutionary movement stands in sharp contrast to the lies and illusions peddled by Marcos Jr. in his fourth SONA. While the Marcos regime sings lullabies of progress, the masses are awakened by persistent crises and chronic poverty. They now rise up and resist across the archipelago, taking up arms to join the NPA and fulfill the Filipino proletariat’s historic task of winning the national democratic revolution. 

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LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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

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THE DECEPTIVE THEATRICALS OF REACTIONARY ELECTIONS

By Raya Andres Montañosa and Ricardo Lozano

The curtain rises on yet another season of Philippine reactionary politics: familiar faces, recycled promises, and the steady hand of US imperialism behind the scenes. Indeed, elections under a semicolonial and semifeudal state like the Philippines will never be truly democratic. They remain a theater to entertain and pacify the masses, to maintain the grand illusion of “choice” designed to preserve the power of the ruling class while dangling the false promise of change.

Every three years, the Filipino people are made to line up and cast their votes in what is called a “free election.” The 2025 midterm elections were no different. From widespread vote manipulation, massive fraud, vote-buying, and red-tagging, to the brazen intervention of US imperialism, the results were precisely how it was designed to be: to maintain a puppet regime that tows the imperialist line, and repress the revolutionary movement at all cost.

A brief history of US control over Philippine elections

For over a century, the Philippine reactionary elections have been manipulated by US imperialism through its local agents. From the colonial occupation at the turn of the 20th century to the present neocolonial Marcos Jr. regime, elections have been used to legitimize the rule of landlords, as well as comprador and bureaucrat capitalists.

Historically, the US has actively intervened in Philippine reactionary elections. In 1953, the CIA openly backed Ramon Magsaysay’s presidential run, providing campaign advice, funds, and propaganda

machineries to secure a puppet leadership loyal to US. The US Ambassador and CIA’s Edward Lansdale were directly involved in ensuring Magsaysay’s victory, defeating nationalist candidates who dared question the presence of US military bases in the country. Magsaysay was packaged by the CIA as a “man of the masses” to suppress popular unrest and present a palatable, populist alternative to growing revolutionary fervor. Under the careful orchestration of US advisers, Magsaysay’s image was crafted to appear humble, incorruptible and in touch with the common people despite how in reality, he enacted policies that preserved elite interests and deepened the

country's military and economic subservience to the US.

Likewise, the CIA supported the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in his declaration of Martial Law in 1972. Years later, during the 1986 EDSA Uprising, the US facilitated Marcos and his family's escape to Hawaii. At the height of the anti-dictatorship movement, the CIA recalibrated its strategy and activated its "reserve horses": the pro-US liberal opposition. Seizing the moment, they helped catapult Cory Aquino to power by leveraging the "...martyr's widow" narrative, packaged further as the country's return to "democracy." Beneath the surface, however, the US had already laid the groundwork through covert operations aimed at weakening the revolutionary movement. US funding flowed through their agencies such as USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and other NGOs that helped redirect popular unrest toward "safe" liberal reformism.

Manipulation, vote-buying and election-related violence

The 2025 mid-term elections in the Philippines were not only fraught with widespread technical failures and violence, but also bore the clear imprint of US interventionist tactics aimed at manipulating the country's political trajectory. The malfunctioning of Automated Counting Machines (ACMs) across thousands of precincts, and the

awarding of the election systems contract to the little-known South Korean firm MIRU Systems, are widely viewed as part of a broader US-orchestrated effort to dominate the country's electoral infrastructure. MIRU's ties to US defense and intelligence partners have raised alarms, especially amid opaque software version updates days before the elections—moves that allowed potential backdoor interference without public accountability. These technological manipulations enabled the undermining of candidates and parties critical of US military presence, neoliberal economic policies, and its backing of the Marcos Jr. regime.

Equally alarming was the combination of traditional elite tactics—vote buying, intimidation, and election-related violence—with intensified red-tagging campaigns targeting progressive and anti-imperialist candidates. Many of these candidates and their volunteers were branded as "communist fronts" by state forces, a tactic long supported by US-funded "counterinsurgency" programs. These red-tagging efforts, paired with physical threats and media blackouts, silenced dissenting voices and disrupted grassroots campaigns rooted in people's movements. Far from being isolated irregularities, these attacks on electoral integrity reflect a systemic design to protect US geopolitical and economic interests in the Philippines—ensuring that only pro-US elites gain or retain power while mass-based, nationalist alternatives are marginalized or violently suppressed.



Other forms of US interventionism

Beyond the Philippine reactionary state, the US has a long history of intervening in the domestic affairs of its neocolonies through a wide range of tactics. Beyond electoral manipulation and having “reserve horses”, the US has employed covert operations, CIA-backed coups, assassinations and targeted killings, as well as direct military interventions and proxy wars to influence, destabilize, or even overthrow governments it deems hostile or ideologically opposed to its interests, ultimately securing continued imperialist control and geopolitical dominance.

To cite a few examples: in 1953, the US overthrew Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh through a CIA-backed coup after he nationalized the country’s oil industry and was perceived to be aligning with the Soviet Union—developments that the US saw as threats to its interests. The coup, known as Operation Ajax, led to the reinstatement and consolidation of the US-backed authoritarian regime under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

In 1961, in the Congo, the US—seeking to protect Belgian mining interests and uphold its anti-communist policy during the Cold War—instigated another CIA-backed coup in coordination with Belgian forces and Congolese politicians. Patrice Lumumba, a staunch anti-imperialist and leading figure in the struggle for Congo’s independence, was murdered shortly after being deposed as Prime Minister.

In addition to covert operations, the US has also directly intervened in foreign conflicts and waged proxy wars as part of its broader anti-communist campaign. One of the most prominent examples was the Vietnam War, which began in 1955, when the US provided support to the French-allied South Vietnamese regime against the communist forces led by Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam. The conflict eventually escalated into a full-scale war, with the US suffering heavy losses at the hands of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army, who ultimately claimed victory over colonial and imperialist forces.

