

LIBERATION

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“DEVELOPMENT” MEANS OPPRESSION

The meaning of "development" under the Marcos dictatorship has become clear to thousands of Filipinos who are being driven out of their lands. In the wake of the bulldozers have come the giant multinational companies, the big landlords and ranchers, and massive infrastructure projects for their benefit.

In the mountains of Kalinga and Bontoc, a whole people and a deeply-rooted way of life face extinction with the implementation of the Chico River Basin Development Project.

Without the consultation of the people and despite their strong protests, the Marcos regime is proceeding to build a dam which would flood the homes, the ancestral lands, the sacred groves and forests of 20,000 families. There seems to be no logic to this planned destruction, except that the valleys owned by the Enriles, Puzons and Romualdezes will now be irrigated and be made more profitable. This is the logic of the reactionaries.

and the logic of a people is to

and to struggle against its oppressors and exploiters.

The Kalingas and the Pantoc - a strong, independent and brave people who were never subdued by the Spanish colonizers - have vowed not to
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OIL PRICES GO UP FOR SIXTH TIME

For the sixth time since martial law, oil companies (mostly foreign-owned), acting as a cartel, have jacked up the prices of oil products.

The dictator Marcos approved last May 14 a 20.13 increase per liter of gasoline and proportionate increases in prices of diesel oil, kerosene, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), industrial fuel oil, aviation turbine fuel oil, thinners, solvents and asphalts.

In less than three years of martial rule, Marcos has allowed the

and... as the breath
of life is still in us."

"My people are giving serious thought to armed violence," Bishop Francisco Claver, a native of Bontoc, said in a letter to Marcos last April 25, 1975, "and they are asking whom they should approach for arms."

The minorities of the Mountain Provinces have begun to realize that the road of armed struggle is the only road open to them.

Every attempt to discuss the building of the dam with the President and his officials has been met with contempt, derision or indifference.

"When some of us went down to Manila to meet the President, we were offered... plenty of canned goods. We were also told to wear pants, not G-strings," they related.

FALSE PROMISES

They have discovered that they cannot rely on government assurances that the displaced families would be compensated for their losses and that the dam would not harm other towns.

Bishop Claver relates what the people found in the relocated areas of Pantabangan and Ambuklao: "We saw people without a will... still crying over the loss of their land. We spoke with house holders who, until now, 20 years later, are still waiting for promised compensation for destroyed property."

Having a sophisticated grasp of the science of hydraulics, the Bontocs also know that the dammed-up waters will trigger slides, eat up land, and cause heavy silting in other areas.

PROTEST MASS

Democratic and progressive sectors in the country are mounting a protest movement against the Chico River Basin Development Project.

Various religious groups are organizing a Mass on June 12, Independence Day, to make public their support for the just struggle of the Kalingas and the Bontocs.

In a statement, they denounced the lack of people's participation in the decision-making on the project; the implementation of economic development in violation of the people's culture and traditions; and the destruction of a "communal way of life."

...to make way for the construction of a Ford auto stamping plant.

The whole barrio was a progressive, model community with four churches, 12 public school buildings where college courses were offered, and 500 residential houses. It has now been fragmented and dispersed to various relocation sites.

NO COMPENSATION

No compensation was given for the damage incurred, except for a few sawn-it boards and some pieces of lumber to replace the demolished hollow-block walls, sidings and glazed-tile structures of the houses. Up to now, water and toilet facilities have not been provided for the relocated families.

The school buildings, which were moved to Bo. Sisiwan by the mountain, can only be reached through a makeshift dirt road with dangerous cliffs on the side. There are no transportation facilities for the children, as promised by the EPZA.

The school house faces the sea and receives the direct impact of monsoon rains and typhoons.

Worst of all, the relocation sites are temporary in nature and most of the families face the prospect of more relocations. Several have been relocated twice already.

Those who protested were accused of crimes fabricated by EPZA officials. Meanwhile, the huge mover-bulldozers rolled in to "demolish the barrio in the interest of progress."

In Bukidnon, the sugar plantations are moving in with all the ferocity and greed of a school of piranha.

Five thousand hectares in the municipality of Danggagan and ten thousand in Salawagan have been taken over by the Bukidnon Sugar Company. It is interesting to note that among the major stockholders of this company is the Ang Silangan Investment and Managers headed by Roberto S. Benedicto, a known Marcos dummy.

