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FOREWORD

The year 2020 confronted the Party and revolutionary movement with a myriad of challenges. While the Covid-19 pandemic raged across the world, the US-Duterte regime unleashed an intensified dirty war against the people, campaign of suppression against democratic rights and all-out armed offensive and relentless bombardment in the countryside.

It is helpful to look back at 2020 to gain a clearer view of what to face in the coming year. It is the task of revolutionary forces to study the past to identify the trends and main currents of history.

Ang Bayan (AB) is issuing this "Editorial 2020," a collection of editorials published by *AB* during 2020 as an aid for studying the past. As *AB* comes out every fortnight, its editorials reflect the overall picture of the situation in the Philippines and the Filipino people at each period.

One will read in this collection the main issues which the country faced in 2020 and the calls which the Party issued to the people.

The first and last *AB* editorial in 2020 touched on the call for further strengthening the antifeudal struggles and the peasant resistance in the countryside against the attacks of Duterte's armed minions. These pointed out the key importance of advancing the antifeudal movement in the overall strengthening of the people's war, and particularly in fighting state terrorism under the US-Duterte fascist regime.

The major topic discussed in the most numerous editorials (7 of 24) during the last year was the Covid-19 pandemic. One can see how, from the outset, the Party denounced the US-Duterte regime for its slow response and neglect in the face of the spread of the virus in the country. Early on, the Party called for a democratic movement of the entire people as the response to the pandemic.

One can also read from these editorials the Party's analysis of the anti-democratic nature of Duterte's initial response to the pandemic, and how he took advantage of the health crisis to advance his fascist agenda. *AB's* editorials denounced the extension of lockdowns while no measures were being carried out to fix the health system and provide assistance to the people severely oppressed by the economic shutdown.

Fascism or state terrorism was the next most discussed topic in the editorials (4) in 2020. This mainly discussed the successive murders of activists and mass leaders, the railroading of the Anti-Terror Law in July, the brazen red-tagging and fascist attacks against the right to expression and other democratic rights.

The editorials of *AB* consistently urged the people to fight for their rights and take action to resist amid the pandemic, economic crisis, intensified fascist attacks and schemes to perpetuate the Duterte dynasty. It is only through collective resistance could the people avoid being paralyzed by the spread of the disease or crushed by the regime's state terrorism.

Through *AB's* editorials, the Party aims to unite all revolutionary forces and lead them in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino people.

We invite everyone to read back through *AB's* editorials of 2020 as a way of looking back into the issues that confronted the Filipino people and how these are understood from the class standpoint of the Party. Use this collection as a reference and guide for continuing revolutionary work in the future.

Launch struggles for land and economic reforms in the countryside

January 7, 2020

7

Tens of millions of toiling masses in the countryside are mired in poverty. They are burdened with various forms of feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation and different oppressive and burdensome policies and laws. There is no other solution to peasants, national minorities and other oppressed sectors' continually worsening conditions but to unite and rise up to fight for genuine land reforms and other economic reforms.

In rice fields, sugar fields, coconut and corn farms and others, those who till and develop are landless. A large part of their harvest is appropriated by big landlords through burdensome land rent and oppressive conditions of dividing the cost of production. Millions of peasants also suffer due to very low farm gate prices imposed by big merchants who have a monopoly control on the market.

Aside from landlessness and low income, they are also burdened with heavy socio-economic problems due to the neoliberal policies in the agricultural sector. They are directly hurt by policies like the liberalization of rice imports which is killing the livelihood of 2.4 million rice farmers. As the value and volume of harvest drops, 4,000 mills are forced to close. From 2017, around a million jobs in the countryside have been lost.

Small farmers' income do not come close to being sufficient as they are perennially in debt. In the past three decades, average farm size has shrank while costs of production ballooned. Land appropriated by landlords and plantations have long reached their maximum size. Land grabbing and peasant dislocation due to conversion of agricultural lands to real estate, export zones, tourism spots and other commercial uses is rampant. Foreign mining and logging companies have destroyed the previously thick forests which are part of ancestral lands of national minorities. As time goes on, already wealthy rich big landlords and their foreign and bourgeois comprador partners amass more and more wealth.

These conditions give rise to an army of unemployed who, unless migrated go to the cities to become part of the sea of surplus labor or were forced to find work abroad, remain stuck and find various jobs in the countryside.

Added to socio-economic hardships is the US-Duterte regime's relentless attacks against peasants and their communities to stifle them and force them to accept their oppression. These attacks are focused on areas where big bourgeois compradors, foreign companies and their bureaucrat capitalist allies have interests. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, on the other hand, focuses its combat operations in areas where the masses and their revolutionary movement fight back.

The Duterte regime itself linked large scale military operations in the countryside to big pro-capitalist and pro-foreign infrastructure projects. Under the so-called "whole-of-nation" approach in fighting counterinsurgency, big combat operations directly serve the construction of destructive dams, mines and energy plants, road systems, airports and seaports needed for the operations of the said companies. In some areas, police and soldiers go on a rampage in the name of the Community Support Program to pave the way for ecotourism projects and export zones. The soldiers themselves bring foreign capitalists to far-flung villages targeted for commercial plantation operations.

The peasant and toiling masses in the countryside have no choice but to stand and fight.

It is the revolutionary movement's duty to support and help the toiling masses in asserting their basic demands. They should be aided in launching mass struggles against exploitation and oppression at for the upliftment of their livelihoods.

It is imperative for the peasant masses and other sectors in the countryside to unite and launch their movement for land reform and other economic reforms for advancing their rights and welfare. Parallel to this, production and economic work should be raised, together with the struggle to defend ancestral lands and the remaining forest resources.

As the true army of the people, the New People's Army should pay close attention to the conditions of the peasants, minorities and toiling masses and assist them in their struggles against feudal and other forms of exploitation and oppression.

It should help strengthen the democratic mass organizations and continue to consolidate the local Party branch.

Leading Party committees at various levels, in partnership with NPA units, should lead social investigations to grasp clearly the issues and problems that the masses confront. They should formulate the correct slogans that are based on concrete and urgent needs and demands of the masses. They should undertake investigations in various levels, and regularly update them. They should expose the oppressive programs, policies, projects, the leading enterprises of big landlords at the regional, provincial, inter-municipality levels down to the barrios. Particular steps and issues that directly affect different sectors in areas covered by the revolutionary movement need to be detailed.

By struggling in the countryside to uplift their economic status, the peasants and other toiling masses are rejecting the semifeudal forms of exploitation and oppression of the semifeudal and semicolonial social system. There is a need to grasp and understand more firmly the principle that the widespread and intensive struggles

of the toiling masses is the key to the expansion and strengthening of the people's army, and therefore, key to raising the general level of the people's war. As the people's army expands and grows stronger, it becomes more capable in carrying out its tasks in an intensive and comprehensive way.

Deepening contradictions in Duterte's last two years in power

January 21, 2020

11

Duterte aims to perpetuate himself in power. However, with just a little more than two years remaining, any scheme will be increasingly difficult to carry out. His regime is mired in deep crisis that is set to intensify as the ruling system is drawn into the process of political transition with the 2022 elections. To realize his Marcosian delusions, Duterte will have to resort to ever more bloody methods of suppression.

No amount of populist demagoguery can reverse the political isolation of the Duterte regime. This is due to the continuous downturn in the people's socioeconomic conditions, rampant extrajudicial killings, police and military abuses, unbridled corruption, and subservience to foreign masters. The situation emboldens a wide range of anti-Duterte forces to take action in order to frustrate Duterte's schemes and seek his ouster at the soonest possible time.

Despite his tyrannical tactics, and all-out effort to place the military and police under his personal control, Duterte has yet to complete his devious scheme to monopolize political power. After more than three years in Malacañang, Duterte's charter change

project has yet to take off as a result of deep divisions among his political clique and vigilant opposition to the real aims of his "federalism" project.

For more than three years, Duterte employed a bloody campaign of killings with extreme impunity to terrorize the people. This was carried out in the guise of the "war on drugs" although its real aim was to wrest control of the shabu market. It has been used as a political tool to make politicians bow to his dictates.

Members of the ruling classes outside the national capital have been forced to cooperate and comply with Duterte's wishes. To many, though, this is only a tactic to preserve themselves while the regime carries out its bloody rampage. However, they harbor deep resentment against Duterte who cuts deep into their business contracts to get the lion's share of bribes and "percentages." They eagerly await the end of Duterte's reign of unbridled greed.

Opposition stalwarts under the Liberal Party have been almost completely disenfranchised through Duterte's dirty political tactics, and electronic manipulation of the results of the recent elections. The opposition, however, continues to reap support among big business and oligarchs. Many have been subjected to Duterte's public rebuke and threats as method for demanding greater business share. Vice Pres. Leni Robredo has heightened her denunciation of Duterte's drug war.

The military and police appear to be solidly behind Duterte especially with them receiving expanded powers under the regime's intensified counterinsurgency drive. Duterte has cultivated his own clique and following among the officers of the AFP and PNP by appointing them to juicy positions in the bureaucracy. However, the AFP and PNP are deeply divided among various factions loyal to various political cliques and criminal syndicates. But its officers are zealously loyal to the US military, which in turn, is deeply displeased by Duterte's flirting with China.

Although two years away, the 2022 election is now quickly causing deep fissures within the ruling clique. Duterte is becoming

wary of his temporary allies, who themselves are powerful bureaucrat capitalists and big oligarchs. They are ready to challenge Duterte's perpetuation schemes or plans to have his family or close friends succeed the presidency. The presidential ambitions of Duterte's daughter and close allies are publicly known. They are fast consolidating their own forces especially with the deterioration of Duterte's health and anticipation of his death before his term ends.

Anti-Duterte forces in the US have become more vocal. The Republican-led US Senate recently issued a resolution calling for a ban on entry of people behind Sen. Leila de Lima's detention. US embassy officials met with Vice President Robredo over the drug war which some officials of the US government have openly criticized. US President Trump, who has publicly sided with Duterte is himself entangled in political crisis and is facing an impeachment trial.

Duterte has placed the entire country under undeclared martial law through Executive Order 70 and the National Task Force. This oriented his entire government to a brutal counterinsurgency drive with the declared aim of defeating the New People's Army before the end of his term. With virtual martial law powers, Duterte's military and police forces are carrying out a brutal campaign of suppression and pacification against the broad masses in the cities and countryside.

Military and paramilitary forces have maintained presence in hundreds of rural villages. However, they have failed to completely subdue the peasant masses and their determination to resist and fight for genuine land distribution and other economic reforms. In the cities, workers, the semiproletarian masses and pettybourgeoisie continue to assert their rights and demand wage increases, state subsidies and other urgent reforms to address deteriorating economic conditions.

The AFP has carried out intensified military offensives against the NPA using new weaponry supplied by the US. Despite these offensives, no NPA unit has suffered major losses. On the contrary,

by availing of the tactics of dispersal, shifting and concentration, NPA units have successfully carried out counterencirclements and put at least one battalion of AFP ground troops out of the battlefield last year.

The broad masses of the Filipino people are seething with unrest in the face of rising cost of living, lack of income, extremely low wages, oppressive land rent, excessive loan interest rates, unfair farm-gate prices of agricultural produce and inequitable terms in backyard animal raising, imperialist economic aggression, lack of state subsidies for public education and health, bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency in disaster work, burdensome taxes and impositions, and other forms of oppression and exploitation.

The deepening contradictions under the Duterte regime are generating conditions which demand widespread mobilization of the people. The Party and all revolutionary forces must reach out to everyone suffering under the Duterte regime and assist them in waging various forms of struggles against all manifestations of oppression and exploitation. All democratic forces must continue to come together in a broad united front to resist the Duterte regime fascist tyranny and perpetuation schemes.

In the countryside, the Party must strengthen the NPA in an all-sided manner. The NPA and all revolutionary forces must mobilize the masses of poor peasants and semiproletariat against feudal, semifeudal and other forms of exploitation and oppression, as well as in their demand for democracy, urgent reforms and an end to the anti-peasant policies of the Duterte regime. The NPA must wage armed struggle to defend the masses against their fascist oppressors, and frustrate the enemy's armed offensives.

Duterte's hollow stance against VFA

February 7, 2020

15

Pres. Rodrigo Duterte recently repeated his rants against the US government. Last month, he announced that he will push for the abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). He said that he will carry this out within a month if the US fails to reverse the cancellation of his rabid henchman, now senator, Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa's visa.

He said that he is not joking. Considering the context and his previous rants against the US, however, it can be seen that Duterte is not at all serious. His stance on the termination of VFA is hollow. He is posturing not to advance the national sovereignty of the Philippines, but his selfish political interests.

This posturing is no different from the bogus nationalism of Marcos who in the 1970s threatened to abrogate the Military Bases Agreement. The agreement, signed in 1946, gave the US the privilege to erect military bases in more than 50,000 hectares of land in Clark, Subic and many other areas. Marcos' posturing, however, just ended up in a bargain for payment of higher land rent by the US and the provision of more military aid to support his martial law.

Following this Marcosian approach, Duterte is using the concept

of national sovereignty as an embellishment to conceal his personal interests. Firstly, in connection with his stance to "align with China and Russia," Duterte is using his anti-VFA antics to push the US to provide more and new weapons, helicopters, bombs, and other matériel for the AFP's brutal war of suppression against the Filipino masses, and for the bogus "war on drugs." With this, he can win the support of pro-US AFP officials. Secondly, he is using this as a card to improve his worth and hinder some US-based groups from pressuring him along with his political rivals.

If Duterte really has even just a whiff of nationalism, he should have since junked the VFA, ordered the pull-out of American troops and dismantled their military facilities in the Philippines. Duterte turns a blind eye to what the Americans are doing in Fort Magsaysay, Clark, Subic, Villamor Air Base, Mactan Air Base, Lumbia Airport, Camp Ranao, Camp Bautista, Carlito Cunanan Naval Station, Camp Navarro and other places. These camps serve as centers for their intervention. These are where they spy, launch drones, and train Filipino soldiers for their interference in the country's internal affairs under the guise of "counter-terrorism."

For the Filipino people who are aspiring for genuine freedom from US neocolonial domination, Duterte's posturing against the VFA will only result in nothing. Time will pass and this will only be forgotten like his past declaration to end the Balikatan "war exercises" and abrogate the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

The actual result of his anti-VFA stance will depend on how he will play this card. It may either result in a mere "review," a new negotiation or a new agreement; or the US may also simply reward Duterte (including his request for the cancellation of Bato's visa). However, this may also backfire at him especially if the US does not immediately compromise and if his antics will go too far as this will embolden some AFP officials, in connivance with US forces and local oppositionists, to oust him from power. What is certain is that

Duterte's stance neither changes nor will change the US' dominion over the country's politics.

The Filipino people have long been clamoring for the abrogation of the VFA, and other unequal military treaties between the US and the Philippines. Among these are the Mutual Defense Treaty and the EDCA which were signed in 1951 and 2014, respectively.

All these agreements give the US military the power and right to be in the Philippines and violate its sovereignty. These agreements are an affront to the national integrity of Filipinos.

Under the VFA, in particular, American troops are allowed to freely enter and exit the country. Contrary to the reactionary Philippine constitution, their vehicles cannot even be inspected for carrying nuclear weapons into the country. American troops who commit crimes are immediately given protection by the US government and, if not for public clamor and protests, are absolved of their crimes.