In 1979, the US openly backed the Afghan Mujahideen in their fight against the Soviet-allied government in Kabul. This support, part of a broader US strategy to counter Soviet influence during the Cold War, helped trigger a prolonged and devastating civil war. The Mujahideen were financed, armed, and trained by the US, primarily through the CIA’s Operation Cyclone, one of the agency’s longest and most expensive covert operations. In the aftermath of the conflict, elements of the Mujahideen evolved into extremist groups, with some members eventually forming the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

The US has continued its proxy war strategy in the Russia–Ukraine conflict. It supported the 2004 Orange Revolution prior to aggressively pushing for Ukraine’s membership in NATO. A decade later, in 2014, it backed opposition forces (including the fascist Banderites/National-Socialist Party of Ukraine) during the Maidan protests, which culminated in the violent coup of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich.

The rise of the “acceptable Left”

The US continues to apply these same tactics of manipulation whether openly or through their operatives, so it was a surprise to no one how the results of the mid-term elections turned out. While Marcos Jr. remains the primary representative of US interests in the Philippines, the US is far from placing all its bets on him. Aware of the growing political instability, deepening economic crises, and the steady erosion of Marcos Jr.'s legitimacy among broad sections of the population, the US is already preparing for a scenario in which Marcos becomes too unpopular or unstable to maintain effective control. True to its long-standing strategy, US imperialism has been quietly positioning its “reserve horses” – a set of US-aligned political figures who can step in to preserve US dominance in the event that Marcos Jr. can no longer be retained.

These reserve horses come in various forms: liberal reformists, recycled opposition figures and military or police-backed leaders repackaged as “strongman alternatives.” Through funding of civil society proxies, intelligence coordination, and bankrolling campaign kitties, the US ensures that it can pivot to another loyal candidate without losing its grip on the country's politics.

For instance, the electoral return of Kiko Pangilinan and Bam Aquino, placing second and fifth respectively, signaled that the US has started to position its bets beyond just the Marcos clique. The Liberal-Akbayan-Pink (LAP) coalition, which have previously also been aligned with US political forces, has been increasingly taking on this position. The return of these “palatable” candidates, sometimes touted as the “acceptable Left” must be seen for what it is: a deliberate strategy meant to defuse the growing tension boiling among the Filipino masses.

These political figures are not outsiders or challengers of the system – they are instead, its shock absorbers. They are deployed precisely at moments of deep crisis to co-opt the language of reform, speak in the idiom of the disillusioned, and drive the masses away from waging revolution. Their role is to absorb popular unrest, take the discontent of the masses, and package it into something non-threatening and ultimately loyal to the same system of US domination.

This has always been the function of the so-called liberal opposition in Philippine politics: to serve as “opposition” but within the boundaries set by the US. Their task is to redirect revolutionary energy into electoral dead-ends, to frame resistance as a matter of “good governance” and to denounce armed struggle as backward or violent.

By elevating liberal figures as the face of “change,” US imperialism creates a buffer zone between the ruling regime and the people's seething anger. These figures are used to channel mass discontent away from revolution and into the arena of reforms and elections, where the outcome has already been rigged to serve comprador, bureaucrat capitalist, and foreign interests.

The final act

Whether under the banner of Marcos, Duterte, or their so-called liberal opposition, the system remains rigged against the masses and controlled by US imperialism. But even as the electoral circus parades new “winners” to pacify discontent, the people grow increasingly aware of the futility of relying on bourgeois politics to secure their liberation. The failure of the reactionary elections to deliver genuine change only deepens the crisis of legitimacy facing the ruling class. And each round of electoral fraud and manipulation erodes the people's trust in the system, and sharpens their desire for national and social liberation. 🚩



RED & PROUD:

FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF LGTBQ+ MARTYRS OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION

By Ricardo Lozano

In the Philippines, imported narratives of identity politics have been used to depoliticize, fragment and neutralize the LGBTQ+ struggle. Under the guise of “inclusion,” imperialist states and corporations have promoted a version of LGBTQ+ rights that is divorced from the material conditions of the majority. However, in sharp contrast to the co-opted narratives peddled by US imperialism, there are those who took the path of revolutionary struggle: LGBTQ+ comrades who chose to dedicate their lives to the fight for national and social liberation.

Wanda “Ka Waquin” Gumban (1985 – 2014)

Wendell Gumban, known to friends as Wanda or Shala and to the Lumad masses as Ka Waquin, defied every stereotype imposed on both activists and queer people. A UP Diliman graduate, Collegian writer-editor, and student leader, he walked away from a future of comfort to embrace the harder path of service to the oppressed. Fair-skinned, bespectacled, and openly gay, he stood out anywhere he went. After witnessing firsthand the struggles of Lumad communities as an observer in

a month-long volunteer project, he chose to return to Southern Mindanao not as a visitor this time, but as a Red fighter. He was killed in a firefight with the 66th Infantry Battalion at the foot of Mt. Tagubud in New Bataan, Compostela Valley.

Kevin “Ka Facio” Castro (1994 – 2022)

Kevin Castro was a beloved comrade, a principled revolutionary, and political instructor of a unit under the Apolonio Mendoza Command – NPA Quezon. At the age of 28, Ka Facio was martyred in an armed encounter with the fascist 1st Infantry Battalion of the AFP in Brgy. Binibitinan, Polillo, Quezon. A student leader from Malolos, Bulacan, he broke away from the path reserved for the urban petty bourgeoisie, choosing instead to dedicate his life to the people’s war. A BS Education student in UP Diliman and nearly graduating as an honor student, he postponed his studies to organize and later join the New People’s Army in 2016. As one of the LGBT youths who chose the path of protracted people’s war, he defied all efforts of the state and imperialism to isolate queer people from the people’s struggle.



Jethro Isaac “Ka Pascual” Ferrer (1992 – 2023)

Jethro Isaac Ferrer, known to the masses and comrades as Ka Pascual, was martyred on November 13, 2023, in Mindoro at the hands of the fascist 76th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army. As a university student in Laguna, he quickly grasped the structural roots of exploitation and became a cultural worker and propagandist, using his skill in video production to expose the violence of the system and help organize students, workers, and artists into the mass movement. In 2010, he made the principled decision to join the New People’s Army, fulfilling a childhood dream to be a fighter for the oppressed. As a gay person, Ka Pascual’s life was by itself a defiance of reactionary gender norms. Comrades would often describe his voice as firm, clear, and steady – a voice that could cut through chaos and still be heard even during a firefight. It was in the people’s movement that he found not only the cause worth living and dying for, but also love and companionship with a fellow revolutionary, further deepening his commitment to serve the masses without reserve.

