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LIBERATION

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2024 INTERNATIONAL



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THE RESURGENCE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST US IMPERIALISM

The resurgence of national liberation movements and the struggle against US imperialism

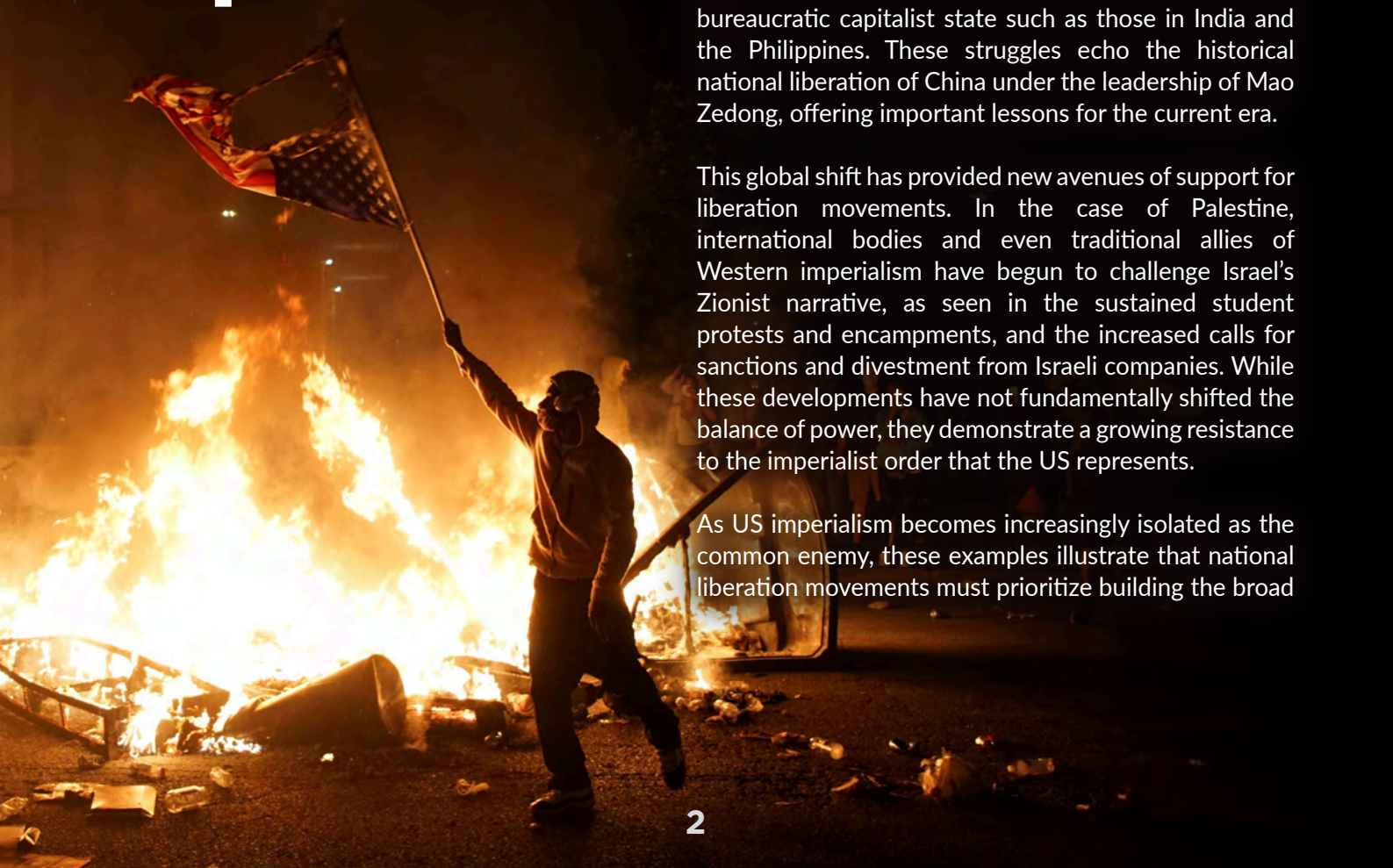
The events that unfolded on October 7, 2023 in the Palestinian resistance against US-backed Israeli occupation marked a significant period in the struggle of national liberation movements against US imperialism and its local agents. The Palestinian resistance created a globally unifying momentum to isolate US and Israel for their war crimes, broadening support for the liberation of Palestine and rendering Israel's strategy of positioning itself as the victim increasingly untenable.

This dynamic has inspired other liberation movements around the world and placed the Palestinian cause as a flashpoint of imperialist conflict and a rallying point for oppressed peoples still grappling with the legacy of colonial rule. These movements are responding to deepening political and socioeconomic crises created by late-stage capitalism, which have only exacerbated poverty, inequality, and disenfranchisement among the masses. In an increasingly multipolar world, national liberation movements have emerged as critical forces to challenge both local reactionary regimes and of US imperialist domination.

From Asia, Africa to Latin America, movements are gaining ground as they call for genuine sovereignty and self-determination. Widespread popular uprisings by the youth, the unemployed, trade unions, activists, writers, artists, and religious groups are challenging injustice and inequality in Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda recently dubbed as the new 'African Spring'. In the semicolonies, revolutionary armed struggles are being waged to break free from the control of the landed class and the local bureaucratic capitalist state such as those in India and the Philippines. These struggles echo the historical national liberation of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong, offering important lessons for the current era.