These agreements, and the dominion of foreign capitalists and banks in the local economy, are the starkest manifestations of neocolonial oppression in the Philippines. Foreign control over the economy and military, and the connivance of some traitors with foreign imperialists are the primary factors why the country remains backward, and why the Filipino people are impoverished while oligarchs, landlords, and big corrupt bureaucrats get richer and richer everyday.

The Filipino people must amplify their clamor for the abrogation of the VFA and all other unequal military treaties. All freedom-loving people must hold the Duterte regime accountable for selling out Philippine sovereignty .

Demand the complete abrogation of the VFA and all unequal military treaties

February 21, 2020

In the face of the Duterte regime's recent notice to the US government of its intention to end the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), it is the Filipino people's task to demand the complete abrogation of the treaty and demand other calls for the defense of national sovereignty.

Duterte's signing of the notice of termination on February 11 corresponds to the Filipino people's continued call to end the VFA. Nonetheless, this is but the first step. It is therefore imperative that the people urgently unite and collectively clamor for the fulfillment of this oppressive treaty's end.

In the coming 180 days, or until the repeal of the VFA takes complete effect, the Filipino people must:

- 1) firmly resist any scheme to recant the notice of termination, renegotiation of the treaty, or negotiation for a new treaty which would allow for the permanent presence of US military troops in the country;
- 2) demand that US military vessels entering the country undergo inspections to ensure that these do not carry nuclear arms;
- 3) demand that US military personnel who have committed

crimes in the country and found guilty by local courts but remain under US custody in the name of the VFA be detained in Philippine jails and be under the country's jurisdiction;

4) demand the cancellation of Balikatan 2020 war games and all military exercises (319 in 2020) to be conducted by US military forces under the VFA;

5) demand the revocation of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty and the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement;

6) call for an end to the Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines which the US military uses to intensify its intervention in the country under the guise of "counter-terrorism;"

7) call for the dismantling of US military facilities which were put up before, and through the authority of the EDCA, including facilities it maintains in Lumbia Airport (Cagayan de Oro), Antonio Bautista Air Base (Palawan), Basa Air Base (Pampanga), Fort Magsaysay (Nueva Ecija), Benito Ebuena Air Base (Mactan, Cebu), Camp Navarro (Zamboanga City), Camp Ranao (Marawi City) and PNP Academy (Cavite);

8) demand the eviction of US military forces stationed in the country, and end its rotational deployment of troops;

9) call for an end in the deployment of US surveillance aircraft and drones, including those operated by private contractors along with Dyne Corporation; and

10) call for an end to US military aid and its provision of bombs, rockets, and ammunition used by the Duterte regime in its armed suppression of rights. The Filipino people call for the abrogation of the VFA and all other military treaties because these give US military forces extraterritorial rights and almost unrestricted access to operate in the country. The US makes use of military exercises in the country to tighten its grip on the AFP. It aims to employ the local armed forces as its minions in its display of hegemony in the Asia-Pacific.

That the local military is bounded to the US does not hinder but instead serves as a magnet that attracts aggression from Chinese military forces and all enemies and future foes of the US. Because

the Philippines is bounded by the treaty, the country could not carry out an independent foreign policy.

The AFP's dependence on the US for military equipment, training, and doctrinal orientation is among the biggest obstacles in attaining a just and lasting peace. Because it is influenced by the US, counterinsurgency remains as the AFP and the reactionary government's primary center of attention, instead of defending the country's sovereignty. Counterinsurgency is big business for the US military-industrial capitalists.

The Filipino people are aware of the mistake in Duterte's reason in justifying his intent to end the VFA. His threat to end the treaty is linked to his selfish political objectives.

This is his response to the US Senate's open political harassment which criticized the detention of Duterte critic Sen. Leila de Lima. Duterte cries "US intervention" only because he refuses to be criticized over his underhanded rivalry with other leading pro-US political groups.

He also exclaimed his dismay over what he considers as insufficient military support for the AFP's counterinsurgency campaign. He begs the US for more attack helicopters, armalites, bombs, fighter jets, drones, and other military equipment.

Duterte's selfish interests and closed-minded thinking reveals that the move to issue the notice to terminate the VFA is not aimed at ending more than half a century of US imperialism's neocolonial rule. It is expected that he will easily be charmed or controlled by Trump or by no less than his pro-US military officials.

However, patriotic Filipinos will not be silenced in their demand to abrogate the VFA and other unequal military treaties with the US. They will firmly rise to advance the struggle to end US imperialist oppression and achieve genuine national liberation.

Act collectively to fight to Covid-19 epidemic

March 7, 2020

21

Covid-19 is spreading rapidly. This is a new strain of coronavirus which has infected more than 100,000 and killed more than 3,400 in at least 80 countries since it was first detected three months ago. The Covid-19 epidemic poses a real threat to the Philippines where there are already six confirmed cases of infection both on Filipinos and foreigners, and one fatality as of March 6.

The nation is vulnerable to the epidemic due to the sorry state of the public health system and the society in general. The precariousness of infections is worst among the toiling masses, especially workers and the semiproletariat. It can spread quickly among hundreds of thousands who are living in crowded shanties. They have no adequate clean water supply and often do not receive public services such as sanitation, garbage collection and many others. There is also a threat that the virus will spread rapidly among workers in factories which usually do not have safe working conditions.

The regime has practically done nothing to address the threat posed by the Covid-19 epidemic at a national scope. It drew flak for its delayed response, particularly in implementing quarantine and

other measures to reduce the interaction of the Philippines with China and other countries.

Instead, the regime was busy in conducting a grandiose publicity campaign on Covid-19. It has failed to implement concrete steps to help the people prevent the spread of the disease. There were no basic measures such as free and widespread distribution of face masks and sanitation equipment, and conduct of widespread sanitation campaigns. It left the Filipino people on their own, who mostly were busy in ensuring food and other basic supplies and were without any protection to shield themselves from the disease.

The order issued by PhilHealth to provide beneficiaries who will get infected with just ₱30,000 exposes its limitation, and how it serves profit-oriented private hospitals. Amid the threat of Covid-19, the budget cut for research on infectious diseases is criminal neglect. Funds for the procurement of test kits to promptly trace the infected are grossly insufficient. Duterte's false assurances failed to quell the people's fear.

The Party and revolutionary forces always take into consideration the welfare of the people, including public health. In areas where the people's democratic government exists, it conducts health campaigns and gives free medical services. It establishes health committees from the village level upward to address the people's health concerns in their respective areas.

Thus, the Party stands in solidarity with the Filipino people in their aspiration to surpass the threat of the Covid-19 epidemic. The Party also stands with them in denouncing and criticizing the ineptness of the Duterte regime's and its failure to implement concrete and correct steps to face the epidemic.

The Party calls on the Filipino people to organize and collectively act to fight the threat of the Covid-19 epidemic. The Party calls on all mass organizations to build thousands of health committees in communities and factories to plan concrete measures in collectively combatting Covid-19.

On top of conducting education campaigns, these committees can mobilize thousands of people to conduct sanitation campaigns in

communities and factories, as well as in schools and offices. These committees must also voice out the sentiments of the people amid the threat of the epidemic and the inept response of the Duterte regime. They can help in demanding the implementation of practical measures in factories (such as the free distribution of medical and sanitation supplies to workers) and communities (garbage collection, access for clean water, free distribution of health packs and the implementation of a sanitation system). Although urban areas are facing the early threat of rapid rise in infections, the peasant masses and their organizations must also prepare in the countryside. In their communities, the health condition is often poor, hospitals are far, and medical services are scarce.

The Party commends nurses, doctors and health professionals who are at the forefront in the fight against Covid-19. The Party calls on them to strengthen their democratic and mass organizations. In solidarity with mass-oriented organizations and health committees, they must assert an increase in the budget for public health, especially now that the country is facing the threat of an epidemic.

An increase in the allocation for public health will ensure funds both for increasing wages, improving medical facilities and health research. They must oppose the service-for-profit policy of the state and medical tourism. They must demand to strengthen public hospitals and end the policy of commercialization which focuses on profit accumulation.

The Covid-19 epidemic has further aggravated the dire state of the Filipino people's public health. There are also severe problems of dengue epidemic, tuberculosis and other controllable and curable diseases which infect thousands and kill many Filipinos annually. This is the result of grave social conditions and state neglect over the health of the people.

The public health of the Filipino people will never be prioritized under the current system. Only a social revolution—a national democratic revolution—will change the current condition, and place public health and the people's welfare at the top of the state's priorities.

Resist Duterte's anti-poor and anti-democratic Luzon lockdown

March 21, 2020

24

Duterte's order to lockdown Luzon against the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) is anti-poor and anti-democratic. It has resulted in widespread chaos, and extreme hardship and inconvenience to workers and ordinary people. Duterte has further enraged the people for imposing the restrictive and repressive lockdown.

More than 40,000 police personnel and soldiers have been deployed to implement the lockdown in and around the National Capital Region. This aims to confine people in their homes and subject transportation and all aspects of social life to police and military control. Checkpoints were mounted to intimidate people and prevent them from going to their workplaces. The lockdown has practically shut down commerce and local production. Millions cannot work and earn a living and supplies are limited.

Duterte's lockdown could result in widespread shortage and hunger. His makes empty promises to feed and dole out cash to those affected. The fund supposedly to be given as aid to workers is extremely too low. Even local governments admit that they do not have the capacity to feed those affected by the lockdown beyond several days.

Amid the Covid-19 epidemic, measures to strengthen public health infrastructures should have been made. Instead, Duterte imposed martial law under the guise of a lockdown in NCR and Luzon by the AFP and PNP. Duterte's lockdown violates the people's most basic civil rights including the right to travel and assembly. People are restricted from leaving their homes without passes or beyond curfew. Violators are threatened with arrest and imprisonment.

Military officials, not doctors or nurses, are in the frontline of Duterte's solution. Instead of putting up much needed testing centers in barangays, checkpoints were mounted everywhere. Funds are squandered on military and police vehicles and other equipment, while public hospitals and health workers lack much needed facilities and equipment to admit, test and treat patients possibly infected by Covid-19.

The lockdown imposition exposes Duterte's ill-preparedness to confront Covid-19 and other epidemics. Prior to the lockdown, Duterte underestimated the Covid-19 threat for two months. He did not implement measures to stop the spread of the virus in the country. In fact, he allowed the entry of thousands of Chinese tourists and POGO workers from January to February, even amid the quick spread of Covid-19 in China and restrictions imposed by many countries on Chinese tourists.

Duterte's fascist lockdown conceals how he slashed the budget of the Department of health by ₱16.6 billion. He cut the budget for the Epidemiology and Surveillance Program, which focuses on the prevention and control of highly contagious diseases such as Covid-19, by half from ₱262.9 million in 2019 to ₱115.5 million. He instead increased the budget of the military and police, and for its corruption-ridden "intelligence" fund.

Because of lack of preparation and genuine care for the welfare and livelihood of the toiling masses, Duterte imposed the lockdown through coercion, using military and police forces. Duterte ignores the plight of millions of people who need to travel in order to work or

find employment, go to their destination, and others. This reflects Duterte's militaristic narrow-mindedness. He think that he can silence all people through his armed military and police forces.

The toiling masses are outraged at Duterte's lockdown. Although portrayed as a measure to counter Covid-19, the Filipino people clearly see that what this brings to them is a heavy burden. The absence of measures to improve health facilities proves that Duterte is not facing the Covid-19 threat seriously.

The Filipino people must demand an end to Duterte's anti-poor and anti-democratic lockdown in NCR, Luzon at and other parts of the country. Just as how other countries have responded, the Covid-19 threat can be dealt with without having to curtail the people's basic rights to mobility, work and assembly. Doctors, nurses and health workers must be at the forefront of this endeavor and not soldiers and police forces.

It is only just for the Filipino people to assert the immediate realignment of funds squandered on the procurement of helicopters, fighter jets, bombs and other war matériel, and the budget allocated for so-called "intelligence" and debt servicing, to health. Public hospitals and other facilities must be immediately equipped to cope with Covid-19 cases, as well as public health facilities at the barangay level to be able to conduct mass testing. They must push for the free distribution of face masks, alcohol and other hygiene kits, as well as adequate access to electricity and clean water, especially in poor communities. They must demand for sanitation services, garbage collection and disinfection of public places. They must assert that the budget of universities and other agencies conducting scientific research to discover ways to test and produce medicines for Covid-19 be increased, and the local production of such medicines be supported. Workers must demand for emergency aid and free distribution of food. They must assert their right to assembly, even if some appropriate precautions need to be implemented to prevent the spread of the disease, to express the people's collective plight.

Simultaneously, the people must collectively take action to

conduct necessary measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19. They must establish local health committees and collectively launch sanitation, cleaning and personal hygiene measures, and provide aid to health workers, among others. They must continuously strive to defend the democratic rights and welfare of the people during the lockdown.

In revolutionary territories, mass organizations and health committees of organs of political power must be mobilized to conduct information campaigns on Covid-19, and implement measures to prevent the spread of the virus in their communities. They must give special attention to the elderly who are most vulnerable to Covid-19. Promote the use of herbal medicines which can be used to fight the symptoms of Covid-19.

NPA units must work closely with local health committees in barrios. They must mobilize Red fighters to help in raising the awareness of the people about the disease and on what has to be collectively done by the people to face this. The NPA must continue to defend the people, especially amid the threat of using Covid-19 to impose fascist military rule, intimidate the people and suppress their rights.

The collective action of the people is key to addressing the current health crisis and not Duterte's fascist lockdown.

The Covid-19 pandemic has become more than just a health concern

April 7, 2020

From being a health crisis, the situation brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic has rapidly developed into an economic, social and political crisis. More and more get infected and die in the Philippines and across the globe. Simultaneously, more and more Filipinos suffer from hunger, disease and other hardships brought about by Duterte's lockdown imposed without comprehensive, sufficient and immediate health and economic measures in place.

The Duterte government is too slow to implement much needed mass testing as an immediate measure to contain the spread of the disease. Three weeks since the lockdown, only more or less 19,000 individuals have been tested while this has to be extensively conducted in communities. Despite the powers given Duterte to realign public funds, only a small amount was allocated to support health workers and aid public hospitals to keep up with the pandemic. The government is acting too slow amid supply shortages and is relying on initiatives by the private sector. Corruption is exposed with its procurement of overpriced equipment.

The longer the lockdown, millions more are made to suffer from

hunger by the government. The budget allocated is way too insufficient to compensate all those who lost their jobs and income. The distribution of aid came very late and many are yet to be compensated. Officials of various agencies are passing the buck. It has become stark that the Duterte government is incompetent and incapable of leading amid the crisis. Many are dependent on the quicker and more extensive aid provided by volunteers, mass organizations, private associations and other groups.

Duterte is using an iron fist in facing the public health crisis. He has deployed police personnel and soldiers at the frontline and in command of the government's machinery to address the health crisis. He further suppressed the people's right to speech and assembly. Duterte openly threatened anyone who will not abide by his rules and "incite chaos" with a shoot to kill order. Duterte imposes terror while the masses are distressed and left hungry by the lockdown and negligent government.

