

LIBERATION

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On the 13th anniversary of the NPA, LIBERATION invites all readers to send material and financial support to the people's army. You can course your contributions through your NDF contact.

EDITORIAL

The changing face of the legal opposition

Recently, Marcos has been alternately taunting and threatening the traditional traditional opposition parties. Why can't they unite and grow, he mockingly complains. Then he warns: Don't unite with "subversives!" Underscoring this threats is the arrest of Kalaw and Rondon. For good measure, Roces is singled out for trial over the boycott issue.

For their part, the LP, NP and Laban announced an agreement to work for unity among themselves and with the PDP, the latest party to join the legal opposition. Earlier, another party, the SDP, announced itself, prompting one columnist to comment on the curious coincidence of two new parties and beer brands.

(Is he saying that they are both all froth, or is he hinting that one of them, like Asia beer, is a Marcos dummy?)

Quite noticeable too is the media play given to Marcos' teasers about a legal communist party. He refers, of course to the CPP which plays the leading role in the armed opposition represented by the NPA and the underground opposition represented by the NDF. Another communist party has been trying hard to get legal recognition since 1974; but even its outright surrender did not yield the political dividends it expected, not even decent media coverage.

What is one to make of all these?

Is Marcos now a "born-again" democrat? There is no lack of standard reasons for would-be believers: he is sick, he is concerned about history, he is under pressure from the US, etc. But no, there is no sudden seriousness about democratization; only the usual seriousness about maintaining the dictatorship.

But how to do this and yet prevent the increasingly acute polarization that benefits the growing revolutionary movement?

One measure, implemented with sadistic enthusiasm by the military, is to strike at the opposite pole, the core of the opposition: the people's army, the armed people, the organized people. The other measure is to prevent the legal opposition (elite, middle class and common people) from cooperating with the underground and armed opposition.

Hence his efforts to restrict the legal opposition to the narrow and arbitrary limits within which he invites the underground to exhaust its energies. For the Marcos regime, legitimate opposition equals an ineffective opposition: credible enough for the rituals of democracy, but not effective enough to replace it, much less change structures.

As soon as any legal opposition threatens to be too effective, it will feel the same measures directed at the underground and armed opposition: arrest, torture, disappearances and outright murder. For the elite opposition, the slight consolation is that unlike the common people, their death will be investigated formally, though inconclusively.

This is not an argument against fighting legally and openly. We need to do more of this and more effectively. But we must also take seriously the changing face of the legal opposition. Instead of being contraposed to the underground, it should be complementary. Instead of being tied to the electoral campaigns of one party, it should be the broadest possible coalition of parties in the service of the people's issues and campaigns. ▴

MAINSTREAM

Daughter of the people

Ma. Lorena Barros (1950-76), woman, poet and revolutionary

By LEON FORTALEZA



Portrait of a fighter for women's and national liberation (1970)

There are many and varied portraits of the ideal Filipino woman. There is the portrait of Maria Clara, the sweet madonna of the Spanish colonial era. She is timid, passive, unquestioningly obedient and perennially dependent on the male. From birth, she is taught that the woman's place is in the home, that woman is inferior to men and that delight could be found in domestic servitude and sacrifice.

There is also the modern portrait of the "liberated" Filipina, patterned after the Western bourgeois feminist model. She is an active champion of equality with men, abortion and free love. She may be a member of the burn-the-bra movement. She is likely to target male chauvinism as solely responsible for female oppression, thus misdirecting her focus from the actual source of antagonism and opening her to (not entirely unfounded) charges of "hysterical materialism" from male quarters.

There is also the gaudy portrait of Imelda Marcos, dubbed the "Iron

Butterfly" by the Western press. She has the dubious distinctions of singing her husband twice to the presidency, initiating a revolution (albeit green) and of being one of the ten richest women of the world. She is the self-anointed patroness of the arts, a hopeful member of the international jetset and a "power behind the throne."

A lesser known but nonetheless significant portrait is that of the Filipina revolutionary symbolized by Ma. Lorena Barros. Lori, as close friends called her, was a scholar at the University of the Philippines (UP), an active student leader, writer and member of several academic organizations like the UP Writers' Club and the Anthropology Society. She graduated in 1970 with an AB degree in anthropology, cum laude, and became a teacher at the anthropology department for some time.

Lori, however, is better known as the founding chairperson of the

Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA), the pioneer women's liberation organization formed during the radical ferment of the First Quarter Storm of 1970. MAKIBAKA rejected the traditional notion of submissive Filipino womanhood and rooted the oppression and exploitation of women in basic social conditions. From the universities where women's liberation first gained currency as an issue, MAKIBAKA launched a program of action which linked the emancipation of women from class and male oppression to the broader national democratic revolution.

The first mass action of MAKIBAKA — an all-girl picket of the Bb. Pilipinas pageant at the Araneta Coliseum on Apr. 18, 1970 — catapulted the fledgling organization to national attention. The picket attacked the commercialization of sex, the degradation of women as objects of pleasure and the irrelevance of beauty contests in a poverty-stricken country. Soon afterwards, MAKIBAKA activists fanned out to do political and organizational work among women in factories, working class communities and in the barrios.

Due to her activities in MAKIBAKA and in the national democratic movement, Lori incurred the ire of the government. When the writ of habeas corpus was suspended in August 1971, she was forced to go underground together with numerous other activists. She continued to work tirelessly as a full-time activist during the difficult early years of martial law. Clarita Roja, a close comrade and fellow poet, remembers her as a soft-spoken, stable, patient and understanding person. "Mapagkandili siya sa mga kasama," (She was full of concern for comrades) Roja recalls.

In October 1973, Lori was arrested by the military in Sorsogon where she was doing organizing work among the peasants. She was tortured and imprisoned. She was later transferred to the Ipil Rehabilitation Center in Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila. The months of torture and deprivation did not diminish her fighting spirit. In 1974, Lori with four other comrades escaped from prison. She immediately returned to the countryside to resume her interrupted

service to the people. She became the head of a squad of the New People's Army (NPA) operating in Bicol.

Even as she took up the gun, Lori did not give up the pen. She continued to give free rein to her literary inclinations. She wrote poems, songs, stories and essays and attempted to introduce a new dimension to traditional literary and musical forms. She became a wife and a mother, but did not turn her back to waging revolution. Filipino women can be liberated only in the collective struggle for national liberation, she affirmed. The hand that rocks the cradle must also rock the boat.

