

LIBERATION

INTERNATIONAL

July 2017 Issue

Published by the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines



HISTORIC CPP SECOND CONGRESS: TRIUMPH FOR THE REVOLUTION AND THE PEOPLE

The Communist Party of the Philippines' Second Congress was a congress of unity. Lessons and decisions forged at the Congress have profound and historical significance for the continued advance of the Philippine revolution (Read the Communique in *Ang Bayan*, March 29, 2017.) At the same time, the process of the activity itself has distinct details. In a guerrilla base, one battalion of the people's army, almost a hundred leading Party cadres and members, and members of the people's militias were able to assemble in one camp despite on-going enemy operations.

Ensuring Democracy for Stronger Unity

The congress is the forum for the highest form of democracy within the Party. Thus, participation of the

delegates, especially those from different regions, was ensured by having the facilitator go around the hall and by having cadres help translate into the local languages of those who had difficulty speaking in Filipino, the congress' official language. During heavy rains, wireless microphones were passed around and connected to two big amplifiers. English and Filipino versions of the documents under discussion were projected simultaneously on two separate screens, as members of the presidium kept track through their computers from their places on the podium.

Although the facilitators found it hard to reign in discussions that poured out from decades of accumulated experience, there was a relaxed atmosphere of reciprocity among participants who all aimed for unity. A member

▶ continued on page 2



ADDRESSING THE ROOTS
OF ARMED CONFLICT 3



MAY DAY ACROSS
THE WORLD 6



INTERVIEW WITH AN
NPA IN MINDANAO 8



REVOLUTIONARY
MARTYRS LIVE ON 15

of the documentation team shared that “I couldn’t participate much in the discussions because I had to get all the ideas into the minutes, but when I really had something to say, I was also given the chance. The discussions were really lively. And I’m happy because I was able to see my comrades from my previous collectives whom I haven’t heard from for decades.”

In approving proposed amendments or resolutions, three members were assigned to count the number of hands raised, and those who abstained were given time to register their opinion and explain if they had reservations. Elections for the new set of leaders were done through secret ballots, and counting at the plenary session where every name was called out by the canvassers and confirmed by three watchers from different regions was simultaneously recorded on the blackboard, the projector, and on paper.

The whole assembly decided that only those getting a majority vote from the delegates would be accepted for the Central Committee and the Political Bureau. As long as the agreed number of seats for each of the two organs were not filled, run-off elections were done repeatedly, extending up to twelve midnight. However, the participants did not feel tired. One delegate joked, “see, it’s been years since we voted in the corrupt government [elections], so let’s even it up here.”

One young military cadre who was elected to the leadership said, “It’s so inspiring to get to know and mingle with comrades from various areas throughout the archipelago, with different generations, meeting one another in a historical event and exchanging views.”

The activity’s steering committee did everything possible to put the delegates at ease and thus help them concentrate on the discussions. From the giant four meter Party flag in front of the session hall and the 24 medium-sized Party flags at both sides for the 48 years of struggle, up to the orchids and other forest plants used to decorate the tables, comrades meticulously poured their attention to make the gathering successful and memorable.

“When I learned that the mural, streamers and banners I was assigned to do were for the Congress, I was overwhelmed; I had goose bumps all-over,” a young artist who was part of the decorations committee said. “This event happens only once, and I never expected to be part of it. I almost got ill with stress, but I was inspired.”

To keep abreast with the current situation, a television set was placed in the mess-cum-social hall, to monitor the daily news. The television also served as recreation for the support staff. At night, when there were no enemy movements around, even those in the sentry posts could come to watch Korean telenovelas or other movies that were interpreted on-the-spot by comrades to make it comprehensible in the local language.

Unity was present not only among the delegates but extended to the revolutionary masses around the camp. Up to more than ten kilometers away, the masses sent news about enemy troop movements. Members of the Party branches in the villages around the camp sent local delicacies they cooked for the comrades. They assisted in marketing and fetching or being guides to comrades who went in or out of the camp.

Party cadres and members, Red commanders, Red fighters and organized masses around the camp participated in the cultural programs at the opening and closing of the Congress. Each unit had a prepared number, and the regions shared their dances: patting from the Cordilleras, curacha from Samar, and Lumad dances from Mindanao. Delegates from other regions participated in the dances. For those who could not go with the dances, a part of each of the programme was set aside for more popular dances such as cha-cha and “maskipaps” (slang for freestyle dancing) still in the tune of revolutionary songs with the appropriate tempo. Comrades also performed their local songs, including the kulilipan and dawes of the Cordillera.

Also introduced in this occasion were two songs created for the Congress, Muog na Buo (Solid Fortress) and Pag-ugit ng Kasaysayan (Shaping History) that celebrated the Party’s determination to develop the regions in step to advance the people’s war faster to greater heights.

METICULOUS PREPARATIONS

At least three months before the Congress, regional committees held their plenary discussions on the draft constitution and program and listed their comments and proposals. They also drafted proposed resolutions that they wanted to present to the Congress. They elected their representatives to the Congress through secret balloting, both the attending and non-attending delegates. The transportation staff also prepared routes and alternative routes, and various modes of transportation.

A few weeks before the activity, the revolutionary mass organizations, people’s militia, and people’s army units in the area were busy building the big session hall, clinic, barracks and individual huts, and other camp structures. Among these were five bathrooms for the whole camp and several bathrooms for comrades with mobility difficulties. Several people’s militia squads moved construction materials and food supplies to stock houses accessible to several kitchens at different areas of the site. Boxes of medical supplies were brought in as preparation for any emergency.

Even earlier, comrades had started raising animals for food because the usual vegetable production of the people’s army was expected to fall short of the demands for a long period of such big gathering. Sacks of flour were also stored to be baked into bread and cakes which were served as snacks for the whole camp. When the delegates and other staff arrived, they had accommodations ready

for them complete with electricity in every hut, copies of the collated comments from the regions, and even the doctor, nurse and other paramedics to administer medical check-ups, supervise nutrition, and give medical services to the whole camp, especially to the elderly and those with medical conditions.

According to one member of the medical group who had long prepared herself for her assignment, “We were the ones who monitored those with hypertension and those taking maintenance drugs. I am glad the historic Congress concluded without any comrade falling with a major illness. The comrades were amazed that we could conduct ECG check-ups inside the camp.

“And we had an in-house doctor who could immediately interpret the results. It was tiring but I had fulfillment.”

Long Delay

During the last part of the 1980s, when the revolutionary forces had gained enough strength and expanded its reach and the US-Marcos dictatorship had been overthrown, plans were in place for a Party congress. The draft documents had been prepared, but because revisionist counter-revolutionaries were present within the Party leadership, the congress that almost became a congress of disunity was not held.

Around mid-2000s, preparations for the congress were again started and drafts were disseminated among the Party committees. But again, it did not push through because of big changes including intensive and widespread enemy campaigns at the planned site. Now, despite the long delay, the Congress was truly successful and historic. ■

NDFP DETERMINED TO ADDRESS ROOTS OF ARMED CONFLICT DESPITE DUTERTE’S ‘ALL-OUT WAR’



law and all-out war by the Duterte regime, the CPP ordered the NPA to intensify its military actions to defend the revolutionary forces, the people and their communities.

Furthermore, on May 27, President Duterte warned the NDFP Consultants who were present in the Netherlands for the peace talks, not to return to the Philippines. He declared he would have them arrested and put in prison.

