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Editorial

State terrorism intensifies as the Arroyo regime's desperation worsens

The November 16 Hacienda Luisita massacre will go down in history as one of the most heinous crimes ever against the worker and peasant masses. It brought to the fore anew the cruel bondage of workers and peasants and the brutal use of state terror to trample on their most basic rights.

The people seethe with anger against the Cojuangco clan and the Arroyo regime's armed minions for their wanton killing of unarmed workers and peasants and violating the democratic rights of oppressed and exploited classes to form unions and to strike, organize and engage in collective action.

The Hacienda Luisita massacre signifies the intensifying use of state terrorism against the people—employing violence against workers and peasants to suppress their rights and muzzle their cries. The use of terror by the state is not an indication of its strength but of its further deterioration and desperation in the face of the intensifying crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

With its own increasing indulgence in militarism, US imperialism is thoroughly behind the Arroyo regime in its heightened use of terror. The blood shed in Hacienda Luisita had hardly dried when US



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imperialism honored Arroyo, proclaiming her queen of “counter-terrorism” in the Asia-Pacific.

Arroyo has likewise become even more dependent on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). In exchange for the support she enjoys from the AFP, she goes all out to secure the loyalty of military officials by appointing retired officers to the most coveted positions in the bureaucracy. She not only turns a blind eye to military abuses against the people but tirelessly weaves lies to cover them up.

The people can never allow state terrorism to be perpetrated with impunity. Brutality in Hacienda Luisita and elsewhere in the country should rightfully be confronted with a powerful mass movement of workers, peasants and other democratic forces. The guilty must be held accountable and punishment must be meted out to them.

Workers and peasants must be reached, aroused and mobilized in their numbers. We must unite them to oppose the antiworker and anti-peasant policies pushed by the Arroyo regime. Special attention should be given to the particular

and general issues that the Hacienda Luisita mill and farm workers are fighting for.

We must attain the broadest support and sympathy of the middle forces, including the churches, in condemning the massacre and the growing list of human rights violations. We must put a stop to the bondage of workers and peasants and support their struggles.

Victims of the Hacienda Luisita massacre and their relatives must also file the appropriate cases with the Joint Monitoring Committee that supervises the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). They likewise have every right to demand investigations in all possible venues, such as the reactionary congress. We must do all we can to further expose and assail not only the massacre but the Cojuangcos’ decades-long abuses and all antiworker and anti-peasant policies of the reactionary government.

The Hacienda Luisita massacre further fires up the anger of the worker and peasant masses against the reactionary state and the mer-




cenary AFP.

In the face of the intense social crisis and the further hardships imposed by the Arroyo regime on the Filipino people, we can expect ever broader economic and political mass struggles by workers and peasants, and the continuous expansion and strengthening of their revolutionary and progressive organizations.

The reactionary state is increasingly mired in a grave economic and political crisis. It is confronted by its own bankruptcy, turmoil within the AFP and PNP due to huge corruption scandals and grave factionalism as well as tumult within the ranks of reactionaries due to large-scale fraud in the previous election, widespread corruption and intense jockeying over spoils, privileges and benefits.

Above all, it faces the intensifying resistance of an increasingly oppressed and impoverished people. In the face of the reactionary state’s desperation, it is entirely possible for it to employ state terror once again the way it did in the Hacienda Luisita massacre. The Filipino people must respond with more widespread protests and the intensification of their armed and unarmed resistance. AB

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Rampant violations of the CARHRIHL

Unbridled violations of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) by the reactionary state's armed forces continued without letup in November.

In North Cotabato. Elements of the 39th IB under Col. Arnold Quiapo summarily executed Renante "Ka Benjie" Ediza, a Red fighter, on the morning of November 21 in Barangay Kisante, Makilala. Ka Benjie, who is a member of the New People's Army (NPA) Magtanggol Roque Command was cornered by the military in a house along with three youths—Josephus Ramada, Jeramie Dante and Alibaoi Musa. Despite his having raised his hands in surrender, the soldiers stabbed Ka Benjie and shot him in the head several times until his brains splattered on the floor. According to the Merardo Arce Command of the NPA in Southern Mindanao, the military violated Article 14 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the CARHRIHL because Ka Benjie was hors de combat. An autopsy on Ka Benjie's body revealed that he was first stabbed before being shot at close range.

Ramada, Dante and Musa also complained of being tortured by the military after their capture. The military rejected a request from Ramada's parents to have him examined by a doctor before turning him over to the police.

In Albay. Joel Barrameda Baclao, regional coordinator of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR) in Bicol and coordinator as well of Andurog-Bicol, a disaster relief program of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), was shot outside his house in Daraga, Albay on the

night of November 10.