Lori's commitment was put to the supreme test when she was wounded and captured in an ambush in

Cagsley, Mauban, Quezon on March 24, 1976. She was interrogated but firmly refused to betray her comrades. She was fatally shot in the head. She was 26 years old.

The story of the bravery of Lori Barros is not unique. It is the story of other Filipino women who shoulder the manifold tasks of the revolutionary movement side by side with their brothers in the struggle. It is the story of historical figures like Gregoria de Jesus, Gabriela Silang, and Teresa Magbanua and of new heroines like Liza Balandó, Puri Pedro, Nona del Rosario, Delia Cortez and countless, nameless others. Bearing arms and facing dangers like the men, they prove that equality and mutual respect between the sexes are not mere dreams.

"For the men in the resistance, the decision to devote their lives to the revolution is also an act of personal liberation," says a writer. By fusing poetry, revolution and womanhood into a coherent whole in her life, Lori showed that this process could be achieved. She showed that women could exercise great potential as a force in the transformation of society and give substance to the slogan, "women hold up half the sky."

In memory of women revolutionaries like Lori and to mark the significance of International Workingwomen's Day on March 8, LIBERATION reprints three of her poems. "Sampaguita" was written in 1973. "Ipil" and "Yesterday I Had a Talk" were written in June 1974. ▲

3 poems

By MA. LORENA BARROS

IPIL

Ipil is harder to bear
without you.
A leaf falls beside my hand;
already it is memory
like hours spent together.
Grief at parting is like
a tear shed for a leaf,
pain unassuaged
by the promise of a new bud
at the tip.
But our friendship draws
its sustenance
from the rich soil of people's war.
It will continue to grow
and bear fruit
for the people.

YESTERDAY I HAD A TALK

Yesterday I had a talk
with an old man
who had your eyes —
the same laughing squint
hiding a watchfulness
that catches even hints
of rainbows.
He spoke to me of patience,
in his voice a whole season
of cool, summed-up sorrows . . .
you have endured
the first minute
of your own dark season —
ah, I can bear to think of it
only when I can see you smile! —
Comrade, dear friend
teach me how not to flinch
through mine.

SAMPAGUITA

This morning Little Comrade
gave me a flower's bud.
I look at it now
remembering you, Felix,
dear friend and comrade
and all the brave sons and daughters
of our suffering land
whose death
makes our blades sharper
gives our bullets
surer aim . . .

How like this pure white bud
are our martyrs
fiercely fragrant with love
for our country and people!
With what radiance they should still have unfolded!

But sadness should not be
their monument.
Whipped and lashed desperately
by bomb-raised storms
has not our Asian land
continued to bloom?

Look how bravely our ranks
bloom into each gap.
With the same intense purity and fragrance
we are learning to overcome.

Beginning February, the Marcos regime escalated its moves to evict residents in areas targeted for "national development" projects. One of these areas is Sitio Imelda in the waterfront site in Navotas, Metro Manila. Despite pleas of community residents to the government, demolition and eviction were ruthlessly pursued. — Editor

For many years, Mang Estoy had tried to make a better life for himself. As a farmer's son back in the province, he had come to realize that he would have to stretch muscles as well as his luck to be able to feed himself and his family.

He and his family left for Manila. He found work in a factory in Tondo, and though the pay was neither good nor enough, they had no choice but to stay. And stay they did in a shanty among thousands of other shanties that circled the factories.

It was always bruited about that the community where Mang Estoy lived was an "eyesore," a "breeding place of crime and disease." Politicians and high-ranking policemen would say in the newspapers and radio that Tondo should be cleared of squatters once and for all.

But, of course, nothing of the sort ever happened before because come election time, the politicians would be a-courting Tondo for its one million votes and every so often, the policemen would come for their *tang* (bribes).

But now, looking at the trucks and the demolition teams that were smashing and tearing down his house, Mang Estoy is not sure anymore. The Ministry of Human Settlements had ordered the National Housing Authority (NHA) to enforce its eviction orders and nothing — not even the sight of a woman giving birth inside a shanty — could stop them from demolishing the houses.

One morning at Sitio Imelda

The demolition started on Feb. 1, the day when Sitio Imelda's community leader was summoned to the office of NHA Gen. Manager Gaudencio V. Tobias to be informed of the eviction of about 600 families.

"We were not even given the chance to be heard," Mang Nilo, the

No place to go

Regime revs up eviction of slum-dwellers

By MINDA RODRIGO

community leader said. Tobias just said that the government needed the land for development. The slum-dwellers — most of whom were "illegal and professional squatters," anyway — must make way for the foreign companies who want to put up their businesses in Sitio Imelda, the retired general said.

But the residents refused to go. Women and children formed a human barricade to resist the demolition team. The menfolk hurled stones at abusive policemen who were on hand to help push through the eviction order.



Anti-riot police at demolition site

When the government authorities finally broke through the barricade, demolition was conducted rapidly and ruthlessly. The families' few belongings, like kitchenware, were ordered seized by the NHA. "*Pasa lale haming mahirepan at mapilitang umalis kagad,*" (To make things harder for us and to force us to leave sooner) a resident bitterly said.

Everywhere in the demolition site, children were falling sick from exposure to the elements. One baby

eventually died of pneumonia. Their houses have earlier been torn down and, because there were no relocation areas, they had to content themselves with makeshift tents until they are once again forced out of the area by the police.

Continuous protest actions succeeded in earning for the residents a few more days to look for a new place. By March, they were transferred from the NHA warehouse to a gasoline station behind the Kapitbahayan housing units. Of the 600 families that were evicted, about 98 have remained because as Mang Nilo put it, "*Wala talaga kaming malipetan,*" (We really have no place to go).

Renewed demolition

The government renewed its eviction and demolition efforts in Tondo to enable it to continue with the construction of a coastal road project that will connect Cavite and Batan. The eviction of the slum-dwellers began way back in 1973 and last month's efforts were the latest in a series of attempts to drive them away.

But the urban poor, many of whom have been living in the area for years, have refused to move out. To soften their resistance, the government has again promised their relocation to housing sites. The people, however, have become wary.