The Philippine Packing Corporation is claiming the entire farm land on the plateau of Bukidnon - a total of 120,000 hectares. Thousands of independent farmers have been living and working on these lands for many years.

gasoline (both regular and premium) by over 330 per cent.

To impress upon the public the "necessity" of the increase and to make himself appear a hero, Marcos first allowed the Oil Industry Commission to approve the increase, then he revoked this decision, and after a few days, finally approved a slightly reduced increase himself.

As usual, the oil companies have claimed that they incurred "heavy losses." However, they refused once again to open their books of accounts, thus presenting the public from checking their claims to "losses."

The "losses" are allegedly due to "the increase in the price of crude oil."

The crude oil processed and used here comes mainly from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), where the mother companies of the local oil firms drill for oil.

As the oil cartel unjustly did in past oil price hikes, the increase in the price of crude oil can no longer be blamed on the Arab countries or the OPEC. For, as Oil Industry Commission Chairman Ponciano Mathay himself admits, the OPEC has in fact been lowering its posted price on crude oil this past year.



ken in their multinational imperialist character.

The multinational oil companies have no justification for increasing the price of crude oil. In fact, they have been inflating crude oil prices, and ultimately, oil prices, in order to make huge profits.

The profits of 30 major US and European oil companies in 1963 were 70.9 per cent more than in the previous year. Their profits rose further in 1974.

For example, Mobil, a giant US oil company with a local subsidiary, amassed a profit of \$1,040 million in 1974, as against \$849 million in 1973.

Its greed not satiated, Mobil declared in the March issue of its local official organ that its rates of return (or profit) must be higher in the future.

SCAPEGOAT

Aside from the crude oil price increase, the OIC cited the increase of tariff duty on oil products as a reason for approving the oil price hike.

The funds from this government tax will be used to support the local oil exploration, a field of enterprise again mainly under the control of multinational oil firms.

Looking for a new scapegoat, the dictator Marcos has accused the public of wasteful consumption of gasoline and electricity. Conserve gas, he says, but the public has already been forced to cut down not only on gas but on all items because of spiralling inflation.

Prices of goods are once more expected to go up one after another as a result of the latest oil price hike. This is due to the fact that virtually all spheres of economic activity use oil.

Transportation will be most affected. Already, bus, jeepney and taxi operators have petitioned for fare increases and shippers, for higher shipping charges.

Next in line will be public utilities (electricity and water), then manufacturing.

Despite last month's increase, oil prices will not stay pegged for long. Marcos promised the oil firms in 1974 one price increase a year.

As practice has shown, there could be more than just that.

RADICAL CHANGE PRECEDES NATIONALIZATION

To stop the perennial increase in oil prices, nationalist businessmen and various other groups and citizens have openly called for the nationalization of the oil industry.

Foremost among the nationalization advocates is the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, the country's biggest business group. The CCP has proposed the Philippine takeover of four foreign (mainly American) oil companies and three oil refineries in the country.

According to the CCP, the oil firms Caltex, Mobil and Getty are largely under US control while Pilipinas Shell is 50 per cent Dutch.

Foreigners likewise own majority of Caltex Refinery (US) and Pilipinas Shell Refinery (Dutch) and 43 per cent of Bataan Refinery (US).

Also pushing for nationalization, Manila Councilor Cesar T. Lucero emphasized, "The foreign-based oil companies operating in the developing countries have been fabricating fake 'oil shortages' to justify petitions for price increases."

PERMANENT SOLUTION

The Federation of Democratic Labor Unions, the Youth Association for Muslim Unity and the Inter-Provincial Students Association of the Philippines also maintained that nationalization would be a permanent solution to the recurring oil price increases.

"Since it (oil) plays a very significant role," they further said, "the control must be placed in the hands of Filipinos who will be thinking in terms of Philippine interests, and not in the hands of aliens."

As early as 1971, Senator Jose W. Diokno had already batted for the nationalization of the oil industry, saying that the intransigence of the oil companies in imposing oil price hikes had "shown me that when one deals with economic imperialism, there can be no half-way measures."

On the other hand, the Preparatory Commission for a National De-

of the oil industry, including oil exploration.

The NDF pointed out that nationalization can only be achieved through a radical change in the social structure:

"Under the present set-up, nationalization is impossible because the international oil cartel colludes with the US-Marcos dictatorship."