The longer the lockdown, Duterte's incompetence and incapability to rule and comprehensively address the people's plight is further exposed. Millions of toiling masses and the middle class are becoming more desperate because of hunger, scarcity and depletion of their savings and loss of livelihood.

In the countryside, the peasant masses are driven to deeper poverty by roadblocks preventing the free flow of farm produce, and restrictions on transportation and food purchase. Despite Duterte's ceasefire declaration, AFP and PNP counterinsurgency operations continue unabated and have intensified. At least 146 barangays are currently occupied by the military. In some areas, soldiers conduct house-to-house inspections without wearing face masks to prevent the spread of the disease. Under the guise of fighting the spread of Covid-19, soldiers mounted checkpoints to restrict travel and prevent people from tending their farmlands and buying food.

To beat and contain the pandemic, the Filipino people need to stand up, act collectively and work together to prevent the spread of the disease and demand the government to provide aid in this time

of crisis. At the same time, they must defend their rights and welfare that are being trampled upon by the regime's militarist solution.

They must continue to demand an end to the lockdown and for implementation of measures such as mass screening and testing in communities in order to immediately contain and prevent the spread of the virus. Thousands of health workers and volunteers must be mobilized, trained, and provided with sufficient funds and equipment. Now is the time to clamor for the strengthening of public hospitals instead of undermining these under the policy of spending cuts on health services.

While Duterte's lockdown is in place, the people must demand the quick distribution of sufficient aid for all. They must hold the Duterte regime accountable for its slow, insufficient and non-transparent distribution of aid.

Amid the lockdown, the collective aspirations of the people are primarily gathered in urban and rural poor communities. The people's hardships are concentrated in these areas. Communities must creatively act to collectively express the entire nation's plight and demands. They must act in their numbers to fight and surmount Duterte's threat to suppress all mass actions.

To face the Covid-19 pandemic and in response to the United Nation's call for a 'global ceasefire,' the Party declared a ceasefire on March 26 that will remain in effect until April 15. We directed NPA units to focus on providing health services in barrios despite being continuously disrupted by AFP operations and raids which have resulted in at least seven armed encounters. Amid relentless AFP offensives, the Party reminded all NPA units to uphold their discipline in maintaining secrecy to deny the enemy an opportunity to attack and to ensure wide latitude for the NPA to continuously provide services to the masses. Organizations and forces in the countryside must be mobilized to assert economic demands and plan for increasing food production in preparation for the imminent shortage due to the lockdown and production stoppage.

While Duterte insists on his fascist dictatorial methods, he

continues to isolate himself from the people. Duterte stinks even more because of the Covid-19 crisis brought about by his regime's failures. His regime is shaken by crumbling support. Every time his dirty mouth opens and with his every misstep, he further enrages the people and fires up their courage. He has at times gave in to people's demands to ease the situation. It remains to be seen whether he can stop the people's anger from boiling over or if he will be totally engulfed by the people's burning anger.

The heavy impact of the Covid-19 in the Philippines exposes the rottenness and fundamental contradiction of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system. It revealed the incapacity of the ruling state to address the plight of the people. The need for revolutionary change to establish a new people's democratic system that will uphold the interests of the Filipino people has become ever clearer.

Duterte is exploiting Covid-19 to impose fascist dictatorship

April 21, 2020

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The Duterte regime is exploiting the Covid-19 crisis to further accumulate authoritarian powers and tighten its grip on power. The pandemic is far from contained. Yet instead of more aggressively undertaking needed public health measures, it is threatening to further mobilize its military forces and place the country under martial law "total lockdown" and establish a fascist dictatorship.

More than a month ago, the Filipino people were made to accept the quarantine and lockdown measures as a means to slow down the spread of the virus with an expectation that the necessary public health measures and socio-economic assistance will be carried out with urgency. However, these measures were not carried out competently, sufficiently and expeditiously. One month after the lockdown was imposed on Luzon and in many parts of Visayas and Mindanao, the Covid-19 continues to spread across the country and infect more and more people. Millions of families suffer hunger, anxiety and uncertainty as Duterte and his inept generals lurched from one ill-thought plan to another.

The regime has failed to carry out the necessary measures to enable the public health system to fight the spread of the virus, and

to provide socio-economic support to the millions of families during the lockdown. Government agencies have been sloppy and haphazard in planning a response to the crisis.

It has yet to take steps to systematically carry out mass screening and testing of the population, as the most crucial component in the fight against the pandemic. It has relied on the initiative of private hospitals, organizations, and local government units. It has not realigned enough funds to build new facilities, hire doctors and nurses, train health workers, or set up factories to produce equipment for protection, mass screening and testing. It has prioritized funding to increase the "hazard pay" of police and military personnel, instead of health workers.

After initially bragging that he has the money, Duterte declared that his government is broke as an excuse for the bureaucratic, chaotic and tightfisted distribution of funds for "social amelioration." Funds for distribution are insufficient. The workers and semiproletariat are suffering the worst from the lockdown and the government stinginess. Middle-income earners are also becoming increasingly desperate with savings running out. With help from private organizations running out, they are being compelled by their economic conditions to defy the restrictions to seek ways to earn a living.

The regime's Covid-19 response is being led by military officials, instead of public health experts, resulting in a militarized approach to the crisis. There is a rapidly increasing deployment of military forces in the National Capital Region. Military and police forces are exercising martial law powers to "impose order." Tens of thousands have been arrested and detained for quarantine violations.

Amid the public health crisis, the regime deployed thousands of soldiers in the rural areas to further intensify counterinsurgency, wasting hundreds of millions of pesos in very costly combat operations, bombing, psywar and drone surveillance. His soldiers roam the countryside without proper health precautions, making the so far insulated barrios vulnerable to infection. As in the cities, he set

up checkpoints in national and provincial roads, forcing people to unnecessarily stop for useless "temperature checks" which only expose them to possible infection.

Despite the urgent need for economic reforms, the government has chosen to stubbornly stick to the neoliberal measures which, in the first place, has taken away funds for health and public services. It has refused to heed the clamor for suspending debt servicing and instead plans to borrow more money, bury the country deeper in debt and impose new taxes in the future.

To strengthen his authoritarianism and justify his plans to impose more draconian measures, the Duterte regime is blaming the people for the spread of the disease. Duterte puts a spotlight on some recalcitrants to condemn everyone except his own errors, failures and ineptitude. He has resorted to outright lying, falsely claiming to have had the foresight and imposed early the lockdown to prevent the spread of the disease.

The plain truth is that the Duterte government refused to heed the demand of the people as early as January and February to close the country's borders to China where the virus originated. It imposed the lockdown on Luzon too late and without the necessary accompanying measures to detect and contain the virus, and worse, without sufficient social support to tide the broad masses over the crisis.

Duterte is browbeating the people to make them believe that the virus can be defeated by his authoritarian "just obey" dogma. He is using the people's fear of the virus to make them bow in submission to his authority, and paralyze them by compelling them to "stay at home." As the people's fear of the virus is overcome by their desperation to live and earn a living, Duterte resorts to instilling fear of his wrath backed by his proven murderous record.

Without mass screening, testing and contact-tracing, even with Duterte's lockdown and checkpoints, the virus has continued to spread undetected and now threatens widespread infection in the congested urban communities. People in the rural areas, especially

the hinterland communities, may ultimately be infected in numbers if the government remains unable to detect the spread of the virus.

Wearing face masks, physical distancing, practicing proper hygiene and maintaining sanitation are necessary measures to help prevent or slow down the spread of the virus. However, stopping the spread of the Covid-19 can only be done effectively with mass screening and testing, rigorous contact tracing, and judicious isolation and quarantine measures. It is only through such measures can the chains of transmission be broken.

The experience of South Korea, Vietnam, Venezuela, Iceland, Canada, Taiwan and other countries prove that the spread of the virus can be controlled or slowed down through detection and isolation, even without the overly restrictive measures against travel and work and certainly without the heavy-handed use of military and police to enforce people's compliance with public health measures.

The spread of the Covid-19 in the Philippines has already reached a relatively advanced stage with the number of infections reaching more than 6,200. Thus, there is need to urgently conduct screening and testing, as well as contact tracing on a mass scale. This requires the mobilization, training and equipping of tens of thousands of health workers in order to scour communities, factories, schools, and so on. The scientific community must be mobilized and heeded in order to determine how to systematically and effectively conduct this campaign. The machinery must be built with the help of local government units, civic and religious associations, scientists, doctors and health workers, and people's mass organizations. There must be open consultations and everyone must be encouraged to do their utmost to defeat the spread of the virus.

To their credit, some local officials have gone against the orders of Duterte's generals and aimed to carry out widespread testing, contract-tracing, loosening of quarantine measures, as well as distribution of financial aid. These efforts, however, will be in vain if these will be done in isolation from each other. There must be initiative on the ground with fund support, push and coordination from the top.

In other words, to surmount the Covid-19, democracy must be unleashed, not suppressed. No amount of Duterte's tyranny can defeat the spread of the Covid-19. On the contrary, without mass testing and contact-tracing to detect and isolate the virus carriers, Duterte's lockdown and quarantine restrictions are blind measures and mere fascist tools designed to suppress democracy.

In the face of the Duterte regime's continuing failure to control the spread of the Covid-19, it is incumbent on the Filipino people to more actively demand the government to carry out widespread mass screening and testing, and contact tracing, and oppose the indefinite extension of the military lockdown and checkpoints which has caused an intolerable humanitarian crisis.

At the same time, they must push for immediate and sufficient social support as recompense in the form of cash distribution. They can push the government to allot funds enough to provide every family with the equivalent of the daily minimum wages set by the government. The Filipino people have been demanding Duterte and his inept generals to answer for their failed Covid-19 response. Failure to heed these urgent demands will only further stoke the people's demand for Duterte's resignation or ouster through direct democratic action.

Amid the lockdown, economic hardships and lack of government support, the people's mass organizations must continue to carry out mutual aid efforts in their communities and strengthen people's solidarity to bring together their efforts to help each other surmount the economic and health crisis. They can continue setting up community kitchens, collective buying of supplies, cooperative stores, production of face masks for the community, and raising funds through donations and other means. They must identify and give extra effort to help those requiring extra assistance and care, such as the elderly and infirm, pregnant women, single-parents and others.

Unions must demand that workers be paid compensation to cover their cost of living in the past month under lockdown. Workers in factories, restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies and other

establishments must demand safety measures in their workplaces to protect them against Covid-19 infections. Contractual workers must demand assurances of continued work and job security.

Market vendors, as well as small shop owners can demand rent reduction or suspension for their stalls. Farmers must demand state subsidy for the purchase of rice and other farm produce to save them from bankruptcy and help ease consumer prices. Local government units can demand greater funds to respond to the urgent demands and needs of their constituencies.

The Party calls on all its committees in the cities to further strengthen and consolidate themselves, and help guide and lead the people and their organizations to confront the crisis.

In the countryside, the Party calls on the New People's Army to give priority to responding to the public health and economic needs of the people. The extension of the ceasefire in response to the United Nation's call for a global ceasefire will give all NPA units the opportunity to expand its reach among the masses to conduct a public health campaign to help the peasant masses prevent Covid-19 infections and prepare for its possible spread in their villages. They must continue to conduct information drives, at the same time, help train the community in screening, preparation of the necessary facilities and equipment for isolating and treating patients, and emergency transportation to city hospitals. They must moreover assist the masses in waging antifeudal struggle and raising production in the face of an imminent economic downturn.

At the same time, the NPA must be on high alert in the face of the intensified operations of the AFP. While maintaining the strictest secrecy to avoid detection, they must be ready to engage in battle the fascist forces who are determined to prevent the people's army from extending its support and service to the people.

The Filipino people must seek to overcome the state of social paralysis that they have been forced into by the Duterte regime's lockdown. They must find ways to express their voices and take collective action. They must not only overcome their fear of the virus, but shatter as well the terror of Duterte's de facto martial law rule.

Further hardships, repression and corruption behind the Covid-19 lockdown

May 7, 2020

The Duterte regime is using the Covid-19 pandemic in the country to extend the fascist measures imposed in the name of fighting the disease. What it calls the "new normal," in essence, is aggravating the worst aspects of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. Under this, more brutal fascism, worse neoliberal policies and exacerbated corruption will reign under the tyrant Duterte.

It has been more than 50 days since Duterte imposed the lockdown in Luzon and other parts of the country which has wrought unprecedented hunger and hardships on the people and damage to the economy. Up to now, his government has yet to undertake initiatives to carry out widespread scientific study about the real extent and virulence of the Covid-19. Its efforts at mass testing are lacking, slow and disparate, and funds for examining samples are grossly insufficient.

The Filipino people remain in the dark about the scientific and health basis of the continuing militarist lockdown called the general and enhanced community quarantine (GCQ and ECQ) and what these have achieved so far. While the people are kept blind and

shrouded in fear of the Covid-19, Duterte and his fascist minions are carrying out more cruel and worse measures and policies.

Under continuing lockdown, Duterte's police and soldiers trample with impunity on the people's basic rights. Hundreds of thousands of people are forcibly locked up in their homes under the so-called "total lockdown" that has nothing to do with, and in fact, is contrary to public health.

Fear and distress reign as Duterte's armed men roam the streets in poor communities as well as private subdivisions. People all over are being accosted, handcuffed, beaten, detained and tortured even on simple misdemeanors. A number of places are under curfew. Checkpoints abound. Protests and expression of grievances are prohibited. Mutual help and relief work are being controlled by the police and military in the name of keeping "social distance."

In the countryside, repression against the peasant masses is worsening alongside AFP counterinsurgency operations. Checkpoints and searches, restrictions on farming, limits on the amount of purchases, house searches, intimidation to force people to cooperate with the military and other forms of suppression cause gross suffering and hardships on peasants.

The ultimate target of Duterte's fascist policies are the democratic and patriotic forces, and critics who expose the sorely lacking and slow distribution of state subsidy during the lockdown, the grave lack of support for health workers, the neglect of public hospitals and the early disregard and lack of preparations for the spread of the Covid-19 and other big failures during the pandemic.

Duterte has already imposed military and police rule through the lockdown. This aims to paralyze the people's democratic resistance and railroad anti-people neoliberal policies that the reactionary state has long wanted to impose.

Malacañang itself has said that the "new normal" will be no different from the GCQ where the state rigidly controls and monitors the movement of entire communities. They wish to maintain this setup until a vaccine is supposedly invented, which according to

scientists may take 18 months (or until December 2021).

Using "social distancing" as an excuse, the regime plans to continue prohibiting gatherings. Claiming to act against the virus, it plans to continue preventing jeepney and tricycle drivers from plying their routes, as well as millions of contractual workers from going to work. The checkpoints will remain using "temperature checks" as justification. It will use sanitation measures to cause the closure of many small businesses. It will open schools and factories, but will continue to prohibit mass gatherings of students and workers. Duterte is pushing for the repressive National ID System in the name of "efficient distribution" of relief and "virus monitoring."

In the name of decongesting the streets, the regime is set on prohibiting old jeeps and replace them with the new vehicles from China, that are controlled by big capitalists. To supposedly decongest cities, it will carry out widespread demolitions of urban poor communities under the "Balik Probinsya" program to pave the way for big bourgeois compradors and foreign capitalists to control prime real estate in Metro Manila.