Kal “Ka Rekka” Peralta (1991 – 2024)

Kaliska Dominica Peralta was a revolutionary lesbian and Red fighter. A former varsity athlete at University of the Philippines Diliman, she exemplified strength not only on the softball field, but also in the political arena. She earned the admiration of her peers when she led a protest outside of the UP School of Economics in 2014 against Budget Secretary Butch Abad. She stormed her way through the crowd to confront the reactionary official. Kal brought this same fire to the countryside, integrating with the Lumad and peasant masses of Mindanao as a member of the New People’s Army. Beloved by the communities she served, she became a source of joy and hope even in the most difficult terrains. However, on April

10, 2024, her life was brutally taken. Ka Rekka was unarmed when she was accosted and summarily executed by elements of the AFP and PNP.

Dee “Ka Dahlia” Supelenas (1999 – 2025)

Ka Dahlia, or Dee Supelenas, a proud transwoman and former student leader from UP Cebu, was among the seven Red fighters martyred on April 27 this year in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental. She led campaigns for safe and equitable education during Duterte’s militarist lockdown, exposing the regime’s failures in addressing the pandemic. As a student leader, she made historic strides in securing the right of trans and gender-diverse students to wear clothing aligned with their identities during graduation rites, and to be recognized by their chosen names. Yet Dee knew that the struggle for genuine liberation extended beyond the walls of the university. She brought her sharp intellect, courage, and compassion to the countryside by joining the New People’s Army in Negros, integrating with the toiling masses and committing herself fully to the people’s war. In the face of patriarchy, transphobia, and state repression, Ka Dahlia stood tall and resolute.

Ka Waquin, Ka Facio, Ka Pascual, Ka Rekka and Ka Dahlia faced rejection, harassment, and invisibility early in life. Yet, instead of turning inward, they turned outward: to the masses, to the collective struggle, to the revolutionary movement. They recognized that LGBTQ+ people suffer from landlessness, joblessness, militarization, and displacement, and that their struggle is inseparable from the broader fight against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism. In doing so, they challenged the reactionary view aimed at containing the LGBTQ+ struggle within the confines of liberal reformism. They asserted, unequivocally, that queer people have a place in the revolution. 🚩



Ka Waquin



Ka Facio



Ka Pascual



Ka Rekka



Ka Dahlia



LIFE UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE BALIKATAN WAR GAMES

By Ricardo Lozano

In the early hours of a November morning, the quiet rhythm of daily life in the coastal barangay of San Vicente was broken by the sudden roar of low-flying helicopters. The sound echoed off the hills and rice fields, rattling tin roofs and waking children from their slumber. On the ground, farmers stopped mid-step, wide-eyed and disoriented. Mothers clutched their children. The elderly whispered prayers under their breath.

“Para kaming binomba pero walang giyera (If felt like we were being bombed, but there was no fighting),” recalls Ate Lina, a 44-year-old coconut farmer and mother of three. “The choppers flew so low that we could see the faces of the soldiers. They were not Filipino, but American soldiers. No one told us they were coming. There was no warning, no explanation. We did not know if there was already war or if it was just a drill. All we had was fear for our lives.”

It was part of Balikatan: the annual joint US-Philippines military exercise which has been intensifying in recent years. But for communities like Ate Lina’s, these war games are not just military drills. They are an invasive, disruptive and disorienting series of events. An imperialist power’s military rehearsal to provoke China into a hot war,

unfolding in their literal backyards and right before their very eyes.

San Vicente is home to an island somewhere at the tip of Luzon, a lush marine reserve and ancestral domain of the Agta indigenous communities. It is also now the site of increased US and Philippine military activity, including surveillance flyovers and amphibious landing drills.

“There was no consultation. No barangay meeting. No written notice. Nothing,” says Mang Jun, a barangay tanod in the nearby village of San Vicente Norte. “We only knew about what was happening when the helicopters came, and even then, we had to piece together information from the radio.”

When local leaders tried to raise concerns, they were ignored, or worse subjected to surveillance and harassment. “Since last year, we’ve seen new faces around town. Men asking discreet questions about us, soldiers dressed in civilian clothes. We’re afraid to speak. If you criticize anything, they say you’re a sympathizer of the New People’s Army,” he adds, referencing the increasing red-tagging in the area.

For the fisherfolk of San Vicente, the sea has always been life. But during the Balikatan exercises, it

became a stage for war games. US soldiers reportedly paid fishermen around \$400 to rent their homemade bangkas, or wooden fishing boats, for amphibious drills.

Mang Dado, a 52-year-old fisherman, initially agreed. “Akala ko tulong na ‘yon. Malaking halaga din kasi ‘yon para sa amin (I thought it was help. That’s already a big amount for us),” he says. “But when I saw soldiers with rifles boarding my boat, using it in mock battles...something inside me twisted. It was no longer just a boat. It became part of something we didn’t understand.”

After the drills, Dado’s boat came back with damaged outriggers. “They gave me money, but now I can’t fish properly. And what if our area becomes a real target? What if it’s no longer a drill anymore? What if someone thinks we are part of the military now? We feel vulnerable.”

In nearby barangays, reports have emerged of soldiers requesting to store equipment in civilian homes and buildings from churches, schools, and even abandoned warehouses – far from the designated EDCA (Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement) sites. Many residents fear these are not humanitarian supplies, but ammunition and weapons, stored close to homes without any legal basis or warning.

“They asked to store boxes in our community hall,” shares Aling Nene, a barangay health worker. “They said it was just for relief goods. But the boxes were

locked, heavy, and guarded. We suspect they are weapons...because why hide food?”

The EDCA agreement requires that US military materials be confined to designated sites. But in San Andres, locals say the rules are “quietly broken” and the Philippine government was nowhere to be found.