A week before the incident, Baclao received a warning to be careful because he was supposedly in the military's order of battle. In an earlier incident, a group of soldiers came to Baclao's house on September 26 to ransack it but were prevented from doing so by Baclao's father-in-law.

In Rizal. Ten elements of the 80th IB Alpha Coy led by 1Lt. Mamintal Demapinto abducted farmers Amador Estanislao, 42 and his nephew Rolando de la Cruz, 29 from their house in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan in the early morning of November 9. The soldiers posed as Red fighters. Estanislao and dela Cruz were found dead the following day in Sitio Lawa, Pinugay, Baras, Rizal, each with two bullet wounds in the head.

In a statement dated November 12, the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command (NAAC) of the NPA in Rizal said that the 80th IB sought to avoid blame for the summary execution not just by posing as guerrillas but by throwing Estanislao and de la Cruz's bodies in Baras, Rizal, near the camps of the 59th IB and 419th PNP Provincial Mobile Group. The 80th IB's camp is located in Rodriguez, Rizal.

Lieutenant Demapinto, who led the abduction and summary execution, is a former element of the 204th Bde and was trained by the butcher Gen. Jovito Palparan on

the brutal suppression of the people's rights.

The 80th IB, to which Demapinto belongs, was also responsible for the shooting of four young girls aged 10 to 14 and their driver in April 2004 in San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal on the ludicrous allegation that they were members of the New People's Army.

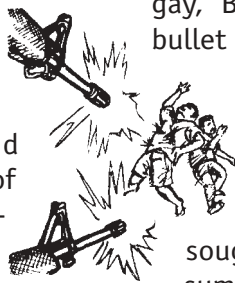
In Batangas. Ten people accused of being NPA guerrillas were illegally arrested by elements of the Philippine Air Force 740th Strike Wing on the morning

of November 6 in Barangay San Felipe, Cuenca. Danilo Mayo, Mary Ann Vibat, Ronnie Ferrer, Marichu Cataquiz, Paterno Atienza, Precy Balmes, Christopher Malabanan, Rufino Arante Tabares, Lijan Gunmay and Analiza Espiritu came from Abra de Ilog, Mindoro Occidental and were aboard a jeep when three vehicles blocked their way in Batangas.

According to witnesses, the victims were beaten up, kicked and their arms twisted behind their backs. They were forced into the blocking vehicles. The timely exposure of the incident compelled the AFP to admit on November 9 that those arrested were indeed in its custody.

Nine of those arrested, dubbed the "Mindoro 9," have been implicated by the military in NPA attacks on the AFP in 2002 and 2003. Contrary to the AFP's claims, no arrest warrant has been issued by the Mindoro Regional Trial Court on any of the victims. The ten victims of illegal arrest have yet to be allowed to communicate with their families and their lawyers.

In Davao del Norte. Three Ata-





Manobo tribespeople were killed and nine were wounded when paramilitary elements belonging to Alamarara rained bullets on their homes at around 1 a.m. on November 4 in Sitio Kapatagan, Barangay Gupitan, Kapalong.

The slain victims were Dao Mamborao, Letty Mamborao and Rosaly Sumpo, while the wounded were Linda Sambag, Dikay Tiwog, Colas Mamatao, Ging-ging Mamboto, Juanito Tiwog, An-an Mamatao, Igay Mamatao and two unnamed children ages 1 and 2 years old.

Witnesses say the massacre was the handiwork of six elements of Alamarara led by Romy Aragil, a soldier under the 72nd IB.

In Kalinga. Elements of the

21st IB mercilessly tortured and killed Bagtang "Ka Awi" Bulawit, 27, on November 2. Bulawit, a Red fighter under the NPA Lejo Cawilan Command in Kalinga and Apayao, was unarmed when he was arrested by a unit of the 21st IB under 1Lt. Arvin Encinas in Sitio Kilayon, Barangay Balantoy, Balbalan at around 11 a.m. He was interrogated by Encinas and 2Lt. Benito Ramos, commander of the 21st IB Charlie Coy. Failing to extract any information from Bulawit, they tortured him and eventually killed him at around 1:30 p.m. Two other officers, 2Lt. Manuel Dumpao and 2Lt. Aurelio Kigis of the 49th Separate Rifle Coy, were also involved in torturing and killing him.

Bulawit's body was found hang-

ing on a tree trunk between Sitio Kilayon and Sitio Ligayan with 13 bullet wounds and signs of torture.

