

Specific Characteristics of our People's War

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From the great treasury of Marxism-Leninism, we draw basic principles and historical lessons to shed light on the people's war that we are waging. But these are of general value; they are a general guide to our action. To rest content with them, without integrating them with out concrete practice, is to turn them into lifeless dogma. To dispense with them is to engage in blind action.

Both dogmatism and empiricism are anathema to Communists. As in all matters, we must integrate theory and practice in the conduct of people's war. The universal theory of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought must be applied to the concrete conditions of the Philippine Revolution. We adhere firmly to the great Lenin's teaching that the soul of Marxism is the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. Only by understanding the specific characteristics of our own people's war can we understand the laws that govern it and thus can we adopt and implement the correct strategy and tactics for carrying it forward to victory.

The basic principles and historical lessons already founded in the universal theory of the revolutionary proletariat have been paid for in blood by various peoples triumphant in their respective revolutions. But as far as carrying out and winning our own people's war is concerned, there is nothing more important than those principles and lessons that we learn on the basis of Philippine conditions and our own revolutionary experience. In this regard, we put the highest premium on those principles and lessons paid for in blood by our own people.

Integrating Marxist-Leninist theory with Philippine practice is a two-way process. We do not merely take advantage of the victories achieved abroad so that we may succeed in our own revolution. But we also hope to add our own victory to those of others and make some worthwhile contribution to the advancement of Marxism-Leninism and the world proletarian

revolution so that in the end mankind will be freed from the scourge of imperialism and enter the era of communism. At this stage of the Philippine Revolution, we wage a people's war, a revolutionary war, because it is the only method possible to end the armed oppression of the people by the reactionary state that is the instrument of the big comprador-landlord class.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the specific characteristics of our people's war, we must consider such specific conditions as that our people's war is in line with the national-democratic revolution of a new type; that we need to wage a protracted war in the countryside; that we are fighting in a mountainous archipelago; that the enemy is big and strong while we are still small and weak; that a fascist dictatorship has arisen amidst a political and economic crisis of the ruling system; that the country is dominated by one imperialist power and thus there is a unified armed reaction, except in Southwestern Mindanao; and that U.S. imperialism is on the decline in Asia and throughout the world and world revolution is advancing amidst the general crisis of the world capitalist system unprecedented since the end of World War II.

In discussing the specific characteristics of our people's war, we are bound to point out certain advantages and disadvantages or strengths and weaknesses. At the same time, we indicate immediately by what general process we can maximize our advantages and strengths and overcome the disadvantages and weaknesses.

1. NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION OF A NEW TYPE

Our country is semicolonial and semifeudal. It is under the indirect rule of U.S. imperialism whose most reliable agents and puppets are the big comprador-landlords and big bureaucrats. The cities are ruled by the comprador big bourgeoisie and the countryside is ruled by the landlord class.

The overwhelming majority of our 41 million people, more than ninety per cent of them, are severely exploited and oppressed by the big compradors and big landlords who together with their closest and best paid political and technical subalterns compose a tiny minority that is no more than two per cent of the population. The most oppressed and exploited are the toiling masses of workers and peasants. The urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle or national bourgeoisie also suffer from the semicolonial and semifeudal situation, with the former stratum suffering more than the latter.

It is obvious why we interchangeably speak of people's war and revolutionary war. We are fighting for the revolutionary interests of the broad masses of the people. We are fighting specifically for their national-democratic interests. Ours is a national-democratic revolution aimed at completing our struggle for national independence and giving substance to the democratic aspirations of our people. We have no course but to fight for national emancipation and social liberation against U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

In a sense, our national-democratic revolution is a continuation of the Philippine Revolution that started in 1896. But this revolution has assumed new characteristics. It is of a new type. It is no

longer part of the old bourgeois-capitalist revolution. It is part of the proletarian-socialist revolution which has emerged since the first global interimperialist war and the victory of the great socialist October Revolution. Though we are still fighting for a national-democratic revolution, this constitutes a preparation for carrying out a socialist revolution in our country.

We are therefore engaged in a continuous Philippine Revolution, with two distinct stages: the national-democratic and socialist stages. In both stages, the class leadership is held by the proletariat which is historically the most progressive, as a political and economic factor, and which evokes the most advanced ideology. Through its vanguard detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the proletariat sees to it that the national-democratic revolution is carried out and completed; that the socialist revolution immediately ensues upon the victory of the national-democratic revolution; and that for a whole historical epoch socialism creates the foundation for communism.

At the present stage of the Philippine Revolution, the Party wields two weapons against the enemy. These are armed struggle and the national united front. These are interrelated like the spear and the shield. One serves the other. The national-democratic front ensures the widest possible popular support for armed struggle; it splits the enemy ranks and isolates the worst single enemy at a time. Armed struggle is specifically the weapon for carrying out the central task of the revolution, which is the destruction and overthrow of the enemy rule and the seizure of political power.

To paraphrase Chairman Mao, without an army like the New People's Army, the people have nothing. To have a few seats in a reactionary parliament and to have no army in our country is to play a fool's game. Anytime that the enemy chooses to change the rules of the game, say the constitution, he would be able to do so at the people's expense.

Between armed struggle and parliamentary struggle, the former is principal and the latter is secondary. Every genuine revolutionary knows that the chief component of the reactionary state is the reactionary army. The Filipino people are helpless without their own army. They cannot take a single step towards smashing the entire military-bureaucratic machine of the enemy without a people's army.

In carrying out a people's war, the Party builds the people's army as its main form of organization. It is not only an organization where the Party membership is most concentrated. It is also an organization for uniting the proletarian revolutionaries and the peasant masses both within the army and in the localities. In this way, the basic alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry so necessary in a national united front takes the most effective concrete form.

The basic alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry is the foundation of the national united front. The stronger this alliance is in the course of people's war, the stronger is the desire of the urban petty bourgeoisie to join the national united front and take active part in revolutionary work. Likewise the national bourgeoisie is encouraged to bring its support to such basic forces of the revolution as the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie. At this stage of the revolution, the leadership of the Party and the proletariat is best proven by its ability to build a people's army and realize the basic alliance of the toiling masses.

2. PROTRACTED WAR IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Eighty-five per cent of the national population is in the countryside. Of this rural population, the poor peasants together with the farm workers comprise about seventy-five per cent; the middle peasants, about fifteen per cent; the rich peasants, about five per cent. The landlords may be only one or two per cent. About three or four per cent is taken up by non-agricultural wage-earners, artisans, small peddlers, merchants, students, teachers and other professionals. There are drastic deviations from these percentages only in particular places where there are mines, logging, modern plantations and some industries. Fishermen along the seacoasts are mainly peasants.

On the basis of these facts, the peasant population and the countryside have a special significance to us in waging people's war. The main social problem, the single problem affecting the greatest number of people, lies in the countryside. It is the land problem. Feudalism and semifeudalism oppress and exploit the poor peasants, the farm workers and the lower-middle peasants. Without focusing attention on this problem and providing it with a solution, we cannot draw into the ranks of the revolution the most formidable force that can overwhelm the enemy.

Agrarian revolution is the solution. The peasant masses are aroused and mobilized to overthrow landlord authority and carry out land reform step by step. Depending on the concrete circumstances, particularly the strength achieved by the revolutionary forces, rent reduction and elimination of usury or outright confiscation of landlord property may be effected. In frontier areas, the poor indigenous people and the poor settlers are to be assured of ownership of their fair-sized lands. The Party maintains that the main content of the national-democratic revolution is the satisfaction of the peasant cry for land.

Only by carrying out agrarian revolution can the revolutionary leadership activate the peasant masses as the main force of the revolution and realize the basic alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry. From the ranks of the downtrodden peasantry can then be drawn the greatest number of armed contingents. As it now stands, the New People's Army is composed mainly of peasant recruits. The growth of our people's army depends on the support of the peasant masses.

In general terms, we state that the most reliable ally of the proletariat is the peasantry. In more specific terms, let us relate the revolutionary proletariat with the various strata of the peasantry. Our policy as proletarian revolutionaries is to rely mainly on the poor peasants together with the farm workers, win over the middle peasants and neutralize the rich peasants. In the course of the national-democratic revolution, we make it a point not to hurt unduly the interests of the rich peasants even as we are alert to their reactionary tendencies.

In opposing and overthrowing the landlords, we hold as chief targets landlords who have vast holdings, who have acquired these by sheer grabbing, who hold political power and who are despotic. We give special consideration, as the masses and circumstances may permit, to the enlightened gentry who endorse and follow our policies and who support our revolutionary war.

Our country is grossly undeveloped due to imperialist domination and retains a relatively wide countryside where feudalism and semifeudalism reign. This backward countryside of our small country is not as large as that of China but it is certainly large in comparison to our own cities. This is the basic setting for our people's war. The bulk of our national population is here.