By Ed Ladera

The 5th Round of Formal Peace Talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) scheduled for May 26 – June 1, 2017 in the Netherlands was abruptly cancelled by the GRP. After postponing the opening from May 26 to the following day, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Jesus Dureza, declared to the NDFP Negotiating Panel that GRP President Rodrigo Duterte and the GRP Cabinet decided not to participate in the 5th Round of Formal Peace Talks. He gave a written paper which cited their reasons. They claimed that there was no enabling atmosphere for the peace talks. They criticized the order of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to the New People’s Army (NPA) to intensify military actions in the face of the declaration of martial law in Mindanao by President Duterte and his order “to flatten the hills” and attack the NPA.

Secretary of Defense Lorenzana then declared all-out war against the revolutionary forces. In the face of martial

The NDFP Negotiating Panel and Chief Political Consultant Jose Maria Sison proposed to Sec. Silvestre Bello, the GRP Panel Chairprson, to sign a joint statement declaring that the cancellation of the 5th Round of Peace Talks did not mean the cancellation of the entire peace negotiations and that therefore the formal peace talks remain in place. This would mean that the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) is still valid and effective, thus ensuring the safety of the NDFP Consultants upon their return to the Philippines.

Before their departure, however, Secretaries Bello and Dureza said they could not sign the draft joint statement.

This left the 13 Consultants in a state of insecurity. The NDFP Panel therefore asked for an urgent meeting with Dutch lawyers who advised that they ask for an extension of their visas while awaiting further developments. The Norwegian government and the Dutch government declared that they were definitely against the NDFP Consultants asking for political asylum. The Dutch foreign

ministry agreed to issue one year multiply entry Schengen visas to the Consultants.

Back-channel talks – working for a solution

Urgent efforts of the NDFP Panel and Prof. Jose Maria Sison, and Secretaries Dureza and Bello with GRP Panel Member Hernani Braganza resulted in statements by the NDFP Panel Chair Fidel Agcaoili and GRP Panel Chair Silvestre Bello on June 17 and June 18.

The respective statements of Fidel Agcaoili and Silvestre Bello declared that the NDFP Panel would recommend to the CPP to order the NPA to refrain from offensives against the AFP and PNP provided the GRP would also order the AFP and PNP not to attack the NPA and the People's Militia. The CPP further offered help to the GRP in its fight against the Maute group, the Abu Sayyaf and other terrorists in Marawi City. This offer was not accepted by the AFP and the Duterte government.

These were preceded by the depositing on June 12 of the JASIG documents of identification by both Panel Chairs and the Third Party Depository, Archbishop Joris Vercammen of the Old Catholic Church in a Bank Deposit in Rotterdam. This act signified the validity and effectiveness of the JASIG, which guarantees the safety of the NDFP Consultants, particularly those in the Netherlands after the cancelled 5th Round of Peace Talks on May 27, 2017.

With these positive developments, the prospect for the resumption of the 5th Round of Formal Talks appeared favorable within two or three months. Bilateral teams of the Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms could meet in Manila.

On June 22, six NDFP Consultants flew home and were met by the Norwegian Ambassador Erik Fornier and GRP Panel Member Hernani Braganza.

NDFP Panel Chair Fidel Agcaoili was scheduled to leave for Manila on June 24 and meet with Ambassador Fornier before the arrival of the seven remaining NDFP Consultants on June 27.

Sudden negative development on June 24

Early morning of June 24, Secretary Bello called up Fidel Agcaoili, stating that the seven NDFP Consultants should not fly to Manila. Even Fidel Agcaoili himself should not fly to Manila. Agcaoili informed the NDFP Consultants and called Norwegian facilitator Elisabeth Slattum. He had to cancel his ticket for June 24 in the evening.

GRP Panel Member Hernani Braganza also called Agcaoili, confirming the warning from Secretary Bello. Braganza said they have to clear the return of the NDFP Consultants with Defense Secretary Lorenzana. Later, GRP Panel Member Angela Librado conveys to Fidel that Bello said it is okay for him to fly to Manila, but he



answers that he already had his ticket cancelled. According to Librado, Bello had asked President Duterte for a meeting as soon as possible.

In the meantime, Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella criticized the NPA for launching attacks against the AFP and PNP and raised questions on the sincerity of the NDFP in peace talks with the GRP. In the same vein, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) issued a statement on June 24 claiming that the military actions of the NPA in Mindanao and elsewhere “disrupt the conducive and enabling environment” for peace talks. OPAPP Secretary Jess Dureza then issued the warning that the GRP would deal with NDFP actions decisively.

Prejudicial question

In response, on June 25, the Information Bureau of the CPP declared: “In view of these Malacanang statements since yesterday, the prejudicial question must be put forward and asked of the GRP’s mouthpieces: Has GRP President Duterte ordered the AFP to refrain from carrying out offensives against the NPA since the June 18 statement of GRP Negotiating Panel Chief Silvestre Bello III declaring “not to undertake offensive operations” against the NPA?

“Without such order from President Duterte,” the CPP statement stated, “the regime’s spokesperson must refrain from issuing statements that castigate the NPA for carrying out acts against the AFP’s all-out war. The GRP should remember that the recommendation of the NDFP for the CPP to order the NPA to refrain from carrying out offensives in Mindanao rests on the critical precondition that the AFP will likewise refrain from attacking the NPA and the people in the revolutionary base areas in Mindanao. Presently, such conditions do not exist concretely.”

Unabated all-out war

The CPP statement of June 27 continues: “Duterte has not rescinded his regime’s ‘all-out war’ policy and ‘flatten the hills’ order against the NPA. The AFP’s war of suppression in Mindanao has worsened since the imposition of martial law on May 23. GRP offensives and aerial bombardments across the country have resulted in at least eight NPA casualties over the past ten days in Mindanao

alone. Paramilitaries have been used to attack the schools run by Lumad organizations.

“The number of extrajudicial killings continues to rise. At least five have been killed by state forces in Southern Mindanao alone. In addition, up to 310,000 people have been forced to evacuate in Marawi City and nearby towns, thousands more in North Cotabato, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur and elsewhere are now in evacuation centers after AFP aerial bombardment targeting their communities and farms.

“In Mindanao, the AFP has deployed several scores of columns to wage relentless offensives in Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley, Davao del Sur, Davao City, North Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Bukidnon, Surigao del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Zamboanga del Norte and other provinces.

“Over the past few weeks, there have also been AFP offensives against civilians in Abra, Kalinga, Isabela, Quirino, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon, Albay, Northern Samar, Leyte, Iloilo, Capiz, Negros Occidental and elsewhere.

“The conditions under Duterte’s all-out war compel the NPA to carry out counter-actions to defend itself and the people. It needs to launch military actions in the widest possible area to dissipate the offensives of the AFP and blunt the attacks against the people.”

CPP still looks forward to peace talks

The CPP statement adds: “The CPP and the revolutionary forces have repeatedly and unequivocally declared their support for the NDFP-GRP peace negotiations. The NDFP Negotiating Panel with its Chief Fidel Agcaoili and NDFP Chief Political Consultant Jose Ma. Sison, is fully recognized by the entire CPP and NPA.

“Like the GRP panel makes recommendations to Duterte, so does the NDFP Negotiating Panel make recommendations to the NDFP National Council, of which the CPP is part of, as well as to the CPP Central Committee which commands the NPA. The recommendations of the NDFP Panel carry great weight in the decisions of the CPP and NDFP leadership.