"Only by overthrowing the dictatorship can a new social order be established which would be conducive to full and genuine nationalization." ■

NPA SPURNS SURRENDER OFFER

The New People's Army in Samar has spurned the offer of the PC provincial commander to give up their guns, return to the comfortable lives they used to live, and participate in the "New Society" of the Marcos dictatorship.

Col. Eduardo M. Javelosa, PC Task Force Commander, said in his letter to Prudencio "Ding" Calubid that the people had started to cooperate with the government because "they have not felt the miseries in life now had it not been for your caprices (sic)."

Javelosa was not able to convince the NPA of anything except that his logic was as feeble as his English.

In their reply, the NPA pointed out that the miseries of the masses in Samar were due to the "atrocities, murder and violence committed by your troops."

The NPA revealed the massacre of a family of seven at Kanhurayan, Calbiga on Nov. 26, 1974, perpetrated by reactionary soldiers under the command of Sgt. George Giray; the attempted massacre of about 50 barrio folk, including children, in a sitio of Manaing, Pinabacdao on Nov. 30, 1974 during an encirclement campaign led by a Sgt. Medel; the merciless killings of farmers in the barrios of Calbiga, Pinabacdao, Sta. Rita and Basey; and other acts of savagery like setting fire to barrios and rice granaries, abusing peasant girls and destroying crops.

Citing Javelosa's statement that "brother Filipinos (should not)

burned down homes, who have deprived the people of their basic rights to free speech and free press, and violated the sanctity of their homes, and who serve the interests of the US imperialists and their local puppets cannot be called "brothers."

"My brother is he who is with me in the struggle," the NPA replied, quoting from a poem written during the Mozambique revolution.

The NPA explained why men and women who grew up in comfort would leave behind their loved ones and the security of their homes for the hardships and deprivations of the countryside, "where home is a makeshift lean-to and roof means a cluster of palm and anahaw leaves."

They stated that this was a choice they had made consciously, with full awareness that "revolution is not a picnic but a ruthless struggle between the exploited and the exploiters."

Expressing contempt for the reactionary troops who fight only for their salaries, the Red fighters said that they have committed themselves "to liberate the Motherland from the clutches of American imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism."

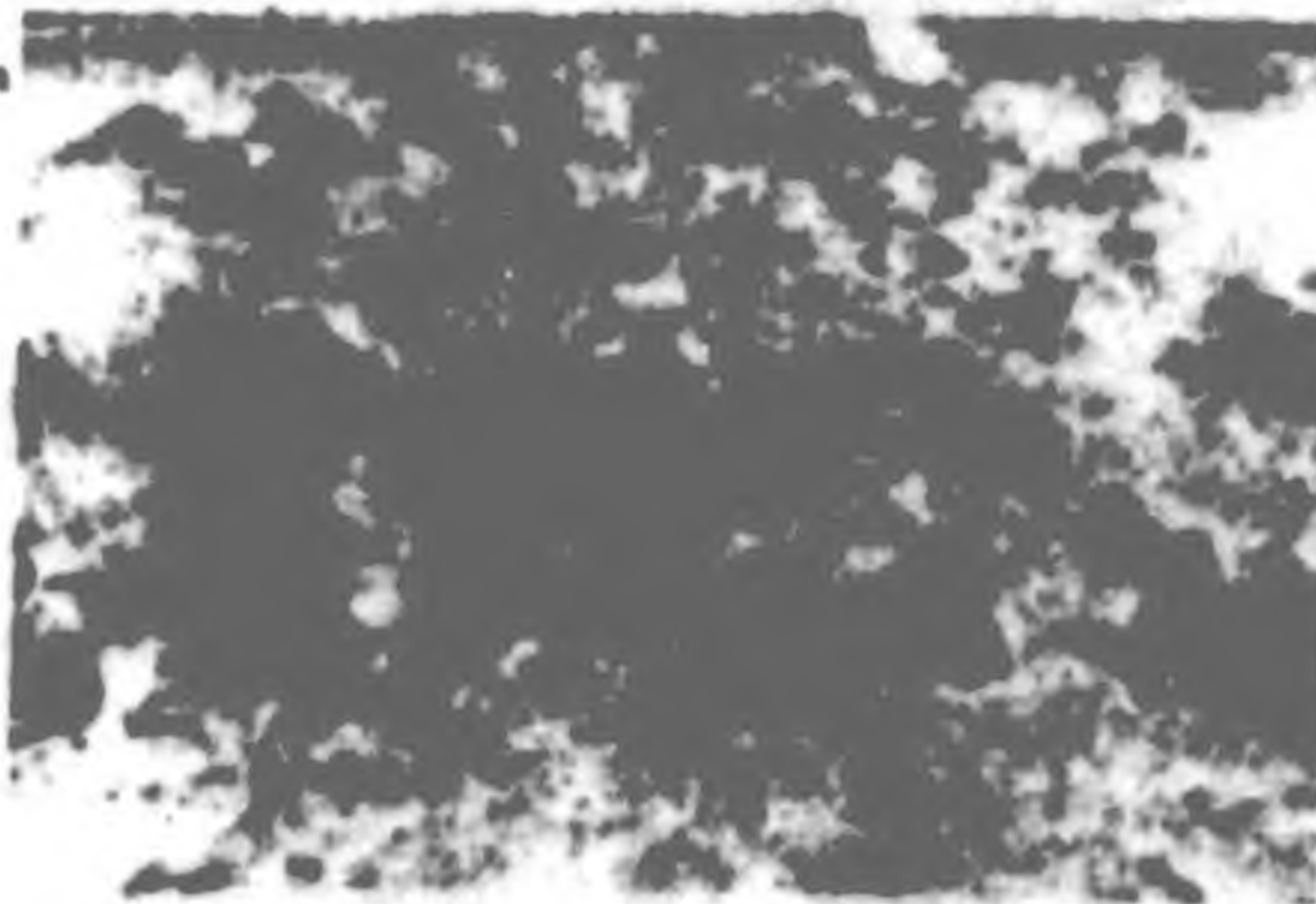
Far from changing this situation, the New Society has in fact intensified and concentrated the exploita-