Duterte also took advantage of the pandemic to recently levy an additional 10% tax on imported crude oil which will surely be shouldered by consumers. While the regime is fast-tracking plans to cut corporate taxes in the name of reviving the economy, it refuses to heed the calls to repeal or suspend the TRAIN Law which imposed oppressive taxes on basic commodities. Additional taxes are also set to be imposed in exchange for the country's more or less \$4 billion new loans with the World Bank, the ADB and other agencies.

Amid the public health crisis and economic downturn, bureaucrat capitalist plunder is worsening. Duterte, his cronies and the big bourgeois compradors are taking advantage of the crisis to make bigger profits. This include the cornering of contracts for building quarantine centers by the Villar family and Dennis Uy.

Duterte is using authoritarian rule to make all the big bourgeois compradors kneel before him. Recently, Duterte "asked for forgiveness" for his months of haranguing the Ayalas and Manny

Pangilinan, which is mere public drama to hide the billions of pesos worth of "settlements."

The other day, Duterte ordered the closure of ABS-CBN, a brazen attack against press freedom. He took advantage of the lockdown so that no one can protest the act. Duterte has long set his eyes on ABS-CBN because it is not easily compliant with Duterte's wishes. Bureaucrat capitalists have long arm-twisted ABS-CBN to force it to cooperate in exchange for its franchise or to compel it to sell the company that is being drooled over by Duterte's cronies and their foreign capitalist partners.

The "new normal" under the Duterte fascist regime means all out repression, oppression and corruption. While threatening to declare martial law, Duterte has already implemented the elements of absolute dictatorial rule and is killing off what remains of freedom and democracy. Freedom is now only for Duterte and his minions: freedom to rake in wealth and profits; freedom to use the people's money for their self-serving aims; freedom to jail anyone who does not bow. Duterte holds democracy by the neck, ready anytime to squeeze the life out of it.

The entire country is already under Duterte's undeclared martial law. Duterte is further suppressing, oppressing and taking away the people's money. However, declared or otherwise, martial law is a big rock that Duterte is lifting but will only drop on his own head.

The entire people must reject the "new normal" that is mere continuation of the lockdown elements and other policies that only aggravate the country's rotten state. They must ask what scientific basis do checkpoints, curfews and all other stringent measures have. In the name of democracy and freedom, they must bring together their courage and creatively defy and challenge the restrictions and Duterte's militarist lockdown.

The people must build the broadest unity of all democratic classes and sectors against Duterte's undeclared martial law. The biggest number of sectors must unite and fight against the shutdown of ABS-CBN and show its connection to Duterte's neglect of health

workers, to the slow and insufficient economic aid during the lockdown, to his refusal to suspend debt payments or costly counterinsurgency operations to favor the needs of public health, to the brutalities and abuses by police and military force, to Duterte's corruption and his suppression of all basic rights including the right to express oneself and join street demonstrations.

There must be widespread propaganda and education work among the masses. Duterte's lies and unscientific blabber about the Covid-19 must be exposed, while amplifying the clamor for health workers and scientists, not fascists, to lead the country's response to the pandemic. Duterte must be held accountable for using the Covid-19 pandemic to push his scheme to establish a fascist dictatorship. The people must expose neoliberal policies for imposing greater hardship on the masses, while uniting to demand the repudiation of the TRAIN law and other oppressive taxes, for decent housing, right to work and other democratic demands.

The Party must continue to strengthen its branches and committees in the cities and countryside. The Party must continue to strengthen the underground movement to ensure that its organization continually gains strength even under the fascist clampdown and suppression. At the same time, the Party must strengthen its links with the masses in order to arouse, organize and mobilize them. The Party must effectively lead the masses in their fight for their democratic rights, and for their health and social well-being.

Duterte and his fascist clique will fail in their objective of suppressing the Filipino people's resistance. While the Duterte clique escalates suppression, oppression and corruption during the Covid-19 pandemic, the people's desire to stand and resist becomes ever more intense. The rotten ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system is being more thoroughly exposed, rousing the people to tread the path of national democratic revolution.

Hardships and perils due to government incompetence

May 21, 2020

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The Filipino people are undergoing grave hardships and face perils as a result of the Duterte regime's failed response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Millions of Filipinos are facing not only the continued threats of Covid-19, but also the burden of economic measures that worsen the crisis brought about by decades of neoliberal policies.

Over the past days, Malacañang has allowed the opening of offices and factories, after a more-than-60-day lockdown. Duterte is rushing to reboot the economy which he shut down in March in the face of the rapid depletion of government resources, worsening problem of hunger and rising people's anger. Because of the failed measures of the Duterte government, the Philippines is still far from controlling the Covid-19 pandemic. Many fear that the country's health system will be unable to cope once the virus spreads again and the number of infected and hospitalized shoots up.

After two months without wages or income, workers are very keen on returning to work. The toiling masses were plunged into poverty and hunger under the lockdown. This is a result of sorely limited funds and the slow and the chaotic system of aid distribution. Despite their eagerness, they also fear that once they gather in

factories or shops, the virus will again quickly spread.

Duterte is veritably exposing workers to danger when it did not obligate capitalists to provide them testing services and required that only those with symptoms should be examined. According to data, more than 80% of those infected are asymptomatic or experience only mild symptoms. The regime and the capitalists are taking advantage of workers' desperation to work and earn wages. Workers are made to report to work if they have to walk several kilometers under the heat of the sun or get stuck in hours of traffic because of left and right checkpoints of abusive police and soldiers.

Recently, the Duterte regime admitted it has no plans of carrying out mass testing. Even amid the pandemic, it insists on its policy of not providing enough funds for health and giving control to the capitalists.

Thousands of nurses and doctors were infected by Covid-19 in hospitals due to the failure to prepare enough protective equipment. It was already in the middle of the pandemic when funds were allotted for purchasing these.

Despite claiming to push the program to "test, trace and treat," the Duterte government has not allotted enough funds and is relying on big capitalists to buy necessary equipment and run laboratory operations. Even in the face of the pandemic, capitalists still compute their profits.

Testing is being done only on people who are already sick, people they have gotten in contact with, and arriving Filipino migrant workers. However, in times of pandemic, mass testing including those without symptoms or not suspected to have been infected is needed as the key strategy to determine where the virus is spreading in order to isolate the infected, treat the sick and protect those who are not yet ill.

Because there is no mass testing and testing capacity is low, the regime remains blind to the real extent of Covid-19 infections in the country. Its data is incomplete and does not show the actual extent of the pandemic. It does not actually know how many are

asymptomatic and were not brought to hospitals.

It is fine that some local officials have taken measures to have their residents tested. However, without national coordination in such testing efforts, knowledge of the pandemic will be limited to one barrio or town, and efforts will only be wasted.

Because he really has no idea, Duterte is resorting to disinformation, giving false assurances, scare-mongering and threatening people. In the end, it blames the people for the continuing spread of the virus to justify the imposition of more restrictions on the pretext of fighting the pandemic.

The Duterte regime is slow and dimwitted in facing the Covid-19 pandemic. It has chosen not to fund mass testing, contact tracing and isolation. It is prioritizing its loan-driven infrastructure projects, the purchase of helicopters, cannons and bombs, and pocketing shares in these contracts. It has not provided enough capital to fund local scientists and researchers to manufacture enough equipment for testing the virus and other needs to fight the pandemic.

It is more occupied with its scheme to establish a fascist dictatorship. It has the military and police in command of the government's pandemic response. It is busy suppressing complaints rather than addressing them. A number of people who have expressed disgust ("kill Duterte") have been arrested, and ABS-CBN has been shut down. The police are getting away with their abusive punishment of people for "misdemeanors." It uses terror to silence everyone. Now, even the funds under the "social amelioration program" (SAP) will be given to the dirty hands of the AFP, to make sure, there will be no more complaints.

To the Filipino people, we must not merely bear the burden of Duterte's failed response and abuse of power. Duterte and his officials must be held accountable for causing gross hardships and suppression of the people's rights during the lockdown. They must be made responsible for their failure to carry out necessary health measures for the country to defeat the pandemic. We must not remain silent. On the contrary, we must express with all our might

and manifest in various ways our anger and protest against Duterte's failed and oppressive measures.

Continue to demand the national government to mount a mass testing program as key response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Continue to push for strengthening the health system, especially the public hospitals and laboratories across the country, hiring more nurses and health workers and raising their wages. Fight for necessary subsidies for food, medicine and medical attention to take care of the health of the elderly who are vulnerable to Covid-19.

Hold the Duterte regime accountable for the gross lack and slow distribution of aid under the now two-month lockdown. Expose and denounce how Duterte's bourgeois comprador partners are exploiting the pandemic to earn profits and evade taxes in the name of helping and giving donations.

Workers must demand health measures in factories and offices. They must push for wage increases, a national minimum and hazard pay for work during the pandemic. They must fight as well for regular jobs and for their right to unionize and collective bargaining. In the face of the crisis brought about by the prolonged lockdown, the small capitalists can unite with workers to push the government for emergency funds to enable them to pay wage hikes.

Genuine land reform must be pushed as the only way to bring life to the rural economy. Denounce widespread land-use conversion for infrastructure and tourism projects, plantations and mining, and the push for growing commercial timber and fruits. Demand free land distribution and subsidies for food production and building local industries for processing of local agricultural products.

Fight measures that worsen oppression including additional taxes to pay the government's almost \$4 billion additional loans. Expose and condemn the "infrastructure" plan that will further pull the country deeper into debt and crisis, especially those which trample on people's rights and damage the environment.

The Covid-19 crisis has brought to the surface the extreme rottenness of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. It has exposed

the country's dependence on imported material and equipment. It has exposed the crisis-ridden and unproductive economy.

Because of the hardship and oppression under the Duterte government's failed response, it is but just for the Filipino people to demand Duterte's resignation or the ouster of his incompetent government. This is the most effective way for the Filipino people to fight and defeat the Covid-19 pandemic.

Unite against the Anti-Terror Bill! Overthrow the US-Duterte regime!

June 7, 2020

On orders of Rodrigo Duterte and his National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC), his minions railroaded the Anti-Terror Bill the past few days. It now awaits Duterte's signature.

The Anti-Terror Bill will complete Duterte's martial law reign, short of formal declaration. This will give him vast powers to accuse anyone of being a "terrorist" and have them surveiled, arrested and put under prolonged detention.

This bill will further intensify suppression of organizations and individuals long targeted by Duterte and the AFP as "CPP/NPA supporters" for their relentless exposure, denunciation and opposition to corruption, fascism and foreign subservience, and for defending the people's democratic interests. The most vulnerable are the workers and poor people, the peasant masses, Lumad and Moro who experience repeated abuses of power by soldiers and police.

The people are disgusted at how Duterte and his minions trampled on congressional procedures to rush the Anti-Terror Bill without being reviewed and amended. They are nauseated at how he prioritized the bill and disregarded the people's clamor for free mass

testing and other medical measures amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The order to rush the Anti-Terror Bill came from Duterte and his junta composed of Delfin Lorenzana, Eduardo Año and Hermogenes Esperon, all former military officials and lackeys of US imperialism. They aim to consolidate fascist rule amid widespread hunger, poverty and the people's seething rage against the regime's militarist and failed response to Covid-19. Duterte wants additional martial law powers to silence the people, but is afraid to openly declare it for fear that this will rouse further outrage and protests.

The rush to enact the Anti-Terror Bill is also part the deal-making with the US government to allow Duterte and the AFP to purchase new helicopters, artillery, rockets, missiles and other weapons. This is also linked to the June 2 suspension of termination of the Visiting Forces Agreement in line with recommendations of his military officers to allow US ships and troops to enter the country in connection with continuing US support for the AFP's brutal counterinsurgency and war of suppression.

Over the past years, Duterte has built his martial law regime brick by brick with the 950-day Mindanao martial law, Memorandum Order 32, Executive Order 70 which formed the NTF-ELCAC, and recently, the claim to "emergency powers" purportedly to fight Covid-19.

He wants to have the Anti-Terror Bill enacted at once to reinforce the fascist order which he succeeded to set up through the Covid-19 militarist lockdown and perpetuate this under a "new normal" of checkpoints, and population control restrictions. This is being done behind the veil of fighting the pandemic but in fact serves to strengthen militarist rule and pursue the scheme to establish a fascist dictatorship.

The Anti-Terror Bill deliberately contains vague and overly broad definitions of "terrorism" and "supporting terrorism" to serve as a wide net to cast over the Filipino people and all their democratic forces. It extends the powers of the military and police to arrest and detain anyone to 14-24 days without warrant or filing charges,

practically suspending the writ of habeas corpus. Worse, it removes any military or police liability from damages which will surely result in even worse forms of abuse of power.

Over the past years, AFP and PNP officers have arbitrarily accused critics of the regime of being "communist fronts" or supporters or linked to the CPP and NPA. They are anti-communist zealots who see red whenever anyone stands for and defends the interests, welfare and rights of the oppressed and exploited. This will worsen under the bill.

Duterte uses "anti-terrorism" to fool the people and make them accede to repressive laws that will crush their basic rights. Over the past years, the fascists falsely equate communists, revolutionaries and even social activists with terrorism, when in fact, communists, as all other democratic forces, are among the most militant opponents of the use of terrorism to instill fear among the people.

In fact, right now, the biggest terrorist in the country is Duterte himself as he has ordered the killing of tens of thousands in the drug war and the destruction of Marawi City. He has also ordered police and military raids and massacres against peasant communities. He has ordered mass arrests, military control of rural villages, the use of attack helicopters to drop bombs causing widespread terror and other fascist crimes.

With absolute powers, Duterte is set to commit the worst forms of corruption, completely surrender the country's national sovereignty and subservience to imperialist US and China, bury the country deeper into debt, impose more taxes on the people, press down wages, favor foreign big capitalists, squander funds to purchase fighter jets, helicopters and bombs, and impose even worse neoliberal policies that will cause greater sufferings on the Filipino people.

Duterte's rushing of the Anti-Terror Bill amid the Covid-19 pandemic has fanned the flame of the people's anger. The regime's actions of the past months—from the non-health military lockdown to the shutting down of ABS-CBN, from the arrest of critics and

jeepney drivers to aerial bombing of rural communities, from checkpoint arrests and inhumane punishment of tens of thousands to the recent killing of urban poor leader Carlito Badion, from the anomalous procurement of overpriced PPE sets and testing equipment to the plunder of billions of pesos in emergency spending—are set to worsen once Duterte signs the Anti-Terror Bill.

The Party urges all democratic sectors—health workers, drivers, women and children, media workers, artists and cultural workers, teachers and government employees, the youth and students, movie and television personalities, small professionals, the religious and all workers, peasants, the urban poor and unemployed—to unite and bring together all their grievances and aspirations.

The Filipino people are being galvanized to take action. They must assert and protect their democratic rights now before they are all taken away by the fascist regime. The Filipino people must get organized. They must demand freedom of the press and freedom to express. They must fight back and protest fiercely.

They must take action in their campuses and communities, in their factories and offices, in churches and parks, and defend these as freedom-zones where they can collect the people's strength in numbers. They must quickly prepare their ranks, educate the entire people, heighten their determination and be ready to lock horns with the regime's anti-democratic forces until the Anti-Terror Bill is junked or until Duterte is ousted.