The weakest link of enemy rule lies in the countryside. The worst of oppression and exploitation is carried out among the peasant masses by the reactionaries. And yet the countryside is so vast that enemy armed forces cannot but be spread thinly or cannot but abandon vast areas when concentrated at certain points. The countryside is therefore the fertile ground for the emergence and growth of Red political power — the people's army, organs of democratic political power, mass organizations and the Party. There can be no wider and better area for maneuver for our people's army and for our type of warfare.

Our experience in more than five years shows that we have created a total of twenty guerrilla fronts in seven regions outside of Manila-Rizal. These fronts continue to thrive in the countryside even in the face of the unprecedentedly harsh fascist counter-measures. When the enemy advances in strong force against our small and weak forces, he is made to exhaust himself by punching the air and he merely allows his prey to hit weaker enemy units elsewhere or expand on new ground. The massive and prolonged enemy campaign of "encirclement and suppression" has failed to destroy our small and weak forces in Cagayan Valley.

In our country, it is possible to wage a protracted people's war because we have a relatively wide backward countryside where the bulk of the population is. There are many parts which are relatively far from the enemy's center and main lines of communications and where the people live basically on their diversified agricultural produce. This situation is completely different from that obtaining in a capitalist country.

In capitalist countries, a civil war is preceded by a long period of parliamentary struggle. To fight there a civil war without the disintegration of at least a great part of the standing army of the bourgeoisie and without the proletariat ready for a general uprising capable of winning decisively within a short period of time is to court disaster for the revolutionary forces. The civil war is mainly conditioned by the fact that the majority of the people are in the cities and is initiated and decided in the major cities where the highly unified economy and the highly developed system of communications are centered. Nationwide victory or defeat in a civil war is faster settled in capitalist countries than in semicolonial and semifeudal countries.

In the Philippines, it is as necessary as it is possible to wage a protracted people's war. It is only through a long period of time that we can develop our forces step by step by defeating the enemy forces piece by piece. We are in no position to put our small and weak forces into strategically decisive engagements with militarily superior enemy forces. In the first place, we have just started from scratch. Neither could we have postponed the start of our people's war. The more time we have for developing our armed strength from practically nothing the better for us in the future. It is our firm policy to fight only those battles that we are capable of winning. Otherwise, we circle round in the face of an enemy force that we cannot defeat and look for the opportunity to strike at an enemy force that we can defeat.

In carrying out a protracted people's war, we apply the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside. We steadfastly develop guerrilla bases and zones at various strategic points in the country. In a subsequent stage, these areas shall be linked by regular mobile forces which shall be in a position to defend larger and more stable revolutionary bases in the countryside. From such stable revolutionary bases, we shall be able ultimately to seize the cities and advance to nationwide victory.

While it is our principal task to wage a protracted war in the countryside, it is our secondary task to develop the revolutionary underground and the broad anti-imperialist and democratic mass movement in the cities. We should combine the revolutionary struggles in the cities and countryside in the towns and barrios in Red areas, White areas and pink areas.

We should excel in combining legal, illegal and semilegal activities through a widespread and stable underground. A revolutionary underground developing beneath democratic and legal or semilegal activities should promote the well-rounded growth of the revolutionary forces, serve to link otherwise isolated parts of the Party and the people's army at every level and prepare the ground for popular uprisings in the future and for the advance of the people's army.

3. FIGHTING IN A SMALL MOUNTAINOUS ARCHIPELAGO

The Philippines is a small mountainous archipelago. It is made up of some 7,100 islands and islets with a total land area of 299,404 square kilometers or 115,600 square miles. The eleven largest islands which are tabulated below compose ninety-four per cent of the total land area and also contain ninety-four per cent of the total population of the country. Every one of these and many other islands have a mountainous terrain with fertile soil.

The importance of an island is not determined solely by its size. Population, forest area and mountainous terrain are more important consideration for our people's war, especially at the initial stage.

There are three outstanding characteristics of the Philippines in being an archipelago. First, our countryside is shredded into so many islands. Second, our two biggest islands, Luzon and Mindanao, are separated by such a clutter of islands as the Visayas. Third, our small country is separated by seas from other countries. From such characteristics arise problems that are very peculiar to our people's war.

On the one hand, it is true that our countryside is wide in relation to the cities. On the other hand, it is also true that we have to fight within narrow fronts because the entire country is small and its countryside is shredded. The war between us and the enemy easily assumes the characteristics of being intensive, ruthless and exceedingly fluid. While we have the widest possible space for the development of regular mobile forces in Luzon and Mindanao, these two islands are separated by hundreds of kilometers and by far smaller islands where the space immediately appears to be suitable only for guerrilla forces throughout the course of people's war. The

optimum condition for the emergence of regular mobile forces in the major Visayan islands will be provided by the prior development of regular mobile forces in Luzon and Mindanao.

Island	Land Area (sq.km)	Population (1970)
1) Luzon	104,688	18,001,270
2) Mindanao	94,630	7,538,315
3) Samar	13,080	1,019,358
4) Negros	12,705	2,218,972
5) Palawan	11,785	236,635
6) Panay	11,515	2,114,544
7) Mindoro	9,735	472,396
8) Leyte	7,214	1,362,051
9) Cebu	4,422	1,634,182
10) Bohol	3,865	683,297
11) Masbate	3,269	492,908

Waging a people's war in an archipelagic country like ours is definitely an exceedingly difficult and complex problem for us. At this stage that we are still trying to develop guerrilla warfare on a nationwide scale, the central leadership has had to shift from one organizational arrangement to another so as to give ample attention to the regional Party and army organizations. This is only one manifestation of the problem. Armed propaganda teams and initial guerrilla units scattered in far-flung areas are susceptible to being crushed by the enemy. This is another manifestation of the problem.

There is no doubt that fighting in an archipelagic country like ours is initially a big disadvantage for us. Since the central leadership has to position itself in some remote area in Luzon, there is no alternative now and even for a long time to come but to adopt and carry out the policy of centralized leadership and decentralized operations. We must distribute and develop throughout the country cadres who are of sufficiently high quality to find their own bearing and maintain initiative not only within periods as short as one or two months, periods of regular reporting, but also within periods as long as two or more years, in case the enemy chooses to concentrate on an island or a particular fighting front and blockade it.

The development of the central revolutionary base somewhere in Luzon will decisively favor and be favored by the development of many smaller bases in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Thus, we have paid attention to the deployment of cadres for nationwide guerrilla warfare. In a small country like the Philippines or more precisely in an island like Luzon, it would have been foolhardy for the central leadership to ensconce itself in one limited area, concentrate all the limited Party personnel and all efforts there and consequently invite the enemy to concentrate his own forces there. It would have been foolhardy to underestimate the enemy's ability to rapidly move and concentrate his forces in an island where communications are most developed.

The central leadership started the armed struggle where it best could by linking with the Red fighters in the second district of Tarlac in early 1969. Soon, Party cadres were dispatched to the

mountainous and hilly area of Isabela. Subsequently, what amounted to the main forces of the New People's Army vigorously grew here from early 1971 to the eve of the fascist martial rule. A few cadres trained here were dispatched for rural work in other regions. The First Quarter Storm of 1970 and the succeeding mass protest actions and mass organizing in Manila-Rizal and other urban centers in the country yielded the greatest number of cadres for the national expansion of the Party and the people's army in the rural areas. These cadres start raw but are enthusiastic, develop new Party cadres from the ranks of the local mass activists and Red fighters, and are tempered in the course of fierce revolutionary struggle.

We have already created seven regional Party and army organizations outside of Manila-Rizal. After strengthening them, especially those of Northwest, Northeast and Central Luzon, we can more confidently look forward to and take the step towards building the central revolutionary base in a favorable terrain that is better populated and more extensive than the east of the Cagayan River. It should be in an area far more difficult for the enemy to blockade. Necessarily, the central leadership would be able to maintain more immediate relations with the regional Party organizations in Luzon than with those in the Visayas and Mindanao. The latter could still be administered through a special organ of the Central Committee.

In the long run, the fact that our country is archipelagic will turn out to be a great advantage for us and a great disadvantage for the enemy. The enemy shall be forced to divide his attention and forces not only to the countryside but also to so many islands. Our great advantage will show when we shall have succeeded in developing guerrilla warfare on a nationwide scale and when at least we shall have been on the threshold of waging regular mobile warfare in Luzon or in both Luzon and Mindanao.

We take the policy of "a few major islands first, then the other islands later." This is now well understood in the Visayas. In every island or in the specific part of an island that we choose to concentrate on, we must develop self-reliance; maintain our guerrilla units within a radius that is limited at a given time to avoid dissipation of our efforts but wide enough for maneuver; and advance wave upon wave, always expanding on the basis of consolidation. Our bitter experience has shown that overextending our guerrilla squads in the false hope of covering a wider area or attending to so many strategic points all at the same time result in shallow political work and are fatal for our squads. Among several guerrilla squads, it is necessary to have some center of gravity or rallying point either for temporary retreat or for a concentrated operation against the enemy. At the same time, we should never lose sight of the necessity of fluidity, which often requires the shiftiness of such a center.