the march of the times, the fact that "the revolutionary forces are advancing upon us on an unprecedented scale, while members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines are demoralized, weary and tired."

They recalled how they stumbled upon a letter beside the dead body of a young AFP soldier, a letter which told of the poverty which had driven him to enlist as cannon fodder for the ruling elite.

In answer to Javalosa's "request for surrender," the New People's Army instead asked him and his mercenary troops to lay down their arms before they are "caught" by the whirlwind of the people's wrath. ■

**WITHOUT
A PEOPLES
ARMY
THE PEOPLE
HAVE
NOTHING**



The NPA builds up its strength in the countryside

BY NPA TEAM

A two-man NPA subteam killed two notorious special police (SP) informers in a successful punitive operation in Oas, Albay last April.

The NPA cadres also confiscated a brand new Colt Armalite M-16, a folding automatic carbine and a paltik Magnum .22 together with a good number of bullets and magazines.

Killed were Ernesto Relona, a notorious carabao-rustler, and Angel Nepal, a hoodlum and extortionist. Relona was a kumpare of a Sgt. Rebita, who had given them the automatic carbine. Naturally, this PC sergeant had a share in the carabao-rustling. As an informer, Nepal was used by the reactionary troops to bully the barrio folk.

The NPA fighters, upon learning that a squad of the mercenary troops were in the barrio with the two SP informers as the advance party, planned the punitive operation in cooperation with the barrio people.

The masses themselves helped the Red fighters in keeping a close surveillance on the movements of the informers, who were drifting away from the Red squads.



The Development Academy of the Philippines, that super-ego trip of the pseudo-liberal intellectual Onofre D. Corpuz, has once again thrust its slimy fingers into many pies. A project that DAP is working on at the moment intends to list down potential "subversives" in government offices, including the University of the Philippines and the DAP itself. One criterion used is the espousal of "Maoist" or "radical" views.

Consider however the personnel working on this project: their credentials are tainted with incompetence. From the very terms that they use, it is obvious that they cannot even adequately evaluate the distinction between what is radical or what is not. These people are not even aware that there is no such thing as a "Maoist."

But this is precisely the danger in this kind of project; many innocent people's futures are in the

selves, together with some barrio people, to await the arrival of the two informers.

A quick ambush was made, with the SP informers caught completely off-guard. One has hacked to death, while the other was shot by a Red fighter carrying the one and only gun on the people's side.

So quick was the ambush that the two informers were not able to fire a single shot and put up a fight. After confiscating their weapons, the NPA soldiers and the barrio people buried the bodies.

Meanwhile, in waiting for the two informers, Sgt. Rebita and his party got edgy and scrambled back to the "safety" of their camp.

The annihilation of the two crooks was a response to a long-standing demand of the local population to justly punish these carabao-rustlers and other bad elements.