In a statement, Lejo Cawilan Command spokesperson Ka Tipon Gil-ayab said that the 21st IB along with the 77th IB were also responsible for other human rights violations in Kalinga. On August 25, four civilians were wounded in a strafing incident by elements of the 21st IB in Balantoy town. In December 2003, elements of the 77th IB killed Victor Balais, a hunter whom they mistook for an NPA guerrilla. Prior to this, in March 2003, elements of the 77th IB also mercilessly interrogated and refused to extend medical attention to Leonard Angid, a wounded Red fighter. **AB**

The heinous Hacienda Luisita massacre

The massacre of unarmed strikers and their supporters in Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac City on November 16 was the month's most marked violation of human rights.

The entire country was stunned when about a thousand soldiers, policemen and paid goons of the Cojuangco family violently dispersed striking hacienda workers along with their supporters. Reminiscent of the Mendiola Massacre in 1987, police elements and three battalions of the 703rd Infantry Brigade used two armored personnel carriers, ten military trucks, tear gas and high-powered firearms such as M60 machine guns to demolish the picket line of the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) and the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (CATLU), then on the eleventh day of their strike.

Due to the indiscriminate shooting, 14 demonstrators were confirmed killed—nine of them due to bullet wounds in various parts of their bodies. Among those killed were Boy Versola; Jun David, 27, of Barangay Cutcut; Juan Sanchez, 20, Adriano Caballero, Jesus Valdez, 30, all of Barangay Balete; Jhaire Basilio, 21, of Barangay Mapalacsiao, Tarlac city; Jaime Pastidio of Barangay Motrico, La Paz, Tarlac; Jesus Laza, 34, of Barangay Parang, Concepcion, Tarlac; and Neng Balete.

Seven bodies have so far been found. The bodies of others whose killings were reported by witnesses have yet to be recovered. According to ULWU and CATLU members, 39 *sakadas* or migrant farm workers are also missing in the aftermath of the bloody dispersal. The farm workers were recruited by three contractors from the Visayas and Mindanao.

One hundred eleven people sustained wounds in various parts of their bodies. Many of them were brought to various hospitals in Tarlac City, with others undergoing treatment in their own homes. Among those wounded were Florida Sibayan, Luisito Versola, Jesus Sosa, Sajid Ramos, Berto Sidora, Ricky Mendoza and a councilor of Barangay Mapalacsiao.

One hundred eleven people were illegally arrested and detained—16 of them at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-Tarlac (CIDG) and the majority at Camp Macabulos, San Vicente, Tarlac City.

Prior to this, KARAPATAN had also recorded cases of harassment and intimidation, several instances of assault and dispersal of the workers' picket line and the destruction and seizure of property of 78 people in relation to the strike. **AB**

Crocodile tears

The Arroyo regime and the AFP are shedding crocodile tears over the tragic loss of hundreds of lives and thousands of homes and livelihoods due to landslides and massive flash floods after tropical storms “Violeta,” “Winnie,” and “Yoyong” battered the country in November and December. The events have underscored the people’s vulnerability, especially those living at the foot of mountains. Most affected were northern Quezon, Aurora province and parts of Nueva Ecija—areas where indiscriminate logging is rampant.

The regime and the AFP were quick to blame the calamity on small-time loggers who were only forced to abandon farming and work for huge logging companies after big logging concessionaires seized their lands.

The regime and the AFP strain to conceal the reactionary govern-

ment’s role in permitting large-scale logging and the military’s responsibility for serving as security forces of big logging concessionaires. It is these companies’ long-standing large-scale and destructive operations that are the real reason behind the denudation of the forests and the deluges that

come in its wake.

The regime and the AFP have the gall to accuse the New People’s Army (NPA) of collaborating with logging companies. In fact, since 1969, the NPA, together with the people in the countryside and mountainous areas, have opposed both illegal and legalized tree cutting by big logging companies nationwide. To counter the unbridled denudation of the country’s forests, the NPA and other revolutionary forces have launched armed and unarmed campaigns against big logging concessionaires as well as mining companies owned by foreign capitalists and big bourgeois compradors.

NPA seizes 18 firearms in Bulacan

The New People’s Army (NPA) seized 18 high-powered firearms when it ambushed a platoon of the 56th IB’s Charlie Company on November 30 in Pasong Bangkal, San Ildefonso, Bulacan.

In a report, the NPA-Eastern Bulacan Command said that the Red fighters confiscated an M60, an M203, three M14s and 13 M16s after they overpowered the soldiers who were undertaking combat operations against the NPA. Also seized were a GPS receiver, a Motorola radio, packs and a number of valuable documents.

Up to 14 soldiers were killed in the ambush, including the commanding officer 1Lt. Ben Puyao. Six wounded soldiers who surrendered were treated well by the Red fighters.

