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**REPORT TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES
AND ORGANIZATIONS**

THESES ON THE WORLD SITUATION

**GENERAL DECLARATION
OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE**

REFORMISM IN THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

**Number 4
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REPORT TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

BY THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES
AS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COORDINATING GROUP
APRIL 1994

Comrades,

The role of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations shines brighter than ever in upholding, defending and advancing the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

The disintegration of Soviet modern revisionism and social-imperialism is a major part of the unprecedented crisis of the world capitalist system and is an expression of the profound changes in that system. This has led to the process of rebuilding the international Marxist-Leninist and workers' movement.

In this process, the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations has held the initiative in defending Mao Zedong Thought and propagating its truth and vindication against modern revisionism. There is the clear starting point for building anew the revolutionary movement of the world proletariat.

The most important achievement of the Third Conference was in taking a clear stand on the Soviet Union and on Gorbachov and in developing that stand up to the General Resolution on major global issues.

As we march from the Third to the Fourth Conference, we must strive for unity on the new questions regarding the world capitalist system, the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary forces, the struggle against modern revisionism and international cooperation. Upon our common understanding, we must coordinate practical steps.

The JCG has carried out its work in accordance with the rules approved by the *International Conference* and the resolutions and decisions of the Third Conference and the Intermediate Conference and with the participation and support of the Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations in the International Conference.

At the same time, new creative ideas have been developed and applied in order to master and realize the new tasks on the basis of the rules and decisions priorly taken by the International Conference.

In any case, the JCG has relied upon the active support of the participants of the *International Conference*, reported to and consulted them on the work being done and has solicited proposals, comments and recommendations.

1. Meetings, Memoranda-Circulars and Consultations

The Joint Coordinating Group (JCG) held a total of 15 meetings or once every 5 weeks to plan, assign, check up and develop its work since 6 September 1992.

There were five meetings before the Intermediate Conference. There were also five meetings before the International Seminar on Mao Zedong Thought. Since then, there have been five meetings up to the Fourth Conference.

In all the meetings, there was either full attendance or a quorum of the JCG members. There were expanded meetings which variably included comrades from GML, KOL, CPP, RCP of Argentina and CP of Peru (pr), depending on the need or circumstances.

JCG meetings are documented by minutes and are mostly followed up by memoranda-circulars to all participants in the Third Conference and, after the Intermediate Conference, also to prospective participants of the Fourth Conference.

The JCG issued a total of eight memoranda-circulars. These have been an important vehicle of information, consultations, arriving at consensus between the JCG and the participants of the International Conference.

There were face-to-face consultations between members and representatives of the JCG on the one hand and participants of the

International Conference and prospective participants in the *Intermediate Conference* and the *Fourth Conference* on the other.

There were occasions when members and representatives of the JCG visited participants and prospective participants of the *International Conference* in their own countries. There were also the occasions when the latter visited the former.

The visits and consultations were the subjects of reports to the JCG, in connection with the question of participation in the *International Conference* and in the current practical work of the JCG.

2. Propagation of the Results of the Third Conference

Since its assumption of responsibility after the *Third Conference*, the JCG has propagated the general resolution and other decisions of the *Third Conference* by providing copies to several tens of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations which are not yet in the *International Conference*.

The JCG has attracted new participants to the *Intermediate Conference* and the *Fourth Conference* by asking recipients of the documents to make comments and to declare whether they are interested in joining the *International Conference*. Those responding favorably were recommended by the JCG to the *Intermediate Conference* for invitation to the *International Conference*.

The *Third-Conference* participants and the prospective *Fourth-Conference* participants have also disseminated the *General Resolution* through their respective publications and through radio broadcasts. The *General Resolution* is available in English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese Pilipino and Indonesian versions.

The documentary film of interviews with the participants of the *Third Conference* has been disseminated in German, English and Spanish.

3. The Intermediate Conference

The JCG organized and held the *Intermediate Conference* in May 1993. In accordance with the decisions of the *Third Conference*, the *Intermediate Conference* performed the main task of letting the

participants prepare the Fourth Conference, unify them and make decisions on the carrying out of the Fourth Conference. The unification of the assessment of the Third Conference and drawing of conclusions for further work were in the center of the discussions at the Intermediate Conference. The Intermediate Conference basically confirmed the work of the JCG.

