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Fight the Enemy until Complete Victory In the New-Democratic Revolution	1
Contribution of the Communist Party of the Philippines to the 6 th Conference of the ICMLPO	15
NDFP Position on the Prisoners of War and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations	31
Memorandum of Agreement on the Release of AFP Brig. General Victor Obillo, AFP Captain Eduardo Montealto, PNP Major Roberto Bernal and AFP Sergeant Alipio Lozada	37
100 Years of Struggle Against US Imperialism	44

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Fight the Enemy until Complete Victory In the New-Democratic Revolution

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On behalf of the Central Committee and the entire membership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, I salute all the Red commanders and fighters and convey to them warmest comradely greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the New People's Army.

The New People's Army has won great victories in fighting heroically for the national and democratic rights, interests and aspirations of the Filipino people. It is the principal weapon of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Filipino people in waging the principal form of revolutionary struggle and inspiring other forms of struggle. Its place in Philippine history is assured.

The armed revolution waged by the New People's Army under the leadership of the Party continues the Filipino people's unfinished struggle for national independence and democracy and has surpassed all previous armed struggles waged against US imperialism and the local reactionaries in the last hundred years.

First of all, the NPA is waging a protracted people's war along the line of the new-democratic revolution, with a socialist perspective. Secondly, the NPA has gained all-round strength nationwide, surpassing in this regard the achievements of the army of the Philippine revolutionary government in the old democratic revolution, the People's Army against Japan (Hukbalahap) and the People's Army for Liberation (Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan).

Following the absolute leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the NPA has accumulated significant strength since

starting from scratch on March 29, 1969. It has surmounted tremendous odds and has advanced from victory to victory. Our revolutionary armed struggle will continue until complete victory is won.

Brilliant Victories of the New People's Army

Upon its reestablishment, the Party proved itself a true and serious revolutionary party of the proletariat by conceiving of the New People's Army in the Party Constitution and establishing it in three months' time. The NPA was born out of the First Great Rectification Movement against the Lava dynasty and the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique and inherited the good remnants of the old people's army and their revolutionary experience and mass base.

The people's army came under the test of severe attacks by the enemy from 1969 onward and went through the prolonged unbridled terror of the Marcos fascist dictatorship to build its nationwide foundation and strengthen itself by fighting the enemy. The Red commanders and fighters have won astounding political and military victories by adhering to the line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war and by waging guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base.

But in the late '70s, "Left" and Right opportunist lines started to overlap with and subvert the correct line and the continuing successes of the armed revolution. The opportunists superimposed such erroneous lines as the "strategic counteroffensive" and "Red Area-White Area recombinations" on the correct line and wrought havoc in different regions at various times from the early '80s up to the early years of the current decade.

Since 1992, the Central Committee of the Party has led and carried out the Second Great Rectification Movement to reaffirm the basic revolutionary principles, sum up experience and set forth the tasks. The Party and the people's army have identified, criticized and

repudiated the errors that have harmed the revolutionary cause and have proceeded to score great achievements in carrying out the constructive tasks of the revolution.

The victories of the New People's Army shine brilliantly on the pages of Philippine history. But we must never forget that these victories as well as the lessons learned from experience are paid for by sacrifice, hard work and fierce struggle. Let us therefore take a pause to pay the highest tribute to our martyrs and heroes.

Let us not become complacent with our achievements. Let us remain ever vigilant and militant. No matter how far we have gone forward in the revolutionary struggle, the counterrevolutionary state of big compradors and landlords still stands and needs to be overthrown and smashed completely. We must fight until the enemy is defeated and the new-democratic revolution triumphs.

We have a sound basis for raising the revolutionary struggle to a new and higher level until complete victory is won. The rectification movement has revitalized and further strengthened the entire Party and the Party organization within the NPA and has raised the level of revolutionary consciousness and militancy among the Red commanders and fighters.

The NPA has grown far stronger than in 1992 when the rectification movement started. Total NPA strength amounts to several regiments. By having been reoriented, reorganized and redeployed for mass work, the NPA has been able to increase the number of guerrilla fronts to eighty-one (81) nationwide.

The typical guerrilla front has a total force of a company, with a platoon as the center of gravity and the other units spread over a wider radius. In certain regions, main guerrilla units sew up various guerrilla fronts and are capable of regionwide maneuvers.

The thousands of men and women serving full-time in the NPA are augmented by tens of thousands of those in militia and self-defense units. All of them draw support from the organs of political power, the mass organizations and the broad masses of the people.

There is an ample mass base for further expansion and further consolidation of mass work and for carrying out extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of ever widening and deepening mass base. Every increase of tactical offensives is related to an increase in mass base within a guerrilla zone, within a guerrilla front, within a region and on a nationwide scale.

The NPA has been able to carry out tactical offensives, like raids and ambushes, as well as various types of actions to enforce the laws and policies of the people's democratic government. In seeking targets for tactical offensives, it constantly looks for the weak points of the enemy or tries to force him to make mistakes and expose his weak points.

The tactical offensives of the NPA have increased gradually and have forced the enemy to acknowledge its growing strength. The enemy's officialdom and the bourgeois media have given much attention to the capture of high-ranking military and police officers by the NPA from 1997 to the present, as in the current case of one general and several other officers. Thus, the enemy propaganda that the revolutionary movement is disintegrating or disappearing has been repeatedly disproved.

The principal function of the NPA is to fight and defeat the enemy. It carries out only those battles it can win. Over a protracted period of time, it launches battles of quick decision to seize weapons from the enemy, accumulate strength in the countryside and goes through stages and phases of development, until it becomes capable of seizing power in cities on a nationwide scale.

But the fighting function cannot be successfully carried out if it were not based on the widespread and deep support of the people. The NPA is the main organization of the Party not only for destroying the enemy but also for organizing, arousing and mobilizing the masses. Through mass work, it draws support from the people as the inexhaustible source of strength.

The NPA has persevered in conducting revolutionary mass education, building various types of mass organizations for workers, peasants and farm workers, fishermen, women, youth, children and cultural activists and in promoting mass campaigns. The most important of these campaigns is the one for land reform because it responds to the main demand of the peasantry and seeks to realize the main content of the democratic revolution.

In the countryside, the Party and the people's army rely mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, win over the middle peasants, neutralize the rich peasants and take advantage of the split between the enlightened and evil gentry (while the minimum land reform is still being carried out) in order to isolate and destroy the power of the evil gentry. The class line that runs through the antifeudal united front is in consonance with the general line of the new-democratic revolution.

In waging the people's war, the NPA follows the principle of self-reliance. It recruits the fighters from the people, organizes production for the army and families of the fighters, receives contributions from the people, seizes weapons from the enemy and collects taxes from the enlightened gentry and from enterprises that follow the laws of the people's democratic government. Resources raised by the New People's Army are for the maintenance and growth of the Party and the NPA as well as for the social needs of the people.

Exceedingly Favorable Conditions for People's War

The objective conditions for waging people's war are exceedingly favorable in the Philippines. The semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system is in grave crisis. Factions and cliques of the big compradors and landlords and even within the ruling circle of the US-Estrada regime are seriously contending with each other over the diminished economic ground for mutual accommodation.

The broad masses of the people are undergoing intolerable suffering from the economic and social crisis. They are outraged by the return to power of the Marcos family and the worst political descendants of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, headed by the former movie actor Joseph Estrada. These scoundrels have recovered their ill-gotten wealth and are again plundering the country.

For some years to come, there is no way for the US-Estrada regime to override the longrunning global crisis of overproduction of raw materials and the current crisis of overproduction of low-value added semimanufactures. The drying up of international credit for financing consumption-driven trade deficits makes conspicuous the crushing foreign and local public debt burden and the backward agrarian and semifeudal character of the economy.

The regime aggravates the economic and social crisis by auctioning off the national patrimony and economic sovereignty to the foreign monopolies. It opposes national industrialization and land reform and offers to the foreign monopolies 100 percent ownership of land, banks, manufacturing, public utilities, social services, telecommunications, mass media, retail trade and all kinds of enterprises.

The people are victimized by rapidly mounting mass unemployment, abrupt peso depreciation, inflated prices of food and other basic commodities, heavier tax burden and rising fees for deteriorated social services. Not satisfied with these, the regime is

pushing legislation to abolish the right to strike and the minimum wage law and encouraging the foreign monopolies and domestic landgrabbers to amass land under various pretexts.