Rise up and end the oppressive and heedless regime

June 21, 2020

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Social inequalities in the country have worsened alongside sharpening of contradictions as the Duterte regime adopts militarist and anti-people measures to confront the Covid-19 pandemic. While a few remain insulated in their mansions and palaces and continue to accumulate wealth, abuse power and engorge themselves in the masses' sweat and blood, millions of people are mired in poverty and extreme hardship.

The people demand justice for all those made to suffer hunger and poverty, suppressed and denied of their rights. After more than three months of failed measures and policies, the Filipino people suffer unprecedented hardships.

For close to three months, Duterte imprisoned the entire people in their crowded homes in the name of preventing the spread of the virus. But Duterte and his generals squandered the people's sacrifices. Not enough funds were spent to enable the health system cope with the pandemic. There is no mass testing. No free treatment of Covid-19. Data gathering is delayed and deficient leaving the government blind as to where the virus is spreading.

Not only did promised social aid come late, it was also inadequate and typically pilfered. "Life is good!" exclaimed a senator,

as officials partied and have filled their pantries, while they forced people survive on porridge and sardines, if any. Majority of the people who live at subsistence level suffered hunger and distress. Those desperate enough to leave their home to scrounge for money and food were denounced, apprehended and severely punished.

Lacking a clear health plan to overcome the pandemic, Duterte stopped everything and shut down a large part of the economy. Millions lost their jobs and income. Small business owners faced devastation. When restrictions were eased this June, it did everything to help big business rise again, while abandoning the toiling masses and practically telling them "you're on your own!"

While people were rigorously made to follow suffocating policies, Duterte and his rotten ilk freely breathed and moved around.

While Duterte flew back and forth to Davao aboard a private plane, hundreds of thousands couldn't find a ride home. They were made to wait on streets and sidewalks, hungry and with no certainty when they could easily get a ride and reach home. Who can forget Michelle Silvertino who died after five days of waiting for a ride home to Bicol on a footbridge in pasay?

Everyday, workers and employees race and ram against one another as they rush for seats in limited buses and trains. Because not enough safe mass transportation was prepared, thousands are now left with no other option but to walk or ride along dangerous highways everyday.

In the face of insufficient workers' wages, Duterte still permitted big capitalists to cut wages supposedly to help them recover their profits. They were also freed from responsibility to have their workers tested to identify possible Covid-19 infections.

Duterte is unperturbed in the face of millions of job losses. He is not rushing anything to stop the sharp downturn in their living standards.

While allowing "modern" jeeps owned by big corporations, it continues to ban hundreds of thousands of small jeepney drivers and

operators. Duterte has turned a deaf ear to the clamor of ordinary drivers for subsidies to allow jeepneys to provide a safe ride even if, in fact, jeepneys and tricycles are much safer than the closed vehicles. Duterte has virtually kicked them out. The "kings of the road" are now pleading and begging on the streets.

While Duterte is once again rushing to import tons of rice from agriculture-subsidizing countries, funds are sorely lacking to subsidize Filipino peasant masses and buy their produce.

Millions of people are aggravated by onerous police requirements for those seeking permits to travel or go home to their provinces or regions.

Because of its refusal to allot enough funds to allow schools to open safely (more schools, classrooms, teachers and other educational infrastructure), Duterte banned classes in the coming months. Instead, he ordered teaching to be done online but without allotting funds, thus passing to teachers and students the costs of purchasing computers, internet services and other needs.

Millions of youth are gripped by fear as many schools plan to raise tuition, while state subsidy for education remain acutely insufficient. They are also victims of arbitrary restrictions against 16-21 year olds which prevent them from seeking work or participating in various social activities.

Instead of cutting spending for unproductive debt-driven infrastructure projects, and realigning billions of pesos for confidential and intelligence funds, hundreds of billions of pesos for the purchase of helicopters, bombs and war matériel, the Duterte regime has chosen to go on a borrowing spree to fund its expenses during the pandemic.

The debt burden is lopsided on the people's shoulders. Instead of being increased, the tax share of the billionaire big capitalists were cut by the Duterte regime; and now plans to increase the share of ordinary income earners. The regime has refused to ease the tax burden on the impoverished people even for a moment and even by the slightest amount.

In the past three months of the Covid-19 pandemic, the anti-people Duterte regime has been further unravelled by its refusal to put ahead the people's interests and prioritizing instead the interests of the big capitalists and pocketing large amounts of people's money. Duterte himself has admitted he was the one who ordered the purchase of overpriced equipment. In addition, he has prioritized the Anti-Terror Bill, the silencing of critics and the strengthening of his military forces in order to intimidate the people, suppress democracy and perpetuate himself as a powerful dictator.

Over the past three months, the people have been boiling with rage against the Duterte regime. They slowly overcome fear and manifest courage and the willingness to fight.

The Filipino people stand on moral high ground to rise up and resist. It is imperative for them to unite and use their power to perform the historical task of shaping the country's destiny. Clouds of social storm are now fast gathering. They must seize the time and opportunity to unleash all rage against Duterte's corruption, neglect, fascism and treachery and put an end to his dictatorship.

Crush the monster Duterte

July 7, 2020

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The Duterte regime is now set on surpassing all previous reactionary regimes in terms of corruption, abuses, oppression and treachery in just a span of four years. Under his tyrannical reign, vast amounts of wealth and power have been accumulated by the monster Duterte, as well as by his bureaucrat capitalist minions, bourgeois compradors and their imperialist monsters.

While those in power fatten themselves, the Filipino people wallow in intolerable hardship and sacrifices. The lives of the people—workers, peasants, the semiproletariat, petty-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie—have nosedived since 2016. Policies dictated by foreign big capitalists and banks have brought misery and agony. The toiling masses suffer the most. They are oppressed by widespread unemployment, low wages and income, landlessness, rising prices, onerous taxes, homelessness, disease and the decrepit state of health and social services.

A few accumulate wealth while the entire economy is prostrate and unable to recover. While the country drowns in an ocean of debt, profits of big bourgeoisie compradors and big foreign capitalists soar. The exploiters and plunderers are insatiable; even as the country lie wasted with its backward agricultural production and without much needed industries.

Philippine national sovereignty continue to erode as its rights are surrendered in the face of heightened plunder and military maneuvers by rival imperialists US and China. In exchange for the promise of a few billion dollars loans, bribes and personal and political favors, Duterte has surrendered the Philippine's sea and land territory, allowed China to plunder marine resources and deny Filipinos their fishing grounds. In exchange for continuing military and political support, Duterte ended peace negotiations and promised to crush the revolutionary movement. He took back his threat to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement and continue to pursue the anti-people counterinsurgency campaign.

On top of the suffering people, the monster Duterte seats on his throne. Under his four-year reign, the country has suffered from the crime and corruption of the ruling bureaucrat capitalists. They have pocketed people's funds and made money from government infrastructure contracts. They have favored the oligarchs who know how to "go along" while aggravate those who refuse to bow to their evil power. Duterte has surrounded himself with favored military officers to guard against his rivals.

In the past four years, he has destroyed the country with a relentless terrorist war against the poor and oppressed. Tens of thousands have been murdered in his fake "war on drugs" to force syndicates to kneel and obey. Tens of thousands were ravaged by the war of destruction and military occupation of Marawi City and the continuing war against the Moro people. All over, people are being intimidated and bulldozed, and their democratic rights suppressed in the war against the people in the name of anti-communism. He successively implemented Mindanao martial law, Memorandum Order 32 and Executive Order 70 to impose military rule over the people.

By signing the "Anti-Terror Law," Duterte has crowned himself dictator. He now holds the power to use the full terrorist might of the state to intimidate, suppress and crush any critic or rival. Through this law, Duterte has claimed powers beyond the limits set by the

1987 constitution. This law tramples on basic civil and political rights.

Duterte has busied himself with his scheme to impose a fascist dictatorship while the entire people face the Covid-19 pandemic. The failed militarist response of his government to threats on public health has resulted in continuing and accelerating spread of the virus across the country. After failing to respond promptly, prepare and strengthen the health system, Duterte imposed his military lockdown to control the entire population as his leading solution to the pandemic and as dress rehearsal for restrictions under his new fascist normal.

Duterte wasted the people's sacrifices and hardship as he failed to take measures for mass testing and extensive contact-tracing, strengthening laboratories and free treatment of Covid-19 patients. Instead, he plundered billions of pesos in anomalous purchases of overpriced equipment, caused widespread hunger and devastated people's lives. It is now crystal clear that Duterte is the biggest threat to their health and safety amid the pandemic.

In the face of widespread sufferings and repression, the people's anger against Duterte are boiling over. They strongly seek to crush the monster and end his evil rule. They are determined to end Duterte's reign as soon as possible and make him pay for all his crimes against the people and against humanity.

The time to be quiet and timid is over. The people are overcoming their fear and gathering courage to collectively act and resist. They are becoming even more undaunted in speaking up and asserting their demand for Duterte's resignation or ouster. A broad front of various democratic forces are now linking arms against his tyranny. While greater powers and wealth are gobbled up by the monster, the more he becomes isolated from the people. However cruel and powerful, the ogre is no match to the power of a united people.

The Party urges all democratic classes, sectors and groups to rise up, organize and build the broadest unity to fight for their rights,

resist state terrorism, corruption, oppression and treachery of the Duterte regime. They must mount street marches and demonstrations in large numbers and wage different forms of resistance in order to gather the people's strength and power to change the course of history.

In the face of worsening terrorism of the reactionary state, the New People's Army (NPA) must defend the people against the terrorist attacks against their rights. While the NPA prioritizes extending health and economic services to the people amid the Covid-19 pandemic, its units must also address the people's aspirations for justice and punish the fascist terrorists and make them pay for their crimes against the people.

The unprecedented sufferings of the people under the Duterte regime manifests the chronic crisis of the moribund system in the Philippines. It underscores the need to wage national democratic revolution in order to end the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system, achieve national freedom and people's democracy, and establish a free, progressive and prosperous future.

Unite and help each other to end Duterte's tyranny

July 21, 2020

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All democratic forces must consolidate their ranks and help each other in their democratic struggles against the Duterte regime. The need for unity is urgent in the face of the successive attacks of the tyrant against the people's interests.

On July 10, Duterte's rubberstamp congress carried out his order to shut down ABS-CBN in a clear case of political vendetta against a media outfit that has allowed the airing of criticism against the regime. It is a grave attack on press freedom and a thinly-veiled threat against those in the media who cross the tyrant. It also paves the way for Duterte's favored oligarchs to make a bid of ownership of the broadcast company.

Earlier, Duterte signed his law on terrorism that is far worse than Marcos' 1972 martial law. He claimed the power to order the arrest of anyone without a judicial warrant and detain people for up to 24 days without filing charges and denying them the right to defend themselves. Duterte will convene the Anti-Terror Council (ATC) which has the power to designate anyone as a "terrorist" or "terrorist-linked" or "terrorist-supporters" using the law's vague and overly broad definitions. The ATC is set to conjoin with the NTF-ELCAC to consolidate Duterte's military junta.

Just days after, state forces mounted attacks across the country. In Masbate, police and military forces massacred three peasants. Successive arrests and harassment were also carried out against activists and human rights workers. Mass demonstrations, even Catholic masses, are being subjected to police surveillance, using pandemic lockdown restrictions as pretext.

With the law on state terrorism, Duterte is set on mounting even more attacks in the coming weeks and months. This shows his desperation to suppress the seething unrest and rising protests against his incompetent response to the Covid-19 pandemic, worsening corruption, devastation of the economy and complete disregard of the people's livelihood and well-being. Duterte is rushing to pursue his scheme of establishing a fascist dictatorship and securing his rule or that of his chosen successor beyond 2022.

The monster Duterte must be confronted and slain by the people's giant power of democracy and freedom. To grow in strength, the various sectors must act as one. They must support each others' democratic demands. Only by doing so can they muster the strength and courage to stand up against the tyranny.

While calling for junking the terror law and bringing ABS-CBN back on air, they must also support the demand of nurses and health workers for protection, salary increases and mass testing to fight the pandemic; of jeepney drivers to get back on the road; and of workers for higher wages and safety at work. They must collectively assert for immediate and sufficient subsidy for millions who lost their jobs and whose livelihoods were lost due to the lockdown. They must join the demand of peasants and fisherfolk against destructive infrastructure projects, mining and other operations that will drive them away from their homes, land and fishing grounds; of the indigenous peoples and rural folk against military occupation of their communities, intimidation and the brutal campaigns of killings, abductions, aerial bombardment, artillery shelling and human rights abuses that characterize the regime's counterinsurgency; of the children, youth and teachers to open classes safely; and of migrants for aid and safe return home.

Duterte is a rabid, but a sick and dying monster. He exploited the pandemic to claim extensive powers, accumulate wealth through corruption and use of public funds. He forced big business to their knees with threats to close or take over their property and operations. He placed the entire population under martial law control causing widespread misery and hardship. Tens of thousands were apprehended in the name of "public health." He murdered activists and imprisoned critics. He bought billions worth of jet fighters, attack helicopters, artillery systems and other war matériel, all while accumulating more than \$5 billion of foreign loans for his favored infrastructure projects to the detriment of the local economy and the people's livelihood.

However, each time Duterte strikes at the people, he only becomes more isolated from the people. Striking at press freedom by shutting down ABS-CBN roused the indignation of journalists and media workers, as well as the entire people. When he signed the terror law, he enraged not only of the Filipino people, but also people and organizations around the world. More rage will be ignited by moves to push for charter change to allow 100% foreign ownership of enterprises and land, as well as to allow removal of term extension limits in order to pave the way for Duterte's stay beyond 2022.

A range of democratic forces are now arrayed against Duterte's tyrannical regime, from the patriotic and democratic organizations, alliances and movements; to the opposition forces in the conservative opposition, as well as Catholic Church, big business and those secretly within the government bureaucracy and in the AFP and PNP.

Street marches and large demonstrations must be mounted in the coming weeks and months to fend off the regime's terrorist attacks. The bigger and more frequent these demonstrations become, the higher probability that disgruntled military and police officers, as well as the international community, will openly withdraw support and push for a process of succession in line with the 1987 constitution.

All the revolutionary forces under the leadership of the Party are aligned with the Filipino people's aspiration to see an end to their sufferings under the tyrannical regime. While continuing to conduct public health and economic work among the peasant masses, the armed revolutionary forces under the New People's Army must mount tactical offensives to defend the people against the Duterte regime's terrorist attacks against the people.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the regime's overarching priority to establish its fascist dictatorship is putting whatever is left of the people's democratic rights and the people's health in great danger. There is broad consensus that the tyrant must be ousted from power as soon as possible. The Filipino people must firmly unite and rise up now!

Duterte's failed pandemic response makes people turn to revolution

August 7, 2020

In the face of the rapid rise in Covid-19 infections which is steadily overwhelming hospitals, health workers issued statements calling for comprehensive changes in the government's strategy to manage the pandemic. Instead of addressing these calls, Duterte angrily rebuked them for making public their demands and proceeded to taunt them declaring "if revolution is what you want, do it, and do it now."