Each regional Party organization should see to it that at the present stage it develops only one, two or three armed fronts. The regional executive committee of the Party should be based in the main front. More guerrilla bases and zones should arise only upon the consolidation of the few that could be sufficiently handled at one time. At present, it is not necessary to have an armed force in every province within a region. More often it is advisable for us to locate our armed force at an interprovincial border area for maximum effect because in the first place we do not have enough armed strength for every province.

The principle of self-reliance needs to be emphasized among all revolutionary forces on a nationwide scale. This is because our small country is cut off by seas from neighboring countries, particularly those friendly to our revolutionary cause. The Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian peoples are more fortunate than us in one sense because they share land borders with China, which serves as their powerful rear. Self-reliance can never be overemphasized among us. The basic needs of our people's war have to be provided for by the people's army and the broad masses of the people themselves. Our basic source of armaments is the battlefields. Our level of military technique and our ability in tactics and strategy will have to rise by our adhering strictly to the Marxist principle of advancing in stages and doing well at one stage to prepare for the next stage. The protractedness of our people's war is underscored by the archipelagic character of the country.

The mountainous character of the country countervails its archipelagic character from the very start. A mountainous terrain with some population and with thick vegetation is an excellent condition for our people's war. If on one hand the archipelagic character of the country has a narrowing effect on our fighting fronts, its mountainous character has both a broadening and deepening effect. Mountains are usually the natural boundaries of provinces. Thus, we can maintain influence on several provinces even if we were to operate from only one mountainous border area. Also, the enemy cannot easily approach us because of the rough terrain and we have more opportunity than anywhere else to conduct political work among the people. Before he starts to climb a hill, we can receive the relayed reports from the masses in the towns and in the barrios, we can actually see his coming from vantage points and we can size up his operation and its possible time span by the sight of his troops, trucks and planes. We can therefore prepare for his coming.

The Sierra Madre sews up almost the entire length of Luzon on the eastern side of the Cagayan Valley to the Bicol region through Central Luzon. It links as many as nine provinces. At certain points, it links two or three provinces at the same time. The Cordillera and Ilocos mountains cover the middle and western parts of Northern Luzon. These link as many as eleven provinces. At certain points, they link as many as four provinces at the same time. The mountain provinces and their fringes have the distinction of being the area where the heaviest concentration of Japanese troops in the Philippines in World War II, reaching up to 150,000, was wiped out by the guerrilla forces. The Tarlac-Zambales mountains link up five provinces. The armed struggle there has to be well-coordinated with the armed struggle in the wide plains below, with special attention given to the fact that U.S. military bases and major A.F.P. military camps are in the vicinity. There are many other smaller mountains in Luzon; they can also provide a favorable terrain for guerrilla forces.

Mindanao is an even more mountainous and more forested island than Luzon. At the center of Mindanao are the mountainous provinces of Bukidnon and Cotabato. These are as well-populated as the mountain provinces of Northern Luzon. These are linked up with almost all of the Mindanao provinces. Outside of Luzon and Mindanao, the mountains of Panay link four provinces and those of Samar, Leyte and Mindoro link two provinces at the same time.

A mountainous terrain, where more people inhabit the foothills, clearings, plateaus, and riversides or creeksides, is more favorable for the people's army. The usual inhabitants of the

mountainous areas are national minorities and poor settlers. These are very receptive to revolutionary propaganda. Their common enemy is the reactionary government which treats their lands as “public lands” and either directly grabs these from them or allows big landlords, big bureaucrats or big capitalists to grab these from them. At the very outset, we should energetically arouse and mobilize them to defend their lands and meager possessions against the landgrabbers and the enemy forces. In launching military operations against us, the enemy always resorts to forced evacuation of these mountain inhabitants so as to prevent them from supporting us and so as to prepare the way for taking away their lands. We must thoroughly oppose every forced evacuation.

The fact that we have given the highest priority to creating guerrilla bases and zones in mountainous areas has helped us in a big way to preserve our guerrilla forces in the face of so many small and big campaigns of “encirclement and suppression” launched against us. Without the use of the Sierra Madre, our small forces in Cagayan Valley with only three companies as main force could not have preserved themselves against 7,000 enemy troops. Without the use of the mountainous areas of Sorsogon, our small initial forces there could not have expanded to their peak of one platoon-size main force and eight squads and could have been more easily reduced upon the coming of 1,000 enemy troops. However, it must also be pointed out that it is erroneous to rely exclusively on mountainous terrain. Our point is to use the combination of the less-populated mountainous terrain and the better-populated plains, relying mainly on the former for military purposes at this early stage of our people’s war.

From the mountainous and hilly areas, we can expand towards the more-populated plains. Even when we shall have gone far in building bases on the plains, our mountainous and hilly bases will retain their strategic importance as guarantors of the victorious advance of people’s war. The central revolutionary base can best stand on the well-inhabited mountainous terrain that is of the greatest breadth in Luzon. Everywhere, bases on the plains, seacoasts, lakes and rivers will find the indispensable support of bases in the mountainous and hilly areas.

Amidst the twenty guerrilla bases and zones already in existence and on the basis of the experience gained in creating them, the central leadership can proceed to establish the central revolutionary base somewhere in the well-inhabited mountainous area of Northern Luzon. The guerrilla bases and zones of Northeast Luzon, Northwest Luzon and Central Luzon can stand as the future terminals of regular mobile forces that are to arise at the central revolutionary base.

After doing well in building two or three guerrilla bases in every region outside Manila-Rizal, we can go on to create more guerrilla bases and zones of every type. Every regional organization of the Party and the people’s army is to establish its own central base and raise in the long run regional mobile forces. On the eve of the nationwide seizure of power, Manila-Rizal shall be caught in a pincer between regular mobile forces from the north and from the two regions of Southern Luzon.

Mindanao is subdivisible into three or four regions, and a central revolutionary base can also be set up to coordinate these regions. The long-term task of our Mindanao forces is to draw enemy forces from Luzon and destroy them. We can cooperate very well with the Moro National Liberation Front and the Bangsa Moro Army in this regard. Our forces in the Visayas can take

advantage of our gains in Luzon and Mindanao and contribute their own share in the task of forcing the enemy to split his forces and of destroying them.

Because our country is archipelagic, it is a matter of necessity for us to develop guerrilla bases and zones along the seacoast. Communications is one clear immediate reason. We should be able to develop as many routes as possible between Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao by conducting political work among the fishermen and seamen. Within the Visayas, boating is as common as trucking in the Luzon or Mindanao mainlands. If we take lessons from Southwestern Mindanao, especially from Sulu archipelago, we can further develop sea warfare, a form of guerrilla warfare making use of small bancas (boats) and big as well as small islands. This would constitute a good support for our guerrilla warfare on land.

4. FROM SMALL AND WEAK TO BIG AND STRONG

We must recognize the balance of forces between us and the enemy. This is the first requirement in waging either an entire war or a campaign or a single battle. As matters now stand, we are small and weak while the enemy is big and strong. There is no doubt that he is extremely superior to us militarily in such specific terms as number of troops, formations, equipment, technique, training, foreign assistance and supplies in general. It will take a protracted period of time for us to change this balance of forces in our favor. Thus, protractedness is a basic characteristic of our people's war.

The enemy armed forces have four major services; namely, constabulary, army, air force and navy with a total force of at least 100,000 troops at present. Under the fascist dictatorship, enemy troop strength has been increased by at least 40,000 both by an actual increase in regular forces and by the prolongation of military service by twenty-year-old trainees from six months to one year-and-a-half. Enemy strength is also beefed up by the "civilian home defense force" (another name for the "barrio self-defense unit"). The fascist dictator has announced that by the middle part of 1975 the total strength of the reactionary armed forces will go up to 250,000 after the integration of the local police forces under the Philippine Constabulary.

The strength of our full-fledged guerrilla forces is a far cry from the regular military strength of the enemy. The typical center of gravity for our guerrilla forces is of mere platoon size. Around it gravitate armed propaganda squads and full-fledged guerrilla squads. So far, it is in Northeast Luzon where we have reached the company level of formation with some sufficient strength and performed company-size operations. Now, even here the level of armed activity is reduced to that of platoons and squads. However, the reduction of strength here as a result of relentless enemy campaigns is more than compensated by the growth of the New People's Army on a nationwide scale. Of course, if we were to include part-time guerrilla and militia units, we would be able to cite a higher figure for our military strength but then these as a body of armed men are small and weak in comparison to the enemy's own irregulars, the "civilian home defense forces," which are far better armed.

We cannot properly evaluate our accomplishment in the military field without giving due consideration to certain objective conditions. The subjective forces of the revolution, especially the Party and the people's army, started from scratch. The Party was rebuilt from scratch on

December 26, 1968; moreover, it had to face the attacks not only of the barefaced enemy but also the vicious Lava revisionist remnants of the old merger Party. The New People's Army was also built from scratch on March 29, 1969; moreover, it had to face not only the reactionary armed forces but also the Lava revisionists and the Taruc-Sumulong gang.