This global shift has provided new avenues of support for liberation movements. In the case of Palestine, international bodies and even traditional allies of Western imperialism have begun to challenge Israel's Zionist narrative, as seen in the sustained student protests and encampments, and the increased calls for sanctions and divestment from Israeli companies. While these developments have not fundamentally shifted the balance of power, they demonstrate a growing resistance to the imperialist order that the US represents.

As US imperialism becomes increasingly isolated as the common enemy, these examples illustrate that national liberation movements must prioritize building the broad



unity of the exploited and oppressed peoples under the leadership of the proletariat. Only through the guidance of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles can national liberation struggles avoid co-optation by imperialist forces or internal disorientation. Moreover, national liberation movements rely on the united strength of the masses, forming broad anti-imperialist fronts. This unity, bringing together diverse sectors of society, is essential in confronting not only the local ruling classes but also their imperialist backers.

In semicolonies, where oppression is entrenched, armed struggle is the only viable path to national liberation. As Mao elaborated in *On Guerrilla Warfare*, "The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people." Guerrilla warfare, which relies on the participation and support of the masses, is a crucial strategy in semicolonial conditions, where traditional warfare might fail against technologically superior forces. The people's war, as Mao outlined, builds revolutionary power structures that gradually dismantle the reactionary state's authority and erode its imperialist ties.

The Philippine national liberation movement, led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), exemplifies this revolutionary goal. Drawing on Maoist principles of protracted people's war, the CPP has built a powerful movement that unites the oppressed masses—workers, peasants, national minorities and other oppressed and exploited classes—against imperialist exploitation and feudal oppression. The leadership of the Party, grounded in the correct analysis of the contradictions in Philippine society and the international situation, ensures that the revolutionary movement will stay the course. As Mao wrote, "A single spark can start a prairie fire," and in the Philippines, that fire is spreading. With the masses behind it and the Party at the helm, the victory of the Philippine national liberation movement is not only possible, it is certain. 

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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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NPA continues to gain strength through tactical offensives

By Ana Rosario

Contrary to the gloating of military officers and officials of the reactionary government that the Filipino people's armed revolutionary forces are seriously weakened, the Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) continue to gain strength by staging tactical offensives and dealing heavy blows against the fascist troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Successful military operations ranging from offensive attacks to sniping, harassment and carrying out just punishment against incorrigible criminals and spies were launched by the people's guerrillas against enemy forces in different provinces of the country during the last three months.

Foiling enemy attacks

On September 15 in Sitio Calanay, Barangay Banco, Palanas in Masbate, the Red fighters from the NPA-Masbate (Jose Rapsing Command) thwarted an attack by the AFP's 2nd Infantry Battalion, then launched a counteroffensive that killed 10 enemy troops. The people's guerrillas used a command-detonated explosive against the enemy troops then maneuvered to safety contrary to the lies spread by the 2nd IB that the NPA suffered many casualties.

According to Ka Luz del Mar, spokesperson of NPA-Masbate, the enemy quickly retrieved the bodies of their fallen soldiers to hide their casualties but many witnessed the retrieval of the AFP's dead. Due to its humiliation from defeat from the Red fighters and failure to get information from the masses, the Philippine Army and the PNP poured 200 troops and personnel into the barangays of Banco, San Carlos and Bigaa in the Palanas town.

Prior to the September NPA offensive, a unit of NPA-Masbate (Jose Rapsing Command) ambushed AFP soldiers in consecutive raids in two separate military camps in the town of Milagros, Masbate. The armed action is a condemnation of the ongoing Pacific Partnership 2024-2 (PP24-2), the so-called humanitarian mission of American and Filipino troops in Legazpi City, Albay in the Bicol region from August 1 to 14. The US PP24-2 is used as a cover for counterrevolutionary war operations under the guise of disaster response exercises such as trainings on the use of geographic information systems technology, emergency operations, mountain and urban search and rescue preparation among others..

The people's guerrillas attacked the 93rd Division Reconnaissance Company (DRC) camp in Sitio San Jose, Barangay Hamorawon and the 2nd IB camp in Barangay San Antonio last August 10 at 9 p.m. The people's army said that the 2nd IB and 93rd DRC are part of the armed forces serving as guards of US troops in the Philippines.

The enemy troops were known for committing atrocities against the Masbateños. The 2nd IB is involved in multiple crimes against the people of Masbate especially against the farmers, threatening their lives, ransacking their homes, stealing the peasants' food, poultry and livestock. The members of the 2nd IB Alpha Company serve as staff and thugs of Masbate Governor Antonio T. Kho and protectors of the lands he has grabbed from the masses.

But the NPA and the masses remain unafraid. In fact, the masses in the area celebrated the defeat of the reactionary soldiers and shouted "Marise!" (You reaped what you sow!)

Ka Luz reminded the NPA-Masbate units that this "defensive battle is a challenge for the NPA-Masbate to continue to persevere in launching tactical offensives to punish the AFP-PNP-CAFGU for their crimes."

The NPA-Masbate also launched harassment operations against enemy troops. Last August 26 at 11 p.m., the NPA unit fired upon soldiers of the 2nd IB while they were resting in their compound in Placer, Masbate. The soldiers scampered as the people's fighters opened fire and used command-detonated explosives against the 2nd IB Alpha Company unit in the area. The people's fighters have yet to confirm the number of casualties from the reactionary army. There were no casualties on the side of the people's army as they were able to safely maneuver away from the area.