In charge of an economy laid prostrate by the imperialists and their local running dogs, the regime is ready to give away everything to the imperialists, not only economic privileges but also the privilege of bringing in military forces that enjoy extraterritoriality and are immune to prosecution for crimes that they commit on Philippine soil. Preparations are underway for the amendment of the reactionary constitution to further violate the national and democratic rights of the people.

Vainly trying to stop the rise of the people's resistance, the regime is carrying out a policy of repression without formally declaring martial law, especially against the working people and ethnic communities. It is encouraging the military, police and paramilitary forces to perpetrate extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, torture and the most brutal acts to force people to abandon their homes and farms.

All of these violate the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) mutually approved by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. The regime has been violating all other bilateral agreements in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. It has in fact terminated these negotiations.

We have no problem with ending the peace negotiations as a form of legal struggle. We have conducted these along the clear line that a just and lasting peace can be attained only by pursuing the new-democratic revolution through the protracted people's war. Having strengthened the revolutionary forces and the mass base, we are in a position to intensify the people's war from year to year.

We cannot tolerate the brazen attempts of the enemy to junk The Hague Joint Declaration and impose on the NDFP a framework of capitulation and self-criminalization. The GRP has violated so many provisions of the CARHRIHL, such as those pertaining to the release of political prisoners, the indemnification of the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos regime, the repeal of repressive decrees, the end of policies and campaigns that brutally victimize entire communities and take away their homes and land and the formation of the Joint Monitoring Committee.

In violation of the framework of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and the CARHRIHL, the GRP has refused to negotiate the issue of prisoners of war, has viciously misrepresented the acts of revolution as common crimes and has arbitrarily “suspended” the safety and immunity guarantees for NDFP negotiating personnel and consultants, also in brazen violation of the JASIG.

The treacherous Estrada regime demands that the peace negotiations be held and put under its mercy in Manila as in 1986 and 1987 and arbitrarily rejects the stipulation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) for a neutral venue abroad. And yet, it refuses the peace negotiations to be held in the territory of the people’s democratic government or within a neutralized zone between the territories of the GRP and the revolutionary government.

It is just fine that an already isolated regime, which is daily buffeted by a severe economic and political crisis, challenges the revolutionary forces to intensify the people’s war. Instead of trying to explore the possibility of truce and alliance with the current enemy through peace negotiations, the revolutionary forces must develop alliances with all possible forces at various levels in order to isolate and destroy the enemy. It is within the realm of probability that a broad united front can put the Estrada regime to an end before its term runs out.

Among the recent alliances that we can publicly announce and consider as highly significant is the formal alliance between the NDFP and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. This is an alliance for armed struggle and its significance is not only regional but national because it can effectively deliver lethal blows against the enemy.

If there were no revolutionary armed struggle, a ruling system or regime can muddle through an economic and social crisis. But the revolutionary armed struggle exists and can intensify. The ensuing aggravation of the political and socioeconomic crisis can be fatal to the Estrada regime.

To complement the revolutionary armed struggle, the Party is vigorously building the united front. This involves an echelon of alliances, such as the basic worker-peasant alliance, the alliance of the progressive forces (including the urban petty-bourgeoisie), the alliance of patriotic forces (including the middle bourgeoisie) and the temporary alliances with the reactionaries opposed to the enemy.

Worsening Crisis of the World Capitalist System

The current crisis of the world capitalist system does not allow the imperialist countries to let foreign loans and direct investments flow to the Philippines up to any level comparable to that during most years (1972-79) of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and during four years (1993-97) of the Ramos regime.

We can therefore be sure that the socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system will worsen and the entire ruling system will weaken in the face of a rising broad mass movement and the tactical offensives of the New People's Army.

There is a chronic crisis of overproduction in all types of goods in the world. There is a contraction of the world market. The so-called emerging markets have sunk and are still sinking further in the direction of the raw-material producing countries depressed since the

late '70s. Under the “laissez faire” or “free trade” policy rationale of “neoliberal globalization”, the monopoly bourgeoisie has accelerated the concentration and centralization of capital, the destruction of productive forces and shrinkage of the global market.

The worsening crisis of the world capitalist system is intensifying all the basic contradictions in the world, such as that between the imperialist countries and oppressed peoples, between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat and among the imperialist countries. The whole world is in turmoil.

The social turbulence is most acute and widespread in Asia, Africa, Latin America and most of the former Soviet bloc countries. Using the slogans of bourgeois nationalism, fascism, racism, ethnocentrism and religion, reactionary forces are generating widespread disorder in their factional strife. This disorder is conducive to the rise of revolutionary forces among the people, if there were a resolute and courageous Marxist-Leninist party to lead them.

The imperialist countries are wracked by the contradiction of inflated productive and financial assets and the reduced incomes of the proletariat and the rest of the people. There is chronic mass unemployment, most conspicuously in Japan and in Europe. In the United States, touted to have a high employment rate, regular jobs are being lost and replaced by part-time jobs. Thus, the class struggle of the proletariat is breaking out into the open even in the imperialist countries.

Cutthroat competition and protectionism under various guises are arising among imperialist countries. Interimperialist contradictions appear to be restrained only because the imperialist countries are united in further oppressing and exploiting the proletariat and the oppressed peoples and in carrying out wars of aggression and “police actions” under the guise of “peacekeeping” and “humanitarian

missions” in various parts of the world, especially in the Balkans, Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Africa.

The imperialist countries are competing for markets, fields of investment, sources of raw materials and positions of strength. However, still under the chieftainship of the US, the Western imperialists have enlarged the NATO up to the borders of Russia. The US-Japan security partnership is geared for aggression in East Asia. The imperialist countries are stirring up trouble everywhere and are generating conditions of war.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is actively propagating the Marxist-Leninist theory of state and revolution and the applicability of protracted people’s war in many agrarian countries where the peasant masses can be the main force of the new-democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat. Together with other Marxist-Leninist parties waging or supporting people’s war, the CPP has recently undertaken the International Seminar on Mao and People’s War.

The Party maintains bilateral relations with parties in all types of countries and is active in various multilateral gatherings to promote at the least the global anti-imperialist struggle and at the most the world proletarian revolution. In all cases, the Party respects the independent and equal rights of parties to conduct revolutionary struggle according to the concrete conditions and judgment of such parties.

Fighting Tasks of the New People’s Army

The central task of the New People’s Army is to destroy the counterrevolutionary state of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and enable the working class and the peasantry to establish the people’s democratic state. Such task can be accomplished over a protracted period of time along the general line of the new democratic revolution.

Right now, thanks to the people's army, there are local organs of political power, now comprising the people's democratic government, even as the reactionary government is still entrenched in the cities. Two kinds of government now exist in the Philippines. The revolutionary government aims to replace the reactionary government in due course.

Without the people's army, the people have nothing. They would only be subjected to oppression and exploitation, without any hope of creating their own political power and achieving national and social liberation from the imperialists and the local reactionaries.

It is clear that the New People's Army is mainly a fighting force for defeating the enemy. But it cannot perform its fighting tasks without performing the tasks of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the broad masses of the people to defend, promote and advance their national and democratic rights and interests.

The NPA must ceaselessly carry out mass work in order to further develop a strong foundation for carrying out the central task, to have an inexhaustible source of strength and to be able to recruit the best sons and daughters of the people. The broad masses of the people cherish and nourish the people's army only because it serves them and fights for their rights and interests.

Revolutionary politics must be in command of the New People's Army. This army must follow the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, serve as the main organization for carrying out the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution set forth by the Party and pursue the mass line of learning from the masses and trusting and relying on them.

The Party acts as the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and the Filipino people and determines the general line and direction of the revolution. It wields both the people's army to destroy the

counterrevolutionary state and the united front to rally the people in their millions to the revolutionary cause.

Even while the NPA is based in the countryside in pursuing the strategic line of protracted people's war, it is of utmost importance for the Party to coordinate all forms of mass struggle that arise and develop in both urban and rural areas.