If he insists on his military and police-centric response to the pandemic and does not relent on intimidating people, Duterte is bound to get what he wishes for. Hardships and sufferings brought about by Duterte's failed response to the pandemic are rousing the people. More and more are now openly indignant and defiant. People are realizing more clearly that the biggest impediment to the country's ability to surmount the pandemic is Duterte himself.

Because of the fascist orientation and mindset of Duterte and his cabal of inept generals controlling the Inter-Agency Task Force, the Covid-19 pandemic is treated more as a national security question and a matter of political survival, and less than a public health crisis. They are more obsessed with suppressing discontent,

than the virus. He took advantage of the situation to secure the anti-terror law under which he claimed additional extraconstitutional powers. He is itching to use these powers in the vain hope of silencing everyone and securing his power.

Since the start, the Duterte regime failed to put into place urgent measures to strengthen the capacity of the country's health system to manage the pandemic. Measures to strengthen the public hospitals and laboratories, recruit additional nurses, provide enough personal protective equipment, raise their wages and give medical insurance are absent, inadequate or late.

Hospital and medical facilities are reaching full capacity, forcing doctors and nurses to go on rotations of 10 days or longer. There is a disproportionately high rate of infections and deaths among health workers. Laboratories are overwhelmed and unable to cope with the number of tests. Data reporting is slow and unable to provide a real-time picture of the pandemic.

As a result, the number of Covid-19 infections in the Philippines continues to rise, making Filipinos even more vulnerable to the pandemic. The number of cases has skyrocketed to 120,000, four times more compared to a month ago. The number of deaths has doubled to more than 2,000. The regime continues to rely on lockdowns to control the infections. In Marcosian fashion, Duterte blames the people's "lack of discipline" for the spread of the virus to justify the restrictions and suppression of people's freedoms as pandemic tactic. People are forced to stay in their homes without income or livelihood, and without adequate and timely social subsidies.

In Metro Manila, tens of thousands are rushing to go home to their provinces. Idiotic travel restrictions and policies resulted in large crowds congregating in airports, piers and stadiums waiting to travel. Hundreds were likely infected and became disease transmitters in the provinces. Many reported that their first Covid-19 infections involve people returning from abroad or from Manila.

Duterte's prolonged lockdowns have devastated the economy.

The economic decline due to the international capitalist crisis has accelerated. Millions of people are going hungry and driven to desperate straits. Thousands are forced to beg in the streets, especially since many have yet to receive social subsidies. The regime has no plans to distribute additional subsidies despite borrowing hundreds of billion pesos, but has plans to cut taxes of big foreign capitalists. Instead of investing in production to manufacture medical equipment and other necessary commodities to create jobs and reduce reliance on imports, the regime is going berserk in borrowing money to fund its corruption-laden infrastructure projects.

Duterte took advantage of the pandemic to consolidate his tyrannical regime and tighten his grip on the fascist state. Under the regime's new terror law, the police and military establishment has been given unprecedented powers suppress people's democratic rights. Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, counterinsurgency and political repression are the tyrant's top priorities.

Duterte spews the vilest propaganda against the patriotic, progressive and revolutionary forces and promotes the most backward, unscientific and repugnant ideas in the vain hope of poisoning the minds of the people to keep them in a perpetual state of stupor. However, the more that Duterte assaults the people with his lies and demagoguery, the more that he rouses the people's indignation and stokes the fire in their bellies.

The more that Duterte uses the pandemic to strengthen his grip on power, to accumulate more wealth by diverting public funds, serve the economic interests of his favored oligarchs, and further kowtow and surrender the country's economic sovereignty to China in exchange for financial and political favors, the more that people are convinced that there is no other recourse but to raise their collective voices to demand the tyrant's resignation or cause his ouster. The Filipino people know they cannot wait for a vaccine or for 2022, knowing how deeper the rut that Duterte will pull the country into within that time.

Clouds of a perfect storm continue to gather. The people's

rumblings of discontent steadily grow stronger and await the opportunity to explode in a conflagration that will surely terrorize the tyrant and surpass his worst nightmares. People must heighten efforts at getting more organized and raise their capacity in mobilizing their ranks. Soon enough, the Filipino people will be able to overcome the regime's reign of terror, surmount state repression and bring together large numbers of people in an exercise of the people's power. Duterte likes to believe that he has surpassed Marcos for having established a dictatorship without yet declaring martial law. But in the end, he will prove to be no different from Marcos, who was driven away by the invincible force of a united people.

As the detested regime intensifies its antidemocratic and anticommunist tirades and attacks, the Filipino people, especially the youth, are becoming more open to revolutionary propaganda and education. The pandemic has laid bare the ills of the semicolonial and semifeudal society which can only be resolved through a people's democratic revolution.

By tirelessly arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people, the revolutionary movement is rapidly expanding and strengthening its ranks both in the underground mass movement and in the armed movement in the countryside. The Filipino people's national democratic aspirations are ever fervent and irrepressible.

The people will not be cowed by state terrorism

August 21, 2020

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Randall Echanis, 72, veteran revolutionary and people's servant, champion of the toiling masses and advocate of just peace, was mercilessly tortured and killed. Fascist executioners raided his home in Quezon City on the wee hours of August 10. He was bound, hit on the head and repeatedly stabbed.

What else other than the Duterte monster's fascist animals could carry out such a dastardly crime? Who else would celebrate Echanis' murder other the exploiters and oppressors which he condemned and fought against alongside with the toiling masses his entire life? What other aim does this crime hope to achieve other than drive a stake of terror on the people's hearts? What else will it arouse but rage, indignation and greater courage and people's resistance?

The brutal murder of Echanis is part of the intensifying and ruthless state terrorist attacks under the Duterte regime. It targets known personalities and patriotic and democratic forces active in the open mass movement and who are the most vigorous in exposing and fighting the anti-people Duterte regime and advancing the democratic mass struggles.

One week after Echanis' murder, the fascist animals were again unleashed. Zara Alvarez, 39, human rights defender and community

health worker, was gunned down in Bacolod City. Like Echanis, Alvarez is among 600 activists which the Department of Justice accused of being “terrorists” in the proscription case against the CPP and NPA. In May, Carlito Badion, 52, was also abducted, tortured and killed. A few days earlier, Jory Porquia, 58, a prominent activist and city coordinator of Bayan Muna, was killed in Iloilo City.

The relentless fascist rampage against known activists in the cities are carried out by the state armed agents under the orders of Duterte and his National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). Even without legal bases, the evil fascists have long implicated activists with the armed revolutionary movement. They target even artists, the critical mass media, church workers and ordinary people critical of Duterte. The target of these killings, arrests, abductions and incarceration have long been red-tagged by the AFP and PNP in their tarpaulin and endless media prattle, to justify the filing of trumped-up charges or outright murder of mass leaders and activists.

If the fascist rampage in the cities are relentless, AFP repression is even more virulent and savage in the countryside, away from media attention and where information flows ever so slow. Under Duterte’s rule, not less than 264 peasants have been killed by the regime’s soldiers, police, paramilitary and armed agents.

They respect no rights or guideline other than martial law. Wherever peasants stand up and defend their rights or fight for land, the fascists are there to silence and crush them. The masses face state terrorism every single day.

Whoever learns to speak for their interests are accused of supporting the armed movement. They impose military restrictions on communities including curfews, checkpoints, food blockades, prohibiting work in the fields and other measures purportedly against the NPA, but in fact, are onerous restrictions against the people. Civilian residents are forcibly used by the AFP in their bloody and oppressive war. They are paraded as “surrenderees,” conscripted into the CAFGU, made to guide military operations,

hauled to pro-military rallies and others.

In waging war, the AFP abides by no rules. Incited by Duterte, soldiers have brutally killed revolutionary leaders and forces even if they are no longer in a position to fight. Southern Tagalog Party leader Ka Mario Caraig was gunned down last August 8 while asleep. He was then convalescing from battle wounds. Last March, Ka Julius Giron, 71, a Party leader and peace consultant, was mercilessly killed in their residence in Baguio City, together with his doctor and buddy.

Contrary to international humanitarian law, the AFP has been dropping 500-pound bombs and indiscriminately firing artillery in suspected NPA camps endangering the lives and livelihood of the peasant masses and minority people in nearby communities.

All these—from political killings in the cities to militarization in the countryside—forms part of the image of state terrorism under Duterte. In the face of the pandemic, Duterte prioritizes state terrorism. He uses the worst forms of fascism to terrorize the people, silence their protests and suppress their struggles.

Intoxicated with power, Duterte aspires for more in order to continue aggrandizing wealth from pocketing public funds, cuts in government contracts, bribe money from drug syndicates and other. He and his minions gravely fear of losing power and having to face innumerable crimes and rights violations, have their hidden wealth exposed and be made culpable for all their transgressions against the people. Duterte persists in his power perpetuation schemes by charter change, rigging the 2022 elections in favor of those who he will choose, or outright imposition of dictatorial rule.

Worsening state terrorism is a manifestation of the US-Duterte regime's desperation to cling to power in the face of rising and broadening calls for his resignation or ouster.

The people's determination to fight intensifies as the face the regime's bungling of the pandemic response, worsening corruption and stealing public funds, fleecing and oppressing the people.

However, instead of being crushed, the people's hearts are filled

with rage, and with the determination and courage to fight. Instead of being silenced, the people see ever more clearly the need to speak out, protest and rise. Instead of turning their backs, the people are ever ready to make the necessary sacrifice in order to fight and defeat fascist terrorism and attain their aspiration for freedom.

Fight resolutely to end the dark reign of new martial law

September 7, 2020

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The Filipino people will mark in a few days the 48th anniversary of the Marcos dictatorship's martial law imposition. Marking this day has added importance because of the similar situation we face today. Lessons from the 14-year struggle against the dictatorship are deeply significant and should help guide in confronting and fighting the Duterte fascist tyranny.

Duterte has virtually pulled the country back to the dark days of Marcos' martial law with the incessant attacks against democracy and freedom. Like then, people's rights are systematically taken away and their struggles are suppressed by the untrammelled reign by Duterte and his cronies and minions.

Like the erstwhile dictator, Duterte's thirst for power and wealth is unquenchable. Using state armed forces to spill the people's blood and terrorize everyone, he established his unquestioned authority. All must kneel and plead. Duterte is an insatiable monster unleashing unlimited brutality against those who dare challenge him.

He sits on the shoulders of soldiers and police. His cruelty and brutality is supreme. He spits and tramples on people's rights. There is rampant killings and violence against the poor, and against anyone

who stands and fights for the people. In four years, Duterte has surpassed the old dictator in terms of mass murder by state armed agents.

Duterte's endless wars have no other aim but to suppress and silence the people and feed his soldiers and police. It is utterly reprehensible that his fascist response to Covid-19 has resulted in widespread failures, inutility and economic crisis.

Duterte now is the bureaucrat capitalist king. He is the lord of all drug lords in the country. He is the biggest traitor to Philippine freedom and sovereignty, and colludes with China in plundering country's wealth. His anti-American rhetoric is hollow when all he could do is bow to his imperialist master.

In marking Marcos' martial law amid Duterte's all-out fascism, let us recall and be inspired by the courage and heroism of the Filipino people, by the tens of thousands of patriots who did not hesitate to take on the difficult and dangerous path of struggle, sacrificed and gave up their lives to end the dictatorship. Scores went to the countryside to sow and nurture the armed revolution.

In the dark years of martial law, workers mounted strikes to fight for their rights and welfare, as well as for the people's aspiration for freedom. Peasants and the poor marched hundreds of kilometers. Plazas and streets became great schools where students honed their knowledge and learned the lessons of history and struggle. The countryside and mountain ranges raged in widespread armed struggle and served as fortress of the people's democratic power. Every stream of rebellion gathered into a raging river of resistance leading to a powerful uprising.

The people's desire to be free from Marcos' martial law is the same aspiration that now drives them to be liberated from repression and oppression of the Duterte tyranny. Under the evil Duterte regime, majority of the Filipino people suffer from unprecedented economic, social and health crisis, while Duterte's cronies and collaborators wallow in corruption, fascism and plunder.

Using the threat of the Anti-Terror Law, the killings, abductions

and arrests, the Duterte regime silences and paralyzes the people's democratic resistance. All tactics are applied to preempt the people from coalescing into a broad front of all democratic forces and coming together in a powerful people's uprising.

The Party encourages the Filipino people and their democratic mass movement to act all-out and frustrate the attempts of the Duterte regime to suppress them. They must employ all means to mobilize the people in their numbers.

Duterte's restrictions against rights on the pretext of Covid-19 pandemic response must be overcome. Lack of public transportation, prohibiting the youth from going out and restrictions against mass gatherings curtail efforts in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses.

Remember that no amount of restrictions can stop people from taking action if they are conscious and determined to fight and end Duterte's evil reign. The key is to rouse the people and raise their consciousness and determination to act.

Propaganda and education work among the masses must be untiringly carried out, taking advantage of technology wherever it is available to send out statements and calls to large numbers, at the same time regularly publishing newspapers and other printed material as solid forms of propaganda.

Take effort to transform the factories and communities into centers of political activity by mounting mass meetings to discuss their daily concerns, how their problems are linked to the overall situation of the country and why they must come out and act. In militarized communities, the people must be creative in evading surveillance and restrictions by state agents.

The democratic mass struggles of the basic classes and sectors must be carried forward with full force. The strength and courage of the toiling masses will encourage other classes and forces to stand up and fight, including those among the conservative opposition and their allies in the military and police who are fed up with Duterte. The united front of democratic forces must be expanded and

strengthened in their effort to demand Duterte's resignation or ouster from power.

The New People's Army must continue to intensify and widen guerrilla warfare across the country. Together with the people's militia and self-defense units, they must cut a thousand wounds on the fascist regime to allow the mass struggles to grow and to further strengthen the army and the people's organs of democratic power.

The Duterte fascist regime must not be allowed to reign unchallenged. But the longer it remains and the more brutal it becomes, the more it stokes the people's anger and determination to fight back, the sooner will be the end of Duterte's military rule.

Build broadest unity to end the tyranny

September 21, 2020

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The Duterte regime has reached a new level of international notoriety. Last week's resolution of the European Parliament denounced the thousands of extrajudicial killings and other serious human rights violations both in the so-called drug war and against human rights activists, environmental activists, trade unionists and journalists. With his unmitigated and brutal reign of state terror, plunder and national treachery, Duterte is now among the ranks of history's most detested dictators.

The brazenness of the regime's fascist attacks against the people have prompted the international community to raise their voices. The European Parliament has taken a step further by calling on the European Commission to suspend the country's trade preferences with EU. The European Parliament vote underscores the isolation of the Duterte regime not only from the Filipino people, but from the international community as well.

The Filipino people welcomes fervently the European Parliament resolution, as well as the statements of members of the Australian and Basque parliament as well as personalities from various countries. It is a big boost to their resistance against the Duterte regime's reign of state terrorism. The resolution comes at a

most opportune time as the Filipino people seek an urgent end to the regime's failed response to the pandemic, its insatiable corruption, rapid accumulation of debt, and heightening state terrorism and repression.