Among the crimes committed by the 2nd IB is the murder of young brothers Ronel and Robert Monsanto on July 8 in Barangay Aguho, town of Esperanza.

Red fighters also launch harassment operations against the enemy because such military actions cause grave demoralization among the ranks of the fascist troops.

More operations against the enemy

- The Red fighters of NPA-Sorsogon (Celso Minguez Command) launched an ambush against the forces of the 22nd IB unit based in Juban, Sorsogon in the Bicol region last September 6 in Barangay Calpi, Bulan, Sorsogon killing Cpl. Rodel Felismino and wounding Pfc Jamil Forte.

Comrade Samuel Guerrero, NPA-Sorsogon spokesperson said that the action was in response by NPA-Sorsogon to the clamor for justice from the people in areas harassed and suppressed by soldiers during military operations in the different barrios in the area of Magallanes, Bulan, Irosin and Juban since March. NPA-Sorsogon expressed determination to address the grievances of the people and defend them against the fascist forces of the state.

- At least six soldiers of the AFP were killed and 12 injured in the counterattacks and active defense by units of the NPA-North Central Mindanao in March and July, according to reports by *Ang Kalihukan* (The Movement), the region's revolutionary mass newspaper.
- The New People's Army (NPA)-Western Samar (Arnulfo Ortiz Command) fired at 87th IB soldiers encamped in Sitio San Pedro, Barangay Poblacion 3, San Jose de Buan, Western Samar on June 9 killing Corporal Marvin Calvintos and wounding several soldiers. On June 23, a unit of the same NPA command carried out a sniping operation against the fascist troops of the 97th IB in Jiabong, Western Samar. Killed during the operation was Sgt. Leo D. Jabinar.
- Three soldiers from the 203e Brigade stationed in Oriental Mindoro were killed when Red fighters from the Lucio de Guzman Command of NPA-Mindoro foiled an attack by the said Brigade last July 11 in Barangay Panaytayan, Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro.

Every tactical offensive launched by the NPA is carefully planned and carried out. The NPA ensures that no civilians are hurt in any operation in compliance with international humanitarian law. The masses trust the NPA. They know that the Red fighters have their interest foremost that is why they give their support to the people's army.

On the other hand, enemy forces have been launching attacks against civilian populations in different parts of the country killing civilians and destroying their homes and livelihood.

The forces of the New People's Army have a sworn duty to defend the masses and together build a genuine democratic and independent Philippines. In line with the strategy and tactics of the national democratic revolution, the people's war waged by the NPA under the absolute leadership of the CPP is the only path to national and social liberation. 🗝

A woman with her right fist raised high in the air, wearing a dark t-shirt with white text. The background is a large red and white flag. The text 'IN MEMORY OF KA CONCHA' is written in large white letters across the top. Below it, a subtitle reads 'A life weightier than Mount Madja-As'. The author's name 'By Raya Andres - Montañosa' is on the right. The woman's t-shirt has the text 'STRUGGLE FOR A JUST & LASTING FACE!' with a bird icon above 'STRUGGLE'.

IN MEMORY OF KA CONCHA

A life weightier than Mount Madja-As

By Raya Andres - Montañosa

Maria Concepcion Araneta - Bocala, or prominently known as Ka Concha or Ka Minay, was a beloved, revered and dedicated revolutionary.

She and ten other guerrilla fighters and revolutionaries were killed during a series of armed encounters with the bloodthirsty fascist troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) from August 5 to 15 in the mountains of Calinog and Lambunao towns, Iloilo province.

Ka Concha is often described by comrades as having a “kikay” flair (stylish person), adorning herself with stylish brooches, pendants, butterfly hairclips, necklaces and always a touch of color on her hair. She fondly referred to these accessories as “remnants of her class origin,” a playful nod to her landlord class background. Born on August 26, 1950, Ka Concha belonged to the rich and landed Araneta clan in Negros Occidental province. She was the fifth of 10 siblings.

She studied elementary and high school in Iloilo City in 1967 after which she pursued journalism at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. She became a member of the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), and actively joined a series of protests in Manila during the First Quarter Storm in 1970.

When Martial Law was declared in 1972, she went underground and joined the New People’s Army. Since then, she remained in the armed movement and took bigger tasks and responsibilities including being a key official of the Communist Party of the Philippines’ (CPP) Regional Committee in Panay, a consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) in peace negotiations and the spokesperson of NDFP - Panay.

During the Party's rectification movement in the early 1990s, Ka Concha played a key role in keeping the Party intact especially in the urban centers while exposing and isolating revisionists within their ranks.

A close comrade of Ka Concha recalls her remarkable resilience when she was nine months pregnant, and they had to transfer from one guerilla zone to the other to escape the pursuing enemy troops. It was a dangerous journey that required traversing the mountain ranges across Panay Island and riding a pump boat to the other side. Her companions were understandably nervous, given she was due to give birth at any day. But Ka Concha remained unfazed despite her delicate condition and the dangers that lurked on their trail. Calm and composed, she reassured her comrades that they would safely reach their destination. This exemplified Ka Concha's leadership - her ability to inspire comrades through her keen understanding of the objective conditions, allowing her to provide well-informed guidance and decisions that ensured the safety of her comrades even in the most precarious situations.