To strengthen the bonds between the revolutionary forces in the rural and urban areas, workers and educated youth must be encouraged to join the people's army and serve the masses in the rural areas. The Party must deploy them accordingly. They bring with them much-needed knowledge and skills even as they must first learn from the masses that they seek to serve in the localities.

The deployment of cadres and mass activists from the cities to the countryside facilitates the coordination of the struggles in the urban and rural areas and prepares the day when the New People's Army shall be able to seize the cities on a nationwide scale.

The new-democratic revolution has a socialist perspective. We seek to overthrow the existing counterrevolutionary state and bring to an end the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions in order to proceed to the socialist revolution as the next stage of the Philippine revolution.

At this moment, the new-democratic revolution being carried out in the Philippines is one of the outstanding revolutions in the world. That is because we have a people's army successfully following the strategic line of protracted people's war.

Now and in the future, the Philippine revolution serves not only to realize the national and social liberation of the Filipino people but also to make its contributions to the advance of the world proletarian revolution and the broad anti-imperialist struggle of the people of the world.

Long live the New People's Army!
Carry forward the new-democratic revolution through protracted
people's war!
Fight until complete victory!
Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!
Long live the Filipino people!

**Contribution
of the Communist Party of the Philippines
to the 6th Conference of the ICMLPO**

1. The world economy, the impact of the Asian and related crises on the various countries.

The entire world capitalist system is in an unprecedented crisis and turmoil since the end of World War II and, if the trend should continue, possibly since the Great Depression. It is once more proven that imperialism or monopoly capitalism is the highest and final stage in the development of capitalism. It is parasitic and moribund capitalism. It is destructive of the productive forces on a global scale.

Under imperialism, economic crisis is destructive enough. It becomes even more destructive as it leads to global wars (like World War I and World War II), the Cold War and local wars. It is not true that imperialism spreads global economic development and industrialization and thereby increases the proletariat on a global scale.

Even before the current level of the global capitalist crisis, which has become conspicuous since 1997, imperialism has devastated the non-industrialized countries dependent on raw-material exports, including oil, and has increasingly relegated a few countries touted as “emerging markets” to taking the low end of high technology, specializing in a few types of exports and sinking into deeper foreign indebtedness due to consumption-driven trade deficits.

It is also untrue that the imperialists have lost their appetite for raw materials because they have reached the stage of high technology and have proceeded to a further stage of sharing even this high technology with many other countries. In fact, since the '70s, imperialism has diverted most countries of the world from the path of industrial development and has induced them to take foreign loans for infrastructure-building and raw-material production for export.

The seeming loss of importance of raw materials to imperialism is due to the crisis of overproduction of these since the late '70s. Nevertheless, the imperialists are always ready to make war over a strategic raw material like oil when control over this is threatened. In this regard, the US has repeatedly launched aggression against Iraq.

In the imperialist countries, the rise of the social character of production through the adoption of higher technology is in sharp contradiction with the private character of monopoly capitalist appropriation. The constant effort of the monopoly bourgeoisie to counter the general tendency of profit rates to fall by pressing down wage levels and thereby extracting higher rates of profit from those who remain employed has led to chronic mass unemployment, the deterioration of wage conditions and the chronic crisis of overproduction relative to the shrinking market.

The policy swing of the monopoly bourgeoisie from Keynesianism to neoliberalism since the '80s to deal with the phenomenon of stagflation of the '70s and to blame supposed rising levels of wages and government social spending as the cause of stagnation and inflation has accelerated and aggravated the overconcentration of both productive and finance capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

The “neoliberal” drive of the monopoly bourgeoisie for the privatization of state assets does not dissolve state monopoly capitalism but quickens its use as a tool of private monopoly capitalism. So long as the monopoly bourgeoisie rules, it can increase or decrease state equity in enterprises and use state revenues and assets for the benefit of the private monopoly firms (e.g., subsidies, tax exemptions, investment insurance, contracts and bailouts). Private and state monopoly capitalism are inextricably linked with each other, whatever is the policy stress of imperialism at any given time.

The era of imperialism and proletarian revolution is still an era of nation-states, whether in the case of imperialist countries protecting

and promoting monopoly firms or in the case of the proletariat establishing and maintaining the class dictatorship of the proletariat. It is wrong to presume that the bourgeois state and the bourgeois ruling class are becoming estranged from each other and that multinational companies are already dissociating themselves from the states and dissolving national borders as the neoliberal touters of “globalization” claim.

The imperialist countries jealously withhold high technology from other countries and retain their national flagship companies. Representatives of the imperialist states sit and make decisions in the Group of 7, the OECD, IMF, World Bank and WTO. They use these international agencies to coordinate their national policies for exploiting the proletariat and people of the world.

In relation to all other countries, the imperialist countries have only 20 percent of the world population but own more than 80 percent of assets in the world. More than 80 percent of the flow of global direct investments are concentrated among the imperialist countries. Less than 20 percent go to about ten other countries with the fancy name of “emerging markets”.

These so-called emerging markets have collapsed. They are crushed by consumption-driven trade deficits, loan defaults, currency devaluation, foreign capital flight and, of course, the global overproduction of their export specialties, e.g., labor intensive, low value-added semimanufactures (semiconductors, garments, shoes and toys) of Southeast Asia and China, higher value-added manufactures (cars, home appliances and steel) of South Korea and Brazil and oil and gas of Russia.

Very rapidly since 1997, these “emerging markets” have fallen into a state of depression and joined the ranks of the overwhelming majority of countries in the world, which have been in a state of depression since the crisis of overproduction in raw materials (agricultural and mineral) since the late '70s. For a long time to come,

they will be crushed by their foreign debt burden and by the cutthroat competition in their lines of production for export.

The scope of neocolonial exploitation and oppression has expanded, with the former Soviet bloc countries and “emerging markets” joining the ranks of the long-depressed third world countries dependent on raw materials for export. We use the term “neocolonialism” here in the sense that Sukarno, Kwame Nkrumah and Zhou Enlai originally used it to mean that the substance of political independence of countries is negated by the imperialists through economic and financial manipulation. This exploits and degrades these countries in an all-round way and certainly does not industrialize and develop them, contrary to the claims of UNCTAD and its echoers.

In the heyday of the “emerging markets”, they served as a big market for the surplus capital and surplus manufactures of the imperialists and as the source of the highest rate of imperialist profits. Now, all the imperialist countries are faced with shrunken markets for their own exports and with the incapacity of the “emerging markets” to repay loans, which had been incurred by the multinational and big comprador firms but are now assumed by the central banks of the client states for the purpose of seeking bailouts under the auspices of the IMF.

It is significant that the monopoly firms, banks, investment firms and stockmarkets of the imperialist countries are being jolted by the series of financial and economic collapses in East Asia, Russia, Brazil and Latin America as a whole. The IMF bailouts do not solve but aggravate the collapses. The focus of the financial and economic crisis keeps on shifting and shaking the entire capitalist world.

The believer in the capitalist industrialization of all or most countries of the world might think that the current destruction of productive forces is precisely the way for the imperialists to buy up and develop the entire world. But the imperialists are themselves

being stricken by crisis and are clever enough not to invest on what is not profitable. Thus, the uneven development of the world becomes grosser after every spasm in the imperialist crisis and so much worse after every outburst of imperialist violence.

2. Political changes within the imperialist system.

US imperialism retains its position as sole superpower. It is the strongest military and political power among the imperialists. It holds the lead in industrial and military technology. It has the highest rate of profit among the global centers of capitalism and thus attracts investments from the other imperialists. It seeks to override its colossal foreign debt and trade deficits by pushing its export drive and requiring its allies to further hold US securities.

It is driven by its colossal foreign debt burden and trade deficits to push its exports at the expense of the other imperialist powers and to make these allies assume increased financial responsibility for military buildup and operations and bailout of bankrupted client regimes.

Euroland is relatively more crisis-stricken than the US. However, it is in the process of consolidating its monetary, market and economic strength and is in an advantageous position in exploiting the former Soviet-bloc countries. In due time, it is bound to develop to a high degree its economic competitiveness and political and military independence vis-à-vis the US.

Germany, the main economic engine of Euroland, remains stagnant, afflicted by chronic high rate of unemployment and by the chronic crisis of overproduction. France is more politically assertive, is ahead in developing aerospace and defense industries and is the spearhead for challenging US positions in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Euroland capital expansion in Russia and Eastern Europe is limited by the policy of compradorizing these and by the

rapacity of the criminal new bourgeoisie, which is adept at tax evasion and pocketing any IMF-sponsored bailout funds.