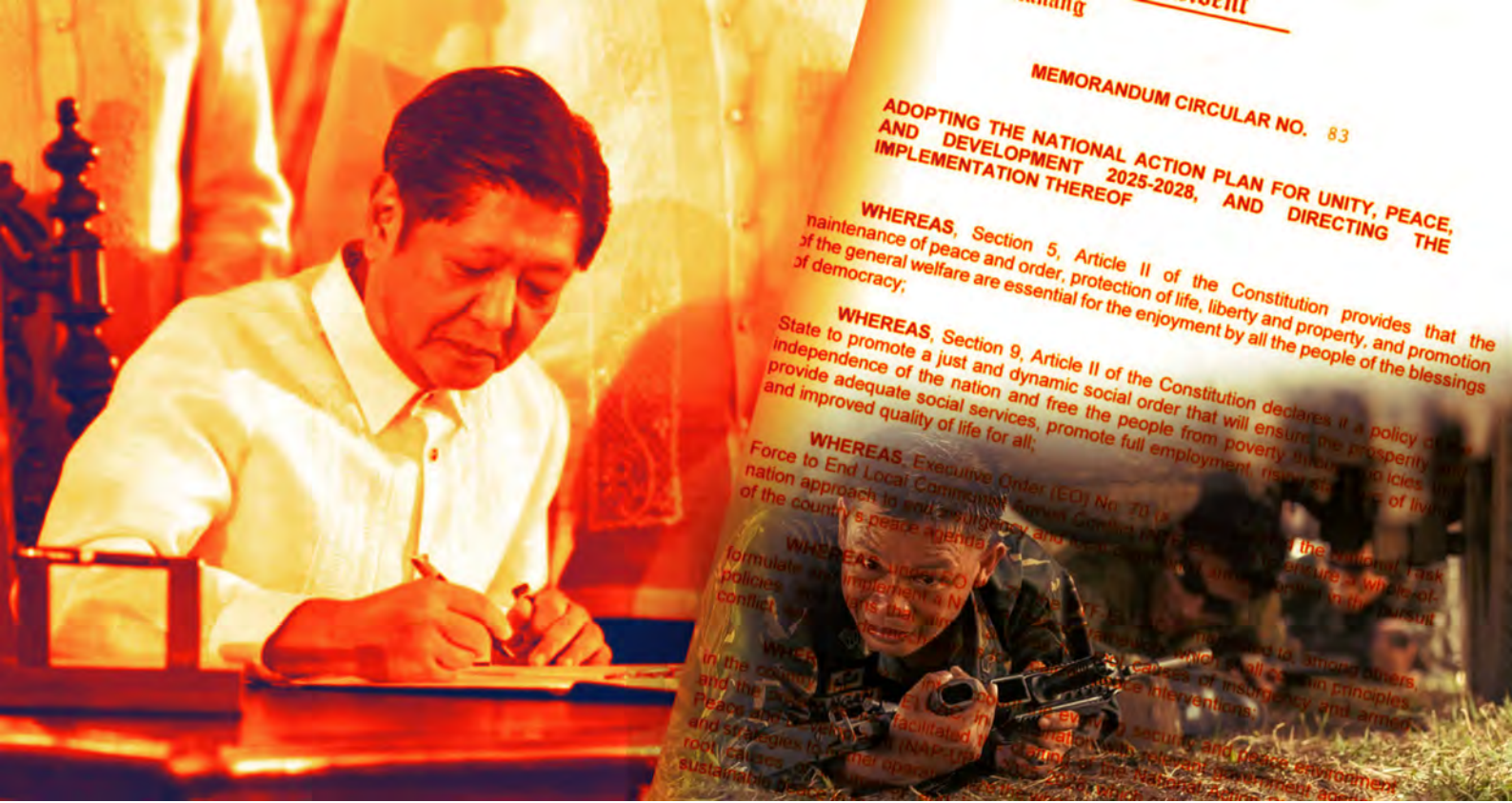
During the April 2024 round of Balikatan, large coastal areas along Northern Luzon were declared off-limits to civilians, including vital fishing and farming grounds. In exchange, residents were given “aid” in the form of a few sacks of rice and canned goods that did not even last a full week.

Rosalie, a 27-year-old mother of two, says her husband was unable to fish for nine days during the military drills. “Wala kaming kita. Wala kaming panggatas para sa mga anak namin. Tapos bigas lang ang kapalit (We had no income. We could not buy milk for our children. And all they gave us was rice.),” she says. “Are we supposed to thank them for starving us less?”

Back in San Vicente, the silence is heavier than the sound of Black Hawk helicopters. It lingers in the conversations cut short. In the meetings never held. In the questions never answered.

“They didn’t tell us what was coming,” Ate Lina utters to herself. “They didn’t ask if it was okay. They just came. And now we live with the consequences.” 🚩





ANOTHER BOGUS PEACE PLAN

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

On November 8, 2024, the US-Marcos regime approved the National Action Plan for Unity, Peace, and Development (NAP-UPD). Behind its lofty name, the NAP-UPD is another bogus peace plan of the reactionary government, and its latest blueprint for suppression and deception.

The NAP-UPD sells “peace and development” through militarist solutions while renouncing the fundamental roots of the armed conflict. Its main implementing agency is the regime’s notorious propaganda attack dog, the NTF-Elcac, whose immediate abolition has been demanded by many local and international human rights and concerned groups because of its record in red-tagging, instigating arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearances.

At its core, the NAP-UPD purportedly intends to destroy the armed revolution in the Philippine countryside by 2028. It boosts the Marcos regime’s Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) which is designed to bring the illusion of government services and development projects flowing down to targeted barangays (villages) where the armed revolutionary movement hold sway. Under this billion peso-funded scheme, economic projects are offered to the community only after they “surrender” and withdraw their support for the New People’s Army (NPA).

“Clear, hold, consolidate, develop”

Like its predecessors (i.e., Joint COPLAN Katatagan, Oplan Kapayapaan, Oplan Bayanihan), the NAP-UPD is rooted in US “counterinsurgency” doctrine. It follows the four-phase formula of “clear-hold-consolidate-develop”: crush the armed resistance, prevent its resurgence, strengthen the grip of the reactionary government, and cloak it all in “development” projects. Consistent with US imperialism’s “counterinsurgency” doctrine, which miserably failed in Vietnam and many times over in several US client regimes, the NAP-UPD uses the “whole-of-nation” approach where civilian government agencies are used to sustain focused military operations and a nationwide campaign of suppression.