“The Party looks forward to the continuation of the 5th round of NDFP-GRP peace talks in August or September. It anticipates preparations to be conducted by both sides in the interim.

“The revolutionary forces continue to regard peace negotiations as an opportunity to resolve through dialogue the fundamental socio-economic issues at the root of the armed conflict, even as the people are compelled to wage ever greater resistance against the oppression, exploitation and armed suppression by the reactionary state.

“The NDFP-GRP peace talks are at a historic juncture as the issues of socio-economic reforms are on the table.

“The vital question is: Will the Duterte regime share the same determination with the NDFP to accelerate negotiations on CASER? Or will he merely continue the old US/AFP counterinsurgency policy of using peace negotiations as a tool for pacification and cooptation by insisting that the NPA silence its guns while the AFP wages all-out war and demanding the NDFP to prematurely enter into a bilateral ceasefire even before completing the agenda on socio-economic reforms and constitutional reforms?”

In a recent interview with TELESUR, NDFP Chief Political Consultant, Prof. Jose Maria Sison stated at the end of his interview: “The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People’s Army and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines have publicly expressed their readiness to fight and defeat the all-out war policy of the Duterte regime. At the same time, they are still willing to pursue the peace negotiations with the GRP even under conditions of the severest fighting in the civil war in order to rouse and rally the people along the patriotic and progressive line, explore further how to serve the interest of the people and forge the comprehensive agreements for a just and lasting peace against the oppressive and exploitative forces of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.” ■



The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace. It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

Liberation International is published by the NDFP International Office in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

BOARD OF EDITORS

Ed Ladera
Isah Antonio
Jose Emilio Jacinto III
Bagani Dong-Ilay

CONTACT INFO

NDFP International Office
Amsterdamsestraatweg 50
3513 AG Utrecht
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 2310431
Email: ndf@casema.nl
Web: www.ndfp.org

CELEBRATIONS AND PROTESTS MARK MAY DAY IN MANY COUNTRIES ACROSS THE GLOBE



By Bagani Dong-Ilay

On May 1, 1886, an estimated 500,000 workers in cities across the US went on a general strike and held rallies with the cry, “Eight-hour day with no cut in pay.” At that time, a US worker worked an average of 60 hours in a six-day work week. To the workers’ demands for better working conditions, the capitalists answered with repression and union busting measures such as firing and black-listing union members, hiring strike-breakers, employing thugs to intimidate and harass workers, and using divide and rule tactics.

On the third day of the general strike, two workers were killed when police fired on striking workers in Chicago. An indignation rally was called for May 4 at Haymarket Square. The rally was violently dispersed in what subsequently came to be known as the Haymarket Massacre. Since then, May 1 has been commemorated as the International Workers’ Day.

With the ongoing general crisis of capitalism that has persisted since the crash of 2008, workers throughout the world continue to struggle against the never-ending capitalist attacks on their democratic rights and livelihood.

Holding high bright red banners was the order of the day as workers in Asia, Africa Latin America, North America and Europe launched different forms of mass actions to commemorate this year’s International Workers’ Day --- some to celebrate victories, others to protest anti-worker and anti-people government policies.

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans gathered at the Plaza de la Revolucion in Havana to mark International Workers’ Day and to show their support for the Cuban revolution. In addition, the people demanded the end of

the US economic blockade against Cuba and the return of the US military-occupied territory of Guantanamo Bay.

Young people carried signs that read “I am Fidel” with pictures of the former president of Cuba and father of the Cuban Revolution. They pledged to continue the struggle against capitalism and for socialism.

In Venezuela, a hundred thousand workers and Chavistas commemorated May Day by celebrating the achievements of the Bolivarian Revolution and expressing their support for the Maduro government which has been subjected to destabilization and violent actions by US imperialism and the domestic Right-wing opposition representing the interests of landlords and compradors. In his speech, President Maduro announced a 20% across-the-board increase in workers’ wages.

Speakers proclaimed their commitment not only to fight for the right to work, “for the liberation of the people as workers, but also for access to land, the right to the city, and the right to dignified housing.” They hailed the Organic Law of Work and Workers (LOTTT) signed into law by Chavez in 2012 prohibiting exploitative practices such as subcontracting, and recognizing such workers’ rights as an extensive maternity leave, a 40-hour work week and retirement pensions for all workers including homemakers.

In Colombia, workers protested against the government’s policy of job outsourcing. In Mexico, workers called for better working conditions and increase in wages.

Palestinian trade unions, on their part, declared their solidarity with the trade union movement around the

world to “collectively resist attacks on our working conditions, cuts to public services and job losses”.

Ahmad Sa'adat, the imprisoned general-secretary of the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) sent out a message from his prison cell, “Greetings to you from inside the prisons and cells of Zionism...Our message today is to all the revolutionary forces in Latin America and Africa, in the Philippines, Turkey and Greece, in the belts of misery and the struggling cities everywhere: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine stands with you on May 1, renewing its commitment to the relentless and unconditional defense of the rights of the exploited, confronting the domination of colonialism, the forces of exploitation and the tools of class and social oppression.”

In the US, tens of thousands of workers marched in over 40 cities for jobs and for better working conditions. May Day also became an occasion for the workers to demand respect for immigrants' rights in the face of Trump's crackdown on immigrants in the US.

In France, demonstrations turned violent when police attacked marchers who were on the streets to commemorate International Workers' Day. Workers and youth have been holding protest actions in many cities across France against labor reforms that would make it easier for capitalists to fire workers. Despite strong opposition from many sections of French society, the government has persisted in ramming through the anti-worker measures.

In Greece, thousands of workers still reeling from harsh austerity measures that have been imposed by successive governments took to the streets to fight another set of measures being demanded by the country's creditors in exchange for another bailout. A 24-hour nation-wide strike was carried out crippling businesses, shutting down state services and forcing transport to a standstill.

Seven years of austerity measures have impoverished the broad masses of working people and have condemned the country to having the highest unemployment rate -- 23 percent -- in the European Union.

Turkish workers gathered in several cities on May Day braving conditions of a state of emergency to raise the following demands: proper severance pay, job security for public sector workers, no subcontracting, prevention of deaths in workplaces, an end to the state of emergency, “No to one man rule”.



In Istanbul, police used tear gas and rubber pellets to disperse a group of demonstrators who attempted to defy a government ban on holding public events at the historic Taksim Square. Taksim Square which has become a symbolic place of resistance had been sealed off for the third May Day in a row.

The demonstrators unfurled anti-government banners with slogans like “Long live May Day! No to the dictator!” Emboldened by a narrow referendum victory in April giving Erdogan more power, the government carried out a new round of purges dismissing around 4,000 government servants and suspending more than 9,000 police officers suspected of having links with the Gulen movement that has been accused by the government of staging a coup to oust Erdogan.

In South Africa, President Zuma was forced to cancel his speech after he was booed by the crowd that had gathered to commemorate May Day. COSATU (Congress of South African Unions), the country's largest body of trade unions, has called for Zuma's resignation on charges of corruption.

In Bangladesh, thousands of garment workers gathered to demand wage increases, better housing and health benefits, and education subsidy for their children. Workers in the country are among the lowest paid in Asia. Many of the leading European and American clothing retailers source their production in Bangladesh taking advantage of the cheap labor.