Not a single rifle was carried over to the full-time guerrillas of the New People's Army from either the anti-Japanese resistance of the Hukbalahap in World War II or from the civil war that followed it. The Lava revisionist renegades had thrown away every gun gained from the previous armed struggle as a result of Jose and Jesus Lava's "Left" opportunist errors and then Jesus Lava's Right opportunist errors. The New People's Army had to start with a few rifles and handguns seized mainly from the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique to arm nine undersized squads of about seven fighters each.

Since it was founded, the New People's Army has had to wage a people's war under conditions where there is neither a global war among the imperialist powers nor an open war among the reactionaries. From the outset, the people's army has had to contend with a highly unified armed forces. It deserves the highest commendation for having preserved itself and still having made some expansion and consolidation in the face of strong enemy military task forces, the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and presently, the martial rule of a fascist dictatorship. Even now when the bulk of the enemy strength is concentrated in Southwestern Mindanao against the Bangsa Moro Army, the enemy still manages to maintain in each region a task force and in each province constabulary and integrated police forces that are hundreds of times in armed strength against ours.

It remains a gross disadvantage and weakness for the New People's Army to have so few rifles and small concentrable forces to face an enemy who launches campaigns of "encirclement and suppression" by deploying so many units no smaller than a half-company for outpost work and oversized platoons, rallying to a full regular company or even a full battalion, for seeking encounters with us within an area of encirclement. Under such circumstances, it is quite difficult for us to maintain the initiative and carry out the policy of annihilation in battles. The opportunity to wipe out an enemy squad or platoon does not often present itself. The enemy even goes so far as to force the evacuation of the entire population by perpetrating massacres, looting, bombardment and arson. Deprived of mass support within a given area, our small guerrilla forces have to shift elsewhere in the main.

At the moment, the only way to amplify our armed strength and fighting effectiveness is to give full play to the popular support that we enjoy. The bolos, spears, crossbows, traps and other indigenous weapons which the masses can easily avail themselves of have to be combined with homemade explosives and the few rifles in our hands. By seriously implementing the policy of luring the enemy and advancing in waves on a favorable terrain both strategically and tactically, we can most effectively put to use the combination of rifles and indigenous weapons and we can at certain times use only the latter, if these are the only ones available. There are even occasions when by some strategem we can disarm "home defense" forces, local police forces and small enemy units without firing a single shot. By taking the initiative fully into our hands, we can repeatedly induce the enemy to bring himself to our well-laid ambush or send his superior

strength somewhere so that we can attack his weak force elsewhere. On each occasion we make sure of seizing the enemy's military equipment.

Especially because of our smallness and weakness, there are two opposite dangers that we have to avoid and counteract. One is trying to cover an area that is actually wider than we can sufficiently cover. This usually involves overdispersing our guerrilla squads. The other is concentrating on so small an area that at one whiff of the enemy we do not know where to shift. Guerrilla forces in relation to regular mobile forces operate according to the principle of dispersal. But since all that we have are small guerrilla forces, with absolutely no regular mobile forces yet to serve as main force on any occasion, then we have to have some relative concentration and some relative dispersal according to the scale of our present guerrilla warfare. We have to have main guerrilla units as well as secondary guerrilla units, guerrilla bases as well as guerrilla zones.

Depending on the circumstances, we have to dispose our limited forces in accordance with definite tasks, in a correct direction and within a definite radius. Our action takes the form of either concentration, shifting or dispersion. We concentrate to attack the enemy, mainly in the form of ambushes and raids on small enemy units that we can wipe out. We disperse to conduct propaganda and organizational work or to "disappear" before the enemy. We shift to circle or retreat to gain time and seek favorable circumstances for attack. Our guerrilla warfare is characterized by flexibility or timely shifting from one mode of action to another and by fluidity or frequent shifting of ground. We must grasp and give full play to this characteristic to maintain the initiative against the enemy.

Our experience has shown that our superiority over the enemy lies in our fighting a just war, a war for the people's democratic interests. We could not have lasted for so long with so small and weak an armed force were it not for the correct ideological and political line that the Communist Party of the Philippines has carried since its reestablishment. The enemy is bogged down in an ever-deepening political and economic crisis and does not cease to perpetrate self-defeating abuses and arouse the people to rebel. Under the absolute leadership of the Party, the New People's Army is confident of winning victory because wherever it is and goes it proves to be politically superior to the enemy because it has a flexible strategy and tactics based on concrete conditions that it comprehends. The Party is still organizationally small and weak like the New People's Army but it is bound to grow into a big and strong force so long as it perseveres in its correct ideological and political line.

As matters now stand on a nationwide scale or even on the scale of every region, the New People's Army has no alternative but to be on the strategic defensive in opposition to the strategic offensive of an overweening enemy. But the content of our strategic defensive is the series of tactical offensives that we are capable of undertaking and winning. By winning battles of quick decision, we are bound to accumulate the strength to win bigger battles and campaigns to be able to move up to a higher stage of the war. To graduate from guerrilla warfare to regular mobile warfare as the main form of our warfare, we have to exert a great deal of effort over a long period of time. We are still very much at the rudimentary and early substage of the strategic defensive.

We may state that in the long process of its growing from small and weak to big and strong, our people's army will have to undergo certain stages and substages. Having in mind a probable course of development whereby our forces are inferior now and will consequently become equal and finally superior to the enemy, we can tentatively define three strategic stages that our people's army will have to undergo.

It is now undergoing the first stage, the strategic defensive. Consequently, it shall undergo the second stage, the strategic stalemate, when our strength shall be more or less on an equal footing with the enemy's and our tug-of-war with the enemy over strategic towns, cities and larger areas shall become conspicuous. Finally, it shall undergo the third stage, the strategic offensive, when the enemy shall have been profoundly weakened and completely isolated and shall have been forced to go on the strategic defensive, a complete reversal of his position at the stage of our strategic defensive.

The future of the New People's Army is bright, though it has to go through a long and tortuous road. On the other hand, the future of the reactionary armed forces is dark. A mercenary and parasitic military in the service of U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism has no future, except failure and doom. The most powerful weapon is in the hands of the people's army. That is the people's support. We cannot wage a revolutionary war without it.

The New People's Army fights for the people's democratic interests with self-abnegating and highly conscious iron discipline and with wise and well-informed courage. Our Red commanders and fighters fight without fear of sacrifice and death because they are fighting in the broad interest of the people and not in the narrow interest of the imperialists or any individual or clique among the reactionaries. At the level of strategy, our Red commanders and fighters hate and are contemptuous of the enemy. But at the tactical level, they take serious and meticulous consideration of him so as to defeat every plot and maneuver that he is capable of.

5. A FASCIST PUPPET DICTATORSHIP AMIDST CRISIS

The setting-up of the fascist dictatorial regime of the U.S.-Marcos clique is the clearest manifestation that the ruling political system is wracked by a crisis that it can no longer deal with in the old way. The fascist puppet dictatorship is a counterrevolutionary measure of weakness and desperation rather than of strength. A whole series of terrorist acts, capped by the second Plaza Miranda massacre, was unleashed by the Marcos ruling clique to pave the way for it. These events and the subsequent imposition of a fascist martial rule and of a conspicuously autocratic rule have incurred the profoundest hatred of the people and have intensified their desire for revolutionary change and for national freedom and democracy.

The mastermind behind the fascist dictatorship is U.S. imperialism. The fascist dictatorship has been set up to make sure that under a "new constitution" the privileges and interests of U.S. imperialism under the 1935 Constitution, the Parity Amendment and the Laurel-Langley Agreement are not only preserved but even enlarged in the face of the growing anti-imperialist struggle of the broad masses of the people and furthermore to harden the Philippines as a base of U.S. imperialism in the western rim of the Pacific and in Asia and in the face of the failed U.S. war of aggression in Indochina. As a reward, Marcos is allowed to remain in power indefinitely

for as long as he can be useful to U.S. imperialism and, of course, for as long as his ambition does not go beyond being the general representative of and even becoming the wealthiest by far of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class.

The fascist dictator Marcos keeps on prating about his unjust regime being a “new society.” But in fact its monstrous abuses have only served to stress that it is but the worsening of the old semicolonial and semifeudal society. We are witness today to unbridled puppetry, brutality, corruption and bankruptcy. Among the local reactionaries, the fascist chieftain, his family and his closest subalterns in the military and civil bureaucracy are the most outstanding beneficiaries of the puppet, brutal, corrupt and bankrupt “new society.”

In essence, the fascist dictatorship is the open terrorist rule of a reactionary clique with big comprador and big landlord interests. The longer it continues in power the more fertile the ground becomes for our people’s war. By negative example, Marcos has stood as the best teacher of the people on the state and revolution. In this sense, he is our best propagandist. He has superbly exposed every evil in this semicolonial and semifeudal society by his own lies and misdeeds. His usurpation of all governmental powers; elimination of all legal political parties; monopolization of the press; and the brutal repression of all democratic liberties by such methods as massacre, assassination, zoning, forced mass evacuation, bombardment and arson, blackmail, extortion, illegal arrest, illegal detention and torture have proven beyond doubt the necessity and justness of armed revolution against armed counterrevolution.