As a top CPP leader, the military placed an PHP 8 million (US\$ 142,000) bounty for her arrest. But

despite her leading position within the Party and her huge role in the upsurge of the revolutionary movement in Panay, Ka Concha often downplayed her importance. "Nobody is indispensable and there will always be leaders to take over our work," she noted in a 2016 interview by the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Ka Concha endured four arrests in her lifetime. Her first arrest was in Manila in September 1972 before martial law was declared. Then, her second arrest was in Talisay, Negros Occidental in September 1979. A year later on Marcos Sr.'s birthday, she and seven other political detainees managed to escape and rejoin the underground movement. Her third arrest was in April 1987 in her parent's house in Iloilo City. Her fourth and final arrest, forty-five years later, was in August 2015. She was released in August 2016 to join the peace negotiations in Europe.

Ka Concha served as a consultant of the NDFP for Panay and part of the Reciprocal Working Group on Political and Social Reforms. She was also a member of the Joint Monitoring Committee to monitor the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).



When Duterte unilaterally terminated the peace negotiations in 2017, Ka Concha went underground once again. Despite her age, Ka Concha remained determined to contribute to the Philippine revolution. "Our participation in the revolutionary struggle cannot be measured by just physical contribution but by what you can contribute even when you age," Ka Concha stressed.

In 2016, Ka Concha recounted in an interview how she found it difficult at the beginning to accept the necessity of violence in waging revolution. But because of her immersion with the issues of the peasant masses in Panay, she would realize that "revolutionary violence is the necessary form of struggle that the people have to take in defense of their rights and in defense of justice...that's how I reconciled the issue of revolutionary violence."

Ka Concha was deeply loved and respected by the peasant masses and the Tumandok people of Panay. Through her tireless efforts, the masses were organized into mutual help groups and cooperatives, fostering unity and solidarity among the peasantry. These groups not only strengthened their agricultural practices by encouraging collective farming but also

elevated their political consciousness, allowing them to understand their rights and resist the attacks of enemy troops. Ka Concha's work empowered the people to take control of their own lives and livelihood, making her an indispensable figure to the communities she served.

Three years prior to her death, she was devastated by the brutal killing of her husband and comrade for 50 years, and fellow NDFP consultant, Reynaldo "Ka Bading/Minoy" Bocala, who was summarily executed by police and military operatives in Iloilo City on May 29, 2021.

However, Ka Concha's personal struggles and privileged background did not deter her from fully embracing the armed revolution. Indeed, the death of Ka Concha and ten other martyrs and heroes of Panay is weightier than Mount Madja-as (one of the largest mountains in Panay Island). She is an epitome of revolutionary sacrifice, undying commitment, admirable courage and selfless love for the oppressed people, especially the Tumandok people of Panay whom she served and defended until her very last breath. 🚩



To Concha

Goodbye, dear sister comrade.

The bullets try to silence you.
But they will not silence you.

Way before many of us became comrades,
You were there—risking your life,
Working with the masses,
Fighting for justice.

The bullets try to silence you.
But they will not silence you.

You waved high the banner of revolution.
Your tiny frame climbing the mountains,
Carrying a gun,
Awakening the masses.

The bullets try to silence you
But they will not silence you.

How many times did they imprison you.
But they could not.

Your spirit soared higher than the bars
Broke the bars and set you free.

The bullets try to silence you.
But they will not silence you.

You worked on, fought on,
In spite of your blindness.
Nothing could stop you
From serving the people.

The bullets try to silence you.
But they will not silence you.

We will hold high your memory
We will make sure your legacy lives on
We will continue the struggle
We will fight until victory.

The bullets try to silence you
But they can never silence you.

Coni Ledesma
August 17, 2024



ML@52: STEADFASTLY ADVANCE THE STRUGGLE OVERSEAS AGAINST UNDECLARED MARTIAL LAW! FIGHT STATE FASCISM!

**Statement of Compatriots-NDFP In Commemoration of the 52nd Year of Martial Law
September 21, 2024**

In commemorating the 52nd year of martial law, the revolutionary spirit of the Filipino people together with compatriots in different parts of the world, remains alive and burning. They will never forget the nightmares and widespread violence committed since former dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr. declared martial law on September 21, 1972. Thousands were arrested and detained without any charges, experienced cruelty such as torture while others were abducted and disappeared and were later found dead or victims of “salvaging” or what is now known as extra judicial killing or EJK.

In commemorating the dark chapters of our history, Compatriots-NDFP affirms that our compatriots abroad will continue to fight. Because until now these heinous crimes of martial law continue albeit known under different names – EJK, trumped up charges, activists are terrorists. And the poverty suffered by the people then is no different except today it is much worst.

The Compatriots-NDFP, the overseas revolutionary movement and member of the NDFP, is one with the Filipino people in recognizing and honoring the victims of violence during the US-Marcos Sr. regime and subsequent US puppet regimes including the present regime of Marcos II. We honor the cadres and red fighters of the New People’s Army who bravely faced the brutality of the enemy.

Some of the revolutionary cadres who were victims of brutality and various forms of repression from the time of the former dictator to the subsequent regimes, and who were forced to leave the country, continue to raise awareness, organize and mobilize overseas Filipinos for genuine freedom and democracy in the Philippines. They also continue to

expose the growing fascism in the country and the rottenness of a semicolonial and semifeudal social system maintained by imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

After more than four decades and the advance of the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist struggle for genuine democracy, justice and peace in the Philippines, the revolutionary movement in countries and territories overseas continue to expand and consolidate. The continuing existence of the country’s basic problems is proof why an estimated 10 percent of the population of the Philippines are forcefully push to leave the country or caused forced migration.