Under the NAP-UPD, the AFP maintains almost the same level of deployment as in previous years – 118 battalions in guerilla zones nationwide – supposedly to prevent the NPA from regaining strength. Triad operations, combining combat, intelligence, and civil-military actions, remain central under its “whole of nation” approach.

But the plan extends beyond the countryside. It targets not only the peasant communities, but also the open legal democratic movement and organizations and formations of workers, farmers,

the middle classes, professionals, progressive electoral parties, the churches and civil society organizations and service agencies. The end goal is to declare key areas under “Stable Internal Peace and Security Status (SIPS), effectively labelling them as “conflict-free” zones.

In practice, this means intensified psychological warfare and repression, forced surrenders, aggressive paramilitary recruitment, heavy military presence, and barangay-level “development” projects under the NTF-Elcac’s Barangay Development Program (BDP). As part of Marcos Jr.’s counterrevolutionary war strategy, the NAP-UPD as in previous Oplans (US-designed counterrevolutionary operation plans) wishes to deny the armed revolutionary movement, particularly in the countryside, of a lifeline in terms of urban support and resources for the revolutionary movement.

In addition, the NAP-UPD also relies heavily on state machineries of disinformation and red-tagging, primarily on the NTF-Elcac. The NTF-Elcac penetrates schools to conduct “orientations” aimed at discrediting the very concept of activism, branding it as “terror grooming.” The plan revives the infamous “Know the Enemy” document which was first used under the Arroyo regime’s Oplan Bantay Laya as part of Oplan Pagbubunyag, an intensified red-tagging and vilification campaign in the 2000s.

“Peace” through surrender

Like previous oplans, the NAP-UPD promotes a false concept of peace, one that is based on surrender and military victory rather than addressing the roots of armed conflict. Instead of resuming formal peace talks, the regime pushes “local peace commitments” that mask harassment, intimidation, and surveillance of communities accused of supporting the NPA. Those targeted are pressured to enter the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) and accept sham amnesty in exchange for token livelihood assistance.

A key tactic they employ is organizing “former rebels” into AFP and NTF-Elcac-controlled groups such as “Buklod Kapayapaan” and “Kalinaw” formations. These groups, led by turncoats, are used to discredit the revolutionary movement and create barangay-level organizations explicitly hostile to progressive groups. To keep tabs on them,

the regime has established the Enhanced Former Rebel Information Systems (E-FRIS) which is a central database used for surveillance and coercive tactics. Those who refuse to participate in government programs risk renewed trumped up charges or imprisonment.

Nearly two years since the November 2023 Joint Statement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), peace negotiations have made no real progress. Under NAP-UPD, the Marcos regime has no intention of reaching a just and lasting peace through dialogue, but instead dreams of crushing the NPA and forcing capitulation through surrender talks.

The NAP-UPD intensifies the use of repressive laws such as the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) and the Anti-Terrorism Financing Law to harass, intimidate, and criminalize progressive leaders and organizations. They are accused of having ties to the armed movement and are charged with “terrorism” or petty crimes just to keep them in jail.

Repression breeds more armed resistance

By intensifying political repression by silencing all dissent – shrinking the democratic space, criminalizing solidarity, controlling development work, and accusing critics of terrorism, the regime wishes to end the armed revolutionary struggle without fundamentally addressing the roots of the armed conflict.

This so-called blueprint for peace in fact closes the doors to the peace negotiations with the NDFP, offers nothing but capitulation and surrender, and trashes comprehensive social and economic reforms that would address the problems of landlessness, poverty, hunger, unemployment and the absence of social and economic justice - crucial preconditions for attaining a just and lasting peace.

However, as with the experience during the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship in the 1970s until its downfall in 1986, subjecting the Filipino people to ever worsening forms of political repression, oppression and exploitation, and clamping down, restricting and eventually closing legal avenues of redress and struggle, and offering them no genuine path to peace, the US-Marcos fascist regime only incites the people to take the path of armed struggle to achieve national and social liberation and genuine and lasting peace. 🚩



HEIGHTENED MILITARY OPERATIONS CANNOT DETER THE ARMED RESISTANCE OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

By Hugo Francisco

The heightened military counterrevolutionary operations in the countryside have done little to deter the revolutionary movement's advances as it continued to launch tactical operations against the fascist Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Ambush Operations

On July 13, in Barangay Bagong Silang, Victoria, Oriental Mindoro, a New People's Army (NPA) unit launched an ambush, killing two police officers working as security for large-scale, destructive projects in the predominantly farming community. The action is a response to the Mindoreños' call to hold the AFP-PNP accountable for its terrorist campaign in Central Oriental Mindoro towns.

The presence of the military and police who provide security for quarrying sites suppresses the people's efforts to defend their land and natural resources. These projects will destroy thousands of hectares of land that farmers and indigenous Mangyan communities depend on for their livelihood.

Encounters

At least four soldiers of the 28th IB under the 4th ID were killed in an encounter with a unit of the NPA in Sitio Kiudto, Barangay Hagpa, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon, on May 23.

NPA-North Central Mindanao Region reported that the battle lasted 10 minutes, and the people's army unit quickly retreated. Meanwhile, the 28th IB continued to fire for 30 minutes.

In retaliation, the humiliated soldiers of the 4th ID fired six cannonballs that fell on the residents' farms. This terrorist act by the military caused massive fear, trauma, and destruction of livelihood.

Harassment operations

As a response to the people's call against the relentless military operations, threats, and harassment, the New People's Army (NPA)-Central Negros launched a harassment operation against troops of the 62nd IB in Barangay Imelda, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental on June 15, killing three fascist soldiers.

According to NPA Central Negros spokesperson Ka JB Regalado, the red fighters used an M203 grenade launcher to detonate bombs on the troops of the 62nd IB -- targeting the gathering of military elements while they were resting in Sitio Lip-o from a forest operation.

In retaliation, the fascist 62nd IB indiscriminately shelled and fired on nearby houses in Barangay Imelda, which caused immense fear and trauma among the residents.

Punitive actions

Amid the continuous military operation in the fields and forests of Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental, the Leonardo Panaligan Command-New People's Army (LPC-NPA) successfully implemented the death penalty imposed by the people's court on Ronald Jacolbe, 39, of Sityo. Sumilang, Barangay Tacpao, on the evening of June 22.