In Taiwan, thousands of workers marched against low wages, poor working conditions and the elimination of basic pension provisions. Korean workers marched in Seoul to protest the wide use of temporary workers and so-called “independent contractors” to evade paying legally required wages and benefits.

In the Philippines, an estimated 100,000 working people and urban poor took to the streets in various cities across the country to commemorate May Day led by the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) labor center and KADAMAY, a national alliance of urban poor. They presented to the Duterte government the Workers' and People's Demands for an increase in the minimum wage, an end to contractualization, genuine land reform, national industrialization, free mass housing and other basic social services.

In the capital city of Manila, an estimated 50,000 demonstrators marched to the US embassy to denounce the US imposition of the neoliberal policy that promotes cheap and precarious labor. They also decried the long-running interference of the US in the internal affairs of the country with the collusion of the local ruling classes of compradors and landlords.

The KMU-led marches aside from commemorating the 131st anniversary of the International Workers' Day also celebrated the centennial of the Great Socialist October Revolution that established the first workers' state in the Soviet Union. ■

INTERVIEW



Ceasefire is simple pacification and surrender without fundamental reforms

Liberation International's (LI) Isah Antonio sat to interview Ka Real, a leading cadre in Mindanao. Ka Real has been active in revolutionary work in the different regions of Mindanao having been organized by the movement as a student activist. In the interview Ka Real discussed with LI his views on the peace negotiations between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the work of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA) in Mindanao.

LI: What do you think of the ongoing peace negotiations? What do the comrades and masses in the countryside think of the negotiations?

Ka Real: The comrades and the masses look at the negotiations in a positive way. The masses have high hopes that meaningful reforms will be attained during the peace talks especially since the current agenda of the negotiations are social and economic reforms. But the way the talks are going and with the cancellation of the 5th round of talks by the Duterte government, doubts about the talks are increasing. Nevertheless, comrades and the masses remain optimistic that the peace talks would move forward and an agreement could be forged on social and economic reforms particularly on agrarian reform and national industrialization.

LI: Are not peace negotiations in contradiction with people's war?

Ka Real: Peace negotiations are also part of the people's democratic revolution. We look at it as another arena of struggle to advance the people's interest. Of course, armed struggle is the principal form of our struggle because it responds to the principal question of taking political power from the exploitative classes. The objective of people's war is lasting peace because it is based on social liberation and justice. The Manila government will not hold peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) if

the revolutionary forces do not engage in armed struggle. The advance and strength of the armed struggle is the people's leverage in negotiating lasting peace with the GRP.

The peace talks are complementary to armed struggle. Through the talks we can explain to the people why there is an ongoing civil war in the country, what are the vision and objectives of the people's democratic revolution, what are the gains of the revolution, etc. Whatever happens to the negotiations, the armed struggle to liberate the people from imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, to achieve a peaceful and just peace will persevere.

LI: The GRP has, in a way, put the issue of long-term ceasefire as a precondition to the advance or movement of the peace negotiations. What is the risk that you see in a long-term ceasefire? How do you overcome the possible dangers caused by such a ceasefire like firearms becoming rusty, Red fighters lulled to "peaceful" environment?

Ka Real: Implementation of a long-term ceasefire is dangerous without achieving fundamental social, economic and political reforms. It's a simple pacification and surrender ploy of the reactionaries. We do not want war because of the damage and toll it brings. But people's war is the only way to end the unjust war that the society's ruling classes are waging against the Filipino

people. As the saying goes, without the New People's Army the people have nothing. The NPA will always be there to protect and defend the masses.

However, if the condition should arise for implementing a long-term ceasefire because of the forging of an agreement on socio-economic reforms and the release of political prisoners, it would not mean that the Red fighters would stop doing their duties. The NPA is not only a fighting army, it is also an organizing force, a cultural force and a production army. Even work in the military field, such as military training, prevention of criminality and banditry, protection of the forest, environment and natural resources, and so on. For sure, the comrades and their weapons will not be "rusty" during a long-term ceasefire.

LI: What do the comrades and the masses hope to gain from peace negotiations? What are the immediate benefits for the Filipino people?

Ka Real: If the talks can push the issue of social and economic reforms and both the NDFP and GRP agree to an agreement on such reforms, or even just on the issue of agrarian reform and national industrialization, this would be a big deal for the Filipino people especially the peasants and the workers. The immediate benefit is not ceasefire as the GRP says. The ceasefire by the reactionary government is a futile attempt to undermine and weaken the revolutionary movement. The revolutionary forces will only enter into a long-term ceasefire if they see actual solutions to the root causes of the armed conflict in the country.

LI: Can you tell me a bit about the state of our struggle in the Mindanao countryside and the victories achieved by the revolutionary movement and masses in the process of their struggle?

Ka Real: Since the revolutionary movement launched the Second Great Rectification Movement in the early 1990's, the comprehensive revolutionary movement in the entire Mindanao region has gradually developed. The movement decided to defeat the series of operation plans (Oplan) of the enemy. For example, during the Operation Bantay Laya I & II during US-Arroyo regime, we not only maintained and preserved the forces of the NPA, we even doubled the number of our platoons and the number of towns and villages we do mass and organizing work.

The revolutionary forces are developing regions in Mindanao step-by-step. The relatively strong and prosperous regions help the relatively weaker regions, so at present, the regions of Mindanao are relatively equal in the level of growth and strength.

Comrades have strived to balance the three elements

in advancing armed struggle: encouraging tactical offensives to accumulate weapons for new platoons; rapidly expanding and consolidating the areas and mass base; and deepening the anti-feudal, agrarian revolution, anti-fascist mass struggles, etc. Together with the aforementioned elements, social services (education and health, e.g.) alongside with the consolidation and defense of the mass base, are also being developed at the same time.

On the other hand, there are tasks to catch up on and there are weaknesses that should be corrected. There is a need to overcome weaknesses in the fields of ideology, politics and organization.

LI: What does the future hold for the struggle, for the movement and the masses?

Ka Real: Simultaneous with the efforts of the entire revolutionary movement in the rigorous and thorough development of the comprehensive revolutionary work, we expect the revolutionary movement to achieve the great leap and growth of people's war. The completion of the requirements of the strategic defensive phase to advance to the next higher level (strategic stalemate) is the current focus of the movement and masses nationwide.

We also expect the attacks and violence of the enemy to intensify against the movement and masses.

LI: What do you see are the dangers (except for enemy attacks) in the growth, expansion and consolidation of our revolutionary movement?

Ka Real: Internal mistakes and weaknesses are the principal risks in the continuing development of the revolutionary movement. The current efforts to rectify the Party against weaknesses in ideology, politics and organization are a positive factor in keeping our struggle on the correct revolutionary path and line.

LI: What do we still need to do to ensure that the struggle is moving on the right direction?

Ka Real: The ideological work, continuous development of theoretical knowledge, ongoing assessment of the situation, timely summarizing experience and launching criticism of weaknesses are decisive factors to ensure that our struggle is moving in the right direction.

The earnestness of comrades to daringly advance revolutionary work and overcome the weaknesses in the organizational field is also a factor in achieving its goals in the immediate future.

Today, the revolutionary forces in Mindanao continue to strive to contribute directly to the comprehensive revitalization of the revolution nationwide.

The vital question is: Will the Duterte regime share the same determination with the NDFP to accelerate negotiations on CASER?



of revolutionary agrarian reform. Today, the anti-feudal mass struggle is surging in many towns and provinces and gaining victories.