Japan is in the worst position among the three global centers of capitalism. Its domestic economy has been in a prolonged state of stagnation since seven years ago and has had negative growth in the last three years. Among the imperialist allies of the US, it is suffering most from US economic competition and the contradiction between its domestic economy and its plants in the US, Western Europe and elsewhere. At the same time, it colludes with the US in exploiting the people in East Asia and threatening them with the US-Japan security partnership.

The US withholds technology transfers to Japanese monopoly firms and has been trying to penetrate the Japanese domestic market and take over financial services. But Japan is resisting. It is floating the idea of an Asian Monetary Fund to counter the multilateral agencies under US control. It is spearheading the neo-Keynesian policy of combining fiscal pump-priming with “economic reforms” to reinforce its position in China and Southeast Asia.

The imperialists collaborate in oppressing and exploiting the people of Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Balkans and the former Soviet-bloc countries. For the purpose, they use their multinational firms and banks, the puppet states, such multilateral agencies as the IMF, World Bank, WTO, and the military alliances.

However, as the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, the imperialists are increasingly at cross purposes in competing for the shrinking global market and in dealing with so many troublespots such as those in the Balkans, the former Soviet-bloc countries, the Middle East, East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Latin America and Africa. US imperialism is hated by the oppressed peoples and is increasingly resented by its imperialist allies for always trying to grab the lion's share of the spoils.

At present, it looks inconceivable that any of the major imperialist powers would openly challenge another in any bellicose manner. Their collusion against the proletariat and oppressed peoples is still by far more conspicuous than their political and economic competition. Thus, there are those misled into believing that the imperialists have become so unified that national contradictions among them are no longer significant and that by a leap of the imagination they can all fall at the same time in some vague international revolution.

The seeming unity of the imperialists is emphasized by the disintegration of Soviet social-imperialism, the capitalist restoration in China, the lack of any formidable socialist country, the quiescence of erstwhile anti-imperialist states, the absence or weakness of Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries and the still limited resurgence of new-democratic revolutions through people's war.

In some respects, we are in a period similar to the period to that prior to World War I and the October Revolution. But the economic and social crisis of the world capitalist system is once more stirring up in an unprecedented way the contradictions between the imperialists and the oppressed peoples, between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries and among the imperialist powers themselves.

We are still in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, especially because revisionist betrayal has left no formidable bulwark of socialism, like the Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin and the China of Mao. There is no change in the economic and political character and development of imperialism as to persuade us that socialism can be established without the overthrow of the state of the monopoly bourgeoisie by armed force in a series of imperialist countries.

Under the current conditions, the role of the proletarian revolutionaries in the imperialist countries is to build Marxist-

Leninist parties, study and grasp the Marxist-Leninist theory of state and revolution, wage class struggle, combat revisionism and reformism, wage protracted legal struggle and support new-democratic revolutions in the semicolonial and semifeudal countries.

Marxist-Leninist parties in imperialist countries should not play with armed insurrections but should consistently build an underground organization to underlie their militant mass actions. History has shown that the monopoly bourgeoisie uses both violence and deception in destroying Marxist-Leninist parties. The monopoly bourgeoisie does not hesitate to use fascism when the economic and social crisis becomes so grave that ordinary methods and devices of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the labor aristocracy can no longer keep the proletariat under control.

So far, history has shown that a desperate monopoly bourgeoisie can turn to fascism and wipe out the party of the proletariat in imperialist countries and the revolutionary party of the proletariat can seize power when the bourgeoisie is weakened by bourgeois war (Franco-Prussian war), as in the case of the Paris Commune of 1871, and the imperialists are weakened by interimperialist war, as in the case of Russia in World War I and some countries of Central Europe in the aftermath of World War II.

No new conditions indicate the possibility that the proletariat in imperialist countries can seize power, without armed revolution and without the conditions of interimperialist war and anti-imperialist wars of liberation in the backward countries. The unprecedentedly higher concentration of economic and political power in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie should dispel the illusion that it shall fall on its own accord or that through parliamentary struggle the proletariat in the imperialist countries can run ahead of the proletariat and people in the semicolonial and semifeudal countries in seizing political power.

3. Strategy and tactics of the Marxist-Leninists in the national and social liberation struggle.

The worst oppression and exploitation is inflicted by the imperialists and local reactionaries on the proletariat and the people in the overwhelming majority of countries which remain semicolonial and semifeudal. And yet the weakest links of the chain of imperialist domination are in such countries. In the current worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system, the worst social and economic conditions arise in these countries but the most favorable conditions for armed revolution by the proletariat and people are also here.

In many of these countries (not all, e.g., Kuwait, Nauru and Kiribati), it is possible and necessary for the proletariat and the people to wage the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. In fact, six or seven Marxist-Leninist parties in such countries are already answering the central question of revolution by waging protracted people's war. In one vast country like India, there are Marxist-Leninist parties waging people's war.

Marxist-Leninist parties waging people's war are still few. But without them, there would be practically no real anchor of the people's hope for overthrowing the imperialists and local reactionaries and aiming at people's democracy and socialism.

We must recognize that these parties have persevered and have been tempered in the struggle against the powerful onslaughts of imperialism, revisionism and reaction. They have also outlasted the armed regimes and armed movements dependent on the influence and assistance of the Soviet and the Chinese revisionists.

In the semicolonial and semifeudal countries, the Marxist-Leninist parties should wage legal forms of struggle to prepare for the people's war and when they begin the revolutionary armed struggle as the principal form of struggle they also continue to wage legal forms of struggle in coordination with armed struggle.

However, in some of the aforesaid countries, a number of parties claim to be Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought or Maoist parties and ceaselessly proclaim their desire to wage people's war. And yet they manage to postpone indefinitely (in some cases for decades) the start of people's war or they misconstrue Mao Zedong Thought as populism or mass work for bourgeois electioneering.

Marxist-Leninist parties that actually wage people's war and persevere in it are worthy of high consideration. They learn how to fight by fighting. The life-and-death struggle requires them to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses and build the Party, the people's army and the united front. When errors are committed, these can be rectified through timely criticism and self-criticism and through a comprehensive and profound rectification movement.

In the imperialist countries, conditions allow the monopoly bourgeoisie to resist most strongly any proletarian attempt at seizure of political power. They have in fact succeeded in keeping Marxist-Leninist parties weak and small in such countries. Thus, it is the proletarian internationalist duty of the Marxist-Leninist parties that can wage protracted people's war to do so and thereby contribute towards creating favorable conditions for the class struggle in the imperialist countries.

The proletariat and oppressed peoples in the backward countries must not wait for any signal for making revolution from the proletariat or any party in the imperialist countries. Lenin pointed out a long time ago that the Bolsheviks could make armed revolution ahead of the proletariat in the West and he actually led them to revolutionary victory and the establishment of the first long-lasting proletarian dictatorship. Since then, the successful revolutions led by the proletariat have occurred in several backward countries.

It is wrong for any party claiming to be Marxist-Leninist in an imperialist country to assert that, for lack of an immediate opportunity at armed revolution in imperialist countries, the dividing

line between Marxism-Leninism and what is not throughout the world is the legal pursuit of the economic demand for shorter working hours.

The demand for a 30-hour work week is fine, especially in the imperialist countries. It points to the high level of social productivity, exposes the exploitativeness of the monopoly bourgeoisie, agitates the working class and indicates socialism as the solution. But the demand becomes economic and reformist when it is not subordinated to political demands in the class struggle and when it is not preceded by a mass denunciation of the grave problems of unemployment and underemployment even in the imperialist countries.

Outside the advanced industrial capitalist countries, especially in the semicolonial and semifeudal countries and in the retrogressive countries of the former Soviet Union and in China, Marxist-Leninists must not fly off from reality if they wish to be listened to by the workers. In such countries the 8-hour workday is far from realized. Employed adult and child workers actually work 10 to 16 hours on the basis of piecework to be able to earn their daily subsistence.