Jacolbe, a barangay tanod and an asset to the AFP, has been providing the military with information on the whereabouts of red fighters and even guiding them during raid operations. He was also among the military personnel who killed an NPA hors de combat, and a senior citizen Tony Pahayahay, 62, and the beating of Tony Garde of Sityo Lupo, Barangay Humay-humay, earlier this year -- this despite the repeated warnings from the red fighters since 2021. Jacolbe's smartphone also revealed information proving his role as a military spy.

Another active spy, Jesmer Pacunla, was sentenced to death on June 24 at his place in Sitio Kasipongan, Barangay Carabalan, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental. Pacunla, an active military asset of the 94th IB, was found guilty of crimes against the masses and the revolutionary movement by providing information to the military about the NPA, guiding military raids, and even intimidating civilians and raiding their houses on mere suspicion of hosting NPA guerrillas. The Romeo Nanta Command-New People's Army (RNC-NPA) had confronted him in the past year and warned him not to continue his work. But he still secretly provided data to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) about the NPA.

In Barangay Bandila, Toboso, Negros Occidental, a unit of the Roselyn Jean Pelle Command-New

People's Army (RJPC-NPA) carried out a punitive action against the notorious rapist, Isagani Imlay, who committed several counts of rape and attempted rape, terrorizing women in the community and preying on the young and vulnerable. Due to the mounting clamor for justice from the masses, the revolutionary people's court immediately took notice of his case. He was fairly tried and convicted, but still given a chance to change his behaviour for the better. But to no avail, as he remained remorseless until the end. As expected, the military denounced the action and called it "senseless killing" of a civilian while being silent about the seizure of numerous assorted firearms and ammunition from these so-called ordinary "civilians," proving they were armed and in a position to put up a fight. The masses, though, see it as a significant relief.

Meanwhile, in South Central of the province, an NPA unit paralyzed and burned two dump trucks and a backhoe used in a destructive quarry operation in Sitio Medel, Barangay Carabalan, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental on July 4. The punitive operation aims to protect the community and the environment, as the excavation activities have been causing damage for a long time, particularly to the river, on which residents' farms and livelihood depend.

While the military and its propaganda machinery desperately claim that the revolutionary movement is experiencing decline, the victories of the revolutionary movement in recent months prove otherwise. Despite the increasing military operations in the countryside, the NPA manages to launch tactical offensives against the fascist enemy, who is becoming ever more isolated from the masses as a result of their terror and destruction in the countryside. 🚩





THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN THE PHILIPPINES INSPIRES RESISTANCE ABROAD

By Mio Lev Moore

In the spring of 2023, the three of us landed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila and our two and a half month long 'integration trip' organized by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) began. During this time, we had several hosts and got insights into a wide range of social situations. After waiting a few weeks, we got the chance to stay in a temporary camp of a guerrilla unit for 16 days before integrating in a community of fisherfolks dealing with the consequences of profit-driven ecocide while engaged in legal battles with Chinese corporations intending to build luxury resorts on their ancestral lands.

Growing increasingly impressed by the organizational capabilities of the CPP, we got a comprehensive view of the Filipino people's struggle at every station of our journey. Below I reminisced about the experiences we had with those who most selflessly devoted themselves to serve the people: the Red fighters.

After a moonless, pitch-dark night of marching single file through the densely forested hills of one of the 7,641 islands that make up the archipelagic country, our group arrived in a camp of a New People's Army (NPA) platoon early one morning, towards the end of the dry season. The only sign of its existence were a few cut branches in the thicket through which we stumbled, and we only realized that we'd arrived when we stopped in the middle of the encampment. With our rubber boots soaked from wading through rivers and having been drenched in sweat, we found ourselves in a large pavilion made from cut down trees and tarpaulin. This construction was referred to as the 'school', complete with a lectern, flags displaying hammer and sickle or a rifle and spear, and welcoming faces. Then, as soon as we'd put down our backpacks and poured

the muddy water out of our boots, the kasamas (the Filipino word for 'comrades') assembled to greet us with a kapehan, a coffee break where everyone was introduced and songs were sang. Hearing the hushed voices of the kasamas singing acapella, in unison with the birds, permitted us to finally relax. This moment of serenity was timely and reinvigorating since the exhausting march wasn't seamless. Crossing a highway, we encountered a convoy of Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) trucks transporting soldiers, which, luckily, did not spot us lying in the bushes next to the street. Nonetheless, this short intermezzo with the comrades aiming their guns and the palpable tension mixing with the nightly fog made us utterly aware of the constant threat of experiencing lethal violence, as well as the uncertainty of when this might occur, which the guerrillas are well prepared for. In the previous months, the company or segments of it, got involved in numerous firefights and the three formations making up the temporary guerrilla forest camp we stayed in, bore the names of martyrs who recently fell victim to the government's 'Focused Military Operations'. Fortunately, throughout our stay in the camp, there were no further encounters with any agents of repression, and besides the occasional 'observation' of a suspicious sound or movement, upon which silence fell over the camp until an all-clear signal would relieve the tacit tension ("It was a dog" or "There were drums in a nearby village"), the only shooting we were involved in was with our cameras. Thanks to the close monitoring of any military movement in the area, and with comrades updating us during our daily briefings, we always felt safe and well taken care of. Curiously, the combat stories that were shared with us both reinforced that feeling and kept us on edge as they

stirred our imagination of what might emerge from behind the dense foliage which both hid us but also limited our ability to see any approaching threat.

The temporary camp was set up to hold a conference on strategy, conduct internal educational discussions and host us – three internationalists from Europe, and members of local organizations, who were there to experience the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the NDFP. Since we had left our phones in the city for safe keeping, the morning of the event, a G-Shock pastiche wristwatch that was lent to us for the time of our stay, woke us to vestigial darkness. The kubo (a wooden construction usually built and used by peasants to escape the burning midday sun during their work in the fields) we were sleeping in, sat on the hillside of one of the three mounds embracing the 'school' and main 'square' adjacent to it. On this 'square', simply a flat area which was freed from trees between the two streams that ran through the camp, the daily morning exercises took place. Next to an uprooted tree stump which was stuck back into the ground up-side-down, now functioning as a gun holder, sat a flock of chickens. After waking us with their loud protests over being transported in rice sacks during the night, the white-feathered birds now sat quietly, oblivious to their fate as dish for the celebration.