LI: Can you explain to our readers what are the organs of political power (OPP), at what level is the majority of the OPP and how do they work? How do the OPP ensure that the victories obtained by the revolutionary forces and the masses are maintained?

Ka Real: We are now forming organs of political power in the municipal level but the OPP are largely still in the barrio level. In barrios or municipalities with existing OPP, the program of agrarian revolution, socio-economic projects, social services such as education and health, control of crimes such as drugs, institutionalization of the justice system and others, are speedily and systematically undertaken.

The OPP acts as a state of the united front with the worker and peasant alliance at the core. It is composed at every level of the Party, basic mass organizations and the middle forces. The officers are elected through assemblies or conferences depending on the situation. The Revolutionary Committee oversees and directs OPP operations under its scope and level, formulating policies and their implementation in accordance with the overall program of the people's democratic revolution. It establishes sub-committees to oversee the different fields of work like production and economy, education and culture, health, defense, etc.

On the other hand, this OPP is a state in war, so it is important to strengthen support for the armed struggle, continue to bring the youth to the NPA, strengthen the people's militia and defensive units of revolutionary mass organizations. At the municipal level we build the municipal command of the people's militia in platoon units in the barrios.

Together with the NPA full-time red fighters, the people's militia is leading the defense of OPP's victories and defending itself against attacks by enemy fascist troops.

LI: Can you give us an idea of the life of a Red fighter? How does he perform his duties, interact with the masses and comrades? What are the usual problems facing a Red fighter and how does she/he overcome these?

Ka Real: The life of a Red fighter is difficult but it is meaningful and fun especially when interacting with the masses. There are sacrifices and threats to one's life due

LI: You mentioned weaknesses that must be overcome in the field of ideology, politics and organization. Can you concretize some of these weaknesses, the problems that arise from these and what steps are being taken by comrades to overcome the weaknesses?

Ka Real: One clear weakness that is being faced by comrades in the past is conservatism in undertaking principally political and military tasks. This is rooted in the empiricist ideological weakness. In being contented with the narrow experience acquired, being used to old ways and underestimating the capacity of the masses.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has intensely launched a campaign to correct this conservatism. Thus in such a short time, we have expanded our mass base and the areas covered, deepened their consolidation, established the organs of political power, increased membership of the Party, formed platoons of the NPA, increased the tactical offensives (both annihilative and attritive), advance the antifeudal, anti-imperialist and antifascist mass struggles.

LI: Regarding the question of land reform, while there is still no agreement on social and economic reforms with the Manila government, can you narrate in concrete terms how the revolutionary forces undertake revolutionary land reform?

Ka Real: In general, we are implementing in the countryside the minimum program of revolutionary agrarian reform -- reduce land rent, lower interest rates on loans, raise farm workers' wages, raise prices of farm products and so on. We enforce this by advancing mass campaigns and mass actions. In guerrilla bases where the village and municipal revolutionary committees are firmly established, land, which is often public lands or forestall lands, are distributed for free. At the same time, we are also actively campaigning for the collectivization of agriculture through simple labor exchange or mutual aid and communal farming.

In the past, work on agrarian reform was lagging relative to the rest of the revolutionary work in the countryside and mass movement. Currently, the revolutionary movement in Mindanao is striving to overcome these weaknesses which obstruct the vigorous implementation

As a Red fighter interacts with the masses, a close bond is established and they receive you like a son or a daughter.

to the war. But the comrades are happy to fulfill their daily tasks. There are conflicts but these are quickly resolved with the help of comrades and the Party units in the military formations. Every Red fighter has his/her daily tasks, mass work and military activity.

As a Red fighter interacts with masses, explains why they exist in such an oppressive situation, helps them in their work especially in production, defends them against enemy attacks, a close bond is established with the masses and they receive you like a son or a daughter. This makes your work more meaningful.

Regarding military formations, the platoon's political section manages the mass work of the platoon. It trains all the fighters in properly relating with the masses, implementation of the mass line, social investigation,

propaganda and education, organizing and mobilizing the masses for various revolutionary activities and tasks. The Red fighters adhere to steel discipline especially in relating with the masses.

Longing for and family troubles are the common problems that beset the Red fighters. Family visits are rare, usually once a year and communicating with them is difficult due to security. The situation is made harder when there are family issues involved. But the comrades find that daily revolutionary tasks within and outside of military units, doing mass work and launching of ideological activities (education, assessment, criticism-self-criticism, etc.) are effective ways of surmounting problems. ■

CONTINUING AND SUCCESSFUL OFFENSIVES—VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE AND PEOPLE'S WAR

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

People's war is mainly a political struggle and its armed component supports its political objectives. Armed struggle is not only an undertaking of the people's army but of the entire revolutionary movement and the people themselves to win the people's democratic revolution.

The New People's Army (NPA) and the people's militias undertake tactical offensives against the reactionary state and the fascist enemies principally to strengthen the revolutionary movement by accumulating weapons and other military arsenals from the enemy, defend the people and their communities from outright fascist attacks and repression, punish notorious human rights violators, enemy spies, those with blood-debts against the revolutionary movement and the people, despotic landlords and plunderers, and to carry out revolutionary justice according to the mandate of revolutionary people's courts. These offensive military actions by the people's guerrillas boost the morale of the people, win over adherents and supporters to the revolutionary cause, further strengthen the people's resolve and commitment to win the revolution, and further weaken and isolate the anti-people armed forces and reactionary state.

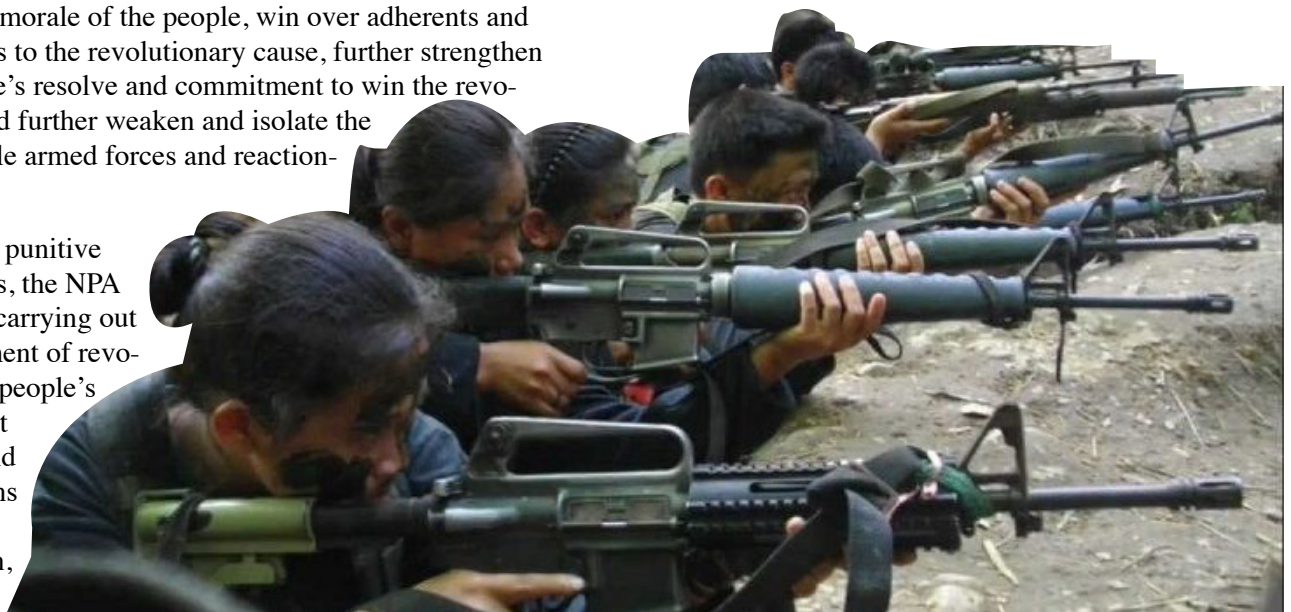
In most punitive operations, the NPA has been carrying out the judgment of revolutionary people's courts that have found the persons – military or civilian, fascist

troops - and entities such as corporations and businesses, guilty of committing crimes against the people and the communities.