Comrade Anacleto Butuan, a Red fighter from Calumpit, Bulacan, was martyred. Two other NPA guerrillas were also slightly wounded.

56th IB involved in military operation, not in rescue efforts

The NPA in Eastern Bulacan likewise strongly refuted accusations by the AFP and the Arroyo regime that the unit of the 56th IB it ambushed was conducting rescue operations.

To elicit the people’s sympathy, AFP and Malacañang spokespersons claimed that the soldiers were helping in the rescue of victims of successive typhoons that hit the country in the latter part of November. The regime and the AFP shamelessly re-

peated this lie to portray the NPA as a ruthless armed force that violates rules of war strictly forbidding attacks on units carrying out humanitarian missions.

The concerned AFP unit was never part of any relief effort. At the time of the ambush, it was on a combat mission under Oplan Thunder, a military campaign conducted by the 56th IB against the NPA in Bulacan. This was borne out by documents that contained details of the operation as well as maps, codes used by the units involved and other materials seized by the NPA from Lieutenant Puyao’s person. The campaign covered the towns of Pandi, Angat, Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad.

A week before the ambush, the comrades had retreated towards San Ildefonso to evade Oplan Thunder’s opening salvo. Unknown to them, a section from the 56th IB’s Charlie Company had already positioned itself in the area and was getting ready to head towards Doña Remedios Trinidad. It was moving in coordination with the battalion’s Alpha Company that was to take off from Talagyo, San Ildefonso and Bravo Company that was to maneuver from Akle, San Ildefonso, and another section of the 56th IB’s Charlie Coy that was then positioned in Barangay Maronquillo, San Rafael, Bulacan. The AFP units were to rendezvous at the site of a suspected NPA encampment in Kamatsing, Doña Remedios Trinidad in three days.

AB

These companies, in collusion with reactionaries in power, have been responsible for denuding the country's forests since the early 20th century. So greatly drawn are the reactionary classes to the oodles of money they have amassed from logging that they have denuded over 29 million hectares of forest land since the 1950s. Every year, they fell up to 200,000 trees that they do not replace. This has resulted in the erosion of up to a billion cubic meters of fertile soil that could otherwise be farmed and the death of up to 30% of the country's rivers.

Today, only less than a million hectares of forest land is left in the country.

These companies export the wood from these forests mainly to Japan and the US—a trade that has been encouraged by successive puppet regimes. Since the 1990s, both illegal and legalized logging have gained renewed momentum under the liberalization policy zealously pushed by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Since the beginning, the Communist Party of the

Philippines, the NPA and all revolutionary forces have taken a clear stand against the large-scale destruction of the environment wrought by the expropriation and greed of foreign and local capitalists in collusion with the reactionary government. As a result of the NPA's efforts, parts of forest lands in Northern Luzon and Mindanao have been preserved.

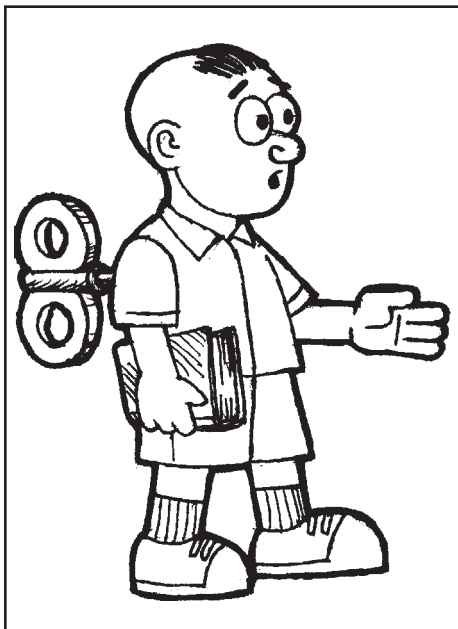
The NPA actively opposes the forcible eviction of peasants and national minorities from the forests to facilitate the entry of logging and mining companies. It punishes military units that provide security to these companies. To the best of its ability, the NPA directly bans logging operations of big companies within guerrilla zones. The NPA has, in many instances, destroyed equipment owned by these logging companies to stop their operations.

On the other hand, the NPA implements agrarian revolution to encourage small-time loggers who work for these big companies to resume farming or look for other means of subsistence. **AB**

Philippine Education

Still commercialized and geared towards foreign interests

Among Gloria Arroyo's rather fantastic promises in her June State of the Nation Address was "education for all"—a despicable attempt to placate the youth's simmering discontent over her rotten and puppet regime. The regime has neither intention nor interest to change the commercialized, colonial and repressive education that has long prevailed in the country.