In so doing, the NPA has once more demonstrated its capability to wipe out dispersed enemy troops even at the early stage of the protracted people's war, and its readiness to defend the interests of the oppressed and exploited Filipino masses even in the face of hardship. ■

hands of a bunch of snooty-nosed kids who cannot even differentiate between radical, conservative, liberal, epicurean, or what-not "views." The irreparable harm that they can do to innocent employees within the bureaucracy is nothing to these bright boys of O.D. Corpuz; they think that they can hide beneath the cloak of anonymity and escape the guilt for their crimes.

For the information of Mr. Antonio Kalaw and Rommel Mannikan who are in charge of this project, the awareness of the people and their memory go a long, long way. Inescapable is the people's vigilance.

Oil increase na naman. Under martial law, the Oil Industry Commission has become the spokesman of the oil cartel, with Mathay justifying the most recent grant of price increases as due to "losses" sustained by the oil companies.

What Mathay actually means is that the profits remitted by the oil companies abroad have been reduced because of the peso devaluation - reduced not even significantly but sinuiscully. To maintain and even add

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also, they added to their rate of increase the bribe money tendered to Mathay and some members of the Oil Industry Commission.

US imperialism's hatchet man and ambassador, William Sullivan, got the goat of Mrs. Imelda Marcos when he undiplomatically commented to her majesty that she was at last starting to feed her people cake.

The Madame, who does not know history from the back end of a horse, had to consult a well-known writer as to what that meant.

When told of Marie Antoinette and the French Revolution, Mrs. Marcos nearly had apoplexy and screamed, "Hayop!"

Now she refers to Sullivan as ha-yop all the time. A case of the pot

Communist Party of the Philippines notes that female workers are discouraged from working in night-time productive enterprises...but are encouraged to work in tourist-oriented enterprises like bars, nightclubs, sauna baths and massage clinics.

Not only are women and labor in general degraded; the Filipino people become playthings of foreigners in their own country.

First, the dictator stresses the virtue of "self-reliance" in the area of national defense. Then he demands more US military aid under the pretext of fighting "alien-fuelled infiltration of hostile agents."

Self-reliance indeed!

analysis

THE NATURE OF RP-CHINA RELATIONS

If the evidence available is to be believed, Ferdinand E. Marcos and his martial law regime will normalize Philippine relations with the People's Republic of China within the month of June this year.

Many well-meaning and progressive elements, who have come to regard China as a true friend of the Filipino people, have expressed misgivings over this possibility.

They believe that China should not establish any kind of relations at all with the Marcos regime, in the same way that China broke off relations with the puppet Lon Nol regime of Cambodia when it came to power by virtue of a CIA-supported coup d'etat in 1970. They argue that Marcos has also come to power by virtue of a coup d'etat in 1972, and that for China to normalize relations with the Philippines through his government would be tantamount to recognizing his regime as the legitimate representative of the Filipino people.

They also believe that the normalization of relations between the Philippines and China now would serve to strengthen the Marcos regime, give it the necessary "breathing spell" through the expected benefits that economic and trade relations would bring, thus blunting

somewhat the sharpening crisis in the Philippines.

Some have even gone so far as to argue that before normal relations are established, China should demand that the martial law regime release political prisoners and restore those rights which the Filipino people used to enjoy before Sept. 21, 1972.

These misgivings deserve serious examination, not only because they come from well-meaning and progressive elements whose increasing knowledge of China has convinced them of the legitimacy of the socialist road of development, and of China's genuine friendship towards the Filipino people and sympathy to the Filipino struggle for national and social liberation.

Precisely, one of the intentions of the Marcos regime is to confuse people through its protestation of friendship towards the People's Republic of China. It is even possible that, once in Peking, in keeping with his cynical policy of "speaking the language" of whoever he happens to be speaking to, Marcos might even make anti-imperialist noises.

There is no doubt, to begin with, that the normalization of relations between China and the Philippines would have as a result the streng-

off the harsh effects of the world-wide crisis of imperialism on the colonial economy of the Philippines.

It is equally true, however, that the establishment of such relations would strategically be of benefit to the Philippine revolution.

In saying this, we are keeping in mind the inescapable fact that every event, every phenomenon, has two contradictory aspects. A bad thing can be at the same time a good thing and the establishment of normal relations between the Philippines and China is, in the present Philippine context, both a good thing and a bad thing.

What is necessary is for us to determine which aspect outweighs the other.