The suffering of the Filipino people is intensifying. Coupled with this are increasing unemployment and unsustainable wages. On the other hand, the exploitative classes in society continue to amass enormous profits and enjoy a life of extravagance.

The enthronement of Marcos Jr. in Malacañang, was marked by widespread fraud during the 2022 elections. This was committed by the Marcos-Duterte tandem that led to intense conflict and the possible impeachment and removal from office of Vice President Sara Duterte. The current regime also aims to revise history and spread lies and revive the old programs of the former dictator while maintaining anti-people laws such as the Anti-Terror Law, the establishment of the Anti-Terrorism Council and the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF ELCAC) and instruments of repression such as red tagging, trumped up charges, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, torture, EJK and others.

Therefore, the Compatriots as a revolutionary movement of Filipinos overseas continues to fight against the repression of the people and revolutionary movement, and the revisionism in history. At the same time, as it continues to raise awareness, organize and mobilize a large number of Filipinos overseas and their families, it conducts solidarity with other revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements from different countries in the world.

Today, on this 52nd year of commemorating martial law, the Compatriots continues to advance the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective by contributing to the armed struggle

while remembering the historical lessons and experiences of the resistance of the Filipino people during the US- Marcos Sr. regime and the subsequent regimes up to the present.

Once again, revolutionary remembrance and tribute to the victims of martial law!

Fight revisionism in history and advance the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective!

Down with imperialism, feudalism, bureaucratic capitalism!



The Marcos-Duterte power struggle exposes the rottenness of bureaucrat capitalism

By Hugo Francisco



The political alliance between the Marcos and Duterte families, formed to consolidate power and win the 2022 Philippine elections, has disintegrated. Forged out of necessity, the collaboration was meant to restore Bongbong Marcos' family image and secure the Duterte camp's influence, as both families have dark pasts of brutal rule. While Bongbong Marcos sought to bury the evil legacy of his father's fascist dictatorship and preserve his family's stolen wealth, Sara Duterte anticipated her turn in the presidency after serving as vice president.

After their electoral victory, Marcos wasted no time consolidating his grip on power. Marcos gave Sara Duterte a traditionally less desired position as secretary of the Department of Education. He filled key posts in the Senate and the House with loyal allies, securing his dominance. Marcos even pursued constitutional amendments to extend his stay in Office, reminiscent of the Duterte camp's failed attempts to alter the Constitution for their benefit. Public opinion

increasingly saw this as a blatant power grab disguised as a "People's Initiative."

The Duterte camp, however, did not take these actions quietly. Sara Duterte resigned from the LAKAS-CMD party, the majority in the House led by Marcos' cousin Martin Romualdez. Rodrigo Duterte joined the fray, publicly calling Marcos lazy and accusing him of drug use.

In retaliation, the Marcos administration targeted the Duterte camp's most ardent supporters: Quiboloy and the SMNI network, as well as Roque and Badoy. Additionally, the Marcos-controlled Lower House began investigating Duterte-linked offshore gambling ventures, known as POGOs, which were connected to money laundering and human trafficking—these further deteriorated relations between the two camps.

By June 2024, Sara Duterte resigned from her cabinet position, formalizing her break from the Marcos administration. On the other hand, questions have also

been raised about the Office of the Vice President (OVP) under Duterte. Lawmakers questioned the OVP's budget mismanagement and corruption. Sara Duterte's evasiveness when questioned about these issues during budget hearings has further fueled public outrage leading to moves to impeach her from the vice presidency.

The rift between Marcos and Duterte is also evident in their foreign policies. Marcos aligned himself more closely with the US, unlike Rodrigo Duterte, who had favored closer ties with China during the early years of his presidency. Many Filipinos, however, now see both families as puppets, allowing the Philippines to be used as a pawn in an inter-imperialist struggle for dominance, disregarding the country's sovereignty, regional stability, and the welfare of its people.

Despite this long-drawn political spectacle caused by the Marcos-Duterte split, it is important for the Filipino people to remember that:

1) Both the Marcoses and the Dutertes belong to the same bureaucrat capitalist class competing against each other to secure positions of power not to serve the people, but to get as much loot from public funds.

2) The Marcos-Duterte alliance was bound to collapse due to their competing interests to remain in power. As representatives of the ruling class, they would occasionally "unite" and settle which positions in government to hold, but this type of alliance never lasts and would crumble at the slightest sign of a power grab.

3) From Rodrigo Duterte's bloody 'war on drugs' to Marcos' horrid counterrevolutionary programs, both camps are guilty of war crimes against the Filipino people.

4) Once out of the power, the former ruling clique would go to self-preservation mode and seek to protect its loot, evade liability for their crimes and abuses against the people, and relentlessly try to return to power as we have witnessed Marcos family's return and the Duterte family's moves to protect their bases.

The intensifying rift between the Marcos and Duterte political camps only exposes the putrid state of Philippine politics – at a time when the prices of basic goods are soaring, and the toiling Filipino masses are facing unprecedented economic hardships while the minimum wage remains stagnant. The poorest, already grappling with the most dire conditions, are the hardest hit, struggling to survive amid the constant political bickering between the two reactionary camps.

In the end, the spectacle of the Marcos-Duterte power struggle, distracts from the deeper socioeconomic issues of landlessness and widespread poverty that are plaguing the masses. Regardless of which political faction prevails, it is the Filipino people who are at the losing end.