In their struggle for political power for a number of decades, the Bolsheviks properly arranged their slogans in the following order of importance: democratic republic, nationalization of land and the 8-hour work day. Raising the third slogan served to incite the workers against the ruling system but putting this slogan on top of the first and second slogans would have been to distort political priorities and to spread the reformist illusion that the rulers could be benevolent enough to give the proletariat a big favor.

Following the example of the Bolsheviks, the Communist Party of the Philippines takes up the wage question in the context of the 10-point Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. The overriding slogan is for the overthrow of the US-propped joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and the

establishment of the people's democratic republic. The next slogans are: realization of land reform and national industrialization, improvement of the people's livelihood and wage conditions and a national, scientific and mass culture.

There are indispensable lessons for us to learn from Lenin and the Bolsheviks. No new conditions warrant the idea that Leninism has become outdated. Imperialism continues to hold sway. In fact, conditions have retrogressed for the proletariat and the people because of revisionist betrayal and the imperialist offensive. There is practically a retrogression to a pre-World War I situation in the sense that there is no formidable bulwark of socialism like the Soviet Union in the time of Lenin and Stalin and China in the time of Mao. We are practically re-starting the world proletarian revolution in the face of the unbridled rapacity and brutality of the imperialists and the local reactionaries.

So long as lessons are well-learned from the revolutionary experience of the proletariat, the Marxist-Leninist parties arising from the ruins of the Soviet Union have the potential of overthrowing the new bourgeoisie, reestablishing socialism and taking an outstanding role in the world proletarian revolution. They must develop their capability to wage armed revolution. Once more, they can run ahead of the West in making proletarian revolution.

A new revolutionary communist party, resolutely and militantly following the line of Mao, needs to be established and developed in China. It has to defeat both the ruling section of the new bourgeoisie that continues to usurp the name of the communist party as well as the other section of the new bourgeoisie that seeks to throw away the signboard of the communist party. The struggle and victory of a genuine Marxist-Leninist Chinese party will certainly make China a bulwark of socialism once more.

In this year the 50th anniversary of the People's Republic of China will be celebrated. It is fine if the International Conference can

decide to hold a meaningful celebration to honor Mao and the Chinese proletariat and people, to condemn the revisionist betrayal and restoration of capitalism and to encourage the formation of a new revolutionary communist party.

4. Outlook

4a. For the international Marxist-Leninist and workers' movement

As Marx had urged since a long time ago, workers of all countries should unite. As Lenin would subsequently urge in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, workers of all countries and all oppressed peoples should unite.

Bound by proletarian internationalism, workers have no countries in pursuing the class struggle of the world proletarian revolution and in expressing contempt for the chauvinism and cosmopolitanism of the bourgeoisie. But since the advent of Marxism, it has always been clear that the proletariat has to establish the proletarian class dictatorship within national boundaries and in one country after another.

As we leave the 20th century, we recognize that imperialism, revisionism and reaction have intensified the basic contradictions between capital and labor, between the imperialists and the oppressed peoples and among the imperialists. In general, we are certain that greater battles and greater victories are ahead for the proletariat and the people in the 21st century.

International conferences and seminars of Marxist-Leninist parties and workers' movements are important for illuminating the road of advance in the world proletarian revolution and for increasing the coordination of revolutionary struggles of independent Marxist-Leninist parties.

No group of parties or single party can presume to be the ideological and political center of the world revolution. It suffices that parties of various countries exchange views and experiences and strive to attain a higher level of ideological and political understanding and cooperation.

More important than any attempt at forming a global center is the revolutionary homework of the various parties. A series of successful revolutions waged by them will certainly point to the further development of the world proletarian revolution.

Within the proletarian internationalist framework, the exchange of views and experiences and the exchange of personnel between Marxist-Leninist parties waging and preparing to wage people's war has a distinctive importance for the simple reason that these are the parties which are now clearly answering the central question of revolution by word and deed.

The General Declaration on Mao and People's War, issued by the Marxist-Leninist parties waging people's war, is certainly a significant development in the international communist movement. It is fine that these parties have decided to publish in book form the results of the International Seminar on Mao and People's War, issue a quarterly international bulletin and hold an annual meeting of parties waging people's war and an expanded biennial meeting with parties supporting them.

4b. Significance of the League of Struggle for Liberation and other forms of international cooperation.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has long engaged in various types of international cooperation at the party-to-party level bilaterally and multilaterally. These types of international cooperation are undertaken on a comradely and/or friendly basis.

They are as significant as they are meant to promote mutual understanding and mutual support on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and/or anti-imperialist solidarity. On the minimum basis of anti-imperialist solidarity, the CPP has friendly relations with as many as more than 80 foreign parties and organizations, as borne out by messages received by the CPP on the occasion of its 30th founding anniversary.

At the people-to-people level, Philippine mass organizations that take the general line of the national-democratic revolution against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism have a far bigger number of relations and a far broader range of cooperation with various types of foreign partners.

The international cooperation at the people-to-people level is as significant as it promotes broad anti-imperialist solidarity. The Philippine mass organizations that take the national-democratic line strive to carry the anti-imperialist line in bilateral and multilateral relations. They are keenly aware of Left, Middle and Right trends in the international mass movement and in the “NGO” world and adopt the appropriate tactics for broadening relations without giving up the anti-imperialist line.

The proposed League of Struggle for Liberation can be as significant as it takes the following position:

1. For people's sovereignty against foreign domination
2. For civil and political rights against fascism and repression
3. For economic, social and cultural rights and development against foreign and feudal exploitation and oppression
4. For peace against wars of aggression and against nuclear and other genocidal weapons
5. For workers' rights and reduction of working hours at full pay against mass unemployment and decreasing wage levels
6. For women's rights against gender discrimination

7. For the rights of ethnic communities against chauvinism and racism
8. For children's rights against child labor and other forms of exploitation
9. For environmental protection against plunder and pollution
10. For the rights and welfare of refugees and migrant workers.

NDFP Position on the Prisoners of War and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations

By the National Council

National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)

March 18, 1999

The NDFP Negotiating Panel is authorized by the NDFP National Executive Committee to negotiate with the GRP on the issue of prisoners of war, including Brig. General Victor Obillo and Capt. Eduardo Montealto. It holds the position that the issue is a necessary and appropriate subject in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and is within the purview of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) mutually approved by the GRP and the NDFP.

Within that context, the NDFP has announced its willingness and readiness to receive the appropriate approach from the GRP for negotiating the issue. The NDFP wishes to resolve it, return the peace negotiations to the status quo ante the so-called suspension of the safety and immunity guarantees and violation of the bilateral agreements, present complaints over increasing cases of extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture, food blockades, bombardments and forced mass evacuations under the Estrada regime and push the implementation of the CARHRIHL.

The response of the regime has been to announce a policy of no-negotiations, accusing the revolutionary forces and even the NDFP Negotiating Panel of a common crime and ordering the unconditional surrender of the prisoners of war in the custody of the NPA. Moreover, the regime has intensified so-called military rescue operations to prevent any negotiated or unilateral release of the prisoners and has undertaken a series of punitive acts against NDFP negotiating personnel and consultants in gross violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG). By itself alone, such violation of a bilateral agreement has, in fact and in

effect, destroyed the basis for peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP.

Nevertheless, the NDFP Negotiating Panel has continued to keep its door open to negotiations with the GRP for the purpose of establishing the political basis (the why) for releasing the aforesaid prisoners and for the safe procedure (the how) for their release. At the same time, the NDFP Negotiating Panel is ever conscious that if the GRP cannot negotiate a minor issue relative to the major issues in the substantive agenda of the GRP-NDFP negotiations, it is clear that the Estrada regime will never talk to the NDFP under the terms of The Hague Joint Declaration but only to dictate the terms of surrender.

The NDFP Negotiating Panel has exerted efforts towards negotiations with the GRP to no avail. In view of the unreasonable and intransigent position of the GRP, which is “no negotiations prior to NDFP surrender”, and the intensified military operations and violations of the CARHRIHL and JASIG by the GRP, the NDFP has considered the exercise of the political power of the people's democratic government to undertake the release of the prisoners of war on moral and political grounds, if applicable. As demonstrated on several occasions in the recent past, it is within the power of the NDFP National Executive Committee to order the release of prisoners of war unilaterally on humanitarian grounds or as an act of clemency due to remorse and apology of the accused or convicted, all in accordance with the Guide for Establishing the People's Government and International Humanitarian Law.