Two of the government's relocation sites — Sapang Palay and Daanrihas in Cavite — have proven to be inadequate. Besides being able to absorb only a limited number of families, these areas are too far from people's places of work and sorely lacking in basic facilities that would provide light, water and electricity.

The Dagat-dagatan housing project in Tondo, which was built ostensibly to serve as a catch basin for evicted slum-dwellers proved to be a boon only for higher-income

groups. Residents said that the lowest rental is at P170, with the highest at a thousand pesos. In addition, only about 500 families can be accommodated in the housing project.

Behind the demolition

The fight for land between the government and the Tondo slum-dwellers goes further back in time. Most of the lands in question are in the Tondo foreshore area, a 100-hectare plot of land which was reclaimed from Manila Bay in the 1940s. The land was originally intended for the establishment of an industrial area and a port complex for domestic shipping.

Its proximity to the city's factories, however, attracted droves of laborers and their families who left the provinces but whose meager wages could not afford them apartments or rooms.

When the government decided to develop the area in the 1970s, the conflict — long lying dormant in past years — exploded. Urban poor delegations marched to Malacañang to demand a halt to the Tondo Foreshore project while relocation remained uncertain. Community leaders such as Fred Repuno, Trinidad Herrera and Emilia de Leon were arrested to stifle the slum-dwellers' protests.

In time, a number of relocation areas and housing schemes were drawn up by the regime to meet the resistance posed by the residents.

But these have invariably failed to provide housing for the poor because their purpose has always been, not to give housing to slum-dwellers, but to get them out of their present homes. There always lurked the suspicion that the government, in pushing through with these projects, had for its ulterior motive the winning of a favorable political image.

Because while the regime continued to trumpet its urban land reform schemes, the fact remained that most of the lands in Manila continue to be owned by a handful of families.

As was pointed out by William Keyes, S.J., an authority on urban housing, "Land in Manila is highly priced, not because it is scarce, but because it is hoarded." ▲



Funeral march for slain worker denounces military brutalities

Bloodshed at the picket lines

Another worker killed as strike wave rises

By DELLA MIRANDA

The killing of yet another striker on the picketline last Feb. 13 once again brought home the point that fighting for workers' rights in the Philippines is a life and death struggle.

Antonio Bayness, a 25-year old worker at Solid Mills in Muntinlupa, Metro Manila was the fifth striker to be gunned down in the 10 months since Vergilio Herbon was shot to death at Metallied Industries in Malabon last April. Those intervening months saw not only a more intense repression of workers but also the resurgence of mass protests in the labor front.

Eighty-five strike notices involving some 15,000 workers were filed in the month of January 1982 alone. By Feb. 21, a total of 145 strike notices had been filed, mostly involving cases of unfair labor practice.

Fierce battles

The strike wave in recent months hit not only industries traditionally known for their anti-labor policies,

such as garments, textile, electronics and export crop plantations. Also hit were service establishments, especially banks, department stores, and public utilities and the professional sector, especially teachers and school employees. Even the bigger transnational firms which are usually more careful in preventing labor unrest have also become the scenes of protest actions launched by workers and employees.

Workers manning the picketlines were harassed without letup. In the ongoing strikes at Solid Mills, strikers and Metrocom-escorted goons and scabs figured in one street battle after another, resulting in injuries to scores of workers.

By mid-February, the battles at the picketline had become so fierce that Metrocom offensives against the Solid Mills workers had to be directed on the spot by no less than Brig. Gen. Prospero Olivas himself and one Col. Antonio.

Picketing workers were arrested and attacked in several instances at strike-bound factories like Ding Velayo Export Co. (DVEC) where at

least 26 workers had been confined in police stations, Dai-ichi electronics, the Gentex compound, GTE Directories Corp., Well-Fit Industries and the La Carlota sugar central in Negros Occidental.

Harassed on all fronts

Where violence at the picketlines failed to stop the strikers, the use of court injunctions attempted to render useless at least three recent strikes. Local courts granted DVEC, Filipro and Solid Mills the right to take finished products out of the factories on the grounds that these were technically owned not by the strike-bound firm but by its subcontractors. The courts also ordered the arrest of strikers who refused to budge at the picketline and allow the trucks to bring out the goods.

The implementation of new laws, among them the infamous Batas Pambansa 130, imposed even more stringent restrictions on the staging of strikes. BP 130 bans strikes in so-called vital industries, a blanket

term which could cover just about any strike-bound firm. This law was invoked in declaring several strikes illegal, including that at the Nestle subsidiary Filipro on the grounds that since the company produces infant formula, it is part of a vital industry.

The strike at Solid Mills was similarly declared illegal as the issues the workers were fighting for are non-strikeable under the new law.

Lopsided laws

Meanwhile, workers under the coalition Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawang Pilipino (PMP) are protesting the picketing and anti-scab laws which are presently being discussed at the Batasang Pambansa. The workers say that these laws only fill in the loopholes in BP 130 as they guarantee the workers' right to picket and to drive out scabs only if the legality of the strike has not been questioned. In a march at the Batasan last Feb. 23, some 400 PMP-affiliated workers

questioned the legality of this law and presented a draft law to counter it.

As it is, labor laws are very much against the workers' favor. In addition, they are often so complicated that striking workers need a lawyer to man the picketline round-the-clock to deal with any contingencies.

Despite the harassment in both the picketlines and in the courts, the workers continue to launch militant protest actions. Some 4,000 workers, students and churchpeople staged an indignation rally last Feb. 17 near the Solid Mills compound. The rally protested against the use of violence in strike-bound firms.

The workers are also launching other forms of protest such as delegations, petitions, slowdowns, boycott of overtime, work stoppages and grievance forums. In addition, more and more unions are now disaffiliating themselves from fellow labor federations. ▲

The making of a revolutionary government

"We don't see ourselves monopolizing power"

"The Marcos regime considers the National Democratic Front (NDF) as the main threat to national stability and security. Only this year (1981) has it recognized the strength of the revolutionary forces. The regime has increased its offensives against the NDF and now moves to draw us in with proposals of legalizing the Communist Party, an NDF member organization."