How can the establishment of normal relations between China and the Philippines be of long-term value to the Philippine revolution?

The effects of Filipino contact with the People's Republic of China have been felt since the '60s, when groups of Filipinos from all walks of life started visiting China. Most of them returned to the Philippines with much enthusiasm for the just and prosperous society that is being



built there, and with the hope that Philippine society may also reach such a stage.

These visits revealed the lies that had been peddled by US propaganda about socialism and greatly contributed to the clarification of the nature of the crisis in our own country.

With the normalisation of relations between China and the Philippines, the opportunities for contact with all aspects of Chinese life will increase. Cultural relations will be established and will thus afford many Filipinos the opportunity to see Chinese plays and ballet, to read Chinese books and periodicals, and generally to increase their knowledge of China. Only the very Philistine will fail to see the

the experience of China, an oppressed people can, with determination and the correct political leadership, achieve national and social liberation.

The establishment of Philippine-Chinese relations will not in any way suggest that the Marcos regime is legitimate. Much less will it be a substitute for the objective need it is he and he alone who shall decide their resolution.

The question of political prisoners and civil rights will ultimately be decided by the Filipino people, as they act together and intensify their struggle against the fascist regime. Sooner or later, the Filipino people shall have the initiative in the resolution of the contradictions in Philippine society, as they gain in strength in the course of the struggle.

China cannot establish the legitimacy of the Marcos government, even if she wished to, by entering into diplomatic relations with it, for the simple reason that it is only the Filipino people who can do this, and no other.

In another context, the normalization of Philippine-Chinese relations serves to provide the Marcos regime, imperialist-sponsored as it is, other options aside from slavish trumpeteering for imperialism in the region. Marcos might think that he can play off China against the US. It is nevertheless an objective fact that once normal relations are established between the Philippines and China, the already sharpening contradiction between Philippine national interests and imperialist interests would sharpen further, as the Philippines begins to benefit from the liberal terms of the economic and technical aid of China.

Can anyone deny that this would also be of benefit to the Philippine revolution?

The demand of well-meaning people that China should impose the condition that Marcos should release political prisoners and restore civil rights in the Philippines cannot, on principle, be accepted by China.

China has always maintained that she will not interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, and that it is up to these nations to resolve their internal problems. This does not mean that it is Marcos who will resolve these matters, that

of achieving national and social liberation. We cannot deny that it is the Marcos regime which at present wields political power in this country. It is to his regime that the government of the Chinese people has to speak.

But this cannot in any way negate the fact that the Marcos regime is an imperialist-sponsored dictatorship of a handful of bureaucrat capitalists, comprador bourgeoisie and landlords over the Filipino people.

Does China's pledge of non-interference mean that she will no longer support the just struggle of the Filipino people against imperialist and feudal aggression? No.

Does this not contradict China's repeated assertion of non-interference in the affairs of other peoples? Again, no.

To provide material and moral support is not the same thing as to direct, supervise or determine the direction of a revolutionary movement.

The fact that China, let us suppose, can aid the liberation struggle materially does not at all mean that she can determine how those materials will be used. China, after all, has, since her own liberation in 1949, never stationed a single soldier to "advise" liberation movements, has never coerced any of these movements to follow her wishes.

At most, she has used her moral suasion from the standpoint of a sovereign people speaking to another, whenever she thinks that mistakes have been committed or serious errors of judgment have occurred.

If we do not expect and do not want China to tell us the direction and management of our own liberation struggle, neither should we now demand that she interfere in our internal affairs by imposing the conditions mentioned above. China will refuse to do so on principle; we should not expect her to do so, on principle.

In looking at the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Philippines, we must remember that these are long overdue. The fact that this is about to happen represents a triumph of the progressive and objectively correct view that it is the People's Republic of China which is the sole legitimate representative of the Chinese people.

At the same time, we must keep in mind that the new relations between the two countries are not a

weakening of the world imperialist system. This possibility is today even more pronounced, in view of the retreat of imperialism from the Asian mainland.

It is possible that the establishment of Philippine relations with China may serve to chip away, though in a limited manner, at the links that chain the Philippines to the United States.

Relations with China would serve to reveal to the Filipino people that there are other forms of relations possible between nations, and these relations need not be between lord and vassals.

Special report

LAND REFORM: DISMAL FAILURE

Whether from the realist or from the revolutionary point of view, the land reform program of the US-Marcos dictatorship has been a dismal failure.