However, the NDFP exercises said power with prudence in view of the calculated position of the Estrada regime to make the NDFP appear as being intimidated and capitulating to the GRP and to misrepresent the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations as no more than a GRP process of dictating the terms of surrender to the NDFP. In this connection, the NDFP is prepared to frustrate the calculations and maneuvers of the regime by issuing a declaration recognizing the fact that the GRP has already terminated the peace negotiations and by

undertaking the corollary actions as to make manifest the significance and consequences of said declaration.

The promise of the Estrada regime to resume the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations after what it calls the “surrender” of the prisoners of war is a big lie. To believe this lie is to bow to the arrogance of such regime and descend to the level of the intelligence of its chief executive.

Since before the capture of General Obillo and Capt. Montealto, the GRP under the Estrada regime has practically killed the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations by sending to the NDFP the following clear message.

1. That The Hague Joint Declaration be scrapped and replaced by a framework of capitulation and self-criminalization at the expense of the NDFP.

2. That the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees is a list of favors from the GRP to the NDFP and that these can be suspended or scrapped at the whim of the GRP and moreover that the provision for a neutral venue abroad is no longer effective and that the formal meetings in the peace negotiations be held in Manila and put under the surveillance and mercy of the GRP as in 1986 and 1987.

3. That the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law is not effective and implementable unless the NDFP submit to a framework of capitulation and self-criminalization and that the GRP can do as it pleases to violate the provisions of the bilateral agreements.

In violation of the CARHRIHL, the GRP under the Estrada regime is carrying out a policy of extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, torture, food blockades, bombardments and forced mass evacuations. These gross violations of human rights are also gross violations of

international humanitarian law (Geneva Convention and its protocols), to which the NDFP adheres, as exemplified in our respect for the rights and humane treatment of our prisoners of war.

In further violation of the CARHRIHL, the GRP has refused to do away with repressive decrees, laws, policies and campaigns that violate human rights and has pushed further legislation to aggravate these. It has used the release of political prisoners as a bargaining chip and has acted in collaboration with the Marcoses to swindle the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos regime.

The GRP intends to amend or replace the current GRP constitution in order to remove provisions that it deems as impediment to a policy of repression and to allow the violation of every aspect of national sovereignty by such laws as those auctioning off the national patrimony and economy and a treaty on “visiting” foreign military forces.

The GRP has ignored the complaints of the NDFP concerning current human rights violations and has refused to comply with its obligations under the CARHRIHL and to negotiate a wide range of issues under this agreement, including the issue of prisoners of war.

Instead of negotiating the political basis and safe procedure for the release of General Obillo and Capt. Montealto, the GRP has used the capture of these military officers in the course of the ongoing war between the GRP and the revolutionary forces as a pretext for violating the JASIG and the CARHRIHL and undermining The Hague Joint Declaration with the demand for capitulation.

The GRP has set a policy of doing away with the peace negotiations and violating the CARHRIHL by considering as common crime every legitimate action of the New People's Army under the law of armed conflict, making revolutionaries, including the negotiators and consultants, appear as criminal accomplices and

prolonging the imprisonment of the political prisoners in the custody of the GRP as a retaliatory action.

The GRP under the Estrada regime has absolutely no intention of resuming the formal meetings of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. If it cannot negotiate with the NDFP on a relatively small issue such as the issue of some specific prisoners of war, it cannot negotiate on the larger issues of the substantive agenda of the peace negotiations.

We have observed that the GRP, especially under the Estrada regime, has no interest in serious peace negotiations to address the roots of the civil war but only in seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary people and forces. The Estrada regime has demonstrated that it would rather push its military solution to problems than negotiate with the NDFP on social and economic reforms and on political and constitutional reforms.

The NDFP can cause the release of the prisoners of war unilaterally in the exercise of the power and authority of the people's democratic government, its constitution and laws and in accordance with International Humanitarian Law. At the same time, the revolutionary people and forces are well prepared to wage all forms of resistance to a regime of the worst political descendants of the Marcos dictatorship.

The bottom line in our position is that, as in the long past even before the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, we can release the prisoners of war under our own terms, in the exercise of our political power and authority and emphatically now not under the terms of the GRP or Mr. Estrada. And we consider as worthless any promise of the Estrada regime to resume the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations because he has violated and will continue to violate the solemn bilateral agreements between the GRP and NDFP.

Hell-bent on pursuing a policy of servility to imperialists, military repression and unbridled corruption, the Estrada regime has

practically terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. All that the NDFP has to do is to make a declaration of recognizing this fact. #

**Memorandum of Agreement
on the Release of AFP Brig. General Victor Obillo,
AFP Captain Eduardo Montealto,
PNP Major Roberto Bernal
and AFP Sergeant Alipio Lozada**

1. Background Statement

The Negotiating Panel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), headed by Chairperson Luis Jalandoni, received and welcomed the third-party initiative of the humanitarian mission headed by Archbishop Fernando R. Capalla and the parallel initiative of Senator Loren Legarda. Other members of the mission are Bishop Wilfredo D. Manlapaz, Msgr. Mario Valle, Atty. Jesus G. Dureza and Rev. Fr. Pedro Lamata (hereinafter called “humanitarian mission”).

The NDFP Negotiating Panel and the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda held a dialogue on March 16 and 17, 1999 in Utrecht, The Netherlands and presented their respective positions, exchanged proposals and reached agreement towards the resolution of the issue concerning the military officers of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) Brig. General Victor Obillo, Capt. Eduardo Montealto, Major Roberto Bernal and Sgt. Alipio Lozada, who are currently captives of the New People's Army (NPA).

The humanitarian mission and Senator Legarda explained the background of their parallel initiatives and the purpose of their coming to Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Archbishop Capalla presented two letters both dated 15 March 1999: one from Chairperson Howard Q. Dee of the GRP Negotiating Panel addressed to him as Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Davao and another from Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines addressed to the leadership of the NDFP. Copies of both letters are attached for ready reference, as part of the presentation of the humanitarian mission.

Earlier, the mission also handed two letters to Chairperson Jalandoni, one from Mrs. Obillo and another from Mrs. Montealto.

Sen. Legarda explained that NDFP directly invited her to participate in the process of facilitating the release of the captives. And this has led to a series of consultations between her and NDFP consultants in Manila and in The Netherlands. She also said that she has been in contact with the families of Gen. Obillo and Capt. Montealto and has kept Pres. Estrada directly informed of her discreet initiative to facilitate the release, including the acceptance of the NDFP invitation to participate in the dialogue in The Netherlands. At the outset of the meeting, Sen. Legarda explicitly clarified that she did not come to The Netherlands as a negotiator for the GRP but only as an invited and interested party acting on her own initiative to facilitate the expeditious and safe release of the captives.

As expressed in earlier communications, the humanitarian mission reiterates its position that because of the nature of its trip as an independent third party, the release of the captives is being proposed by the mission on moral and humanitarian grounds and the issue relative to the political basis of said release is a matter that is beyond its competence to handle.

Chairperson Jalandoni explained the NDFP Position on the Prisoners of War and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations. This position is contained in a paper dated March 16, 1999 a copy of which is attached for ready reference, as part of the presentation of Chairperson Jalandoni.

By agreement of the parties, human rights lawyer Romeo T. Capulong assisted the parties as their common counsel during the meeting in collaboration with Atty. Jesus G. Dureza who likewise assisted the humanitarian mission as counsel. They will continue to act as such counsel and assist the parties in the implementation of this Memorandum of Agreement.

Upon the proposal of the humanitarian mission, the NDFP has agreed to take the high moral ground. Upon the request of the mission and Sen. Legarda, the NDFP shall undertake the release of the above-named captives on humanitarian grounds, according to the guidelines and procedure in Section 3 on Safe Procedure of Release and such supplemental guidelines and procedure which the NDFP may hereafter issue to ensure the safe release of the prisoners and the safety and security of their custodians and others who will assist or be involved in the implementation of this agreement.