That was the reply given by a representative of the NDF to the question of a priest about the regime's reactions to the revolutionary united front. The conversation took place in an open forum at the second national congress of the Christians for National Liberation (CNL) which was held during the last quarter of 1981. (see LIB, Jan. 1982) Excerpts from the open forum:

Q. What happens after the Marcos regime is dislodged?

A. There are three possibilities that may occur. First, if the national democratic movement is the primary force that will overthrow the dictatorship and a revolutionary government is already operating underground, the revolutionary government will take over.

Second, the NDF will work together with other groups in a coalition government which can call for a national constituent assembly for the purpose of drawing up a constitution. After the constitution is framed, elections can be called by the coalition government. Third, in case Marcos may suddenly disappear either through natural means (death) or he is ordered assassinated by the Americans, it is probable that the military will take over. It is hard to predict under what circumstances the third possibility may occur.

Q. What is the possibility of a coalition government and the monopoly of power by the NDF?

A. A truly representative form of government is a built-in concept in the provisional revolutionary government (PRG). The PRG, from the very start of its establishment from the lowest level in the barrio, is represented by all sectors and is not monopolized by poor peasants alone. As we go up to the higher level, representation broadens with class and sectoral representation in government. All political groups that organized and participated in the struggle will be represented. We don't see ourselves monopolizing power.

Q. Is this system of government any different from the present one where the moneyed groups reap the benefits?

A. In the PRG, we don't have the exploiting classes.

Q. How will sectoral representation be determined?

A. In the NDF at present, sectoral representation is divided into professional categories. For instance, the CNL which is comprised of members of the church sector is an NDF member. As lawyers, teachers and the health sector also become more active, they shall be represented. Representation would depend on how politically active the sector is and its number.

Q. What is the participation of the Kabataang Makabayan in the NDF and in the proposed coalition government?

A. KM is one of the organizations which participated from the very start in building up the NDF. The youth comprise a big part of the population and should have representation in the national, regional, provincial and local levels.

Q. What is the NDF stand on the nationalization of industries?

A. We believe some industries should be nationalized, some regulated and some should be left to the private sector. The

"All political groups that organized and participated in the struggle will be represented."

NDF program does not call for complete nationalization, but only of basic industries. There is room for private industries.

Q. Would this not only perpetuate the anomalies of the present economic situation?

A. At present in the semi-feudal stage of our economy and society, it is unrealistic to forbid all private industries and still build up a healthy economy which will produce a higher level of well-being for our people.

Q. How does the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) view the NDF?

A. The MNLF has a very positive attitude towards the NDF, especially after the Permanent People's Tribunal in Antwerp, Belgium wherein both us worked closely together. The MNLF said, "We haven't joined the NDF yet." There are some problem areas to be resolved but we can work this out. For instance, the feudal ties in the MNLF are very strong. So to raise the question of land redistribution will mean an internal struggle within the MNLF. But there are already some Muslim groups exerting efforts to promote land reform.

Q. What are the prospects of getting international recognition for the NDF?

A. Right now, the NDF is known in several countries. A few governments in fact recognize the NDF and have extended invitations to us to establish offices in their countries. But we are still a long way to gaining diplomatic recognition such as in the United Nations, for example.

Q. How strong is the group of the Loyalists? Are they open to the NDF?

A. We classify the Loyalists under the Marcos camp because they participate in government projects such as the bogus land reform program. In 1980, they drew up a revised political program which noted that Marcos is a puppet of US imperialism. Earlier, they considered Marcos as a nationalist bourgeois. Instead of seeing the need for rectification, they simply claim that it is Marcos who has changed! The most we can concede is that they have graduated to critical collaboration.

Q. What about US intervention in the revolutionary struggle?

A. To a limited extent, the regime uses the facilities of the US military bases, especially in Central Luzon, to suppress the revolutionary forces. But with growing public opinion against US armed intervention, we can try to achieve some pressure with the support of international solidarity groups to prevent the US from interfering in the internal affairs of the Philippines.

Q. There are many Filipino movements in the US against Marcos such as the Manglapus group. What are their relations to the NDF?

A. The group of former Senator Raul Manglapus was in the past anti-communist and anti-NDF. They have modified their position in the last two years. Recently, Manglapus has issued statements that he is willing to cooperate with the Left. Manglapus is now moving to set up a political party which may be related to similar moves of Canoy. Manglapus' group engages in armed activities whose purpose is the destabilization of the Marcos government. Their overall strategy is ballot offensive-bullet defensive.

Q. What are the present responsibilities we can focus on in the revolutionary struggle?

A. Since the NDF is now considered the main threat and the main force working against the regime, our first responsibility is to be able to mobilize all political forces fighting the regime and to prepare them for armed struggle. The NDF is now working on building up the sectoral movements of the church sector, health sector, teachers, media people, cultural workers, lawyers and government and private employees. We feel that our task in the years ahead is to mobilize these groups alongside other citizens participating in the mass struggle and to isolate the US-Marcos regime. The people themselves will undertake the struggle.

Our second responsibility is to tighten the unity of all revolutionary forces. We have a responsibility to assist each other. Closer coordination must also be worked out between the countryside and urban centers, between armed struggle and other forms of struggle. Our third responsibility is to develop the international solidarity movement. Closer coordination is also needed between our work here and abroad. ▲

SPARKS

CORDILLERA FOLK STAGE BODONG

About 500 people gathered last month in Betwagan, Mt. Province to form a solidarity movement in the Cordilleras which would unite the communities into a cohesive and active people's alliance.

The group represented about 15,000 residents living in the communities that will be affected directly by the Chico Dam Project and the Cellophil Resources Corp. project. These include the mountain tribes living in Besao, Tabuk, Segada, Buscalan, Ngibet, Bugnay and Bontoc.

The conference, which was organized by the local village leaders, also sought to link up the struggling communities with the urban communities in the Cordilleras as well as with other sympathetic groups in the country. The participants discussed the establishment of a forum through which the community residents can express their problems and aspirations.

During the conference, it was noted that militarization has intensified in the Cordilleras, especially in the Chico River Basin and the concession areas of the Cellophil Resources Corp.

Military troopers now number about 600. At the same time, the government is stepping up its recruitment efforts among the tribespeople through the PANAMIN. Primary among its targets for recruitment are those groups which have not been included in the Bodong.