The regime stubbornly insists on its militarist approach to the pandemic with token health measures and insufficient economic subsidies. There remains no free mass testing and contact tracing remains slow and unable to keep at step with new infections. Thus, the virus continues to run ahead while the government continues to lose the game of catch-up. In the past month, there are several thousand daily new infections pushing the number of Covid-19 cases to close to 300,000. Millions of Filipinos, especially the downtrodden cramped in congested communities, remain under threat of getting infected. The unmanaged pandemic is pushing the limits of health care facilities, especially in the provinces.

The number of infections have risen sharply among workers and ordinary employees who need to travel and work in factories and offices without sufficient protection. Duterte ordered the easing of restrictions on business operations but did not require capitalists to conduct testing and follow public health standards. Using the pandemic to force his anti-poor jeepney phaseout program, Duterte stubbornly refuses to allow Covid-19-safe jeeps back on the road despite the lack of public transportation.

The regime has practically abandoned millions of Filipino students and their teachers by failing to make sufficient preparations and upgrade schools and necessary facilities to allow teachers to safely teach before their students this year and next. It has refused to listen to criticism of its so-called "blended learning" that disdainfully disregards the concrete conditions of millions of families without funds for gadgets or internet access.

There has been no letup in the regime's campaign of killings and abuses of human rights even amid the pandemic. Duterte's dirty war has intensified marked by the successive killings, abductions, torture, arrest and prolonged detention against activists and critics of the

regime. Gross violations of human rights are being committed everyday in the course of counterinsurgency and the tactics of psywar, military occupation and hamletting of rural communities.

Duterte and his cronies have taken advantage of the pandemic to intensify bureaucrat capitalist accumulation through overpriced government purchases, kickbacks and bribes. Billions of pesos of public funds have been realigned to the pockets of big bureaucrats in buying overpriced medical equipment and corruption in PhilHealth. Even without any clear prospects, Duterte is already scheming to buy vaccines from Russia and China in what may turn out to be one of the biggest scams in the regime's Covid-19 response.

If the regime's 2021 draft budget is to serve as any indicator, there clearly is no end to the people's sufferings under the Duterte regime. The regime's 2021 budget is utterly anti-people and prioritizes counterinsurgency and pork barrel over health. While Filipinos will get a measly ₱3.16/day for their health expenses, Duterte will get to spend ₱12.3 million per day of so-called confidential funds. No extra funds were allotted to education despite the urgent need for upgrading public schools. On the other hand, allocation for the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) was increased by 2,969% to ₱19.1 billion.

The regime and its mouthpieces are endlessly dishing out lies and half-truths to cover up the real situation of the country. Without any basis, it claims the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic is over, even as the Filipino people are experiencing unprecedented levels of joblessness and socioeconomic desperation. On the other hand, Duterte extended the "state of calamity" by one year to enable him and his minions to continue the plunder of public funds and pursue their various schemes to perpetuate themselves in power.

There is great urgency for the Filipino people to bring together the greatest possible number of democratic organizations, movements, institutions, agencies, sectors and classes in a broad united front for ousting the Duterte regime. Only by doing so can

Filipino have better chance at fighting the pandemic, overcoming the economic crisis, ending state terrorism and paving the way to attain a just and lasting peace.

All sorts of sectoral, multi-sectoral, campus-based and territorial alliances, formal or non-formal, can be built to serve as centers for cooperation and coordination of all anti-Duterte forces. They can mount different types of activities to provide venues for political and cultural expression by people with different levels of consciousness. Overseas Filipinos must also mobilize to draw global support and help generate international diplomatic, political and economic pressure against the regime.

The national democratic forces must be the solid core of the broad united front of anti-Duterte forces. They must be flexible, creative and patient in bringing together people and raising their consciousness and militance. At the same time, they must be unwavering even in the face of the regime's intimidation and threats.

The demand for Duterte's resignation or ouster is the most urgent clamor of the Filipino people who desire to attain justice, restore their rights and freedoms, and to have a government that responds to their welfare and prioritizes efforts to attain peace instead of waging endless wars against the people.

Cracks in the Duterte fascist coalition

October 7, 2020

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The political intramurals being played at the House of Representatives over the speakership issue is a manifestation of cracks within the Duterte ruling fascist coalition. The shameless jockeying for position is part of the bigger competition to get a bigger slice in the 2021 pork barrel budget, especially with the fast approaching 2022 elections.

On September 30, 184 of 300 members of the House of Representatives voted to reject the show of an offer of Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano to resign from his post. The exercise was denounced by many as a waste of people's time and money.

Cayetano's offer to resign, instead of actually resigning, was meant as a stopple to the "term sharing agreement" which he entered with Cong. Lord Allan Velasco. Under this agreement, Cayetano would sit as speaker for the first 15 months of their term, while Velasco will take over the last 21 months. Cayetano is being denounced for clinging to power and renegeing on the "gentlemen's agreement."

The vote against Cayetano's show of a resignation offer was an indirect slap on Duterte, who himself facilitated and brokered the deal for term-sharing first reached in 2019 and reaffirmed in a recent

Malacañang meeting. It shows Duterte's sway over his minions in Congress is not absolute, and that not all are satisfied by the sharing arrangements over the perks and privileges of power.

Both Cayetano and Velasco profess loyalty to the tyrant Duterte. They represent different groups or factions within the Duterte ruling clique. These have acted in unison to allow Duterte to further accumulate bureaucrat capitalist and fascist power, which recently included the so-called Anti-Terror Law, the denial of the ABS-CBN franchise and the granting of extraordinary powers for Duterte to realign the budget amid the pandemic.

However, reactionary politicians are loyal only as long they are fed well and in relative equality. As long as their congressional districts receive funding for showcase construction of roads, waiting sheds and other infrastructure projects where they can plaster their names onto, political minions in congress will continue to serve well the tyrant and its appointed subalterns. They become increasingly difficult to feed and satisfy whenever elections approach as they demand more to spend to get reelected or seek greater powers.

The intensification of the Cayetano-Velasco dispute is inextricably linked with the ongoing deliberations of the 2021 budget, specifically their share in the ₱397 billion pork barrel funds subsumed under the Department of Public Works and Highways. The Velasco faction have raised complaints over the "inequitable allocation of funding" for infrastructure projects, pointing out that Cayetano's Taguig district and his allies in Camarines Sur will get ₱11.1 and ₱11 billion funding respectively, while districts of non-allies are set to receive only ₱2 billion.

The House conflicts are set to go on high-gear in the coming days with the Velasco faction demanding that Cayetano abide by the "term-sharing" deal and resign on October 14, the date they agreed upon for the leadership transfer. If Cayetano acts otherwise, they have threatened to declare vacant the House Speaker post to pave the way for a showdown.

The contradictions in the House of Representatives are a

reflection of the rising contradictions within the Duterte ruling clique. These are set to deepen and widen in the coming period as the crisis of the ruling system worsen and the avarice of Duterte and his minions become even more impossible to satiate. The contradictions will become even more apparent as the 2022 election campaign period approaches, or as Duterte's charter change or other schemes to perpetuate their power are accelerated.

These fissures are bound to be open conflicts within the military and police, specifically between the rival criminal syndicates, and between its officers engaged in high-stake corruption and gross violations of human rights. There are bound to emerge within the ranks of military and police officers those who see the impossibility of ending the armed conflict in the country through a military-led war of suppression.

Contradictions are also bound to further deepen as international pressure on the Duterte regime mounts in the face of widespread condemnation of rights abuses perpetrated by Duterte's military and police forces, as well as Duterte's subservience to China and allowing it build military facilities in the South China Sea. From the US congress to the European parliament, calls have reverberated demanding an end to the state-perpetrated killings against activists and in its so-called drug war. He is also being pressed by recent takedown of Facebook accounts being operated by the military.

The Filipino people must take advantage of these contradictions within the ruling clique by further exposing the crimes, corruption, brutality and subservience of the regime and building the broadest unity among all patriotic and democratic classes and sectors. They must vigorously speak up against the regime's pork barrel and counterinsurgency budget for 2021 that is utterly anti-people and anti-poor especially amid the pandemic and the urgency of racking up government spending for medical, economic and educational services. They must denounce the rivalries for power and privilege while people suffer from the failed opening of classes, rising costs of fare, health care, food security and other urgent socio-economic problems.

Some minions are disenchanted that they are left with orts by Duterte's insatiable inner circle. They must be encouraged to renounce the regime of greed and tyranny.

The Filipino people must be further roused to resist Duterte's fascist, puppet and corrupt regime. The evils of the regime must be laid bare in order to rouse their indignation and strengthen their determination to fight back.

The broad masses of workers, peasants and semiproletariat must take action in great numbers in the factories, urban communities and rural villages. Tireless propaganda and education work must be conducted among them. The toiling masses must fight for their rights and well-being especially amid the economic crisis and hold the regime accountable for corruption and mispriorities.

At the same time, the alliance among the middle forces must continue to expand and grow in strength and militance. The student youth, teachers, nurses and health workers, government employees, church people, women, opposition forces and other democratic sectors must continue to come together and broaden the ranks of the anti-Duterte united front.

The politically advanced section of Party cadres and mass activists must take lead and serve as models in the arduous and often dangerous work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses. Only by mobilizing the people in their numbers can victory be attained.

The Party must continue to lead the New People's Army in waging extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare. The rising numbers of tactical offensives against the regime over the past several weeks show the nationwide capacity of the NPA and determination to fight the fascist regime and help in its overthrow.

By waging all forms of resistance, the broad masses of the Filipino people can further isolate and weaken the Duterte fascist regime. The regime's resort to state terrorism will surely be defeated in the face of the people's determination to gain back their freedoms and fight for democracy.

Dare to resist and protest amid the pandemic

October 21, 2020

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Times of pandemic are times for protest and resistance to defend the people's rights and well-being against tyrants who besiege their freedoms, abandon their health and oppress them with a virulence worse than the disease.

Around the world, people are rising up in numbers. They have shown how resistance should not be hindered by the pandemic, rather, that resistance has become more urgent as the pandemic is used to intensify oppression and repression. From the US, to Indonesia, Thailand and other countries, millions are rushing to the streets to fight fascism and the tyranny of a few.

For more than six months now, Duterte has taken advantage of the pandemic to wrap in fear and paralyze the people. He and his minions have exploited the locking down of people in their homes to accumulate more wealth and power, intensify the killings and the suppression of rights. They have abused their powers brazenly believing no one will dare go out in the streets and resist.

Duterte has further consolidated his fascist reign. He used the militarist lockdown to give the police and military control of the people's everyday life, force the separation of people and stop them from coming together and fight. Duterte has pounded the people

with the false claim that “a vaccine is the only solution” to cover up the fact that he cannot lead the country in surmounting the crisis.

Duterte has been inutile from the outset. Pandemic response was handed over to the military, not to doctors. Militarist lockdowns are the only answer. It abandoned state responsibility to undertake the needed health measures: free mass testing and treatment for Covid-19. Capitalists and thieves raked in profits even as the virus continued to spread. Most of the infected chose to scrimp rather than die losing money in the hospitals.

Duterte’s pandemic priorities are repression and politics. The economy and people’s livelihood are devastated. The country is deeper in debt. Critics are killed, suppressed or threatened. A dirty war is waged the countryside. Big capitalists and cronies get all the benefits. Congress is more tightly under his control. Schemes to remain in power are endless.

The Filipino people seethe with anger over the inutility, oppression and repression under the Duterte fascist regime. Workers, peasants, the unemployed, teachers, nurses, employees, the youth and other sectors undergo untold sufferings. The people seek to vent their fury and await an opportunity to demonstrate their outrage against the Duterte tyranny.

The people are one in seeking to confront the ruling regime and vigorously resist Duterte’s terrorism, corruption and national treachery. They aim to vigorously oppose the Anti-Terror Law, the fascist and pork barrel budget, the anti-people infrastructure projects, the policy reducing workers’ wages, the tax burdens on the masses and the tax breaks for big capitalists, the debt-dependent policy and the plan to change the constitution and other schemes to perpetuate Duterte in power.

It falls on the shoulders of the national democratic forces to lead the people in their struggles. It is their responsibility to display courage, militance and sagacity in the face of the regime’s systematic attacks against their ranks. While exercising caution over the pandemic, they must exert all efforts to reach out, rouse, organize

and mobilize the people in their millions. They must lead in mobilizing the masses and aim primarily to bring their numbers to the streets—the main arena in the fight against tyranny.

The Filipino youth and students play a vital role in arousing and mobilizing the entire people. They should creatively draw together their own ranks amid closure of campuses and schools. The youth's social awareness and aspiration for freedom and democracy must be transformed into a material force. They should serve as voice of the entire people in the struggle against the tyrannical power.

The workers play a crucial role in the resistance against the Duterte fascist regime. Of all the sectors in the cities, it is the workers who have the capacity to display strength in numbers marching as one. All-out effort should be exerted to transform factories into schools to raise knowledge and analysis of the country's condition, the problems of the working class and Filipino people and the need to daringly struggle. Work must be carried out in hundreds of factories to establish unions and associations and mobilize the masses of workers to fight for their well-being and the interests of the entire people.

The broad mobilization of the youth, workers, peasants and impoverished masses will serve as core of the broad unity of all other democratic forces. By displaying courage and militance, they can unleash a storm of rage and protest for freedom and democracy.

While waging broad mass struggles in the cities, the people's army will continue to intensify and expand guerrilla warfare in the countryside in order to punish the armed agents of the fascist regime. More tactical offensives will stretch the enemy and prevent it from concentrating a big force to suppress the people. More victories in the armed struggle will embolden the people more in their fight to end the Duterte tyranny.

Fight anticommunist witchhunting

November 7, 2020

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Directly following the recent enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Law (ATL) is the current anticommunist witchhunting drive against progressive and democratic organizations and movements, threatening activists, artists, parliamentarians and even local government officials. High government officials brandish their additional fascist powers in the hope of repressing democratic rights and suppress the forces fighting the ruling regime.

Anticommunist witchhunting is a dirty tactic of the power-hungry regime. Legal democratic forces are being outrightly linked to the revolutionary armed movement.

Under the Duterte terrorist regime, the fascist generals were emboldened to spew poison and lies against the legal and democratic forces and against the revolutionary movement. With the ATL, they aim to use the full force of the terrorist state to completely suppress the legal democratic movement that has long served as a fortress of the Filipino people's militant resistance.

Illegalization of progressive organizations is the ultimate objective of these measures of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) and the AFP. They aim to

repeat how Marcos' 1972 martial law declared illegal all forms of mass organizations. The NTF-ELCAC and the AFP are now using the ATL to make its anti-democratic policies appear legitimate and legal.

But instead of formally filing charges of "terrorism" against these organizations, as provided for by the ATL, the NTF-ELCAC is resorting to witchhunting to clampdown on the legal and democratic forces. However, except for the claims of a discredited "witness," the NTF-ELCAC could not provide evidence to prove its accusations against the legal national democratic organizations as "fronts" of the CPP and "recruiters" of the NPA.

The AFP and NTF-ELCAC expanded the scope of counterinsurgency to target even the non-armed forces. The intensified anticommunist witchhunting drive is part of the campaign of violence against the progressive and legal forces, that include the successive killings against mass leaders and activists. Only within the month of October, no less than eight activists were arrested.