The role of the revolutionary movement is critical in this unfolding situation. By exposing the self-serving character of the ruling elites represented by the Marcos and Duterte dynasties and by clarifying to the masses how the two camps are both reactionaries, the revolutionary movement can channel the people's aspiration for revolutionary change. Arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses intensifies efforts to dismantle the repressive structures built by the ruling class. The conditions for revolutionary change therefore are not only ripe for the taking; they are the most favorable for the revolution as they have ever been. 🚫



The pursuit of sports excellence in the midst of hunger and poverty?

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

Filipinos rejoiced when another Pinoy athlete, gymnast Carlos Yulo, won two gold medals in the recently concluded Olympic games in Paris, France in August this year. Previously, weightlifter Hidilyn Diaz in 2020 won for the Philippines its first ever gold medal in the Tokyo Olympics. Gold medalists like Diaz and Yulo however had to seek financial support and specialized training abroad due to the lack of a supportive environment and the consistent neglect of the reactionary government, which has failed to provide adequate resources for Filipino athletes.

Since joining the Olympics in 1924 during the American imperialist occupation of the country, the Philippines has not figured prominently in any of its sporting events, despite Filipino athletes', then and now, pouring out their very best to bring pride and honor to Filipinos and etch a name for themselves in sports.

While the Filipino people rightfully rejoice the honor brought by Yulo and Diaz, the Philippines' recent gold wins in the Olympics, however, should not end in

euphoria. Instead, it should bring to light once again the poor state of sports in the Philippines. It can be recalled how Diaz had to “crowdfund” financial support for her bid in Tokyo while pole vaulter EJ Obiena likewise lamented the lack of funding for his team.

This should provoke a serious assessment, not only of the drought in medal winnings since the country joined the Games, but more importantly, of the impoverished state of the Filipino athlete, the Filipino youth and the peoples' health and welfare, in general. The poverty and backwardness in the Philippines are crucial factors to consider in this assessment.

The development of a comprehensive sports program for the well-being of the youth and students has never been a priority of the reactionary state whose funds are wasted on corruption. In the latest national budget proposal for 2025, the Philippine Sports Commission's budget is set to be slashed to P725 million (US\$12.5 million) in 2025 compared to its P1.156 billion (US\$19.9 million) this year. Whatever measly funding



the Philippine reactionary state provides to athletes are even corroded by bureaucratic corruption, with reports of sports officials redirecting the payroll and allowances of Filipino athletes into their bank accounts. Medalists in local and international sports events, who won mostly out of self-sacrifice, are awarded, recognized, and used as political trophies, while the non-medalists are relegated to the sidelines.

At the core of these challenges lies the absence of a comprehensive sports program that can nurture the talent of budding athletes at all levels. Compounding this issue is the reactionary government's lopsided economic and social policies that favor big business and the handful of the elite compradors and landlords. The majority of the people on the other hand, the workers and peasants and the lower petty bourgeoisie from whose ranks should come the country's potential athletes and sporting greats, are emaciated and malnourished, and left on their own for their economic survival.

It leaves no doubt that with the anti-people government setting the minimum food requirement to an incredible ₱64 (US\$ 1.14) per day or ₱21.30 (US\$ 0.38) per meal per person, the workers and peasants are consigned to a life of poverty. And with 14.2% of

Filipino families experiencing involuntary hunger, it is an illusion for anyone from the ranks of the poor and marginalized to even enjoy a healthy life, much more dream of strength, speed and endurance. Sports and maintaining a healthy physical well-being have become elusive for the majority. Even reforming policies like integrating a sports development program in the commercialized, elite and fascist educational system is a lost cause under the present system, when about 11 million youth and children (according to the government's own figures) are deprived of the opportunity to attend school and study.

Addressing social inequalities such as tackling the root causes of poverty, exploitation and marginalization that hinder young people from reaching their full potential and becoming healthy and upright individuals and citizens is a political question that only revolutionary change can address.

As we ponder on the honor and pride concomitant with achieving sports excellence and on the unadulterated capitalist-free values of the Olympic spirit of before, let us not forget that the utmost concern of Filipino workers and peasants is not who will deliver, or where to get, the next medal, but where to find their next meal. 🚩



US imperialism's continuing strategy to control Venezuela, and the rest of Latin America

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

US imperialism's unwavering evil intention to control the natural resources, economy, and the people of Latin America is once again exposed with its blatant political meddling in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, a democratic and oil-rich¹ country of 28 million people.

Venezuela successfully held presidential elections last July 28, wherein incumbent President Nicolas Maduro, one of Latin America's staunchest anti-imperialist leaders, won. Maduro won 51.2% of the votes, against his opponent Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia, who got 44.2%.

Anxious of another victory to challenge Maduro's anti-imperialist government, the US and its agents in the region attempted to disrupt the Venezuelan elections by hacking and attacking the data transmission system which delayed the release of the electoral results. Without any solid proof of digital cheating, the US and its propaganda machinery together with the Venezuelan opposition declared the election "fraudulent" and recognized Urrutia as the "winner." Urrutia was a substitute to opposition candidate Maria

Corina Machado, who was barred from running because of her support for the US in imposing economic sanctions that have crippled Venezuela, and for calling for foreign military intervention to oust Maduro.