All the fascist acts of the U.S.-Marcos clique carried out with brute armed force are calculated to “stabilize” the rule of U.S. imperialism and the local reactionary classes over the broad masses of the people. But the essential effect of such acts has been to widen and deepen the armed resistance. The New People’s Army under the leadership of the Party has waged more battles than ever before against the enemy and has established more guerrilla bases and guerrilla zones than ever before. Party and non-Party activists, who in the period before Proclamation No. 1081 had waged mass struggles against the same U.S.- Marcos clique, have in considerable number joined the revolutionary armed struggle in the field or have formed a strong revolutionary underground at various strategic points in the country.

The Bangsa Moro Army which is far better armed than the New People’s Army has so far waged the biggest battles against the enemy and have inflicted severe losses on him in troops and equipment. The revolutionary armed struggle of the national minorities for self-determination and against national oppression in Southwestern Mindanao has helped in a big way the New People’s Army in various parts of the country by drawing a great part of the enemy’s land, sea and air forces. In return, we are doing our best to wage a people’s war in our own areas so as to force the enemy to move helter-skelter. At the moment, we are witness to an enemy with the big dilemma of attending to far south and to far north.

There are no significant armed forces opposing the fascist dictatorial regime, except the New People’s Army and the Bangsa Moro Army. In Luzon, Visayas and the greater part of Mindanao, there is no significant armed resistance except that waged by the New People’s Army. We might say that these areas we are faced with a unified reaction. There is no open war among the reactionaries here. There has been a lot of talk about the “Filipino Freedom Fighters,” an outfit

supposedly run by an anti-Marcos group with some U.S. support, but so far even after two years of fascist martial rule it appears to be a mere token force given to issuing occasional manifestoes threatening some strange mixture of coup d'état and guerilla warfare. True to their original and essential character, the Lava revisionist renegades have openly surrendered to the U.S. Marcos clique and are blatantly collaborating on hunting down revolutionaries and swindling the masses. There is no way but treat these revisionist fascist diehards as traitors and spies.

Because there is no open war among the reactionaries where it is, the New People's Army is faced with a unified fascist reaction. This means to say that the enemy can launch stronger offensives against us than otherwise in any particular area which he chooses to concentrate on. This is certainly a disadvantage for us. In this regard, we have no alternative but to study and apply the correct strategy and tactics of dealing with enemy campaigns. However, experience has shown that no matter how far the armed resistance in Southwestern Mindanao is, it has induced the enemy to drastically reduce his forces in Cagayan valley since March 1973.

There is a long-term advantage in the New People's Army being the only armed force regarded by the people as their own in at least ninety per cent of the Philippine territory. It becomes easier and simpler for the middle forces to choose which side they must support. The choice becomes easier and simpler, indeed, the worse that the enemy becomes. The confidence and trust of the broad masses of the people in the New People's Army is so great and resounding despite the present smallness and weakness of this army, because it is all that they have against the fascist tyranny.

The economic crisis which has been the basis of the crisis of the entire reactionary political system even previous to the Marcos rightist coup has become far worse under the fascist dictatorship. This economic crisis makes everyone of the people throughout the country suffer no matter how it may appear that he is not directly the victim of the political and military abuses of the fascist dictatorship. Linking the fascist puppet dictatorship with the people's economic suffering is the single method which has made our propaganda for armed revolution most effective. Since long before the fascist martial rule, the broad masses of the people have comprehended the responsibility of the U.S. Marcos clique for the economic crisis.

A runaway inflation; rampant unemployment; accelerated increase of the tax burden; continuous devaluation of the currency; food, fuel and fertilizer shortages; unlimited entry of foreign capital and unlimited remittances of profits; enormous foreign trade deficits covered up by technical smuggling and false statistical figures; excessive foreign and domestic borrowings; ever increasing military expenditures; and inflationary deficit spending on "infrastructures" which fatten the imperialist banks and foreign contractors, serve the colonial trade pattern and the plunder of the country's natural resources and are opportunities for enormous graft and corruption and land speculation with the loot monopolized by the fascist dictator. All these conspicuous ills characterize the fascist dictatorial regime. The deterioration of the economy is so rapid that Party cadres must keep close watch on fast-changing economic data.

The broad masses of the people suffer from the combination of political and economic abuses. As the economy deteriorates, political tyranny aggravates. To be able to continue exploiting the people, the fascist dictatorial regime of the U.S.-Marcos clique resorts to enlarging its armed

forces, buying more military equipment and bribing officers and men with promotions in rank and increases in salary, allowances and other privileges. Increased expenditures for such a parasitic entity as the military result in further deterioration of the economy. More exploitation and more oppression engender more resistance, then, another round of military expenditures by the fascist dictatorship in a vicious cycle of its own making.

With complete callousness, the fascist dictatorship has been proclaiming throughout the world that it has succeeded in keeping Philippine labor cheap for the imperialists to exploit. Indeed, the U.S.-Marcos clique for several years already has so preserved the backward conditions of the country that there is an abundance of the unemployed. Now, under martial rule, labor power is made even cheaper than before. The workers are deprived of their trade union rights, especially their right to strike, even as the prices of basic commodities are skyrocketing. Whenever they demand higher wages, the workers are openly intimidated with armed force by the fascist military and are liable to be arbitrarily suspended or dismissed by their employers. The “new labor code” systematizes the suppression of workers’ rights under the pincer attack of the fascist government and the big bourgeoisie. To maintain a general state of intimidation, the fascist military and police often conduct raids and zoning operations on factories and workers’ communities.

The peasants are callously told that if they wish to have their own piece of land, they must enter into contracts with their landlords whereby they are required to make installment payments so exorbitant that they cannot make good even the first installment. This is what is bandied about as “land reform.” The peasants are also required to pay high land taxes; special levies on the sale of their produce; membership dues and special fees for the “barangay” and “barrio association” and fixed contributions to the so-called “savings fund” and “barrio guarantee fund.” Further on they are required to pay high interest rates on overpriced fertilizers from the Marcos-owned Planters Products under the “Masagana 99” program and increasing fees for irrigation wherever this is available. Some “insurance” and “medicare” schemes are also afoot to suck more blood from the peasant masses. All over the country the “barangays” are under orders to set up “civilian home defense forces”; these entail extra expenditures by the peasants and also reduce their working hours in the fields as they are forced to make “rondas.” Where the people’s army is already in the midst of the peasant masses, the enemy resorts to the most brutal military operations which include forced mass evacuation, massacre, looting, arson and indiscriminate bombing and strafing.

Like the toiling masses, the urban petty bourgeoisie detest the fascist dictatorship. The bare essence of the reactionary state in the service of imperialist, big comprador and feudal interests has become fully and concretely exposed to them and in their day-to-day lives their limited incomes are not exempt from the ravages of an inflation generated locally and imported from abroad. The fascist dictatorship has gone so berserk as to suppress all the democratic liberties and persecute tens of thousands of democratic personalities who belong either to the urban petty bourgeoisie or whom this social stratum highly respects. Abuses by the fascist dictator and his military minions have become so widespread that every single urban petty bourgeois either has directly experienced some abuse by them or knows a relative or personal friend abused by them. The urban petty bourgeoisie recognize clearly that an atmosphere of intimidation and terror is

being whipped up to keep Marcos in power and to promote the interests of foreign and feudal exploiters.

The national bourgeoisie, especially the lower and middle sections, find themselves cast away by the fascist dictatorship. They are being forced into bankruptcies. The foreign monopoly firms have become even more rapacious in their activities in the Philippines as they try to make up for their losses and difficulties elsewhere in the world. It is the shameless policy of the fascist dictatorship to link its existence with the sell-out of the country to foreign monopoly capitalists, principally American and Japanese. Under the Marcos constitution, Investment Incentives Act, Export Incentives Act and so many specific fascist decrees, the U.S. and other foreign monopoly capitalists are enjoying privileges surpassing those under the 1935 Constitution and the Laurel-Langley Agreement with its parity clause. They are rapidly enlarging their holdings, crushing the national bourgeoisie, taking over all sorts of businesses and opportunities, and plundering the country with complete abandon.

While it is true that we are faced with a unified fascist reaction in Luzon, Visayas and the greater part of Mindanao, this is but the surface of a situation in which the broad masses of the people are seething with hatred for the enemy and are enthusiastically supporting the early beginning of our people's war. Beneath the apparent strength of the enemy is the deep-going crisis and an irremediable rottenness. If not for the broad support that they enjoy, our small armed units would not be able to last long against the powerful assaults of the enemy.

6. UNDER ONE IMPERIALIST POWER

The single most valid explanation why there is yet no open war among the reactionaries despite all the bitterness of the internal contradiction among them, a contradiction so far marked by the unilateral acts of terrorism and violence by the Marcos fascist gang, is that the entire country is under the domination of one imperialist power. The country is therefore so much different from the China that was divided among several wrangling warlords supported by several contradictory imperialist powers.