The CRC also continues with its incursion into the ancestral lands of the communities, thus preventing the people from making productive use of their property, the participants said.

Lastly, the conference denounced the continued efforts of the national government to push through with the Chico River Dam project, in spite of almost eight years of resistance and protest by the Cordillera communities.

NPA SCORES IN 2 AMBUSHES

Seven enemy troopers were killed and several high-powered firearms were seized in two separate ambushes by the New People's Army in Cagayan last January.

According to *Beringhuan*, mass newspaper in Cagayan Valley, the first ambush took place in Bo. Rosette, Gattaran. Four enemy soldiers were killed in the eight-minute military operation. Seized were one M-203, two M-16 rifles, an M-14, 34 rounds of ammunition and hundreds of bullets.

The second ambush took place in Western Cagayan. Three Philippine Army soldiers were killed and two M-16s were confiscated.

The Red guerillas suffered no casualties in both ambushes.

CPP BICOL HOLDS CONFERENCE

The first regional conference of the Communist Party in Bicol was successfully held late last year despite military operations in the area.

In a communique released by the regional party committee, the success of the conference was largely because of the support given by the masses in guarding its security.

It was decided in the conference that the primary task of the regional Party organization is to open new fronts and to expand and consolidate existing guerilla fronts in Bicol.

LAGUNA FISHERMEN AND DUCK RAISERS PROTEST

About 300 small fishermen and duck raisers from San Pedro, Laguna marched last Feb. 12 to protest the encroachment of big fishpond operators in Laguna de Bay.

The protesters said the operators, most of whom were influential politicians and businessmen, were violating Letter of Instruction No. 740 which limits the size of fishpens. Corporate fishpens representing only 20 percent of the total number of fishpens in the bay cover about 58 percent of the area.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority which is supposed to implement and enforce the LOI, however, said it is helpless to act against the big fishpond operators. (BMP)



Bontoc in the Cordilleras — magnificent setting for an unconquered people's resistance.

FARMERS ASSAIL MERALCO

What the government gives today, it takes away tomorrow.

This is the observation of 72 farmers and their families in Jala-Jala, Rizal who are up in arms against the grabbing of their lands by the government-owned Meralco Farms Management, Inc. The farmers said they have been paying amortizations on the lands since July 3, 1973 when they were given certificates of land transfer (CLTs) as beneficiaries of the so-called agrarian reform program.

Last year, however, Meralco started ejecting the farmers so that it could convert their lands into one agro-industrial estate. The company said it was acting in compliance with General Order no. 47 requiring all corporations with at least 500 employees to own rice and corn lands. (BMP)

MILITARY STEPS UP CAMPAIGN IN WV

Three military battalions were brought to Western Visayas in a span of two months during a heightened military campaign in the area.

The reinforcement came in the wake of the people's indignation over the massacre of six demonstrators in the town plaza of Culasi, Antique last Dec. 19. The residents were protesting against the growing militarization of the province when they were fired upon by PC soldiers.

DABA-DABA, the regional newspaper, also reported that military officials in the province have ordered police chiefs and town mayors to prevent mass actions. The military has also prohibited the survivors of the Culasi massacre from talking about the incident. (BMP)

HUMAN RIGHTS CONFAB SCORES REGIME

Leading human rights organizations denounced the Marcos regime and the US government for the heightening trend of human rights violations in the country and held both governments directly accountable for such violations.

The denunciation was issued by some 150 delegates representing 70 organizations at the First National Conference on Human Rights held Feb. 17 and 18 at the Communication Foundation for Asia in Sta. Mesa, Metro Manila.

In a declaration, the delegates called on all human rights groups and concerned individuals in the country and abroad "to join hands to form a broad, militant and sustained movement against militarization and for the protection of the basic rights of the people."

Among the speakers at the confab were former Sen. Jose Diokno, former Con-Con delegate Teofisto Guingona, Sr. Mariani Dimaranan of the Task Force Detainees, former Sen. Ambrosio Padilla and Assemblyman Valentin Legaspi. Testimonies were given by survivors and witnesses of massacres perpetrated by the military in Culasi, Antique; Daet, Camarines Sur; Las Navas, Samar; Guinayangan, Quezon; and Lasc, Davao.



Protest murals provide a backdrop to human rights confab

Prominent lawyers from five southeast Asian nations attending the Human Rights Internet seminar in Tagaytay City declared their solidarity with the conference and signed a pact to form a regional council on human rights in Asia.

GOMBURZA COMMEMORATED IN LECTURES

Filipino nationalist priests Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos and Jacinto Zamora who were executed by the Spanish colonial government on Feb. 17, 1872 were commemorated on the 110th anniversary of their martyrdom.

Some 170 churchpeople held memorial lectures on the same day at the Sisters Formation Institute at San Juan, Metro Manila. The theme of the lectures was "The Church's Involvement in the People's Struggle."

The speakers included Fr. Jose Dizon, national chairman of the National Priests and Religious Union (NAPRU); former Sen. Jose Diokno; Prof. Mario Bolasco, head of the philosophy department in St. Scholastica's College; and Bishop Estanislao Abeinza, national chairman of the Protestants' Organization for People's Enlightenment and Liberation (PROPEL).

Bolasco put in historical perspective the Gomburza tradition and discussed the limitations of the secular struggle. He indirectly referred to the Christians for National Liberation (CNL) which, instead of protesting political innocence, declared its explicit commitment to the people.

Diokno explained the role of the church in the national and social liberation of the people. He urged the churchpeople to be involved in the people's struggles and to help create a "truly human society here and now."

A statement was issued warning against the trend of active intervention by the government and military in religious programs and institutions. The statement noted the replacement of progressive with more conservative churchmen and the wide distribution and study of materials "intended to create a paralyzing fear of communism and not the resolution of basic problems in the light of Gospel values." ▲

CROSSCURRENTS

Emptying the sea

Vietnam-type hamlets revived to fish out NPA

By JULIAN CRISOSTOMO

The Central Mindanao Command (CEMCOM) calls it a "war without bullets." But it killed people, nonetheless. Twenty-eight children were killed in the first week of February, not by brief bursts of gunfire but by a bad bout of measles aggravated by the lack of food, cramped quarters and very poor sanitation in two of over 30 strategic hamlets in San Vicente (formerly Laac), Davao del Norte. The children were the incidental casualties of this bullet-less war meant to win the people's hearts and minds even if some lost their lives in the process.