Ten Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations participated. These included: the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Afghanistan, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Argentina, the Communist Party of Japan (Left), the Communist Organization of Luxembourg, the Marxist-Leninist Group of the Netherlands, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany, the Communist Party of Peru (patria roja), the Communist Party of the Philippines, EKIM of Turkey and Union of Progressive Movements of Zaire. Two of the aforementioned, the Communist Party of Japan (Left) and UMP of Zaire, were invited by the JCG in accordance with its task to work on and develop the list of participants.

The Intermediate Conference discussed and approved the following:

- a. Report of the Joint Coordinating Group
- b. Joint Assessment of the Third Conference and unification of conclusions
- c. The agenda of the Fourth Conference and assignment to six participants of the task of writing introductions to the six major subjects in the agenda
- d. The provisional list of invitations for participants in the Fourth Conference
- e. Referral to participants by memorandum-circular of the draft resolution on the 100th birth anniversary and the draft General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought
- f. Assumption by JCG of the responsibility for the publication of the *International Newsletter*
- g. The site, technical requirements and financing of the Fourth Conference.

Memorandum-Circular No. 5 covered the results and documents of the Intermediate Conference which were forwarded to all participants of the Third Conference and the Intermediate Conference. The results

of the Intermediate Conference were also published in the *International Newsletter* No. 4.

4. Participation in the International Conference

The main character of the International Conference is determined by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. It is a forum for rebuilding the international Marxist-Leninist and workers' movement and for preparing and realizing a new upsurge of the struggle for socialism.

The process of rebuilding necessarily involves the process of ideological-political clarification in which the International Conference can play a significant role and actively exert influence. It is not enough to bring together parties and organizations that avow themselves to be adherents of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. More importantly, the International Conference must take an active role in carrying out the ideological-political process.

The time is past for simply defending Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought against modern revisionism. Now is the time for going on the offensive, which means promoting the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought in preparation for a new upsurge of the struggle for genuine socialism. This entails paying the greatest attention to the positive lessons and learning from the previous defeat of the international Marxist-Leninist and workers' movement.

The Marxist-Leninist ideological-political offensive is a counteroffensive to the prior offensive of the imperialists gloating over the collapse of the revisionist-ruled regimes but subsequently shamed by the structural crisis of capitalism. It is as well an offensive against remaining forces and influence of modern revisionism.

Long before the Fourth Conference, the International Conference has been an ideological-political forum and has not been an exclusive association of parties expressly adhering to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. At the same time, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought is historically and currently the main current in the conference. However, through democratic discussions, resolutions and decisions

have been arrived at through consensus even in the absence of any unified ideological-political line.

The criteria for inviting to the Fourth Conference new participants in the International Conference in addition to the participants in the Third Conference are as follow:

- a. Adherence to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought,
- b. Struggle against modern revisionism and a positive attitude towards Stalin and Mao Zedong; and
- c. Recognition of the principles of equality and cooperation and acceptance of the Rules of the International Conference.

Following the foregoing criteria, we have succeeded in increasing the number of participants in the International Conference, from ten parties and organizations in the Third Conference to seventeen in the Fourth Conference.

5. The Process of Decision-Making

The Rules of the Conference respect the principles of independence, equality, noninterference, mutual support and cooperation among the participants. In accordance with these principles, there is the basic rule of consensus and unanimity in making resolutions and decisions.

There is no unified ideological-political line in the International Conference. The participants are not bound by democratic centralism and are not under the central authority of an international center. Consensus can develop within one conference or in a series of conferences. In the course of voting on various issues, the composition of majorities can change. A participant can opt to abstain on any issue or resolution without negating its participation in the conference.

By way of enhancing our determination to make the Fourth Conference succeed in its decision-making process, may we reiterate certain points which are derivable from the rules and experience of the conference:

- a. Voting is a method to find out the positions of delegations and the degree of consensus already reached.
- b. To reach unanimity, the negative vote or strong objections of

any delegation or a minority may be overcome by arriving at a common denominator or by agreeing only on what can be unanimously agreed upon and laying aside differences that cannot as yet be resolved.

c. A participant has no veto power over the decision of the majority but has the right to abstain from or opt out of (not to sign) the decision.