Thus, halting the offensives and military actions of the people's guerrillas and the people without achieving fundamental social, economic and political reforms, would betray the revolutionary movement and people, and would only preserve the rotten, fascist, anti-people political, economic and social system.

The NPA is the people's army. Without the NPA, the people have no one to defend them. Without armed struggle, the reactionaries would not even go through the motion of talking peace with the revolutionary movement.

On the next page is an overview of the various NPA operations against fascist troops of the AFP and PNP for the first half of 2017.



OVERVIEW OF NPA OPERATIONS DURING FIRST HALF OF 2017

DATE	PLACE	NPA UNIT	DESCRIPTION
June 24	Barangay San Jose, Baggao, Cagayan	Henry Abraham Command (NPA-Cagayan) – 2 military killed, several enemy wounded	Raid on Military Intelligence Group (MIG) safehouse used for spying and counterrevolutionary activities; house of Dexter Remurado, a retired army also raided for being used as safehouse of 17th IB
June 21	Barangay Dumagmang, Labo, Camarines Norte	Armando Catapia Command (NPA-Camarines Norte) – 1 soldier killed, 4 wounded	Offensive operation against the patrol base of the 902nd Infantry Brigade of the 9th Infantry (Spear) Division, PA. Command-detonated explosive used against truckload of AFP reinforcement conducting counterrevolutionary operations (1 soldier killed, 4 wounded)
June 22	Sitio Castilla, Barangay Napolidan, Lupi, Camarines Sur	Norben Gruta Command (NPA-West Camarines Sur) – 1 CAFGU killed, 5 others wounded	Demolition operation against 92nd Division Reconnaissance Company (DRC), 9th Infantry Division. NPA used command-detonated explosive against AFP truck on the way to pick up soldiers for counterinsurgency operations
June 20	Canlaon City, Negros Oriental	Leonardo Panaligan Command (NPA-Central Negros)	Carried out revolutionary justice against enemy spy Ronie Montejo for multiple-murder and frustrated murder
June 20	Barangay New Canipo San Vicente Palawan	Bienvenido Vallever Command (NPA-Palawan)	Punitive operation against the Newington Construction Company owned by family Gardiola from Batangas; involved in illegal quarrying destructive to environment and communities, and in corrupt practices
June 18	Brgy. Ajos, Catanauan, Quezon	Melito Glor Command (NPA-Southern Tagalog) – 10 casualties from AFP	Counter tactical offensive against elements of the 85th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army for committing human rights abuses against peasant communities in Brgy. Ilayang Ilog, Villa Nacaob, Sta. Elena, Mabini, and San Rafael in Lopez town
June 18	Maasin, Iloilo	Napoleon Tumagtang Command (NPA-Panay) – confiscated 11 Armalite rifles, 4 pistols, bullets and VHF radio without firing a single shot	Disarming operation against a police station involved in extortion and the proliferation of drugs and illegal gambling
June 6	Brgy. Sibariwan, Dumarao, Capiz	Nonito Aguirre Sr. Command – confiscated 19mm and (1) .22 caliber magnum, bullets from a 12 gauge shotgun, (1) .38 caliber pistol and 1 homemade shotgun	Disarming operation against despotic landlord and landgrabber Aurelio Longno
May 24	Sto. Nino Village, Pangantucan Bukidnon	NPA-Kitanglad Sub-Regional Command (NPA-North Central Mindanao) – confiscated were 1 Baby M16 with 562 live ammos, 13 ammo magazines and two ammo vest, (1) M2 Carbine with 30 live ammos and one ammo magazine, 1 shotgun with 14 live ammos, 1 Caliber .22 revolver with live ammos, 1 telescope, 1 jungle knife	Disarming of a notorious drug trafficker
May 20	Sitio Minpahaw, Brgy Binicalan, San Luis, Agusan del Sur	Western Agusan del Norte-Agusan del Sur (WANAS) guerrillas – seized were an M14 rifle and a Garand rifle; guerrillas suffered no casualties	Raid of a CAA detachment under the 26th IB as counteraction against the military's combat operations to drive away the NPA from Esperanza, San Luis, Talacugon and La Paz to give way to mining and oil palm plantation operations; another guerrilla ambush on the 26th IB of the same day, resulted in five soldiers dead while four remained missing in action
May 14 & 17	Majayjay, Luisiana, Laguna, Lukban, Quezon	Cesar Batrallo Command (NPA-Laguna) – enemy suffered 28 casualties; destroyed were 2 vehicles of RPSB, 1 heavy equipment of GHEI, (2) 6x6 military truck	Tactical offensives against 80th IB-PA at 202nd Brigade under the 2nd IDPA, PNP, Regional Public Safety Battalion, and Global Heavy Equipment Inc. - which have been implementing anti-people and environmentally-destructive projects

DATE	PLACE	NPA UNIT	DESCRIPTION
May 16	Brgy. Loo, Benguet Province	Jennifer Carino Command (NPA-Benguet) – no shots were fired by the guerrillas; they confiscated (1) 9mm bereta firearm with 4 magazines including (1) M14 magazine, (1) hand grenade, holsters, pouch, 2 VHF radios, and military uniforms	Raid of a police sub-station as punishment for its extortion activities, sale of illegal drugs, and other anti-social activities
May 13 & 15	Brgy. Balbalasang, Balbalan, Kalinga	NPA- Kalinga (Lejo Cawilan Command) – undertook three engagements with enemy forces; 2 enemy killed-in-action, 4 wounded	Dispersed counter-operations against the 50th IB of the AFP led by Lt. Col. Gulliver Seneres. 50th IB engaged in continuing counterrevolutionary activities against the people
May 4	PNP sub-station in Barangay Annafatan, Amulung, Cagayan	Henry Abraham Command (NPA-Cagayan) – confiscated (4) M16 rifles and (2) 9mm pistols	Disarming raid of PNP station
May 29	Maddela Police Station in Quirino Province	Venerando Villacillo Command (NPA-Cagayan) - confiscated (6) M-16 rifles and (4) 9mm service pistols	Disarming operation
May 14	Barangay Barong Barong Brookes Point Palawan	Bienvenido Vallever Command (NPA-Palawan) – confiscated 18 arms: (6) shotgun, (9) 9mm, (2) m4-bushmaster, (1) regular M16, 500 rounds ammunition of 5.56×45mm, 100 rounds for 9mm, 20 rounds and (1) magazine cal.45 and other bullets for cal. 38 and cal.40.	Raid on a house of a notorious criminal, drug lord and gunrunner Gilbert Baaco, who died after exchanging fire with the guerrillas.
March 20	Barangay Bagong Silang Dos, Labo, Camarines Norte	Armando Catapia Command (NPA-Camarines Norte) – one soldier killed, 4 wounded	Harassment operations against elements from the 9th ID to counter and foil its continuing fascist attacks against the people, accusing poor peasants as NPA guerrillas
March 9	Palawan	Bienvenido Vallever Command (NPA-Palawan)	Punishment operation against the San Andres Co. which own a palm oil plantation, which has abused its farm workers, grabbed the lands of poor peasants, and destroyed the environment