As the "gauge for success or failure of the New Society," it shows the widest gap between the regime's high-flown rhetoric and the true interest that it serves - that of US imperialism, its chief stooge Marcos, and the rest of the local ruling class.

The basic reason for the failure of the land reform program is that it was never meant to succeed; it was based on "no particular commitment to the peasants *per se*" but on the strengthening of the existing social and political order.

The critique on the land reform program of Marcos comes from a wide spectrum of political and ideological commitment.

But, whether accepting the possibility of real reform within the framework of martial law or asserting that only a people's democratic revolution can make reform possible, they all contradict Marcos' glorious claims that he has "liquidated the big landed estates" and "liquidated the feudal agrarian system."

The extremely slow rate of implementation, the cancellation of the program by subsequent amendments to the presidential decree, the impunity with which landlords are allowed to evade and even violate the provisions of the law with the intervention of the military and the

the liberation of the peasantry will neither in the short run nor in the long run be achieved by Marcos' act of signing a piece of paper.

It is foolish to expect that the knight will kill the dragon when he himself is part of that dragon.

Marcos' promises on land reform have, in every case, been extravagant and deceptive.

From the very beginning, the government had shown its dishonesty and insincerity when it deliberately understated the figures on number of tenants on rice and corn holdings and the area of land involved, in an attempt to make the program's actual achievements look better.

In his paper, Dennis Shoemith, research scholar of the Department of Pacific and Southeast Asian History at the Australian National University, revealed that the DAR figure on the total number of tenant farmers on rice and corn lands was based on 1960 figures. And, instead of being updated to account for demographic changes, it was even reduced from 1,000,000 to as low as 650,000.

Furthermore, although the area of land under rice and corn cultivation has been increasing since 1972 and has reached a total of 5,678,000 hectares, the Marcos administration has deflated the DAR estimate of 1,767,000 hectares to 1.3 million hectares.

MINIMAL GAINS

The United Nations mission also pointed out the discrepancy between the government claim that only 32 per cent of rice and corn tenants were still sharecroppers by 1972 and recent statistics from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics showing a minimum figure of 61 per cent.

Even with these understated figures, Marcos' accomplishments in land reform have been minimal so far.

Prof. Roy Prosterman, foreign adviser to the Philippine government on its land reform program, said that "after more than two years, land reform is less than one per cent complete."

According to the World Bank, in 1974, only 20 per cent of the target for number of hectares set for title transfers has been met.

years to complete the reform.

The captive press of the Marcos regime has, on the other hand, announced the completion of land reform by 1977.

Reality is also ten thousand miles away from Marcos' grandiose proclamation of the "whole Philippines" as a land reform area.

The original decree itself substantially leaves out 3,700,000 hectares planted to sugar cane, banana, abaca and other crops which are controlled by giant foreign-dominated agro-industrial corporations, as well as about 69 per cent of all rice and corn lands.

The latter limitation is due to the application of land reform only to tenanted lands. Reliable sources place these lands at 31 per cent of the total rice and corn holdings, contrary to the DAR figure of 44 per cent.

EMASCULATED DECREE

Amendments made by Marcos have further emasculated a decree that never had strength of purpose from the start.

By raising the permissible limit of individual landholdings from seven to 24 hectares, the amendments have placed 80 per cent of all rice and corn tenants outside the land reform program.

Marcos has also made exemption from land reform possible for landlords, even the absentee ones, who have a "strong emotional attachment" to their property, servicemen, retired public servants and the like. The dictator is extremely sensitive to the "feelings" of a few while ignoring the abject misery of millions.

Even reformists see the true essence of this "restructuring" of the land reform program.

In a report prepared for the 26th Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in Boston, Massachusetts, Benedict Kerkvliet points out that the abandonment of the 7-hectare ceiling to land holdings "probably more than any other single act indicated the government's insincerity about land reform and how expendable the program could be when confronted with higher priorities unrelated to the peasants."

The United Nations viewed the restructuring as accomplishing only

ment in the distribution of the Philippines."

The insincerity in Marcos' efforts to implement a land reform program that is truly and wholly to the benefit of the landless peasantry has spurred landlords to commit outright violations of the law.

While brutally enforcing laws that are meant to keep the Filipino masses "in order," the dictatorship has permitted, encouraged and even colluded with the members of the exploiting classes in manipulating and violating the laws to their benefit.