To defend the democratic electoral process, Maduro turned to the Venezuelan Supreme Court to resolve the electoral dispute. After three weeks of examining the opposition complaints against the government and analyzing the electoral results, the Venezuelan Supreme Court on August 22 confirmed that Maduro was indeed re-elected with 52 percent of the popular vote. The opposition and the US media promptly rejected the court's ruling.

While some Latin American governments believed the US and Western media narrative, officials from Cuba, Honduras and Bolivia congratulated Maduro on social media. "The people spoke and the Revolution won," Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel wrote on X. Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega offered to send "Sandinista fighters" in support of Maduro in case the latter wanted to fight armed "counterrevolutionary"



¹ Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves at an estimated 500 billion barrels (20% of global reserves).

forces. Maduro has also received congratulatory messages from China and Russia on his election victory.

In a statement on August 8, 2024, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) strongly condemned the US government's blatant political meddling, and together with the Filipino people, stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people. The CPP also said the US is enabling puppet opposition groups in Venezuela and the Western media, to promote images of "widespread fraud" during the recent elections effectively undermining democracy in Venezuela.

"As in 2019, the US has brazenly claimed the power to declare the opposition candidate as the new president of Venezuela. It is funding pocket riots in an attempt to destabilize the situation and ignite an upheaval. It has mobilized its global psywar machine to prop up support for its intervention," the CPP said.

"The US has long been undermining Venezuela with unilaterally imposed economic sanctions, causing economic hardships for the Venezuelan people. The US has repeatedly attempted, but failed, to assassinate Maduro and overthrow his government, to effect regime change as it did in other countries not willing to accept US hegemony. The US' evil agenda is to replace Maduro with a regime that will bring back neoliberal economic policies, US monopoly capitalist control of Venezuela's oil reserves, and other privileges for US corporations," the CPP added.

Under the late Bolivarian president Hugo Chavez, Venezuela effectively reduced poverty and inequality by redistributing wealth, heavily invested in social services, eliminated illiteracy by providing tuition free education from daycare to university, subsidized food distribution thus reducing malnutrition, provided access to potable water to 96% of the population, radically improved the country's healthcare system, and despite the sanctions meant to destroy Venezuela's economy, continued to build up its national industries and agriculture. Venezuelan democracy has also meant the powerful participation of the people through 30,000 communal councils, which determine the people's needs. Maduro also cracked down on corruption and pledged to recover the money to invest in public works and social services.

These same achievements are what Maduro's government, and the Venezuelan people have vowed to safeguard and continue.

"Venezuela remains one of the cornerstones of resistance to US imperialism in Latin America. The Venezuelan people's resistance inspires militance and fires the people's determination across the world to fight US imperialist domination," the CPP emphasized.

US imperialism has a long history of intervening in Latin America and undermining and subverting democratic governments resisting US hegemony in the region. The US' policy to impose regime change in the region has its roots in the so-called Monroe Doctrine enunciated by 5th US president James Monroe who proclaimed, "America for Americans". The essence of the Monroe Doctrine is for the US to dominate the Americas.

In pursuit of this doctrine, the US has since been blatantly launching coups, violent invasions and sanctions whenever necessary, from Cuba, the Caribbean and the rest of South America. US imperialism has undermined the people of Latin America, their sovereignty and national security, plundering the region's rich natural resources for the benefit of US big businesses and corporations, hindering and denying the people's economic and social development, and thus their fundamental right to self-determination.

American lawyer and former UN Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order, Alfred de Zayas comments: "Even after the Venezuelan Supreme Court confirmed Maduro as president, it is certain that the sanctions by the US and EU will not cease. Venezuela will not be allowed to have peace.....The fact remains that there are millions of Chavistas in Venezuela who will not accept retrogression and the destruction of the socialist model....What is at stake is the principle of State sovereignty – not just Venezuela's sovereignty and the Venezuelan people's right of self-determination, but the sovereignty of other States in Latin America, Africa and Asia. What is crucial is our recognition of the need to apply international law uniformly and not la carte, in the spirit of US "exceptionalism". The US and the EU do not have the right to meddle in the elections of other countries, nor the right to decide which elections are legitimate and which are not."

Undoubtedly, as the late CPP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison admonished in one of his messages to Venezuela: "all peoples of the world are on a common ground with the Venezuelan people against imperialism and all reaction and for national liberation, democracy, social justice, economic development, cultural progress and peace." 🗨️

Manipulating data will not make the Filipino people less poor

By Ana Rosario

It is not enough for the current regime to keep the Filipino masses mired in poverty. It insults them by saying poverty is being alleviated by flaunting statistics from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) showing that if you can spend Php64 (US\$ 1.14) for food or Php21.33 (US\$ 0.38) per meal per day you are no longer poor.

According to independent think tank Ibon Foundation, the P64 food-poor threshold set by NEDA grossly underestimates the poverty threshold in the country. Underestimating the poverty threshold means underestimating poverty. Actual poor people will not be officially reported as poor.

People's organizations of the toiling masses of workers, peasants, fisherfolks, urban poor slammed the government for being detached from reality, weaving lies and manipulating and misrepresenting data.

"Sila kaya ang mamalengke at nang makita natin kung paano nila pagkakasyahing pakainin ang kanilang pamilya ng 3 beses isang araw sa halagang 64 pesos (US\$ 1.14). Karamihan nga ng pamilya 2 beses na lang kumakain sa isang araw. Karaniwan ay kanin at kapirasong daing o instant noodles na maraming tubig at kaunting repolyo para masabing masustansya," sabi ni Lina, isang urban poor na organisador.