THE STORY BEHIND THE IMPERIALIST-INSTIGATED WAR IN SYRIA

By Bagani Dong-Ilay

In March 1949, Syria's first post-Independence president, Shukri-al-Quwatli, hesitated in approving the Trans-Arabian Pipeline which was an American project to connect the oil fields of Saudi Arabia to the ports of Lebanon via Syria. For such hesitation, the CIA carried out a coup replacing al-Quwatli with the US's handpicked man, Husni al-Za'im. But before al-Za'im could approve the American pipeline, the Syrian people overthrew him



four months into his regime.

Shukri-al-Quwatli was elected as president again in 1955 after returning from exile in Egypt. At first, he stood neutral in the face of the Cold War. But after being rebuffed by the US when he asked for economic and military aid, he turned to the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc for support.

The CIA again plotted a coup. It incited militants from the Muslim Brotherhood and bribed Syrian military officials and politicians to overthrow al-Quwatli.

But the CIA coup plot was exposed and foiled. The CIA continued its covert efforts to topple Syria's Ba'athist government by arming the Muslim Brotherhood to carry out assassinations. In response, Syria moved even further away from the US and into an alliance with the Soviet Union.

In 2000, history would repeat itself. In that year, Qatar proposed to construct a \$10 billion, 1,500-kilometer

gas pipeline to run from its side of the South Pars/North Dome gas field through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and Turkey. The proposed pipeline would link Qatar directly to European energy markets via distribution terminals in Turkey.

Qatar is an important US vassal state in the Arab world. It hosts the US Central Command's Mideast headquarters and the biggest US military base in the Middle East that has been used extensively in the US interventionist wars in Libya, Afghanistan and Syria.

The EU, which gets 38 percent of its energy from Russia, had much interest in the proposed gas pipeline because it would give its members cheap energy. With the current tensions in its relations with Russia, Europe is eager to diversify its energy sources. Turkey, a long-time US ally in NATO, is Russia's second largest gas customer and wants to end its over-reliance on Russia. Turkey would also benefit enormously from being at the center of the distribution hub to Europe, the biggest energy market in the world.

For the Russians, who sell 70 percent of their gas exports to Europe, the Qatar/Turkey pipeline is a real threat. From their point of view, the Qatar pipeline is a NATO plot to deprive Russia of its foothold in the Middle East and strangle the Russian economy.

In 2009, Assad announced that he would not allow the Qatari pipeline to run through Syria to protect the interests of his country's Russian ally. In the same vein, Assad endorsed the Russian supported "Islamic pipeline" running from Iran's natural gas field through Syria and to the ports of Lebanon. Iran shares with Qatar the South Pars/North Dome gas field which is believed to hold the world's richest natural gas deposit.

The Islamic pipeline would make Shiite Iran, not Sunni Qatar, the principal energy supplier to the European market. It would greatly increase Tehran's influence and power in the Middle East and the world.

Israel is naturally opposed to the Islamic pipeline as it would strengthen its archenemies, Iran and Syria that support Hezbollah and Hamas.

The moment Assad rejected the Qatari pipeline in favor of the Islamic pipeline, the US began plotting to overthrow him. The CIA began funding and arming opposition groups in Syria.

In 2011, the US together with France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UK formed the Friends of Syria Coalition that openly called for the removal of Assad. By 2012, Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia were arming, training and funding radical jihadist Sunni fighters from Syria, Iraq and elsewhere to overthrow the Assad regime. Qatar

It is no coincidence that the parts of Syria occupied by the ISIL are precisely along the route of the proposed Qatari gas pipeline.

invested \$3 billion in building the Sunni-led insurgency in Syria and asked the US to train insurgents at the US bases in Qatar.

Prior to the American invasion, there was no Al Qaeda in Iraq. After President George W. Bush destroyed Saddam's secularist government, his hatchet-man Paul Bremer installed the Shiites in power and banned Saddam's ruling Ba'ath Party. He proceeded to lay off more than 700,000 mostly

Sunni, government officials and ordinary employees. He disbanded the 380,000-man army, which was 80 percent Sunni.

These US actions gave birth to the Sunni insurgency in Iraq. The Sunni insurgency named itself Al Qaeda in Iraq. Beginning in 2011, Qatar and Saudi Arabia funded the invasion by Al Qaeda in Iraq fighters into Syria. In April 2013, Al Qaeda in Iraq, having seized some territory inside Syria changed its name to ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant). It is no coincidence that the parts of Syria occupied by the ISIL are precisely along the route of the proposed Qatari gas pipeline.

According to reports, ISIL is run by a council of former Iraqi generals. Many of them were members of Saddam Hussein's secular Ba'ath Party who converted to radical Islam while in American prisons.

In 2008, a Pentagon-funded Rand report proposed a blueprint for the present crisis in Syria. That report said that control of the Persian Gulf oil and gas deposits remained a top priority for the US. It recommended using "covert action, information operations, unconventional warfare" to enforce a "divide and rule" strategy. "The United States and its local allies could use the nationalist jihadists to launch a proxy campaign" and "US leaders could also choose to capitalize on the sustained Shia-Sunni conflict trajectory by taking the side of the conservative Sunni regimes against Shiite empowerment movements in the Muslim world ... possibly supporting authoritative Sunni governments against a continually hostile Iran."

In 2011, the US began to incite street demonstrations against Assad that turned violent. In 2013, the US-led coalition formed the so-called Free Syrian Army. Its jihadist soldiers were portrayed in the western press as moderate Islamist freedom fighters. Soon these so-called moderate Islamist freedom fighters were defecting en masse to ISIL bringing with them the arms and military equipment supplied by the US-led coalition.

This is the real story behind the tragic events in Syria which is not being told in the western press that has become part of the imperialist war machine that has destroyed countries in the Middle East, cost hundreds of thousands of lives and turned millions of people into refugees. ■

REVOLUTIONARY MARTYRS LIVE ON IN NPA UNITS

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III
(First in a series)

The guerrilla movement in the Philippines continues to be a torch-bearer of revolutionary armed resistance and a continuing inspiration not only for the Filipino people, but for all other peoples of the world struggling for social and national liberation.

Alongside the victories achieved and boundless benefits the revolutionary movement has given to the poor and oppressed, the revolutionary movement has also produced countless peoples' heroes, guerrilla warriors and martyrs. Their selfless dedication and firm commitment to the people's cause have brought forth these victories and outstanding achievements.

Like their forebears during the gallant armed resistance of Filipinos for national freedom and democracy from Spain, the United States, and Japan, among them Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, Antonio Luna, Macario Sakay, Francisco Dagohoy, Diego and Gabriel Silang, Teresa Magbanua, et al, the names and memories of these contemporary revolutionary heroes and martyrs have lived on

and memorialized in people's stories (kwentong bayan), songs, poetry, plays, films, documentaries, and among the many guerrilla commands and units of the New People's Army (NPA), which continues to nurture and advance the armed revolution, and defend the masses against oppressive warlords, corporate plunderers and the fascist agents of the Philippine state.