2. NDFP's Basis for Release

The NDFP Negotiating Panel shall order the release of the above-named military officers in accordance with the authority vested on it by the NDFP National Executive Committee and the laws and processes of the People's Democratic Government, and in compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and the NDFP Unilateral Declaration of Undertaking To Apply the Geneva Conventions and Protocol I.

The order of release shall be done and issued in the exercise of the power, authority and jurisdiction of the People's Democratic Government. The moral basis of the release is humanitarian grounds and grant of clemency on the occasion of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. It is also NDFP's favorable response to the widespread appeals of well-meaning parties and personages for the unilateral and negotiated release of said prisoners.

The Order of Release shall suspend or supersede the judicial proceedings initiated by the Southern Mindanao Regional Operational Command (Merardo Arce Command) of the New People's Army against said prisoners, including the sentence which may have been imposed, if any, provided that such proceedings shall

remain valid and the evidence therein shall continue to be admissible against the said prisoners in the event of another justifiable arrest.

The NDFP Position on the Prisoners of War and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations and the NDFP Order of Release shall be distributed on an appropriate date together with this Memorandum of Agreement in order to inform the public of the moral and political basis of the release as herein unilaterally decided by the NDFP and as a rejection of the GRP's intransigent position of no-negotiations and unacceptable imposition of surrender of the prisoners.

3. Safe Procedure of Release

3.1 Pursuant to their voluntary undertaking and mandate, the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda shall exert best efforts to secure from the GRP appropriate and effective binding orders for the cessation of GRP military operations and withdrawal of GRP military and police forces from offensive deployment for a period of four weeks, from March 22 to April 19, 1999, from an area the perimeter of which is wide enough for the safety of the NPA custodial force and for the safe holding, transport and release of the above-named prisoners of the New People's Army, as determined by the latter's local command. Said area shall include Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Bukidnon, North Cotabato and Davao City.

3.2 Within the aforesaid area and during the period of March 22 to April 19, 1999, the armed personnel of the GRP and the NDFP shall cease and desist from undertaking any offensive action against each other. The NPA unit involved in the holding and release of the prisoners shall be given ample time and territorial space to maneuver and move safely before, during and after the release of the prisoners within the aforesaid period. On or prior to March 22, 1999, NDFP Panel Chairperson Luis Jalandoni shall sign a written order to the NDFP forces in the area to implement this provision, while the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda will secure a counterpart

order from the authorized GRP officer or official on or prior to said date.

3.3 Once secured from the GRP on a best effort basis, the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda shall present certified true copies of the orders mentioned in paragraph 3.1 and 3.2 to the NDFP Negotiating Panel or its duly authorized representative. Subsequent to the presentation of the certified true copies, the NDFP Negotiating Panel shall approve and sign the Order of Release for each of the above-named prisoners of the NPA. The Order of Release shall be immediately announced jointly by the parties hereto but the actual issuance and implementation thereof shall be determined by the NDFP within the period stated in the preceding paragraph hereof.

3.4 The NDFP Negotiating Panel, the Merardo Arce Command of the NPA and their duly authorized representatives shall take full charge of the release procedure with the cooperation of the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda. Both the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda shall help ensure, monitor and verify GRP compliance with its orders to its military and police forces to keep out of the areas defined in paragraph 3.1 hereof and to comply with the orders required by said paragraph 3.1 and paragraph 3.2.

3.5 As in previous releases of NPA captives and in accordance with established practice and precedents, the representative/s of the International Committee of the Red Cross shall receive the captives from the NPA custodial force and thereafter turn them over to the immediate members of the families of the captives through the members of the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda in the presence of interested GRP officials, human rights advocates, Church people and other personages.

3.6 The NDFP Negotiating Panel or the Merardo Arce Command may decide to cease or suspend the release of the captives or modify the release procedure due to any circumstance or reason that may endanger the lives of the NPA custodial force and the captives. The

Merardo Arce Command shall authorize its forces to investigate and determine the presence and activities of any enemy surveillance on the ground or from the air or any form of infiltration, ambush, sabotage or blocking teams which will endanger the lives of the NPA custodial force and the captives and warrant a suspension of the release of the captives or a modification of the release procedure.

4. Major Roberto Bernal and Sgt. Alipio Lozada shall be released on the moral, humanitarian and political basis in Section 2 and in accordance with the safe procedure defined in Section 3 hereof, preferably within the period of March 22 to April 19, 1999.
5. The foregoing initial guidelines and details in the implementation of this Memorandum of Agreement have been agreed upon by the NDFP Negotiating Panel, the humanitarian mission and Sen. Legarda in order to start the safe, expeditious and appropriate process in the release of the above-named captives. Said details are highly confidential and shall not be revealed to any unauthorized person or party to ensure the effective implementation of the release procedure and the safety of the captives and their custodians.

Done in Utrecht, The Netherlands, March 17, 1999.

Arch. Fernando Capalla
Head
Humanitarian Mission

Sen. Loren Legarda Luis G. Jalandoni
Chairperson
NDFP Negotiating Panel

Bishop Wilfredo D. Manlapaz
Member

Fidel V. Agcaoili
Member

Msgr. Mario Valle
Member

Coni K. Ledesma
Member

Rev. Pedro Lamata
Member

Antonio Zumel
Senior Adviser

Atty. Jesus G. Dureza
Legal Adviser

Atty. Romeo T. Capulong
General Counsel

Prof. Jose Ma. Sison
Chief Political Consultant

100 Years of Struggle Against US Imperialism

By Jose Maria Sison

Chairman, International Network for Philippine Studies

February 3, 1999

This was a message of solidarity to the International Conference of 100 Years of Struggle Against US Imperialism, sponsored by the Congress of Teachers and Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND).

In the spirit of anti-imperialist solidarity, I convey warmest greetings to all the participants in the International Conference on 100 Years of Struggle Against US Imperialism.

We recall the outbreak of the Filipino-American War on February 4, 1899 and we celebrate the people's revolutionary struggle against US imperialism. We draw inspiration from our revolutionary forebears, honor our people who persevere in the struggle, learn lessons from the past and current circumstances and define the tasks for completing the struggle for national liberation and democracy.

In celebrating the 30th anniversary of its reestablishment, the Communist Party of the Philippines has expressed the resolve to continue the national-democratic revolution through protracted people's war against US imperialism and the local reactionaries even if this revolution should take another hundred years.

For as long as the Filipino people remain under US imperialist domination, we do not cease to wage all forms of revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy. As the enemy never gets tired of oppressing and exploiting them, the people can never get tired of resisting oppression and exploitation and fighting for national and social liberation.

The absence of genuine national independence and the reign of greed and terror in our country are the bitter consequence of the successful US war of aggression. The US destroyed the Philippine

republic that issued from the armed revolution against Spanish colonialism. The US imposed its own colonial rule on the people and granted them nominal independence on July 4, 1946, only after making sure that it could continue to profit from semicolonial rule through the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

I commend CONTEND for celebrating the Filipino people's armed resistance against the US war of aggression and the continuing US imperialist domination. This celebration comes into sharp contrast with that of the big comprador-landlord state which has spent a lot of tax money in order to gloss over the people's revolutionary struggle and the need to continue it.

The US war of aggression

Since the beginning of its alliance with the Aguinaldo-led revolutionary movement against Spain, the US had been driven by its monopoly capitalist interests to deceive and betray the Filipino leaders, wage a war of aggression against the Filipino people and take over the Philippines as its own colony. It coveted the Philippines as a strategic post for turning the Pacific Ocean into an "American lake" and for allowing US monopolies to take a slice of the "Chinese melon".

The historians present in your conference can tell you all the facts about the double-faced dealings of US agents in Singapore and Hongkong, the arrogant and clever military maneuvers of the US forces in Manila, the pre-arranged surrender of the Spanish authorities and the mock battle for Intramuros, the Proclamation of Benevolent Assimilation, the US-Spanish Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898 ceding the Philippines to the US for USD20 million, and the US provocation at San Juan bridge on February 4, 1899.

To impose themselves on the Filipino people, the US aggressors arrested, tortured and killed hundreds of thousands of Filipinos.

Millions of our people suffered forced relocations and food blockades. The genocidal methods previously used against the American Indians were used in the conquest of the Philippines and would be used again and again in the '40s and '50s and from 1969 to the present. The same methods were also used against the Vietnamese people during the '60s and '70s.