Until last year, the military had not cared about the hearts and minds of the 35,000 poor settlers in this town nestling among the rugged slopes near the Agusan del Sur border. But in June 1981, the area was marked as a "hotbed of dissident activity" when the entire town, without exception, boycotted the presidential election. Encounters near the area between NPA guerillas and Marcos troopers further pinpointed the town as a target for the reactionary army's "total pacification campaign."

This campaign entailed the deployment of San Vicente of 2,500 troopers who, with their usual zeal, practiced their rites of torture, salvaging and harassment on the residents. These terrorist tactics failed to crush the revolutionary mass organizations which had by then taken firm root among the people. Thus, in a last-ditch effort to rid the guerillas of mass support, the military ordered the villagers in all 35 barrios of Laac to transfer to the sitio centers.

Virtual prisons

The barriofolk were told to remove the roofs and sidings of their homes so that these could not be used by the guerillas. Anyone who refused to do so faced a prison

term and the payment of a fine; the soldiers also threatened to burn the houses of those who refused to move.

Hardly had the people settled down when they are ordered to transfer again, this time to the barangay centers. They dismantled their makeshift huts, pecked their belongings and began another exodus to heavily-guarded areas where there was little food, no safe drinking water, no schools or clinics. The military called these relocation sites "barrio groupings," virtual prisons where a dawn-to-dusk curfew was imposed.

Just so they can till their lands, the barriofolk have to walk as far as 12 kilometers daily to and from their farms. They were also forced to render free labor to build PC barracks and to work on a tree plantation owned by an army officer. Hunger and disease stalked these "barrio groupings," the term preferred by the military.

inset: Farmers forcibly dismantling their huts move on to relocation sites; hamlet areas in Agusan del Sur



As early as 1972, strategic hamlets have been established in several instances in the provinces of Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Aurora and many Mindanao provinces. However, the case of San Vicente is significant because it marks the first time that the military has built strategic hamlets involving the population of an entire municipality. In the island of Mindanao alone, as of the latest count made last January, there are at least 141 barrios and three whole towns in which strategic hamlets are presently existing. Altogether, these hamlets involve over 215,000 people.

A Tactic that Failed

Two decades and several hundred thousand lives ago, the US-supported Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorship in South Vietnam implemented hamletting on a grand scale. In the 1960s, most of the rural population of that country were kept behind the barbed wire fences of more than 16,000 strategic hamlets where, it was thought, they would be unable to shelter and support the guerillas and cadres of the National Liberation Front (NLF).

Hamletting turned out to be a dismal failure: rather than quashing resistance, it further instilled among the south Vietnamese people the will to fight a tyrannical government. With a combination of armed and political struggle waged not only by



the people penned up in the hamlets but also by those in the cities and even within the ranks of the increasingly demoralized US-Diem army, the NLF forces were able to liberate most of these strategic hamlets.

By 1963, 80 percent of the strategic hamlets had been destroyed due to the combined efforts of NLF guerrillas and the hamlet residents themselves who were armed only with the most rudimentary weapons, spiked traps and a few modern arms captured from enemy forces. The entire population of these villages — were active participants in the struggle for their liberation.

A Coordinated Struggle

Essential to the liberation of the hamlets was the proper combination and coordination of organizing work, armed struggle and legal or semi-legal actions. After NLF cadres had done some secret organizing work among the people, the residents organized themselves into self-defense units and transformed mutual aid groups and enemy organizations into revolutionary people's organizations. After these initial efforts, the people were able to launch small mass actions with the residents marching to the military headquarters carrying petitions demanding some freedom of movement within the hamlets. Then, as the legal limits were stretched, these mass actions became bolder and larger in scale, turning into big demonstrations protesting the murder of relatives of youths who left the strategic hamlets to join the guerrillas.

Even as these protest actions were being prepared and staged, the people were organizing themselves into units for production, health, education, security and economic affairs. At the same time, the self-defense units were gathering more and more arms and supervising the building of underground tunnels and traps. Gradually, the self-defense forces shifted from passive to active defense; the strategic hamlets were converted into combat villages.

Once the groundwork was laid, the people were ready to launch armed uprisings coordinated with the residents of nearby hamlets. In some instances, as many as 50,000 people in a cluster of

hamlets launched simultaneous uprisings, thus confusing enemy troops which were forced to spread themselves thinly. In big, massive waves, the people tore down the barbed wire fences of the garrisoned hamlets and returned to their native villages. Attempts to round them up again only stressed to the people the need to increase the scope of armed struggle and coordinate it on a national scale.

The armed people's uprisings were so successful that by 1968, it was the Americans and their local puppets who were sealing themselves off behind barbed wire fortifications in Saigon and the other cities.

Valuable lessons

That the Marcos military should apply to the Philippines a tactic which failed in Vietnam attests not so much to the lack of creativity of reactionary armies but more so to their desperation. The implementation of hamletting is an admission that the available arsenal of terror tactics cannot prevent the guerrilla forces from expanding nor the people from supporting their army. To the military mind, the logic behind hamletting was simple enough: the guerrillas are like fish in the sea which is the masses; to kill the fish, the sea must be emptied.

The courage and perseverance of the Vietnamese people shattered this logic. However, while the US-Marcos armed forces refuse to learn from the mistakes of the US-Diem regime, the Filipino people can draw valuable lessons from the Vietnamese struggle.

A successful anti-strategic hamlets, or in general, anti-militarization campaign needs the support of the broadest sectors of people. In the case of the Davao hamlets, human rights advocates, including religious personages, lawyers and former justices were able to expose hamletting and stir public opinion against it. This prompted the regime's defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile to issue a statement ordering the dismantling of strategic hamlets.

Enrile's statement is no guarantee; in fact, as the revolutionary forces become stronger, the fascist army will be left with no choice but to pan in more people and in larger

areas — although, this next time, it may not refer to these as strategic hamlets. When that time comes, public opinion will be disregarded in the face of the impunity with which the regime will unleash all the forces of reaction at its command.

Only an organized people's resistance can weather and become victorious over the fascist fury of a desperate regime. In the ultimate analysis, it is only the combination of a people's army and an armed people that can, as in Vietnam, overcome the enemy from within its own prisons.