Emanuel Lacaba, a people's warrior, NPA guerrilla leader and outstanding Filipino poet who was martyred by Marcos' fascist forces in March 1976 in the island of Mindanao, wrote aptly in his epic poem "Open Letters to Filipino Artists", an immortal tribute to the nameless people's warriors, guerrillas of the people's army -

We are tribeless and all tribes are ours.

We are homeless and all homes are ours.

We are nameless and all names are ours.

To the fascists we are the faceless enemy

Who come like thieves in the night, angels of death:

The ever moving, shining, secret eye of the storm.

MELITO GLOR

Ka Melito was born in Atimonan, Quezon. Even in his youth, his potential for leadership and intelligence already stood out. He studied at the University of the Philippines in Diliman where his social consciousness was nurtured. When martial law was imposed in 1972, he returned to his province Quezon to do organizing work. He was later assigned as a leading cadre and commander of several units of the New People's Army comprising several provinces in the Southern Tagalog region.

In December 1974 an encounter ensued in a house where he and his two comrades – one of them his nine-month old pregnant wife, were staying. Ka Melito died in the first volley of fire from the fascist military. Thus, the legendary Melito Glor Command of the NPA in Southern Tagalog was named in his honor.



APOLONIO MENDOZA

Ka Apolonio who was also known as Ka Gendo, is a humble and caring cadre leader. He always showed firmness and bravery in the face of the enemy. He upheld self-sacrifice as a valuable virtue.

Ke Gendo operated in the Quezon-Bicol Zone and became part of numerous and victorious big tactical offensives there. He became the commander of the regional fighting unit of the NPA and led tactical offensives from the company to the battalion levels.

Ke Gendo perished in 1987 while supervising the dismantling of explosives in South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula. An NPA Command in Quezon has been named after him.

NARCISO ANTAZO ARAMIL

Ka Narciso was born in Binangonan, Rizal. He was politicized while being an active unionist in a factory in Rizal, and he conducted political work among the ranks of the peasants and fishermen in the rural plains of Rizal and the adjacent Laguna lake on the Rizal side in 1983.

He joined the NPA in 1985 and belonged to one of the units of the urban sparrow Alex Boncayao Brigade (ABB). Even after being arrested in 1987, he continued conscientizing and organizing comrades inside prison. As a result, they were able to get concessions from prison authorities, from increasing their food rations, relaxing rules on visitations and other benefits for fellow political prisoners. After being released in 1990, Ka Narciso wasted no time in rejoining the people's army. He later on became a member of the Provincial Committee of the Rizal Party Committee in 1996.

He was martyred after the enemy encircled his NPA unit in the area of the Dumagats and Remontados in Sitio Sari, Barangay Lumutan, Heneral Nakar, Quezon on February 14, 2000.

Revolutionary martyrs live on in NPA units cont'd

LUCIO DE GUZMAN

Ka Lucio is from Quezon City. He was fifth in a family of seven siblings. It was during his studies in a seminary that Ka Lucio became aware of progressive ideas. He joined the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK, Association of Democratic Youth) in 1970.

At the height of the First Quarter Storm of 1970, Ka Lucio decided to join the New People's Army and was assigned in Bicol. In 1982, he was re-assigned to Mindoro island and became the secretary of the committee in the whole island of Mindoro until his martyrdom.

While entering a guerrilla zone aboard a motorcycle on November 4, 1987, he was chanced upon and arrested alive by fascist troops who were conducting pursuit operations against an NPA unit which had conducted a punitive raid in the town of Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro. He was heavily tortured at the provincial headquarters of the PC-INP (Philippine Constabulary), but stood firmly and did not give away any information to the enemy. He was "salvaged" (summarily killed) on November 7, 1987, but the enemy made it appear that he was killed in an encounter in Alitaytayan, San Jose. He was summarily killed with two other peasant leaders from Bubog, San Jose – Ka Roger Pesales and Hernani Jacinto.

The NPA command in the whole island of Mindoro was named after Ka Lucio de Guzman.

CESAR BATRALO

Ka Cesar was born in San Pablo, Laguna, but he became known as Ka Raffy in the Bicol region, Ka Edmund in Southern Tagalog, Ka Ruben in Rizal and Bart to his family and friends. He began his revolutionary work during the early part of the 1970s. He was known for his good abilities and humbleness.

He was assigned as member of the executive committee of the regional committee and supervised the areas under his leadership along the revolutionary path.

Ka Cesar was abducted on December 21, 2006 between San Mateo, Rizal and Manila. He was the 94th victim of enforced disappearances under the US-Arroyo regime. He was never found since then.

An NPA Command in Laguna was named after him.

BIENVENIDO VALLEBER

Ka Bienvenido was born and raised in Tagkawayan, Quezon to poor farmers. He joined the NPA because he suffered intense oppression from the hands of the Moratos who were logging concessionaires in the border of Camarines Norte and Tagkawayan. His sister was killed after being raped by Moratos' goons. He sought justice from this oppression by joining the revolutionary movement.

He became a good cadre and organizer of the guerrilla army in the border of Quezon-Bicol. Together with his wife, he led the opening of a guerrilla zone in Guinyangan and Bondoc Peninsula in 1979. He was sent to Mindoro Oriental in 1982 to open guerrilla zones there. In 1989, both he and his wife were re-assigned to Palawan to prepare for the opening of a new guerrilla zone. He died as a result of contracting malaria in 1990 while conducting his political work in Palawan.

The NPA Command was named in his memory in recognition of his valuable role in opening the island as a new arena for armed struggle.

ROSARIO LODRONIO – ROSAL

Ka Rosario hailed from a peasant family in the province of Albay. She was better known as Ka Soly. Her gender did not become a hindrance for her to fulfill her tasks in the revolution. Ka Soly joined the Communist Party of the Philippines and joined the NPA in the area bordering Quezon-Bicol on March 1990 at the age of 21.

Because of the good conduct of her work, she was chosen as member of the Regional Committee of the Southern Tagalog region in 1994, was elected its regular member until its Third Regional Conference in Southern Tagalog in 1997 until becoming a member of the Executive Committee of the Party in the region in 2000.

Inside the revolutionary movement, she met her partner-comrade Ka Gregorio Rosal, or more popularly known as Ka Roger, the deceased national spokesperson of the CPP.

In an encounter in Mauban, Quezon, Ka Soly was killed on February 7, 2011, while gallantly fighting the mercenary troops of the AFP.

The NPA Command in the majestic Sierra Madre mountains on the side of Southern Tagalog, was named after Ka Rosario Lodronio-Rosal.



EDUARDO DAGLI

Ka Eduardo Dagli was born to a peasant family in Rosario, Batangas. He became a key Party member in their locality.

In 1981, he decided to join the people's army, where he became its political and military officer. He was known among the masses and comrades in Batangas as a prolific poet, which was further enriched by his revolutionary struggle.

He was martyred in November 1990 in Barangay San Francisco, Lipa City when his unit was ambushed by a PNP Mobile Group. He served as the secretary of the guerrilla zone in eastern Batangas.

The NPA Command in Batangas was named after Ka Eduardo Dagli. ■