For breakfast, everyone (except for me due to my medical condition, I was provided with a specially cooked vegetarian meal) had rice and tinapa (small smoked fish). As soon as the plastic containers, which was used to distribute the food to the different positions, were gathered and washed again, the preparations for the anniversary gained momentum. In the 'school' some of the kasamas started to set up the

stage. An NDF flag, hand-sewn and decorated with letters cut from yellow paper, was hung behind the lectern. Next to it was a banner made of tape, displaying the 12-point program. It would later be covered in slips of paper, as every participant of the event stuck a small note with their renewed vow to uphold the organization's principles after their speech or performance. I was handed some pieces of colorful chalk and tasked with drawing the logos of the different NDFP allied organizations on a black tarpaulin under the guidance of the propaganda officer. Since I'd never drawn on a free-hanging tarpaulin before and struggled to get the proportions right, I was soon relieved of this duty. Next to us, a few comrades forming the 'cultural group' Pulang Bandila ('Red Flag') were quietly rehearsing their choreography with flags, bolos and their M16 rifles as props. For the special occasion and to regain some energy, the camp commander prepared pancakes, which were distributed together with sugary coffee as the setting-up finished. A short time later, everything was ready, and the energized kasamas all assembled, and the ceremony started.

After a short introductory speech by two of the younger comrades in the gathering, Ka Aiko a clean-shaven, tall and well-articulated man in his forties stepped up to the lectern and read a statement of exaltation to the martyrs of the revolution. He began by informing everyone present how Ka Laan, Ka Bagong Tao, and eight other revolutionaries (also known as the Catbalogan 10) were heinously and brutally murdered by the fascist AFP.

The group were unarmed when they were severely beaten and tortured before they were summarily killed. Then, to cover up their monstrous deeds, the fascists



blew up the group's lifeless bodies in a boat full of explosives. Harnessing the outrage generated, the speaker peaked with a call to "set ablaze and spread the fire of the people's war," roused a passionate chant by his peers, and concluded by saying, "Inspired by the memories of Ka Laan, Ka Bagong-tao, Ka Joma, and all great martyrs and heroes of the proletariat and Filipino people, let us give all our energy to shoulder the difficult tasks in advancing the aspirations for genuine freedom, democracy and socialism." When Ka Aiko finished his speech, which was shortly interrupted when he was overcome with tears and quickly left the lectern to blow his nose, he reached behind his back and grabbed the note stuck there. He read the vow on it and recited a poem he had written especially for this occasion.

Subsequently, another kasama started to relate the nature and history of NDFP. Smiles appeared on the faces of the audience. Summoning the expressed support from the ranks of youths, women, church people, scientists, lawyers, artist, writers, teachers, national minorities, peasants and fisherfolks, which form the national democratic alliance, she emphasized that their duty as "organizers in the countryside", first and foremost is to implement the NDFP's vision for national liberation and democracy. She stirred laughter by sharing an anecdotal remark: "That won't happen, comrades, if we don't promote it ourselves. The masses say the revolution has been around for a long time and

ask, 'When will it happen?' The comrades reply, 'When will you join us?'"

After the last speech was wrapped up, a variation of the '21-gun salute' was performed. The spatial limitation of the 'square' just allowed for a row of seven kasamas, and due to the camps' proximity to streets and villages, there was no live firing, only the racking of slides and the hammers hitting empty chambers reverberated. Concluding the anniversary celebration, the kasamas adjusted their stance to face the CPP flag fluttering high on a pole and quietly sang 'The International' in Filipino.

As we observed during our time in the Philippines, the people's democratic revolution has persisted for more than half a century across the archipelago, and it reaches far beyond its shores. The call to join the revolutionary movement, therefore, extends to comrades across the globe. In the face of the ever-worsening crisis of the capitalist world system, our comrades' unwavering revolutionary commitment continues to motivate all those who seek fundamental change. Contrary to the reactionary government's claim that Philippine revolution is nearing its end, our experience proves otherwise: It is very much alive, and as strong as ever. We are grateful to comrades who shared their revolutionary experiences and knowledge with us, helping us better understand how the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines can inspire resistance abroad. 🚩



MARCOS JR.'S "NO MORE GUERRILLAS" CLAIM BLOWS UP IN HIS FACE

by Jose Emilio Jacinto III



Just two days after Marcos claimed in his 4th "state of the nation address" (SONA) last July 28, that guerrilla groups no longer exist in the country, the brutal Philippine Army's 8th Infantry Division, released a statement saying its fascist troops engaged in two consecutive encounters with New People's Army (NPA) on July 31 in the hinterlands of Barangay San Isidro, Las Navas in Northern Samar province in the Visayas.

The AFP also dropped several bombs in the early hours of July 31 in the same area in Northern Samar, purportedly against a guerrilla camp of the NPA terrorizing communities. The AFP also conducted an aerial bombardment in Tagkawayan, Quezon province August 2 after an encounter with NPA guerrillas and fascist soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division.

Barangays in Las Navas, Northern Samar have since been placed under "lockdown" or "hamletting" - a US counter-guerrilla scheme implemented but miserably failed during the Vietnam war, during the US-Marcos-fascist dictatorship, and in other reactionary US-client regimes to supposedly cut off the guerrillas support from the barrio people. When a village is hamletted,

village people are prevented by fascist troops from leaving the village, even to tender their farms and sell their produce. They are also prevented under threat from visiting nearby barrios effectively cutting off their communication outside. Their food supply is strictly controlled.

Moreover, according to several reports, a number of NPA units were engaged in other encounters with the AFP just days after and a few weeks prior to Marcos' declaration of a "guerrilla-free Philippines," resulting in casualties. Referring to AFP reports themselves, the CPP said two successive clashes occurred in the hinterland barangays of Gingoog City, province of Misamis Oriental and on July 27, the AFP also reported to have encountered several NPA fighters in Barangay Uson, Masbate province. A few weeks earlier, on July 1, a local NPA unit in Bukidnon reported that seven soldiers were killed in an encounter in Barangay Busdi, Malaybalay City.