All other explanations follow, like the anti-Marcos reactionaries never having had a cohesive armed force of some significant size outside of the state's armed forces; the country being small and archipelagic and not providing much space for a division into several spheres of influence, Marcos having been smart enough to confiscate the arms of the amorphous petty armed groups under reactionary politicians not reliable to him or known to be opposed to him; the officers of the reactionary armed forces having been so trained to maintain canine loyalty to whoever is commander-in-chief by any "constitutional" pretext; and so on and so forth.

Many explanations can be made but so long as they are pertinent to the question they all lead to the single explanation that U.S. imperialism is the single most important determinant force in reactionary politics in the country. Among the reactionary politicians in the country, the persistence or replacement of one clique by another clique carries with it either the expressed or tacit approval of U.S. imperialism. In the period before the fascist dictatorship, presidential elections were decided by the campaign funds and press support extended by the U.S. imperialists and their big comprador-landlord agents; and the two major political parties had no

basic difference except as to which party had the clique of candidates that best served U.S. imperialist and local reactionary interests and at the same time best pretended to stand for the interests of the people.

Under the present circumstances, when the rule of the gun has become extremely conspicuous, the strategic control and influence of U.S. imperialism over the reactionary armed forces immediately and directly comes into focus when we pose the question as to whether the anti-Marcos reactionaries have a chance in replacing or overthrowing the Marcos fascist gang. It is pertinent to recall one time when U.S. imperialism showed blatantly how much it could do with its strategic control and influence over the reactionary armed forces to help effect a change of reactionary administration. That was the time when Magsaysay opposed Quirino in 1953 and the CIA and JUSMAG gave direct orders to AFP battalion commanders to support the former.

From the viewpoint of U.S. imperialism, an open war among its own local minions is as impermissible as it would have the net effect of disturbing whatever “stability” and advantages it has gained in the country under the fascist dictatorship. It is therefore difficult to expect that U.S. imperialism would deliver the arms for an anti-Marcos but still pro-U.S. group to build an army against the Marcos fascist gang. If it would become necessary to replace Marcos by armed force, because he refuses to budge from power despite his notoriety and abuses, becoming more of a liability than an asset, it would suffice for U.S. imperialism to instigate another coup d’etat.

It has never been the practice of U.S. imperialism to allow the distribution of arms to the people in a country like the Philippines where the reactionary armed forces are still securely under its control and influence. Before the folly of Bataan in World War II, the U.S. colonialists refused to distribute arms to the people to prepare for the Japanese invasion. It was only towards the end of the war when they were already making massive troop landings in the country that they gave arms to the USAFFE guerrillas in great quantity. As soon as the country was reconquered, U.S. imperialism and its lackeys used all kinds of methods to seize what in their view were loose firearms.

It is in this light that we must see the oft-repeated threat of the anti-Marcos reactionaries to launch a coup d’etat. Raul Manglapus who is well associated with the old crop of C.I.A. agents that put Magsaysay into the presidency in 1953 is today the most outstanding spokesman of the anti-Marcos reactionaries. He is under the care of the U.S. State Department and it is obvious that he is some kind of a horse in reserve. However, he is not necessarily the principal horse in reserve. It happens that unlike Aquino who is in prison or Macapagal who prefers to wait in the shadows, he is in a position among the anti-Marcos reactionaries to openly issue propaganda against the Marcos fascist gang.

The fascist dictator Marcos is aware that the length of his political life, including his personal safety, depends on U.S. imperialism. Thus he does everything to satisfy his imperialist master. At the same time, he is aware that his master is benefiting from his indefinite rule as well as from the blackmail value of keeping horses in reserve. Thus, he does everything to maintain his own hold on the reactionary armed forces by keeping his kinsmen and other favorites in the most strategic commands, by pushing out of service those whom he considers unreliable, by bribing officers in general with promotions in rank and increases of salary and allowances upon the

expansion of military personnel, by providing them with opportunities for graft and corruption, including outright blackmail and extortion, and by superimposing on the regular intelligence agencies an intelligence network of his own.

Marcos' plans and tactics in prolonging his retention of power are clear. He is out to stagger such possible events as the election of local executives, the setting up of one big political party and possibly one another or several small parties all under his control, his appointment of a "legislative advisory council," the convening of the "interim national assembly," his retention as prime minister, and so on and so forth. It is Marcos' wish to stay in power for so long that after some time all his political rivals would capitulate to him in consideration of their own selfish interests. After all, Marcos and his political rivals can easily agree on the essentials of the Marcos constitution and other fascist acts which serve U.S. imperialism and the local reactionary classes.

But then Marcos cannot decide history all by himself. The political and economic crisis is worsening. The people hate his fascist regime more than his pre-fascist regime and the revolutionary movement is steadily growing and advancing. Though it is his wish to lay out his own kind of "normalization" only to retain power for himself, U.S. imperialism itself after some time might shift from letting him rule indefinitely to replacing him under some kind of "normalization" to which he must agree to else suffer the consequences of a coup d'etat. In many cases elsewhere in the world, puppets of U.S. imperialism have found themselves the scapegoats of their masters.

The fascist dictatorship has so far served U.S. imperialism well. It has been used to preserve and enlarge U.S. economic privilege and interests in the Philippines despite the termination of the Parity Amendment and the Laurel-Langley Agreement. In unleashing a reign of terror against the people, Marcos boasts of having created a political "stability" for the U.S. and other foreign monopoly capitalists to expand their investments and make bigger profits. But then it is also clear that he has failed to crush the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. Under conditions of fascist martial rule, these revolutionary organizations have struck deep roots in every region and have enjoyed more than ever a high prestige among the people. The revolutionary movement is steadily gaining ground throughout the country.

Under the infamous "Nixon Doctrine," U.S. imperialism impliedly admits that it can no longer hold out in mainland Asia by involving its manpower in a land war and so in this context it expresses a policy that it would rather provide its puppets with war materiel and a nuclear umbrella and have "Asians fight Asians" rather than commit its own manpower. At any rate, under this doctrine, it is stressed repeatedly that U.S. imperialism shall remain a "Pacific power." It is clear that U.S. imperialism has to hold on tightly to the Philippines so as to remain a "Pacific power" and so as to have a base from where to exert influence throughout Asia. As the U.S. "first line of defense" (Indochina, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, especially Okinawa) declines, the "second line of defense" (Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) gains in importance to U.S. imperialism. U.S. investments and military bases in the Philippines play the key role in this "second line."

U.S. investments in Asia are most concentrated in the Philippines and continue to expand in the Philippines. According to conservative 1972 estimates, which do not fully take into account the current market value of all U.S. assets in the country, U.S. direct investments alone amount to three billion dollars. These comprising eighty per cent of foreign investments in the country, are strategically located and enjoy a high rate of profit.

To protect these against the people, U.S. imperialism does not only keep firm control over Philippine politics and the local reactionary armed forces but also under unequal military treaties, maintains as its ultimate weapon its own military personnel and military installations on Philippine soil. Several tens of thousands of troops are stationed here as a token force and can be increased anytime. The military installations include huge air and naval bases and radio and radar stations; there are also U.S. military reservations which can be reactivated at the whim of U.S. imperialism. Clark Air Base and the Subic Naval Base are the largest U.S. military bases in Asia. Nuclear weapons are positioned in these two bases as well as in Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte and in the so-called weather station in Bukidnon.

Under these circumstances, we are certain that U.S. imperialism is even more sensitive to the development of our people's war in the Philippines than it has ever been to the people's war in Vietnam or elsewhere in Asia. The stakes are bigger in the Philippines. So, we can expect that U.S. imperialism, despite its own pious words about "withdrawing" from Asia, will commit its own aggressor troops against the Filipino people in the event that the local reactionary armed forces would no longer suffice.

Whoever holds power in Malacanang, so long as he is a mere placeman of U.S. imperialism and the local reactionary classes shall work against the national-democratic interests of the people and shall earn the people's wrath. The crisis of U.S. imperialism and world capitalism and the political and economic crisis in the country will grow worse. Our people's war will develop irresistibly under these conditions. A time is likely to come when the local reactionaries shall become so incapable of fighting us that U.S. aggressor troops will have to step in. On this expectation, we should be prepared that our revolutionary war which has started out as a civil war shall become a national war against a barefaced foreign aggression. It is no mere coincidence that a U.S. ambassador like William Sullivan, the butcher of Indochina, and other U.S. officials who are veterans of the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam are being assigned to the Philippines.

Since the resumption of our people's war, U.S. military and police advisers on "counterinsurgency" have been increasing and participating in training and military operations against the people. The sale and free grant of military materiel to the local reactionary armed forces have been stepped up. U.S. aircraft flown by U.S. pilots have been involved in reconnaissance and bombing operations against us. U.S. "green beret" reconnaissance teams have deployed under the cover of "civic action" in various parts of the countryside. A.I.D., Peace Corps and other ostensibly U.S. civilian personnel have been used for intelligence purposes by the U.S. "country team" composed of the U.S. ambassador, the C.I.A. station chief, JUSMAG chief, A.I.D. director and U.S.I.A. head.