The first Vietnam

The Vietnamese experience also stresses the importance of a revolutionary movement coordinated on a nationwide scale and guided by a revolutionary ideology and an understanding of guerrilla warfare. It was precisely the absence of these elements which spelled the doom for the guerrilla bands that fought during the American war of aggression in the Philippines in the turn of the century.

The first strategic hamlets were actually built not in Vietnam but in the Philippines during the first few years of this century. These hamlets or reconcentration camps, as they were called, were huge concentration camps where American soldiers herded together at gunpoint several thousands of people. Faced with a technologically superior enemy, Filipino guerrillas were unable to liberate these camps and were forced to retreat to the mountains, deprived of the masses' material and political support. "They fought with their wits and instincts alone, which led in turn to terrible reversals and ultimately defeat in an uneven, suicidal struggle doomed from the start," explains Filipino historian Luzviminda Francisco.

History will not repeat itself in the Philippines. The national democratic forces today have learned the lessons of the past revolutionary struggles of the Filipino people and of other peoples. Their study of the specific characteristics of people's war in the Philippines has resulted in significant victories both in guerrilla war and open mass protests. Theirs is a struggle not doomed from the start.▲

VIEWPOINT

The ballot or the bullet?

A conversation on political options



"The NPA now operates in 34 guerrilla fronts."

Andres, 32, is an NPA political officer of an FGU (front guerrilla unit) in Cagayan Valley. He is in Manila, recovering from a battle wound.

Cora, 26, teaches at a private college. She and her husband look at themselves as NDF sympathizers. They read LIBERATION and other movement literature, and help out occasionally; in this case, they've offered a spare room to Andres whom they know personally. But they don't belong to any unit of the NDF. "We still have some questions," they say. Here are some:

Cora: I accept your point about Marcos dictatorship and all that. Sure, we need to get rid of him. But should it be the bullet? Isn't there a more peaceful way?

Andres: If there were a more peaceful way, I'd prefer that. But do you think Marcos would ever allow elections clean enough to remove him? He has mastered all the tricks of old society politics and added a few new society ones.

Cora: He could die, you know.

Andres: Of course. In fact, if rumors could kill, he would have died long ago, of all sorts of diseases! He could even resign; that's what various oppositionists keep urging him to. But do you think he'll do that? Besides, it is not wise politics to pin one's hope on such uncertainties. We have to take them into account; but we'll concentrate our best efforts in organizing for people's war.

Cora: O.K., so some violence has to be. Why not assassination or a coup? There must be some officers willing to do it, as in Egypt. I once read that even some CIA people wanted him out; they're better at this sort of thing, aren't they?

Andres: Such things can happen, but what do you get afterwards? Pimentel had a point; he was supposed to have said: "Get rid of

Marcos and what do we get? Marcos clones!" It's not just Marcos; it's the structures — oppression and exploitation, not to mention US domination.

Cora: Sure, but all that takes time to change. First, get rid of the guy; then you can organize people for bigger changes. Doing that now is risky — you have to keep hiding; you risk being killed.

Andres: How do we get rid of him if we don't organize in the first place? But, yes, I agree with you. We need not think of an all-rounded people's war with millions organized before the regime falls. A coalition could take over sooner, with us in it, before most people are organized. Obviously, organizing them afterwards would be minus the present risks. But it would still be hard work.

Cora: So, why tie yourselves to your protracted countryside-to-city march? Isn't that too heavily influenced by Mao's ideas for China? I have the impression that people here in Manila are quite dissatisfied; they are quite a few millions and all packed together. Why not Manila? People like us would help, you know. But don't ask me to go to the barrios!

Andres: (laughing) Of course not! You can do all your fighting here. We do operate in the cities, especially Manila. It's been mainly legal organizing and struggles so far. But we're also building the underground and should be able to launch partisan warfare too, as we do in cities like Davao. Mao's ideas do influence us, but we adapt them to our specific Philippine situation. I think the results speak for themselves. We've made many mistakes, but we've continued to grow. I told you earlier that the NPA now operates in 34 guerrilla fronts.

Cora: You know, I don't think could ever take up a gun myself.

Andres: There are many legal organizations you can work with; even underground organizing isn't all armed. Maybe your teaching skills can be tapped.

Cora: I don't know. Legal politics has its own risks; even well-known politicians get arrested. On the other hand, the underground isn't immune from arrest either.

Andres: It's your decision, of course. I guess all I want to stress is that people's war is not all bullets. Open mass struggle must complement the armed struggle. The idea is for the two to develop up to the point of merging in outbursts of people's armed uprisings.

Cora: You make it sound like in the movies! Parang sine. Are you thinking of something like Nicaragua?

Andres: Not exactly. But, yes, it could be like that. What I had in mind was Vietnam. Did you know that their offensive was waged not only by their people's army? The organized people themselves overwhelmed many garrisons!

Cora: Oh, so you look favorably on Vietnam. I thought you were opposed to Vietnam?

Andres: Did I give you that impression? We would be

blind not to admire the Vietnamese people's struggle against the US and Thieu regime. There's a lot of lessons there for us, not the least their ability to tap a wide range of international support. Also their work among the ranks of the enemy forces, both military and civilian was something.

Cora: I meant to ask you that. Surely, you're not making an absolute virtue of self-reliance? Marcos keeps getting US arms and will get more as you grow stronger; just look at El Salvador. And here they need not ship US troops from there; they're already at Clark and Subic.

Andres: Yes, you've pinpointed a problem there. We need strong anti-intervention movement abroad, especially in the US. But we should be able to tap the forces of the anti-nuclear and peace movements. Did you know that close to 2,000,000 joined the recent wave of protests in Western Europe alone? Then there are the other solidarity movements.

Cora: Hey, you've got me talking within your framework of people's war! Let me slip out of that. What about the ballot - elections. Shall we be boycotting all of

them? Surely, there is reason to take part, sometimes.

Andres: It depends. As I said earlier, legal struggle is part of people's war. But elections? There are many factors to consider. You know, even pre-martial law elections were not purely peaceful affairs. There was always the gun, pointed at the people and political opponents. Now that the people (quite a few, at least) have guns, maybe they can combine the bullet with the ballot. We'll see. What is crucial is the advance of the people's organizations and consciousness.