The estimate of Filipino casualties from the US war of aggression ranges from 250,000 to one million or more than 10 percent of the entire population. General Bell testified before the US Congress that at least 600,000 Filipinos were killed in Luzon alone. Until now, there has been neither the full satisfaction of the people's demand for revolutionary justice nor official apology from the US government over its dastardly crimes against the Filipino people and entire humanity.

Moved by the spirit of patriotism and by democratic aspirations, the Filipino people fought heroically against the US imperialists. The Filipino-American war lasted from 1899 to 1902 when the main forces of the revolutionary army were destroyed or their leaders capitulated. But the armed resistance, including that of the Moro people, continued in many regions up to 1916.

At great cost to Filipino lives and property, the US imperialists were able to conquer and impose direct colonial rule on the Philippines. This persisted until the Japanese imperialists invaded and occupied the country in 1942. The interimperialist war was a big opportunity for the people to build their own independent revolutionary armed strength. But the subjective forces of the revolution could develop strength only in Central Luzon, Manila and Southern Tagalog regions.

Continuing US domination

The US reconquered the Philippines in 1945. In advance of the grant of bogus independence to the country, it made sure that US

military bases and US property rights and privileges would persist. And yet it tried vainly to postpone the shift to semicolonial rule. However, confronted by an armed revolutionary movement, it relented and gave way to such a rule in 1946, with national administration conceded to the politicians and bureaucrats of the big compradors and landlords in subordination to US imperialism.

The key factors for continued US control over the Philippine neocolonial state are the following: the conversion of the economy into a semifeudal one since the beginning of the century, dependence of the coercive apparatuses of the state on US indoctrination and military supplies, the pro-imperialist training of puppet political, business and cultural personnel and the merger of imperialist and feudal culture.

In the semicolonial political system, the people have suffered a series of puppet regimes. The US is the most responsible for the the oppressive and exploitative policies of all these puppet regimes, from Roxas to Estrada, and for the prolonged Marcos fascist dictatorship. The US dictates all major policies either bilaterally or through US-controlled multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO. The US remains as the No. 1 imperialist power dominating the Philippines even as it has found it convenient since the '60s to take cover behind multilateral arrangements.

The US military bases have been closed down since 1992 because after all US military control is effected through the puppet military and police forces. US military bases in nearby countries and spy satellites are being used as additional instruments for US control over the Philippine archipelago. Furthermore, there is the US-Japan security partnership. But the US is always interested in further entrenching and multiplying its military control over the country. Thus, it is pushing the Visiting Forces Agreement, which the people are now vigorously opposing.

So far, US imperialism has succeeded in keeping the Filipino people under its domination, not only because of its superior military force but also because of its capabilities for deception. In the face of US imperialism, the old democratic revolution was not only limited by its inferior arms but was confounded by a foreign power that used bourgeois liberal slogans to advance its monopoly capitalist interests.

To this day, US imperialism misrepresents itself as the teacher and prime example of democracy and its Filipino marionettes in the political, economic and cultural fields echo and ape the misrepresentation. In this regard, we have always taken pains to distinguish the official ideology of pro-imperialist conservative liberalism from the anticolonial and anti-imperialist progressive liberalism that has characterized the best of petty-bourgeois thinking since the old democratic revolution.

US imperialism and the local reactionaries use the subjectivist and opportunist ideology and language of the petty bourgeois to sugarcoat imperialist as well as subservient policies, trample upon the basic national and democratic rights of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and attack the new-democratic revolution. They talk about free enterprise and individual rights in the abstract to obfuscate the reality of imperialist and class exploitation and oppression.

The neoliberal language of so-called globalization is nothing but a recycling of the antiquated bourgeois-liberal catchphrase, “free marketplace of goods and ideas”. It is calculated to assail and put aside the Marxist-Leninist critique of modern imperialism, exactly at a time that the rapidly rising social character of the productive forces through the adoption of higher technology by the imperialists in their own countries makes the capitalist relations of production and the relations of the imperialists and the oppressed peoples more untenable than ever before.

In a conspicuously sinking “emerging” market like the Philippines, the mainstream exponents of “free trade” globalization

insist on using neoliberal language. But marginal though special ideological and political agents of the ruling system tout globalization as an irresistibly new fact of life, as something that supposedly makes the anti-imperialist and class struggle irrelevant and outdated and as something that can be reformed for making a “civil society”.

Since the late '70s these pseudoprogressive recruits of imperialism and local reaction from the petty bourgeoisie have claimed that the Philippine social economy is no longer predominantly agrarian and semifeudal but an industrial capitalist one because of the supposed economic development under the big comprador-landlord Marcos regime. Since the coming to power of Ramos in 1992, they have proceeded to claim that the Philippine economy is so tightly integrated into the global economy that the question of national sovereignty and independence has become passe.

The current worsening crisis of the world capitalist system is bringing to the surface the basic contradictions between the imperialist countries and the oppressed peoples, among the imperialist countries themselves, and between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries. The illusion of free trade globalization is dissipating. The reality of nation-states and distinct modes of production are more conspicuous than ever before. The whole world is now in social and political turmoil. This is the eve of social revolution on an unprecedented scale.

We are clearly still in the era of modern imperialism and the proletarian revolution and not in a nebulous era of “globalization” or in a utopia of liberalism where everything is for sale and the invisible hand of self-interest peaceably settles everything in the market. In fact, the crisis of overproduction is already driving the imperialists to wrangle over the shrinking market.

Most important development

So far in Philippine history, the most important development by way of continuing the unfinished democratic revolution against the imperialists and the local reactionaries is the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines under the guidance of the theory of the revolutionary proletariat and its adoption and implementation of the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

In representation of the revolutionary proletariat, the CPP brings to a new and higher level the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy. It is armed with the ideological weapon to contend with and defeat the fallacies and lies of imperialism, revisionism and reaction. It has also proven in deed for more than three decades that it has an effective strategy and tactics to preserve and accumulate the revolutionary armed strength of the people.

Without the ongoing new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war, there is no hope for the Filipino people to liberate themselves from the clutches of foreign and feudal domination. Foreign domination would continue for another 400 years and US domination would continue for another hundred years if all that we did in that course of time were to seek accommodation, reforms and civility from a ruling system that is inherently oppressive and violent against the toiling masses.

For the Filipino people to achieve national liberation and democracy, there must be organized forces, including a revolutionary party, a people's army, mass organizations and organs of political power to carry on the struggle and defeat the enemy. Fighting the enemy also involves fighting its special ideological and political agents who are used either to penetrate and liquidate from within the revolutionary forces or attack them from the flanks or behind.

The Second Great Rectification Movement within the Communist Party of the Philippines is of great importance not only for the Party

itself but also for the broad masses of the people. It is an educational movement to heighten revolutionary resolve against the enemy and to rectify both malicious and honest errors. It is also a practical constructive movement to further strengthen the revolutionary forces and the people in their struggle.

In the new-democratic revolution, there is always the need for an echelon of alliances: the basic alliance of the workers and peasants, the progressive alliance of the toiling masses and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the patriotic alliance of the progressive forces and the middle bourgeoisie and, whenever possible and necessary, the unstable temporary alliance with sections of the reactionaries—all for the purpose of isolating and destroying the power of the enemy, the most reactionary puppet clique of the imperialists at every given time.

Front runner in the anti-imperialist struggle

By staying on the road of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war, the CPP builds the strength of the people to win victory and march further on to socialism. In the whole world today, the Filipino people are among front runners in the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples for national liberation and democracy against imperialism and the local reactionaries.

In the past, the Filipino people had the distinction of being the first nation in Asia to wage and win the old democratic revolution against a colonial power. Again, they have the distinction of being among the most persevering and most successful in waging the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. They serve as a torch bearer of international significance in the transition from the 20th to the 21st century.

This transition is one from a century of great victories of socialist and national liberation movements, temporarily defeated due to revisionist betrayal, to a century of greater struggles and greater

victories of the world proletariat and oppressed peoples. It is pure nonsense to think that history ends with monopoly capitalism and bourgeois liberalism.

The scientific basis for our revolutionary optimism is the chronic and ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the irrepressible efforts of the revolutionary forces to learn from history, to resist oppression and exploitation and to carry the revolutionary struggle forward. #