To justify counterinsurgency and use "anti-terrorism" against the revolutionary movement, the AFP and the NTF-ELCAC obscure the difference between communism and terrorism, in order to obfuscate the justness of waging revolutionary struggle and the taking up of arms, especially against a tyranny. Terrorism or the use of violence against civilians or people not taking part in the armed conflict, run counter to international laws of war. This is a crime which the Party firmly condemns.

By accusing the Party of "terrorism," the NTF-ELCAC seeks to deny the status of belligerency of the Party and NPA and the firm adherence of the revolutionary armed forces to the standards of human rights, rules of war and humanitarian laws. They use terrorist-labeling against the Party to justify the termination of peace talks and the launching of a relentless, dirty, costly and corruption-riddled war.

Instead of being paralyzed by fear and intimidation by the

anticommunist witchhunting, more sectors are rising up and pushing back against the NTF-ELCAC and the Duterte regime's fascism. As anticommunist persecution against democratic and progressive forces and suppression of democratic rights intensify, the people's outrage is more and more stoked. Even various personalities and officials are roused to speak up against the AFP and NTF-ELCAC clampdown against national democratic forces.

It is just to condemn and renounce the AFP's red-tagging and assert "activism is not terrorism." In addition, it must also be asserted that neither is it terrorism to bear arms, to follow the path of Bonifacio and Sakay, to call for revolutionary change and wage a war for national liberation. That armed struggle is a right that cannot be taken away from the oppressed and the subjugated and recognized since ancient times. That under a system where power is monopolized by a few, the impoverished and disenfranchised masses have no other more effective way of defending their rights and fighting for their cause than bearing arms. That the people's war being waged by the NPA aims to achieve national freedom and social justice and is just in the face of treachery and oppression by the ruling reactionary classes.

In clamping down against the democratic forces and increasing restrictions against freedom of expression, the necessity and justness of waging armed struggle as means of defending the people and fighting terrorist suppression by the tyrannical regime become even clearer. By perpetrating more extrajudicial killings, unlawful arrests and detention, and by intensifying the fascist regime's attacks and denying the people's right to organize and protest, Duterte himself is pushing more and more people to the path of armed struggle.

The NPA must take advantage of the favorable social and political conditions to strengthen and expand its ranks. Recruitment of new Red fighters from among workers, intellectuals, employees and other urban sectors must be strengthened, while sustaining recruitment from the rural masses. The NPA must continue to

mount tactical offensives and expand and intensify guerrilla warfare across the country.

Tactical offensives must be intensified in response to the clamor for justice of the masses victimized by the AFP fascist terrorist units. There must also be more tactical offensives in order to stretch the forces of the AFP to prevent it from concentrating forces to carry out suppression in the cities. News of NPA victories inspire and embolden the resistance of the democratic forces in their fight to end Duterte's fascist tyranny.

Unite the people to make the Duterte regime answer for its neglect

November 21, 2020

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Millions of Filipinos openly saw the criminal neglect of Rodrigo Duterte's government amid devastation brought by typhoons Quinta, Rolly and Ulysses. As they drowned in floods and rains, Duterte comfortably slept through his responsibilities and duties. To coverup his failings, he blamed victims for supposedly not heeding warnings by authorities. Worse, he chided those who extended help and threatened those who protested the negligence.

Duterte failed to coordinate different agencies and local units, quickly put in place measures and and preposition enough personnel and equipment for rapid response. For years, his regime has cut calamity funds thus impairing responders to simultaneously respond to various disaster-stricken areas.

As a result, millions of Filipinos now suffer the destruction brought by floods and landslides. Several thousand homes in rural areas, town centers and cities were destroyed by strong winds and raging water and mudflow. Ricefields, vegetable gardens and others crops were inundated. Fishing boats were smashed. Hard earned property and means of living were destroyed. Many were left with

nothing. Electricity and water services of private companies were cut. Initial estimate of damage is at ₱12.3 billion.

Government aid is grossly insufficient and arrives ever so slow. Thousands remain in congested evacuation centers where they are vulnerable to Covid-19 infections.

Praiseworthy are efforts by mass organizations and individuals to extend aid to survivors. But these are limited and must not be regarded as substitute to the duty of the state to respond systematically to the widespread needs of calamity victims.

It is just that Duterte be firmly held accountable amid disaster especially with regard his regime's mispriorities in terms of funds and attention. It continues to prioritize counterinsurgency and corruption. It continues to give priority to counterinsurgency and corruption-riddled infrastructure projects. It has cut funds to calamity response by providing it a mere ₱15.7 billion, 60% lower than ₱39 billion in 2017. Redirecting funds from repression to rehabilitation must be pushed including the ₱19 billion NTF-ELCAC funds. The immediate distribution of ₱83 billion funds being kept in the DSWD coffers must be pushed to benefit victims of the pandemic and calamity.

In the face of the regime's failed response, people's unity and action must be strengthened and expanded to amplify the demand for the regime to account for its ineptness and neglect. It must reach communities, offices and factories and other places where the regime's intimidation and disinformation reign. They must turn their communities and evacuation areas into centers of protest to push the regime to mobilize all its agencies and resources to prioritize rehabilitation of all affected. As long as cries are disparate, Duterte will simply ignore the people's anger and disgust.

Victims must understand that they need not wait, plead or beg for the national government's material and financial aid. They have the right to promptly receive state aid for their food, water, clothing, hygiene and medical needs. They have the right to funds and services for quick clean-up of their flooded communities, rapid

restoration of water and electricity services and assistance for rebuilding homes and infrastructure. It is their right to receive emergency aid to recompense their flood-damaged property including their jeeps, motorcycles, boats, home appliances and others. They have the right to receive state funds to compensate for destroyed fields, businesses and other means of livelihood.

Every year, more than 20 storms enter the Philippines. It is thus just to demand that officials, agencies and companies be made to account for the inundation of communities as in the case of Magat Dam. The disaster-preparedness of these agencies must be assessed in order to prevent repeated tragedies.

The regime must also be held to account for its failure after four years to carry out substantial environmental rehabilitation, dredging of rivers and lakes and other measures to prevent flooding. Denounce Duterte for his sham demand for “climate justice” while it relentlessly pushes for mining, logging and foreign-funded infrastructure projects that bring widespread environmental destruction.

The Duterte regime’s criminal neglect of the people’s well-being amid the calamity comes on top of several months of failed response to the pandemic, economic devastation and brazen corruption. It brings disaster with its unremitting borrowing from foreign institutions, pro-capitalist policies that oppress workers, lack of subsidies for agriculture and other measures that bring worse sufferings to the impoverished masses.

Duterte is a disaster who for four years has devastated the country and slaughtered anyone in his path. He has brought immeasurable destruction to fields, businesses and livelihood of millions of people. The people’s anger must continue to be consolidated into a storm of protests that will push Duterte to resign or cause his ouster from power and subsequently make him pay for all his crimes.

Take a big stride forward

December 7, 2020

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The Filipino people have suffered relentless beating and oppression under the Duterte regime's militarist and anti-people response to the Covid-19 pandemic and successive calamities. The rotten regime abandoned its obligation to address the health and economic needs of the people. It intensified repression and imposed measures which worsened poverty and hunger.

Fearing a people's upsurge amid crisis similar to those in other countries, Rodrigo Duterte used deception and intimidation on the one hand; and violence and armed suppression, on the other. The past months saw intensified suppression of the mass media and red-tagging, and the campaign to sow disinformation, lies and trash talk.

At the same time, Duterte used the longest "lockdown" and restrictions on people's freedoms, and surveillance, imprisonment and successive murder of known revolutionaries, mass leaders and activists. Worse, he railroaded the new terror law which effectively imposes fascist dictatorship without declaring martial law.

The ultimate aim of using these tactics of psywar and suppression is to aggravate the national democratic forces and mass organizations, and get them occupied with defending their rights, safety and lives. This aims to prevent them from voicing out the people's grievances, paralyze the democratic mass movement and prevent street demonstrations from mounting.

Duterte is confusing the people's mind to scatter their attention and draw their consciousness away from their main and urgent problems resulting from his regime's corruption, neglect of the masses and prioritization of the interests of a few.

Over the past months, the people's outrage has been prevented from flaring up into widespread demonstrations against the ills, crimes and neglect of the Duterte regime of its obligations to the people amid the pandemic. Among these are the slashing of the budget for health and disaster response, lack of free and reliable Covid-19 testing, lack of subsidies for those who lost their jobs and income in the cities and for peasants in the countryside, low wages for nurses and failure to employ additional nurses in public hospitals, prioritizing the purchase of helicopters, fighter jets, the private jet for Duterte and his generals, bombs and other war matériel, allowing the reduction of workers' wages, corruption in the purchase of personal protective equipment and medical provisions, corruption in PhilHealth, handing over pandemic response leadership to generals instead of doctors, overaccumulation of loans for oligarch's infrastructure projects, planning to impose new taxes and other measures that will worsen the burden and poverty of the people.

Based on the anti-people and anti-poor 2021 budget set to be approved by the reactionary congress, the people's sufferings are set to even worsen. It continues to prioritize the military and its dirty war against the people, the business of oligarchs, corruption and favors for his minions and political loyalists and preparations for the 2022 election, while the people's livelihood, public health and education remain neglected.

The Filipino people must unleash a widespread and intense protest movement in the coming months against the oppressive and burdensome policies. Raising protest is the key to preventing new taxes and other policies and measures that will worsen the people's lives.

The national democratic forces must strengthen their efforts in

arousing, organizing and mobilizing the broad masses of workers, peasants, youth, health workers, the unemployed, professionals and other sectors hard hit by the economic crisis.

While they defend against the attacks of the Duterte regime, they must firmly take hold of the people's burning issues. Strive to unite the whole people on a clear and simple set of urgent demands in the face of the pandemic, calamities and economic crisis. Expose the anti-people and anti-people US-Duterte regime and the rotten core of the ruling system.

There must be untiring propaganda using forms that directly reach the masses while effectively countering disinformation in mass media and social media. The mass organizations must be expanded and strengthened severalfold to enable the masses to voice out and raise their grievances and demands.

Experiences must be studied, assessed and summed up to develop strengths and overcome weaknesses in efforts to arouse, organize and mobilize the people in their hundreds of thousands or millions in the face of the pandemic and calamities, and in the face of the relentless fascist suppression and brutality of the tyrannical regime.

On the basis of an assessment of work in the past years and taking stock of current strength, tasks and plans must be laid out for the coming year. These must serve the objective of uniting the masses of the people and unleash a widespread upsurge of protests and struggles to advance the interests of the masses.

Strengthen the unity and determination of the national democratic forces to shoulder the difficult tasks despite the threats of suppression and restrictions behind the veil of pandemic response.

In a few weeks, the Party will mark its 52nd anniversary. The broad masses and their revolutionary forces anticipate this as an occasion to celebrate their achievements of the past year, assess their strength and lay out plans to attain bigger revolutionary victories for 2021.

Fight all-out the ruthless fascist terrorism in the countryside

December 21, 2020

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The US-Duterte regime's fascist terrorism in the countryside was ruthless this year. The cruelty of Duterte's armed minions against the peasant and poor masses is without equal. Amid raging pandemic and calamities, psywar, intelligence and intimidation operations are relentless in villages and communities which the enemy suspects of having mass organizations or Party branches or supportive or sympathetic to the New People's Army (NPA). This suppression campaign against the masses, under the so-called Joint Campaign Plan-Kapanatagan, is carried out in parallel with large-scale, intense and sustained combat operations against NPA guerrilla fronts.

Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) teams of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) lay siege, occupy and reign over villages. Its despicable aim is to eliminate any trace of revolutionary influence. Its operations last 3-6 months at the minimum, or up to three years in a cluster of villages.

Its fascist objective is to destroy the masses' unity and cooperation. They pinpoint and gang up on those they suspect of being members of mass organizations, or having a relative in the NPA, a Party cadre, a former NPA fighter or just anyone who refuses

to bow, surrender or serve as informant.

The fascists use red-tagging. They announce names over the radio or in tarpaulins. They paint a red X on the homes of those they suspect. They summon or take “suspects” in to report or “clear their names” in military camps where they are made to “surrender” and serve the enemy or take part in projects where the military rakes in money.

Those who refuse are arbitrarily imprisoned or threatened with death. They get repeated visits in their homes, which later get surrounded, entered or raided and searched, usually in the dead of night. Those who continue to resist are eventually liquidated. There are increasing cases of massacres later made to appear as encounters with the NPA. This 2020, at least 290 peasants were killed by the fascists.

The peasant masses are compelled to follow arbitrary policies imposed by the fascists, such as limiting amount of food and supply purchases, or prohibiting them to work in their fields on the pretext of “social distancing.” All these have no legal bases, violate their rights and are a burden on the masses.

Community peace is disturbed. These ruffians promote cockfighting, all-night drinking, drug use, pornography and abuse of women. They fire their weapons at night to intimidate people. They drop bombs and fire artillery in mountains near villages, damaging farms and property of the masses and cause grave fear, especially among children.

The enemy spreads intrigues non-stop to destroy the masses mutual trust and destroy their organizations. They vilify the people’s army and threaten the village folk that they will suffer the consequence of any NPA tactical offensive in their area.

The fascist regime’s dirty war is causing grave damage in some guerrilla fronts. The masses have become passive and disorganized and could not resist in the face of the enemy’s onslaught and abuses. This is due to some shortcomings of Party committees and NPA units to quickly adapt to the enemy’s siege tactic and carry out the

necessary steps to maintain firm unity and cooperation with the masses.

Still, in many guerrilla fronts, the masses, together with their army, have valiantly stood up and fought back. Despite their losses, they continue to rise up and resist.

With firm assistance and guidance of the Party and NPA, the masses have remained united and have collectively acted and fought tooth and nail. With the army, they are not helpless. They stand firmly for their rights and fight for their well-being. They stand by each other. The welfare of one is fought by all. They are able to collectively and courageously fight cruelty and oppression. They have accumulated rich experiences in fighting back, openly or through other creative means. They collectively disobey the enemy, run circles around or completely ignore them. They find ways as long as they are determined and imbued with a fighting spirit.

The mass organizations continue to be strengthened and expanded to forge their unity and raise their determination and capability to resist. Even if enemy forces are in the village, they can meet and assemble without the fascists seeing or hearing. The strongest organizations are active in propaganda work and education. They thoroughly denounce the terrorist crimes of the AFP and Duterte regime and expose their lies.

In the face of the regime's fascist repression, the link between the masses and the people's army should not be severed. As it is of utmost importance, countless ways of communication and correspondence are developed. The people's army perseveres in assisting the masses' antifeudal struggles. They also actively fight against the enemy's armed minions. The enemy's spy network is disrupted. Those threatened by the enemy are temporarily taken in or brought to a safe haven. The fascist criminals in the villages are punished—sniped at and blasted away.

Across the country, the masses' have proven that their determination to fight and overcome fascist abuses will not be crushed. Lessons and inspiration must be drawn from experiences of

the masses, the army and the Party's undaunted resistance, as well as the further deepening of the revolutionary mass base in the countryside.

In its desire to remain in power and perpetuate its reign of plunder and corruption, the Duterte fascist regime will undoubtedly continue to oppress and burden the masses. But the more Duterte resorts to cruelty and brutality, the more the masses and the people's army are determined to resist and carry forward the people's war.