Cora: In the end, isn't the ballot the one that matters? You do plan elections after the overthrow of the dictatorship, don't you?

Andres: Of course. But that's another point altogether. Bullets are necessary for toppling dictatorships. (And even that takes more than bullets.) But, yes, the new coalition government would still have to submit to the ballot. In a way, you could look at what we're doing as a long campaign. People support us, vote for us, sometimes literally with their lives. You, too. You're giving more than a simple vote. ▴



"It's not just Marcos, its the structures . . . not to mention US domination."

History's wars have, in the main, been fought by men. And most often often, the very people who have the least to gain from the society which demands their sacrifice have paid the highest price. Women, too, have paid their price but like the other disadvantaged, their participation generally did little to ensure their more equal role in the societies built after the declaration of peace.

In African countries where wars of national liberation are ongoing or have already been victorious, this paradox is far less true. In several countries, women have both been encouraged to play, and have demanded to play, a continuing part in the process of revolutionary social transformation.

Mozambique President Samora Machel summed up the important role of women in the national struggle in a speech at the founding conference of the Mozambican Women's Organization during the war of independence: "The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for the revolution, a guarantee of its continuity and a precondition for its victory."

Subservient Roles

In Africa, the general situation is that women are subservient to men, are subjected to numerous detrimental customs such as polygamy or forced and child marriage, and have little say in the political life of their country. This subordinate role has come about despite their active participation in agricultural production, one that far outweighs that of men.

This has not always been so. In pre-colonial Africa, women derived considerably more status from their role in agricultural production and it enabled them to be an integral and vital part of the economic and social life of the community. However, the ever-deepening incursions of colonialism brought a considerable erosion of women's situation, with South Africa providing the most extreme example.

Today, the struggle for women's liberation is twofold: for an equal place in the political, social and economic life of their respective countries while simultaneously uprooting the attitudes that keep

INTERNATIONAL Struggling on two fronts

African women fight against two colonialisms



Women now stand in the forefront of the struggle

women down. This means that the women's struggle is viewed as an integral part of the overall process of social transformation. For only in a free and independent society that is based on principles of total equality can women find their equal place.

Two Colonialisms

However, the attainment of national independence and even the development of socialism will not mean that women are spontaneously liberated. The separate struggle for the emancipation of women is indispensable. As it has been stated in Guinea-Bissau: "Women are fighting two colonialisms — the one of the Portuguese and the other of men." This does not mean that men are considered the enemy, any more than the Portuguese people were considered the enemy. Rather, it is the systems which produce these forms of oppression which must be changed — be they government structures or traditional attitudes and customs.

But how to bring about such change? In certain countries where wars of liberation have been fought, women's involvement was encouraged solely because of necessity. With the attainment of independence, women were encouraged to return home and enlarge their families.

In the struggles in southern Africa, necessity too has been a factor. Every man, woman and child had to be called upon to

participate in some way of overthrowing the repressive regimes. But as the ideologies of these movements extended beyond the pragmatic, the activities of women have been consciously encouraged and mechanisms set in motion to ensure their full participation.

During a war, this is easier to achieve. The enemy is obvious and visible, and the need for everybody to contribute their outmost is crucial. With independence comes a different set of complexities, and the struggle for development that now confronts countries such as Mozambique and Zimbabwe is vast.

A Luta Continua — the struggle continues — is not an empty slogan. It is a deep reality. How women fare in this phase of the revolution is even now more dependent on their own demands for their liberation. There are too many examples of how this facet of the revolution has been set aside as less than immediate priority where "more important" issues take precedence. But 50 percent of the population are women. There is room to hope that this battle will continue, in particular where women have played an active part in wars of liberation, as soldiers and other capacities and where new governments continue to emphasize their liberation as a "precondition for victory." ▲

(This article is based on stories by Stephanie Urdung and Gloria Jacobs in Southern Africa published in spring, 1980.)



'Mr. Man-no-talk'

What were the first words of Tommy Manotoc to Imelda to win her favor after his so-called kidnaping? "Look Ma, man-no-talk!"

First Son-in-law Manotoc gained about 10 pounds during his kidnaping. Now, some skinny people are asking how they can get kidnaped. By the same kidnapers, of course.

Manotoc's kidnaping is a first in Philippine history. He is the first kidnap victim to be rescued by his own kidnapers.

Over dinner, Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. was asked by his daughters about his firm's oppression of the farmers of Haciendas San Antonio-Sta. Isabel which they had read in posters at Assumption College in Makati. "Is it true you are an oppressor, Daddy?"

Cojuangco nearly choked on his meal.

A wit has a novel theory about the street diggings. The government wants to reach the underground.

Enrile reportedly paid a visit to Jose Ma. Sison in his prison cell to inquire what reaching the advanced substage of strategic defensive means.

When Enrile takes time out to visit Joerna, that's what reaching the advanced substage means.

"Will they let us walk the dog again?" asks Francisco Tatad in his Feb. 10 column in the Evening Post. Is Tatad tiring of being walked from his dogchain in Malacañang?

Conrado Calubid, tagged as the overall NPA commander in Eastern Visayas, could be the most killed and most captured man in the country. He has been reported howitzered twice, captured twice (the latest during the Feb. 26-27 arrests in Metro Manila when in

fact he was not in the city) and the military is still hunting for him.

Enrile reported the sighting in Bicol of a mysterious white helicopter suspected of smuggling arms to the NPA. Marcos' white helicopter was in Bicol during that time.

Does Enrile suspect his master to be the mysterious arms smuggler?

The people have many faults and the rulers have only two. What the rulers say is one. What the rulers do is another.

Why should the US-Marcos dictatorship be named necessity? Because necessity knows no law.

"When they drop a bomb at the White House, I might get mad," Ronald Reagan warned recently.

Bombs away!

Our favorite mailman, Meng Tambo, denies using the Social Security System's franking privilege for mailing LIBERATION. However, he wants to know if SSS administrator Gilberto Teodoro, Balletia columnist Jesus Bigornia and Adrian Cristobal would care to receive LIB - in real SSS envelopes.

Definition of a dictator: One who thinks he can take it no matter to whom it belongs. ▲



MARCH 1982 LIBERATION