STATE VS. PEASANTS

The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines reports "numerous accounts of harassment and threats, outright eviction of tenants in many farms, conversion of rice and corn lands to other crops, subdividing land heirs and changing the status of tenants to agricultural workers."

The instrumentalities of the state - from the military to the courts - are being used by the landlords to evict or intimidate tenants in order that their lands can be placed outside the scope of land reform.

The regime's coddling of the landlord class at the expense of the tillers of the land does not stop here.

Heavy payments, for the land itself and for the government's "guarantee" that they will eventually own the land, are imposed on the peasants in exchange for the land they have worked on and made productive for many years.

But the landlords are compensated by the regime with huge estates on public land and government assistance for infrastructure projects.

One concrete result of this compensation scheme is that feudalism has been introduced in areas where it did not exist before.

In Batarasa, Palawan, several thousand people have been displaced and forced to become landless tenants or agricultural workers by the award of 16,000 hectares in the area to the Cojuangco family. The government has promised to build \$50 million worth of roads, bridges and other infrastructure projects for the sugar plantation of the Cojuangcos.

For those few eligible for land reform, the benefits are few. First,

be required to pay about P240 a year for one hectare, P1081 for two hectares and P1611 for three. One bad year from a natural disaster or sickness or loss of farm animals, and the new "owner" is in serious trouble.

To compound the tenant's problems, the holding he is entitled to buy is too small for him to farm economically. Under the most favorable conditions, a farm of the size so far given out under land reform (1.8 hectares) would not enable the owner to meet his amortization payments.

Kerkvliet predicts that many tenants "will sooner or later fall too far behind in their payments, either postponing "real ownership indefinitely or losing altogether their option to buy."

Both in quantity and in quality, the Marcos dictatorial regime has not shown any real commitment to a land reform program that serves the interest of the peasantry.

Under martial rule, Marcos has succeeded in saving neither Republic nor society.

The imposition of tyranny has been paralleled by the entrenchment of the most oppressive and most exploitative structures in the "old society."

Millions of Filipinos have been deprived of their civil liberties and are expected to bear increasing hardships so that Marcos can launch his "social revolution."

"Social revolution," however, is the last thing that Marcos wants because it will mean the end of his regime.

In the final analysis, the only future for the Philippine peasantry, the only chance they have to fulfill their demand for land and the eradication of feudal exploitation - and the only future for all the other democratic forces in Philippine society - lies in their participation in the struggle to achieve a national democratic revolution. ■





US IMPERIALISM: MAIN OBSTACLE TO RP INDEPENDENCE

US imperialism makes a farce out of Philippine independence. Because US monopoly capitalists maintain a stranglehold over our economy, and because political power resides in lackeys of US imperialism, like the fascist puppet Marcos, the Philippines is not truly sovereign or free.

The Philippines now suffers the fate of a typical US neocolony. US imperialism, seeking high rates of profit, has exported to the Philippines its surplus high-priced commodities and it has depressed the prices of raw materials coming from the Philippines.

At the same time, it has remitted huge profits on direct and indirect investments here and has imposed numerous loans that carry terms extremely profitable for the foreign monopoly capitalists.

Now suffering from a breakdown in industrial production at home, US imperialism is shifting here the ravages of its inflation and recession. It has put more direct investments and loans in the Philippines, thus intensifying its exploitation of the country.

Contrary to all claims of making the country self-reliant, the Marcos puppet regime has made her more subservient to US imperialism. Because of the unbridled puppetry of the martial law regime, US monopoly capitalists now plunder the country

Marcos enjoys being a puppet of US imperialism because he is well-paid for being so. There is not a single privilege, concession, license, contract or loan agreement of some considerable value that does not involve a share for him.

It is the shameless policy of the Marcos regime to give way to all the unjust demands of its foreign master at the expense not only of the toiling masses who suffer from imported inflation aggravated by local corruption, but also of the nationalist businessmen whose efforts to develop Philippine economy are nipped in the bud by giant foreign octopus corporations.

US imperialism is the principal hindrance to true Philippine independence. For as long as US imperialism and its local lackeys ride roughshod over the Filipino people, we will never be able to truly determine our destiny as a nation based on our own real interests.

The Preparatory Commission for a National Democratic Front calls on all anti-imperialist forces to unite and overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Corollary to this, the Preparatory Commission calls on the people to expose and oppose US imperialism as the mastermind behind the setting up of the fascist dictatorship, demand the nullification of all unequal treaties and arrangements with this imperialist power, and call for the nationalization of all its assets.