

Relationship of the Party with the NPA and the United Front

August 1992

DIRECTIVE

To : All Units and Members of the Party

From : EC/CC

Subject: Relationship of the Party with the NPA and the United Front

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The Communist Party of the Philippines is the advance detachment of the proletariat, which is the leading class in the Philippine revolution.

The vanguard role of the proletariat is absolutely necessary in order to carry out the Philippine revolution in two distinct but continuous stages: new democratic and socialist.

By virtue of its two-stage line of development under the class leadership of the proletariat, the Philippine revolution clearly belongs to the same category as the Soviet, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Cuban and similar revolutions and not to that of revolutions aimed at mere decolonization towards a neocolonial compromise or at democratization that is without genuine proletarian leadership and therefore ends within the confines of bourgeois rule.

If the proletariat and its revolutionary party are not in the lead, then all efforts at social revolution in a country like the Philippines fall within a vicious circle dominated by the joint class dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie and the landlord class, even as some unremoulded petty bourgeois elements pose as the champions of democracy and social reform and appear to be independent of the exploiting classes in viciously opposing the vanguard role of the proletariat and its revolutionary party.

The Filipino people have three instruments for carrying out the two-stage Philippine revolution: first, the Communist Party of the Philippines as the advanced detachment of the proletarian leading class; second, the New People's Army (NPA) and third, the united front, whether there is a formal united front organization or not.

How are these weapons of the people related to each other? Representing the leading class, the Party wields the armed struggle and the united front as two weapons in the people's democratic revolution.

Party cadres and members are first of all personnel of the Party when they work in the field of armed struggle or united front. They are duty-bound to pursue and realize the general line of the people's democratic revolution set by the Party and follow the discipline of the Party.

The revolutionary class leadership of the proletariat through the Party has to be stressed time and time again because there are certain elements who wish to evade their obligations and responsibilities as Party cadres and members by asserting the "independence" and "separateness" of either the NPA or the National Democratic Front (NDF).

The same has to be clarified among cadres and members of the Party in the New People's Army in the face of the emergence of some erroneous concepts regarding a separate machinery and premature verticalization of the structure and flow of command within the people's army, simultaneous to the tendency of weakening the leadership of the corresponding Party committee or organ.

From outside the Party, there are the imperialists, revisionists and anticommunist petty bourgeois elements who keep on trying to undermine the conviction of Party cadres and members with regard to the vanguard role of the proletariat, democratic centralism and the socialist future of the Philippine revolution.

The Relationship Between the Party and the NPA

The Party has absolute leadership over the New People's Army. Without this principle clearly and firmly held, then the command of the NPA at every level is liable to fall into the trap of the purely military viewpoint.

The revolutionary politics of the proletariat, represented by the Party must be in command of the NPA. The Party is the one holding the gun from whose barrel political power grows in the people's democratic revolution.

It is wrong to speak of the separateness and independence of the NPA as if the Party leadership were something dispensable. The Party and the NPA have distinct organizations and functions but they are inseparable and interdependent, with the Party playing the principal role and the NPA the secondary role in this relationship.

The entire Party is at the head of the entire NPA. At every level, from the national level downward, the Party committee provides the political leadership to the command of the NPA.

The Central Committee directly and through its Military Commission leads the National Operational Command of the NPA (NOC); the interregional Party committee, the Interregional Operational Command; the regional Party committee, the regional operational command; the guerrilla front Party committee, the guerrilla front command; and so on.

At no level should the Party leading committee be identical with the command of the NPA for two reasons:

1. The Party leading committee is the comprehensive organ for all matters within and outside the NPA; and
2. The Party leading committee must not be narrowed down to military concerns.

While being at the head of the NPA, the Party is at the same time at the core of the NPA.

At every command level, from the company upward, there is a Party committee. At the level of the NOC/NPA, there is the Political Department to promote ideological and political work within the NPA and in the localities and to insure that there is Party building at the basic level and upward in the NPA and in the localities.

At every command level and in every unit of the NPA, there is dual leadership. The commander is in charge of military command and administration. The political commissar or political officer is in charge of the ideological and political work. The military commander and political officer or commissar must consult with each other and work together in order to achieve combined political and military objectives.

In an emergency military situation in which neither consultations between military commander and political officer nor a deliberative meeting of the entire NPA unit is possible, the military commander assumes full responsibility.

The Party within the NPA, from the branch level to the Party committees at higher levels of the NPA must do political work among the Red fighters as well as see to it that the NPA units do political work among the people in the localities.

In the localities where units of the NPA have just begun conducting mass work, the Party within the NPA is superior to the Party in such localities for the obvious reason that the former has prior knowledge and experience and better access to the higher levels of the Party. The situation of the Party in the localities may also be fluid because of enemy campaigns.