The ceaseless and increasing U.S. military assistance and the possible aggression of U.S. imperialism are two factors that can make for a prolongation of our people's war. It is possible that upon the start of U.S. aggression we shall have to make adjustments in our strategy and tactics, whatever level shall have been previously reached by us in our people's war. As part of our preparedness against U.S. aggression even now, we should expose and oppose every kind of U.S. intervention in our country. In this regard, we must seek right away the support of the American people and the peoples of the rest of the world.

In the face of U.S. imperialism, we are in dire need of international support. The support of those abroad who are in sympathy with our just revolutionary causes is indispensable to our victory. Through we stand firmly for self-reliance, we do not mean to say that this stands for reducing foreign support and assistance to zero. As a matter of fact, as the revolutionary armed struggle progresses, the volume of foreign assistance may increase though it may decrease in proportion to our total war effort. It has been demonstrated in the Vietnam War that as the level of armed struggle rose, the volume of international assistance grew. That is because U.S. imperialism heavily supported its puppets and unleashed the largest and longest war of aggression after World War II.

7. DECLINE OF U.S. IMPERIALISM AND ADVANCE OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

The Philippine Revolution, particularly our people's war, is greatly advantaged today by the decline of U.S. imperialism in Asia and throughout the world and corollarily by the advance of the world revolution. The main trend of revolution keeps on advancing because of the ever-worsening crisis of U.S. imperialism and the entire capitalist system.

The United States was in its initial vigor as an imperialist power when it was able to thwart the old national-democratic revolution in the Philippines at the beginning of the century. The Filipino revolutionaries at that time were not ideologically, politically and organizationally prepared to defeat a modern imperialist power, though they had already defeated Spanish colonialism. There were not even the objective conditions nationally and internationally to give rise immediately to the subjective forces that could successfully lead a people's war against the U.S. aggressors in the Philippines.

World War I shook and weakened the entire capitalist system to the extent that it created the conditions for the victory of the October Revolution and the establishment of the first socialist state in one-sixth of the world. The character of the world revolution changed from bourgeois-democratic to proletarian socialist. But the particular imperialist power holding on to the Philippines was the one among the imperialist powers that took the most advantage of the interimperialist war. Besides, the imperialists and colonialists could still manage to hold on to their colonies and semicolonies, through the instability of their rule here started to become more evident than before.

U.S. imperialism maintained a firm grip on its Philippine colony. It continued to cultivate a retinue of reactionary politicians under its orders and further used the country as a forward base

for its expansion in Asia. Only in 1930 was the Communist Party of the Philippines founded under conditions of world depression and local social unrest.

The world capitalist system continued to undergo a general crisis even as the first interimperialist war had just ended. Subsequently, fascist regimes emerged in a number of Western European countries and in Japan. The struggle for the redivision of the world among the imperialist powers further intensified. Inevitably World War II broke out. As it did in connection with the first interimperialist war, the United States made profits on loans and war production before and throughout the war and provided supplies to both warring sides until it was ready to join the war on the winning side and pick up the spoils.

The United States emerged from the war as the Number One imperialist power, having gained hegemony over the entire capitalist system and assuming the principal responsibility for retaining the colonies and semicolonies throughout the world. It was in a strong position to reconquer the Philippines from the Japanese fascist and quell the revolutionary forces here. Moreover, it was helped in a big way by the series of grave errors perpetrated by the Lava and Taruc revisionist cliques which consistently took the line of subordinating the revolutionary movement to the U.S. scheme of granting fake independence to the Philippines. The gains made by the revolutionary forces in the course of the war, when the U.S. forces temporarily retreated from the country, were squandered and lost. Recovering the Philippines, U.S. imperialism proceeded to expand in Asia and oppose every anti-imperialist struggle in the region.

But beneath the surface of overwhelming U.S. imperialist strength, the entire capitalist system had been profoundly weakened more than ever before. People's democracies under the leadership of communist and workers' parties emerged over a large area of the world, in Asia and Eastern Europe. In Asia, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China emerged. The socialist countries encompassed one-third of humanity. National liberation movements surged ahead with unprecedented vigor in colonies and semicolonies. Thus, the economic territory of the entire capitalist system receded and could not but further recede.

The victory of the Chinese Revolution and the establishment of the People's Republic of China came as the hardest blow to the imperialist powers soon after World War II. They lost their spheres of influence in this large country with a large population, comprising one-fourth of humanity, notwithstanding the massive military and economic aid by the U.S. imperialists to the Kuomintang reactionaries. The imperialist front in the East was irreparably breached. The world significance of this great victory was incalculable. The impact of the Chinese Revolution in Asia alone terrified U.S. imperialism. The oppressed peoples and nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America started to look up to China for revolutionary inspiration.

Soon after China's liberation, U.S. imperialism launched a war of aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and failed to accomplish its objective of conquering the whole of Korea. Then, it formed the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and violated the Geneva Agreements on Indochina. Failing to learn its lessons from the Korean War, it once more launched a war of aggression in Vietnam and tried to defeat the people of South Vietnam, ruin the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and subjugate the whole of Indochina. At the height of the

Vietnam War, 700 thousand U.S. aggressor troops and 1.5 million puppet troops were used against the people's armed forces. About \$150 billion were spent by the U.S. imperialists to carry out their war. But they were forced to withdraw in defeat. The Vietnam War accelerated the decline of U.S. imperialism not only in Asia but also throughout the world.

The Chinese, Korean and Indochinese peoples are all neighbors and brothers of the Filipino people. Their victories are a great inspiration to the Filipino people and have objective effects favorable to the growth and advance of the Philippine Revolution. Aside from these victories, there is one outstanding phenomenon in Asia which brightens the prospects of people's war in the Philippines. This is the persistence of revolutionary armed struggles in Southeast Asia in general since World War II. Even at the height of its power, U.S. imperialism could not suppress these; it found no effective use for its rift-ridden Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. The revolutionary armed struggle in Indochina has so far been the most outstanding and the most victorious among these. But all other persistent armed struggles in Southeast Asia, of which our people's war is one, promise to eventually grow in significance and effectiveness as the turmoil of the capitalist system worsens and U.S. imperialism declines further.

The revolutionary armed struggles in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have served to stress the fact that since after World War II it has become possible for the peoples of colonial and semicolonial countries in the East to develop over a long period of time big and small revolutionary base areas, wage long-term revolutionary wars in which the cities are encircled from the countryside, and then gradually to advance on the cities and win nationwide victory. Chairman Mao correctly pointed out at the opening of this decade, "Innumerable facts prove that a just cause enjoys abundant support while an unjust cause finds little support. A weak nation can defeat a strong, a small nation can defeat a big. The people of a small country can certainly defeat aggression by a big country, if only they dare to rise in struggle, take up arms and grasp in their own hands the destiny of their country. This is a law of history."

The revolutionary armed struggle in the Philippines, even as it was resumed only a few years ago with so many glaring disadvantages resumed from practically nothing in a small archipelagic country under the sway of one imperialist power and without the condition of either an open war among the reactionaries or an interimperialist war), has been able to persist. One important explanation for this phenomenon is the ever-worsening crisis of U.S. imperialism and the entire capitalist system and the irrepressible advance of the world proletarian revolution. These external conditions have profound effects within the country.

The crisis of U.S. imperialism and the entire capitalist system cannot but take a more bitter form in a semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines than in the United States or any other capitalist country. This is because an imperialist country makes it a point to extract a higher rate of profit wherever it can do so, especially when it is making up for losses elsewhere. Increased exploitation entails increased oppression. Thus, the political crisis has found expression in the fascist martial rule and its intolerable abuses, the worst since the end of the Japanese fascist occupation. The economic crisis features the foreign monopolies, chiefly American, remitting superprofit with abandon on direct investments and loans, abetting a rate of and unemployment several times higher than in the capitalist countries and depressing the price of the country's raw material exports. The inevitable result is that the people hate U.S. imperialism and the Marcos

fascist gang and they are readily moved to support and participate in armed revolution. They are confident of winning victory in the long run because they are aware of the defeats and general decline of U.S. imperialism as well as the victories of revolutionary peoples abroad.

The world capitalist system is wracked today by a crisis unprecedented in gravity and turbulence since the end of World War II. The root cause of this is that U.S. imperialism, while playing the role of main pillar and policeman of world capitalism for some time, has overprinted its money and overborrowed internally and externally; overconsumed and wasted the world's resources; overexpended for its military establishment, particularly for its armaments, foreign military bases and wars of aggression; and suffered tremendous losses in the hands of the people. Because the economic territory available for imperialist exploitation has shrunk, the areas for intercapitalist accommodation have also shrunk and intercapitalist contradictions have had no course but to intensify. As a result, the class struggle between the proletariat and the big bourgeoisie comes to the fore in every capitalist country.

The struggle for world hegemony and arms supremacy between the two superpowers, U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, is intensifying. They are fighting without letup for markets, fields of investment, sources of raw materials and strategic positions and they keep on bumping into each other. They covet each other's spheres of influence. They make trouble in several areas of the world and try to manipulate the situation to their own advantage. They keep on trying to reverse the irresistible trend of history — countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution. Bullying, aggression, intervention, subversion and control characterize the two superpowers' behavior in international affairs. But instead of succeeding all the way, they incur the condemnation and resistance of the peoples of the world.