Exorbitant costs of education. A study by the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) reveals that a family spends up to P10,000 yearly for various educational expenses in sending a child to public elementary or secondary school. College education is even more costly. At the minimum, tuition in a state college or university comes to P3,100 a year. But a student still needs to cough up P6,900 a month (or P34,500 per semester) for other expenses.

With the budget for education progressively reduced annually, tuition fees in public schools have correspondingly increased year after year. In fact, since 1998, tuition fees in

public colleges and universities have risen by a bigger percentage than in private schools.

But if tuition fees in public schools are exorbitant, those in private schools are sky-high. In private schools, one has to pay P22,000 for tuition and other fees per semester. The P65,000 semestral tuition fee in exclusive schools is sheer highway robbery. In the last five years, tuition fees have gone up a total of 65%, while the usual miscellaneous fees have gone up 140%.

Private schools rake in whopping revenues. Up to 952 colleges and universities are stock corporations—that is, profit-oriented. The biggest ones, which are managed by the biggest businessmen, rank among the country's top 1,000 corporations. They include Lucio Tan's University of the East, Alfonso Yuchengco's Mapua Institute of Technology, Henry Sy's Asia Pacific College and Emilio Yap's Centro Escolar University. In 2003, nine private schools with combined earnings of P1.13 billion landed in the top 1,000 corporations.

The reactionary government has long granted private schools absolute freedom to increase tuition and other

The teaching of history and other social sciences—subjects that have the potential to instill patriotism and militancy—has, on the other hand, been practically dispensed with.

fees. This fact dates back to 1982 when the Marcos dictatorship passed the Education Act. In 1997, the Higher Education Modernization Act (HEMA) was passed, empowering the board of regents of public schools to increase fees.

Like previous reactionary regimes, the Arroyo regime has no intention of allotting adequate funds for education. The 2003 national budget provides ₱130 billion or only 30% of the GDP, for education—a mere half of the percentage recommended by the United Nations. If the regime gets its way, it would provide no more than the same amount for education in next year's budget. Based on the latest price increases and depreciation of the peso, the real value of the ₱130 billion education budget comes to only ₱74 billion. The ₱16.69 billion allocated for 111 public universities and colleges is actually worth a mere ₱9.51 billion in real terms.

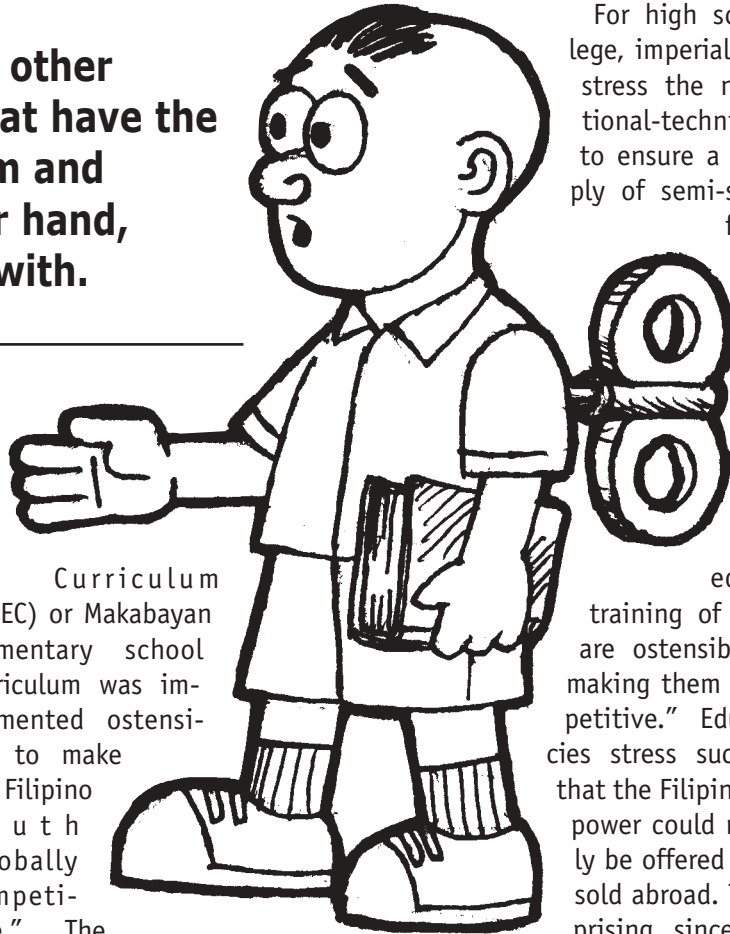
Education for foreign interests.