("Let them do the marketing and let's see how they could feed a family three meals a day with just Php64 (US\$ 1.14). Most families eat only 2 meals a day. It's usually rice and a piece of dried fish or instant noodles cooked with a lot of water and for little nutrition we add cabbage," said Lina, an urban poor organizer.)

"Ibig sabihin kung may 64 pesos ko para sa isang araw mong pagkain, hindi ka na mahirap at pwede ka pang sabihing mayaman kung mayroon kang 90 pesos. Saan kayang planeta nakatira ang mga taga NEDA?" patuloy ni Lina.

("This means that if you have 64 pesos for your daily meals you are no longer considered poor and you might even be rich if you have 90 pesos. In what planet do NEDA people live in?" continued Lina.)

Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA), national federation of small

fisherfolks, slammed the Php64 poverty threshold as unrealistic and kept low "to justify low wages and to allow the government to evade its responsibility to provide cash incentive to indigent sectors."

"Isang kilong bigas at isang itlog lang ang mabibili ng 64 pesos. Paano nya ito mapagkakasya sa isang araw?" sabi ni Ronnel Arambulo, bise presidente ng Pamalakaya.

("You can only buy a kilo of rice and an egg for P64. How can an individual make do with that for a day?" said Pamalakaya vice chairperson Ronnel Arambulo.)

Pamalakaya also criticized the national budget allocations, noting that billions could be potentially siphoned off as kickbacks, while workers continue to struggle with a minimum wage of P645 (US\$ 11.47), far below the P1,206 (US\$ 21.45) necessary for a living wage. For example, the office of vice president Sara Duterte was exposed of disbursing so-called intelligence funds worth Php 125 million (US\$ 2.2 million) but could not give concrete details where and how the money was spent. The funds could have been allocated to areas affected by recent typhoons or drought.

Overseas Filipino workers or OFWs are also affected by the heightening gravity of poverty in the Philippines. Forced to go abroad for lack of employment and low wages at home, the OFWs suffer low wages and brutal working conditions.

Their families back home tell of severe hardships so much so that the migrant workers have to work and earn more to help their family. One OFW told Liberation International that: "Noon nga po tatlong bahay lang nililinis ko. Ngayon, kailangan ko maglinis ng limang bahay isang araw para makapagpadala ng sapat sa pamilya ko."

("Before, I only cleaned three houses per day. Now, I have to clean five houses a day so I can send enough money to my family.")

Undocumented OFWs are most vulnerable to abuse. Women workers are often physically and sexually abused by their employers, and their wages and passports withheld lest they escape. Most endure their situation in order to help their family back home.

Major official statistical data in the Philippines are falsified and manipulated to create an illusion of progress and better living conditions. But wages, in fact, remain low and unemployment is rampant.

There remains a significant gap in the minimum wage between urban and rural areas, which hampers efforts towards national industrialization and agricultural development. In urban centers, wages tend to be higher due to the concentration of employment opportunities, while rural areas, which are largely agricultural, lag behind with lower wages. This disparity perpetuates unequal development, driving migration to cities and leaving the countryside underdeveloped.

Today, the latest Metro Manila rate is Php 645.00 (11.47USD) for the non-agriculture sector and Php 608.00 (10.82USD) for other sectors, which workers would earn per day. Although a big number of workers do not receive the daily wage as mandated by law.

The cycle of poverty is further perpetuated as limited access to education and employment opportunities hinder their chances of upward mobility.

These are precisely the issues that the NDFP's Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER) seeks to address. This draft agreement outlines concrete and doable steps to bring

about real social and economic progress to eradicate the root causes of poverty.

Poverty is endemic in a semifeudal and semicolonial system. The unequal distribution of land and resources are root causes of poverty. Majority of farmers are poor and have to struggle to make ends meet. The lack of support for agricultural development and agrarian reform exacerbates the plight of the rural poor.

Addressing the endemic issue of poverty in the Philippines requires revolutionary change. Genuine land reform and national industrialization for economic development, equitable economic policies, and investment in social services are critical steps towards addressing the root causes of poverty. Empowering poor communities through access to education, healthcare, and sustainable livelihood opportunities is essential in breaking the cycle of poverty.

The NDFP and the entire revolutionary movement in the Philippines has long recognized the deep-seated issues that perpetuate poverty in the country and has developed its own program to address these very issues. Through the CASER, the NDFP offers a clear and practical roadmap to resolving the root causes of the armed conflict. This program focuses on equitable development between urban and rural centers, ensuring fair wages, and pushing for land reform and national industrialization. 🚩



The Way to a Just Peace

by Jose Maria Sison

The Yanks came posing as a friend
Then they unleashed aggression
To rape, plunder and imprison
Our long suffering Motherland.
Our way to a just peace is to fight
For national liberation

By ceaseless, ruthless use of arms
The ruling classes dominate,
Oppress and exploit the people
Mainly the workers and peasants.
The way to a just peace is to fight
For social liberation

The people must rise up to fight
The imperialists and puppets
Gain the power to free themselves
And build a just and lasting peace

The kind of peace that the imperialists
And the local exploiting classes wish
Is the abject surrender of the people
To the daily violence of exploitation.

The way to a just peace is to end
The violence of exploitation.

The people must rise up to fight
The imperialists and puppets
Gain the power to free themselves
And build a just and lasting peace!

December 2005

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