Deceitfully claiming the defeat of the New People's Army, Marcos said: "At sa wakas, wala na ring nalalabing grupong gerilya sa bansa, at titiyakin na ang

pamahalaan na wala nang mabubuo muli,” Marcos said. (And finally, there are no more remaining guerrilla groups in the country, and the government will ensure that none will be formed again.)

The CPP in response, strongly refuted this fake claim stressing that Marcos, his Armed Fascists of the Philippines and his NTF-Elcac are only fooling themselves with these farcical claims.

The NPA, which has been reorganized and redeployed to counter the AFP’s encirclement operations continue to expand to new areas and consolidate its mass bases, in order to gain the initiative for waging guerrilla warfare and continue to persevere and enjoy the deep and wide support of the people in the countryside, the CPP emphasized.


“A new generation of young Red fighters continues to slowly rise among workers, peasants and petty-bourgeois intellectuals. With firm determination, Red fighters of the NPA will bring the armed revolution forward. They are guided and inspired by the Party. They are imbued with an indefatigable spirit to fight and defeat the enemy, however monstrous and oppressive,” the CPP stressed.

Marcos’ claim was so fantastic that even a mainstream media outlet (Philippine Star) fact-checked this claim as false. In disputing Marcos’ lie, the media outlet said that the reality on the ground reflects that armed resistance persists.

The Philstar explained that it fact-checked Marcos because he sought the revival of peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which represents the CPP in negotiations, and signed an agreement in 2023 aimed at pursuing a peaceful resolution to the armed conflict but that “arrests and killings in military operations against insurgents have continued since then”.

Indeed, according to the most recent CPP field reports, AFP battalions are conducting simultaneous ‘counterinsurgency’ operations in the northwestern provinces of Luzon, in Quezon, the Bicol provinces of Camarines Norte, Albay, Sorsogon, Masbate, in Mindoro island, Negros provinces, Capiz province, Samar island provinces, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Surigao and Agusan provinces, Lanao del Norte and others, placing entire villages under military control.

“The lies and illusions woven by Marcos during his state of the nation cannot obscure the basic fact that the majority of Filipinos remain mired in poverty, and suffer from landlessness and land grabbing, joblessness, very low wages, rising cost of living, homelessness, deteriorating public services and other social ills.

Under Marcos, the three basic problems of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism continue to grow worse and more oppressive. The puppet, fascist and corrupt Marcos regime continues to make the grounds for armed resistance more fertile,” the CPP emphasized. 





STATEMENT BY CHRISTIANS FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION (CNL) ON THE PASSING OF POPE FRANCIS

With deep respect and revolutionary mourning, Christians for National Liberation (CNL) joins peoples of faith and conscience across the world in commemorating the life, ministry, and passing of Pope Francis—Jorge Mario Bergoglio—on Easter Monday, 21 April 2025.

The timing of his death, on the holiest day of the Christian calendar, is rich with symbolism. As the Church remembers the crucified Christ and the promise of resurrection, we reflect on a papacy that rekindled the liberating essence of the Gospel amidst a world scarred by exploitation, empire, and exclusion.

Pope Francis did not dismantle the structures of patriarchy and clericalism that continue to haunt the Catholic Church. He did not—perhaps could not—fully reconcile the Church with the oppressed peoples it has historically marginalized. Yet, he took critical steps to reclaim the Church’s prophetic vocation. In an institution long allied with emperors and capital, he dared to stand with the poor, the migrant, the earth, and the occupied.

From the shanty towns of Buenos Aires to the halls of the Vatican, Pope Francis embodied a shift—not of dogma, but of direction. He was the first pope from the Global South, the first Jesuit pope, and the first in recent memory to publicly name the spiritual and material violence of capitalism, colonialism, and ecological destruction. He called capitalism “the dung of the devil,” decried militarism, and named climate change for what it is: a moral and political crisis rooted in greed.

He offered solidarity, not charity. He met with the landless, the displaced, the excluded—not as a gesture,

but as a commitment. He canonized Óscar Romero, embraced the preferential option for the poor, and welcomed voices once exiled from the Church’s center. He condemned the bombing of Gaza, called for justice in Palestine, and refused to baptize imperialism in religious language.

Yet his legacy, like all legacies, is unfinished. Pope Francis leaves behind a Church still contested by the forces of reaction—those who fear a Church allied with the people more than they fear injustice itself. He was often isolated, even within his own hierarchy. But he reminded the world that Christianity must not serve Pharaoh but stand with the Hebrews in struggle.

Christians for National Liberation honors Pope Francis not as a perfect leader, but as a flawed and courageous pilgrim who bent the arc of an ancient institution toward justice. In a time of fascist resurgence and ecological collapse, he wielded the papacy as a witness against indifference and domination.

As revolutionaries rooted in faith, we do not await another savior. We take from Francis’s life a call to action: that the Church belongs in the trenches of the people’s struggle; that faith without justice is hollow; that the Gospel lives not in gilded cathedrals but in the movements for land, peace, and liberation.

May his memory ignite deeper solidarity. May his passing birth not despair, but renewed commitment.

The struggle continues. 🚩

Against the Monster on the Land

For centuries the monster on the land
Has gorged himself with flesh and blood.
Now he wields Q brittle rusty sword
And still casts a spell with a cross.
We go with the children of wrath
And prepare a trap across his path
A net of vine holding a carpel of leaves
Covers the pit full of bamboo spears.
When he stumbles in the hungry hole.
And raves and writhes among the poles,
He shall see the children of the soil
Casting upon him buckets of flaming oil.
The night shall flee from the flames.
These shall rage until the break of day
And merge with the glory of the sun.
The monster shall have been gone.
His sword shall break by a hammer blow
On a rock from which O sweet spring flows.
The fragments of the swords we shall gather
To fashion new things by the hammer.
The children of the soil shall be freed
Of yoke and terror in their country.
They shall stand against any monster
And win by wit and engulfing number.
The festival of the children of the soil
Is the festival of all children of toil.
We joyously sing and dance with them
As the ancient monster comes to an end.

Jose Maria Sision
17 March 1978




Illustration from "Illustrations of Hope:
The NDFP 12-point program in
postcards," <https://liberation.ndfp.info>

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