The reactionary state's major educational policies continue to serve imperialist interests. Schools mold the consciousness of Filipino children, inculcating the kind of thinking and worldview that rationalize the present semi-colonial and semifeudal social system. They prepare a few to take charge of the reactionary and puppet government and train others to serve as managers and technocrats of monopoly corporations. The greater majority are trained to become subservient workers willing to receive meager wages.

Under the "globalization" slogan, the 2002 Revitalized Basic Education

Curriculum (RBEC) or Makabayan elementary school curriculum was implemented ostensibly to make the Filipino youth "globally competitive." The number of core subjects was reduced to five—English, Science, Mathematics, Filipino and "Makabayan" which is a hodgepodge of Social Studies, Music, Physical Education, Health and Technology, and Home Economics. Tailored to the needs of large companies, the teaching of English, Math and Science was broadened. The teaching of history and other social sciences—subjects that have the potential to instill patriotism and militancy—has, on the other hand, been practically dispensed with.

The Arroyo regime implemented the RBEC with indecent haste because it was a condition for the approval of an IMF-WB loan for education sought by the regime. Without much ado, Arroyo likewise ordered the use of English as the medium of instruction in schools. Now, as they did then, imperialist institutions continue to recognize the importance of primary education in producing much-needed workers for the future.



For high school and college, imperialist institutions stress the need for vocational-technical education to ensure a sufficient supply of semi-skilled workers for monopoly corporations.

In line with the reactionary government's labor export policy, the education and training of Filipino youth are ostensibly directed at making them "globally competitive." Education agencies stress such training so that the Filipino youth's labor power could more effectively be offered in auction and sold abroad. This is not surprising, since it is overseas contract workers' remittances that continue to keep the country's bankrupt economy afloat.

To give a concrete example of how much education catering to foreign needs has been emphasized, the government has been promoting and supporting schools that provide nursing and caregiver training programs since the US, Canada and the UK opened its doors to these workers. Within a year, up to 758 schools were set up to provide caregiver training. A total of 18,878 out of their 54,644 graduates immediately left for posting abroad.

Likewise, call center training schools are being set up to meet the growing needs of foreign monopoly corporations. The call center "industry" is now the only sector of the economy that creates new employment. Nonetheless, these companies are extremely exploitative especially since monopoly corporations established them to cut down on costs in their respective countries. AB

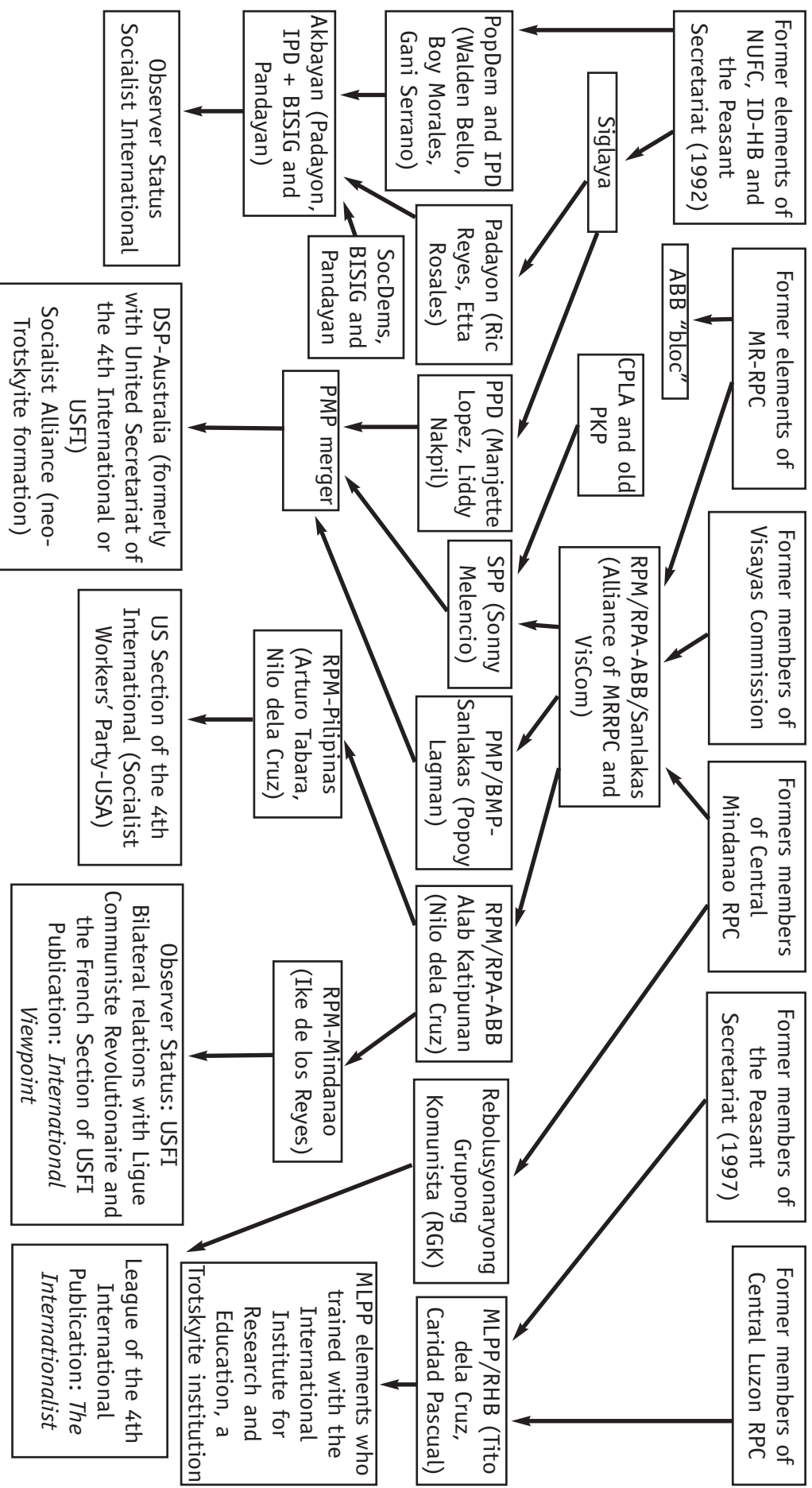
Links of counterrevolutionary groups with Trotskyites and Social Democrats