The two superpowers collude in trying to terrify the people with their nuclear arms, in demanding that the destiny of mankind be placed in their hands, in making disarmament agreements, in lulling the people with talks about detente and in making certain temporary settlements here and there so long as each stands to gain more than before at the expense of others or at least so long as one does not lose in the bargain though the other gains. But between rival imperialist powers in a capitalist world about to burst asunder, there is no course but for collusion to serve contention from the beginning, at every step and in the end. Each superpower is bent on ruling the world and eventually pushing the other out. Thus, both are feverishly engaged in arms expansion and war preparations. Here lies the danger to world peace and the possibility of a world war.

There is not a region in the world where the two superpowers are not in contention. Eastern Europe is far from the United States and in a Soviet sphere of influence but U.S. imperialism covets it. Latin American is far from the Soviet Union and is a U.S. sphere of influence but Soviet social-imperialism covets it. But even in these regions, not all the incentive belongs to the superpowers. There are countries wanting independence, nations wanting liberation and peoples wanting revolution as elsewhere in the world.

Western Europe and the whole Mediterranean area are being contested by two superpowers. U.S. imperialism banks on its old alliance with Western Europe, particularly on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and is concerned about the fact that its foreign investments are most

concentrated in this region. Soviet social-imperialism banks on its being the dominant power in Eastern Europe through the Comecon and the Warsaw Pact and on the revisionist parties within Western Europe. Despite the U.S. Soviet duet about detente and the Soviet proposal to set up a “European security system,” the reality stands out that U.S. and Soviet military bases and naval fleets daily confront each other. But in the meantime, the countries of Western Europe singly and jointly and within or outside their Common Markets are becoming more and more at odds with the two superpowers; and the proletariat in every country is becoming more and more militant in a class struggle that the revisionist parties cannot lead to a revolutionary victory over the big bourgeoisie.

In the Middle East, a region that links Europe to Africa and Asia, U.S. imperialism uses Zionist Israel as a lever for enlarging its privileges and profits in oil; and at the same time Soviet social-imperialism uses its arms supplies to extort its own privileges and make profits on the oil income of the Arab countries. The October War is still indecisive. But even as the two superpowers have their own selfish interests and manipulate the situation to their advantage, the Arab and Palestinian people remain firm in their struggle for their sovereign rights and for the return of the occupied lands and are vigilantly opposed to the U.S.-Israeli combination as well as to the other superpower. The countries of Western Europe, adversely affected by the shenanigans of the two superpowers, are being compelled to deal directly and independently with the Arab countries and refuse to be herded by some superpower into any rash action.

In Africa, the two superpowers incessantly maneuver to take the place of the old colonial rulers. Both pretend to be in sympathy with the people’s struggles against old-style colonialism and for national independence. U.S. imperialism exposes its own hypocrisy by its close links with the old colonial rulers and by its own rapacious schemes and activities. While being more deceptive, because it uses “revolutionary” language and uses the prestige of the revolutionary past of the Soviet Union, Soviet social-imperialism exposes its own hypocrisy by doing essentially what the other superpower does. The struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism continues to rage. Africa is a major part of the third world. Its countries, nations and peoples, like those of Asia and Latin America, are in the mainstream of the struggle against the superpowers.

In South Asia, Soviet social-imperialism has made use of the ruling Indian reactionaries to promote its hegemonic ambitions and to make trouble like threatening China and dismembering Pakistan. As a result of the Indo-Pakistani War, which it masterminded, it has secured several bases for its naval fleet in the Indian Ocean. It is so inebriated by its aggressive acts that it continues to dream of putting up an “Asian collective security system” under its control. U.S. imperialism is more than ever concerned with maintaining its own foothold in this region and in launching a series of countermeasures. But the peoples of South Asia, including the peoples of India and Bangladesh, and a number of countries like Pakistan and Ceylon are opposing the two superpowers and their puppets.

In Southeast Asia, U.S. imperialism wants to retain its hegemony over Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines. These countries do not only serve as a “second line of defense” in the U.S. military strategy for Asia but also are expected to be a great alternative source of petroleum. But the situation for U.S. imperialism is becoming more and more complex and difficult, especially after its resounding defeats in Indochina. Soviet social-imperialism

wants to take advantage of U.S. decline and weaknesses in the region. Japanese capitalism has to be accommodated here because otherwise the China-Japan relations would develop beyond U.S.-Japan relations. China has its own policy of friendliness towards all her neighboring countries. The peoples of Southeast Asia are engaged in revolutionary armed struggle under Marxist-Leninist parties. Should there be another world war, Southeast Asia is one region that is almost certain to become completely Red.

The scheme of U.S. imperialism to use Japan as its anti-China spearhead and its fogleman in Asia is at odds with Japan's own interests and needs as a capitalist country that can no longer be accommodated in U.S. economic territory as adequately as before, especially when the Korean War and the Vietnam War were on. Likewise, the scheme of Soviet social-imperialism to entice Japan into an anti-China alignment by serving up its natural resources, especially oil and timber in Siberia, is at odds with the more economic terms of China-Japan trade and with Soviet refusal to restore the four northern islands to Japan. The peoples of China, Korea and Japan are firmly against U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

The desertion of the Soviet Union from the ranks of the socialist countries by becoming revisionist, social-capitalist and social-imperialist does not make for an increase in the strength of the world capitalist system but instead makes for an increase in the virulence of interimperialist and intercapitalist contradictions. By usurping the social wealth and military prowess of the Soviet proletariat and people, Soviet social-imperialism has posed itself as the most formidable rival of U.S. imperialism and also a competitor as well as prospective master-state of other capitalist countries.

On the part of revolutionaries the world over, the problem that has arisen with the emergence of Soviet social-imperialism is that here is one imperialist power with the special characteristics of being socialist in words and being imperialist in deeds and being liable to launch against socialist China a full-scale war of aggression because of new tsarist ambitions and blatant war preparations in pursuit of such ambitions. As time has proceeded, instead of being able to confuse people, Soviet social-imperialism has demonstrated its true nature not only by its own counter-revolutionary words but also by its wanton acts of aggression and counterrevolutionary deeds.

China has adopted and carried out a comprehensive program of defending and advancing its revolution, opposing the two superpowers and countering their maneuvers and the dangers of a world war posed by them, and promoting the world revolution as the antidote to the poison of imperialism and war. By undertaking the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, under Chairman Mao's theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it has thwarted the restoration of capitalism within the most populous socialist society and has become consolidated as a strong bulwark of socialism and world revolution. As it continues to win great victories in socialist revolution and socialist construction, it enhances its ability not only to defend itself against one or two superpowers but also to fulfill its internationalist obligations.

China is playing a pivotal role in developing relations of friendship, mutual assistance and cooperation among the socialist countries in accordance with the principle of proletarian internationalism. It is extending tremendous support and assistance to the revolutionary struggles

of all the oppressed peoples and nations and at the same time encouraging them to be self-reliant and to maintain initiative in their own countries. Its external policy includes the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence, specifically the Five Principles. This is an important weapon in the service of the world revolution because by it the broadest possible united front can be created against the two superpowers and contradictions even in the ranks of our enemies can be taken advantage of. It fully accords with Marxism-Leninism to make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few and crush our enemies one by one.

Within the United Nations, China puts a great emphasis on promoting the struggle of the third world countries and small and medium-sized countries to assert their independence and state sovereignty against the two superpowers. The monopoly of the imperialists over international affairs is being shattered. Therefore, it becomes difficult for any single superpower to draw a following for launching a world war. As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, there are bound to be more and more disagreements and conflicts between the two superpowers and between one or two superpowers and the dependent countries, whether also capitalist or developing.

As disorder reigns in the affairs of the two superpowers and the world capitalist system, the revolutionary forces of the world find the situation excellent for their anti-imperialist struggles. Should a world war still break out despite all efforts to prevent it, the outcome for the imperialists shall be worse. The last two world wars have proven that a world war leads to civil wars and a revolution of wider scope against imperialism.

In the world anti-imperialist struggle against the two superpowers, it is entirely correct for China and other socialist countries to raise their levels of socialist revolution and socialist construction and rely on their own proletariat and people and upon such a basis carry out an external policy that would foster unity with Asia, Africa and Latin America and take advantage of intercapitalist contradictions as well as contradictions between the two superpowers themselves. Under these circumstances, Marxist-Leninist parties the world over can thrive in leading the people in revolutionary anti-imperialist struggles in their respective countries.

The Philippine Revolution, particularly the people's war that we are presently waging, finds abundant support not only among the broad masses of the people in the Philippines. It also finds abundant support in the peoples and proletariat of socialist countries, colonies and semicolonies and capitalist countries. Support comes in the general form of fighting in common against one or two superpowers and, in cases to increase in the future, also in the form of direct and concrete assistance to the Philippine Revolution.

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[From: <http://www.philippinerevolution.net/documents/specific-characteristics-of-our-people-s-war>
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