But in due time, as the Party in the localities gains more knowledge and experience, this becomes a stable force and develops direct relations with higher levels of the Party which are defined according to the territorial scope of jurisdiction.

In fact, NPA units can operate most effectively in any locality through the cooperation of the Party in the NPA and the Party in the localities, besides the close relations of the NPA units with the people and the local organs of political power.

Relationship of the Party and the United Front

To carry out the united front policy and wield the united front as its weapon, the Party may or may not build any formal united front organization.

What is important is that the Party pursues a revolutionary class line involving the following: working class leadership, basic alliance of the working class and peasantry, the alliance of such basic forces as the toiling masses and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the alliance of such positive forces as the basic forces and the national bourgeoisie, alliance with sections of the reactionary classes and isolation and destruction of the enemy.

With regard to the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry, it has sufficed for the Party to lead and coordinate the organizations of the working class and peasantry. And yet this basic alliance is the foundation of the national united front.

Without any formal united front organization, the Party and the NPA have been able to relate to individuals and organizations belonging to the urban petty bourgeoisie and enlightened sections of the reactionary classes since the start of the armed struggle in 1969.

There have been multisectoral and issue-oriented legal alliances combining the toiling masses with the urban petty bourgeoisie and sometimes with the national bourgeoisie or even with sections of the reactionary classes. In these alliances, the Party has not been a formally recognized part but Party cadres and members have worked in them.

These alliances have strengths and weaknesses arising from or related to their legal status. They are strong in legally promoting the national democratic line but they are weak because they are vulnerable to the coercive power of the reactionary state.

Since 1973, the National Democratic Front (NDF) has been conceived of as the most comprehensive formal united front organization under working class leadership, along the line of new democratic revolution, and for armed struggle.

The principles of the united front were drawn mainly from a study of Philippine, Chinese and Vietnamese experiences and writings. The works of Mao Zedong were definitely the richest source of ideas. But in addition to learning from Philippine experience in the building of formal united front organizations, the NDF was considered most akin to the South Vietnam National Liberation Front as a foreign example.

In a certain effort to build the NDF recently as a "federation" or "confederation", a number of principles of the united front have been violated in the following manner:

1. The working class leadership, the line of the new democratic revolution and the socialist perspective have been liquidated. What is set forth as the ultimate goal of the revolution is the building of a "national democratic society" upon the seizure of political power. Thus, the program is to recycle the old democratic revolution. The working class is reduced to carrying the sedan chair for the bourgeoisie.
2. The Party is reduced to being a "member-organization" subject to voting and being outvoted by a preponderance of nonproletarian member-organizations, mostly petty-bourgeois even if there are Party groups within them. The principles of working class leadership through the Party and the independence and initiative of the Party are contravened.
3. Under the guise of liberating the NDF from the "centralism" of the Party and making the NDF separate and independent of the Party, certain elements wish to subordinate the proletariat and its party to the NDF and regard the NDF as the center of the Philippine revolution. These elements include some Party members and members of NDF "member-organizations" as well as individuals who are not at all members of any NDF "member-organization" but are regarded as direct individual members of the NDF.

If the Party is to build the NDF as a formal united front organization, its Program and Constitution have to be in accordance with the following:

1. The working class leadership and the two-stage line of development of the Philippine revolution must be reaffirmed.
2. The concept of "federation" or "confederation" has to be discarded. The organizations coming together under the rubric of the National Democratic Front must be allied or cooperating organizations and not member-organizations. They must enjoy independence and initiative. Their representatives can confer, consult and agree with each other under the rule of consensus and unanimity.
3. There should be no direct individual members of the NDF who do not belong to any allied or cooperating organization of the NDF. Such allied or cooperating organizations must be strengthened. The only individuals that may be invited to the NDF should be those who represent certain significant trends, sectors and sections of organizations outside of the NDF and who are invited to become members of leading councils at various levels.
4. Any basis for certain elements to claim that the center of the Philippines is no longer the Party but the NDF must be removed from the NDF Draft Program and Constitution. Thus, the basis for putting the Party and the NDF on a collision course or invoking the name of the NDF against the Party is removed.

Relations Among the Party, the NPA and the NDF

Is it the Party or the NDF that leads the NPA? It is the Party. At the same time, it is correct to say in the following sequence that the NPA is the army of the Party, the people's government, the NDF and the entire Filipino people.

What is the relationship of the Party, the NDF and the organs of political power? The Party leads the united front and organs of political power. The NDF cooperates with the Party by paving the way for the organization of the organs of political power and for the effective functioning of these in various aspects of government.

The Party does not yield political power to any united front organization. The NDF has not been formed to supplant the Party leadership over the organs of political power. Upon the basic completion of the national democratic revolution through the nationwide seizure of political power, the Party will still exercise leadership over the democratic coalition government and the people's democratic state, if we are to carry out the socialist revolution.

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