The following diagram shows the links of local petty-bourgeois reformist and pseudo-revolutionary groups with international Trotskyite and Social Democratic formations. From this can be gleaned the real class orientation of these pseudo-progressive or pseudo-revolutionary groups.

Worldwide, Social Democrats form petty bourgeois parties that ride on the coattails of big bourgeois parties. They pose as progressives and cry "socialism" to derail the struggle of the proletariat from the revolutionary path towards the path of reformism and parliamentarism. They are usually content with participating in elections and placing a few representatives in the bourgeois state. They serve as adornments to bourgeois democracy.

On the other hand, Trotskyites are known to sabotage mass movements by shouting slogans that are beyond the people's actual level of consciousness and inappropriate to the existing social system. At the same time, Trotskyites are also known to veer to the Right during ebbs in the people's political movement.

The diagram was prepared by the Communist Party of the Philippines International Department.



Response to the economic crisis: Revolution and socialist construction

Third part

China's foreign trade prospered on the basis of enhanced local industrial and agricultural production and the development of foreign relations. From being imperialist-controlled, a new system of foreign trade was begun by the Chinese people in 1949 based on equal relations and mutual benefit as well as on exchanging experiences and developing friendship with the other peoples of the world.

Trade relations between China and other socialist countries bloomed on the basis of internationalism and mutual cooperation. Trade with friendly countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America also prospered on the basis of mutual support for each other's economic development. Trade relations with capitalist countries likewise grew steadily.

With the economic development then prevailing, socialist China's exports grew in terms of volume and value. Within eight years up to 1973, the value of China's exports grew 2.5 times. Sixty-five percent of its exports consisted of manufactured goods. These included machine tools, construction equipment, scientific and measuring instruments, medical apparatuses, bicycles, sewing machines, cameras and other products. China also started to export oil after its production exceeded domestic requirements.

China strove to develop self-reliance. It geared its production towards ensuring the people and the economy's needs. It is also within this framework that China imported certain products such as steel, vehicles, ships, airplanes, machinery, rubber, fertilizer and insecticides, among others. Importation was carried out according to a plan to further develop production and ensure the supply of various kinds of

consumer products.

Enhancing people's incomes

Under socialism, the Chinese people lived with a sense of security even as their standard of living was continuously raised. The people's government under the leadership of the Communist Party ensured that the interests of the people were given principal consideration.

Upon the revolution's triumph, the unemployment problem was immediately addressed by providing jobs in accordance with the requirements of national reconstruction. The rapid advance of socialist construction enabled China to resolve the problem of unemployment. By 1957-58, China had no unemployment.

The wage system that was then implemented stressed the need to narrow the gap between the highest and the lowest grades of pay. At the same time, the state carried out wage increases. By 1973, the workers' average wage was 150% higher than that in the first year of socialist revolution. However, more than just increasing wages, China

ensured stability in the people's economic status by providing job security, stable prices and low rent for housing (only 4-5% of the monthly salary). There were likewise no income taxes and public services such as education and health were ensured.

The state provided insurance for childbearing, aging, injury or disability. Sick workers were given 40-100% of their wages, while the

state assumed their medical expenses. Workers who sustained job-related injuries received 100% of their wages while recuperating. Women were given 56 days of paid maternity leave, and the state shouldered all hospital expenses. The state also shouldered the costs of medical

services for sick relatives of workers in state enterprises. Retirees received 50-85% of their wages as pension. The state also allotted a social security fund for workers without having to deduct anything from their wages.

Under socialism, the income of peasants also grew steadily as production developed and the socialist transformation of agriculture was carried out. Production brigades and their families were able to accumulate grain reserves. Peasants' earnings were raised by increasing the price of grain and other agricultural products, while reducing the prices of industrial products



and agricultural machinery.

The people's standard of living in the cities and countryside grew several times higher with the increase in wages and purchasing power. This resulted in the higher consumption of meat, eggs, vegetables and other household items. While farmgate prices of agricultural products were raised to increase incomes in the countryside, the state maintained stable market prices for these products to protect the economic status of city and town dwellers. The socialist state continually reduced the prices of medicine. The prices of certain imported medicines were reduced by 80% from 1950 to 1973.

To solve the housing problem, the state immediately constructed apartments and other residential facilities for workers, a great advance in the standard of living of millions of workers who previously lived in shanties.

The Chinese people achieved a stable and happy life under the banner of socialist revolution from 1949 to 1976. They showed that liberation from crisis, poverty and hunger can only be realized with the destruction of the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system and the establishment of a state that is led by the proletariat and represents the interests of the broad masses of the people. **AB**

Transport strike

The nationwide transportation stoppage on November 25 successfully demonstrated the solid unity and strength of the labor and transport sectors as a political force that continues to challenge the oppressive government and ruling system. Even yellow and independent transport groups that refused to join transport strikes in the past joined the widespread mass action.

The transport strike led by the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsu-per at Opereytor Nationwide (PISTON) and the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) paralyzed 90-95% of transportation in Metro Manila as well as in the country's provinces and main cities and forced the leading oil companies to grant the transport sector a token discount.

Consequently, PISTON declared that it would continue to demand a significant rollback in oil prices and the repeal of the oil deregulation law. PISTON assailed the 50-centavo discount on diesel fuel approved by Caltex, Shell and Petron, because it was niggardly considering their superprofits in the last seven years as a result of the deregulation of the oil industry. Whatever benefits the discount provides will soon vanish into thin air because the oil giants will be hiking the prices of petroleum products anew.

In Metro Manila. Aside from PISTON, leading transport organizations such as PCDO-ACTO, FEJODAP and the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (IMBOA),

and even drivers of FX taxis joined the strike. Before noon on November 25, up to 90% of all public vehicles had stopped plying their routes.

In Central Luzon. PISTON reported that public transportation was 100% paralyzed in Bulacan, 80% in Nueva Ecija, 70% in Tarlac and 98% in Pampanga. One-hundred percent paralysis was also effected in Bataan, Zambales and Aurora.

In Pangasinan, 18 transportation groups joined the strike, including those not affiliated with PISTON.

In Northern Luzon. PISTON-Baguio paralyzed the city's three major routes from 7 a.m. until noon. Jeepneys plying routes to Benguet province also joined the strike.

In Southern Luzon. The Southern Tagalog Transport Sector Organization (STARTER) led the strike in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon, where 99% of all public utility vehicles joined the protest action.

Transportation was 99% para-

lyzed in Camarines Norte while 95% of jeepneys and tricycles and 100% of public utility buses and vans in Albay and 99% in Sorsogon did not ply their routes.

In the Visayas. PISTON-Panay paralyzed transportation and business in Iloilo City and the provinces of Iloilo, Aklan and Antique on November 24 and 25. In Iloilo City, 4,000 jeepneys and tricycles stopped plying their routes. Jeepneys, tricycles and ferryboats in the nearby island of Guimaras also joined the strike.

In Cebu, the three major transportation routes in the cities of Mandaue, Lapu-Lapu and Talisay were paralyzed. The strike was led by the Nagkahiusang Drayber sa Sugbo (NADSU).

In Negros Occidental, members of the United Negros Drivers Operators Center (UNDOC) launched a rally in Bacolod City.

In Mindanao. In Davao City, 94% of transportation was paralyzed when only 500 of the more than 9,000 jeepneys plied their routes. The protest action was led by the Transmission-PISTON and KMU.

In South Cotabato, Sultan Kudrat, Sarangani and General Santos City, 90% of transportation was paralyzed when most of the 8,000 tricycles and 3,000 jeepneys stopped plying their routes before noon. **AB**