6. The Agenda of the Fourth Conference

The agenda of the Fourth Conference allows us to have ample ideological-political discussions on six major subjects of great and urgent importance and to make resolutions on these.

Listed hereunder are the six subjects, each with the name of the participant contributing the introductory article:

a. Sharpening of the general crisis of imperialism, new phenomena in economy and politics (MLPD)

b. Class struggle in the imperialist countries, conclusions for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics (JCP [Left])

c. Development of the national liberation struggles, conclusions for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics (RCP of Argentina)

d. Currents of revisionism after the breakdown of the Soviet Union (MLPD)

e. Situation of the international revolutionary movement, perspectives of the International Conference (Communist Party of Philippines)

f. International Workers' Aid organization (KOL)

All available written introductions to the above and the theses of various participants on these have been distributed. Participants which have not yet submitted their written theses in advance are expected to express themselves extemporaneously. Written introductions shall not be read but presented orally in a summary of ten minutes each.

May we remind you that after the oral introduction to each subject, every delegation shall have the opportunity to speak and a delegation can speak for no more than five minutes at every speaking turn allowed by the presidium. The discussions during the plenary sessions

shall guide those responsible for drafting the resolutions.

The plan for the Fourth Conference deliberately offers to the participants the opportunity for informative meetings and bilateral talks in addition to the agenda which is more ample and thorough than in previous conferences.

7. The 100th Birth Anniversary of Mao Zedong

In accordance with the spirit and principle in the decision of the Third Conference to celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Mao Zedong, the JCG took the initiative of proposing to the participants of the International Conference the resolution on the celebration of the Mao centennial and General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought.

Through a series of memoranda-circulars and exchanges of letters, the JCG was able to effect the improvement and approval of the aforesaid resolution and declaration as well as the International Seminar and the two book projects (one consisting of the seminar proceedings and the other consisting of long papers) on Mao Zedong Thought, which were projected in the resolution.

Consequently, the participants of the International Conference actively cooperated with the JCG in its initiatives. They also embarked on the celebration of the Mao centennial in their respective countries in accordance with the decision of the Third Conference and reported their preparations and the actual celebration to the JCG.

The JCG co-sponsored with the Center for Social Studies and the Workers Education Center the International Seminar on Mao Zedong Thought in Gelsenkirchen, Germany last 6-7 November 1993.

Nine-hundred-thirty-two (932) men and women from thirty-three countries attended the seminar. More than half of the participants were workers. Also participating were prominent social scientists, researchers, Marxist-Leninist theoreticians and working-class leaders who acted as speakers and resource persons.

To cover the full range of Mao Zedong Thought, there were four sessions on the following subjects: the new democratic revolution, the socialist revolution and construction, the struggle against modern revisionism and the theory of continuing revolution and the world

significance, relevance and influence of Mao Zedong Thought.

The International Seminar on Mao Zedong Thought contributed to the preparations of the Fourth Conference ideologically and politically. There was a clear stand criticizing and repudiating modern revisionism and the restoration of capitalism in China through the seminar and the General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought.

During the seminar, the mass participants were given the opportunity to express themselves orally and in writing on the subjects and to interact with the speakers and resource persons. The proceedings of the seminar are fully documented and are the basis of a book publication and a 50-minute documentary film.

Thirty-three long papers were contributed in advance to the International Seminar by leaders of Marxist-Leninist parties and social scientists. These were made available for sale during the seminar. More than half of these papers have been selected for book publication in English, German and Spanish. Extracts from the other papers are to be put into the book publication of the seminar proceedings.

There is an evaluation of the International Seminar on Mao Zedong Thought made by the JCG, pointing out the achievements and shortcomings. A short version of this evaluation has been published in the International Newsletter.

8. The General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought

The initial draft of the General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought was circulated as early as during the Intermediate Conference. Comments, suggestions and proposed amendments subsequently came from the participants of the International Conference.

As a result of the consultations with the prospective participants of the Fourth Conference, through memoranda-circulars and exchanges of letters, the General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought was approved by a majority of the participants of the International Conference and was ready for presentation and signing by participants of the International Seminar on Mao Zedong Thought on 6-7 November 1993.

Numerous participants signed either as representatives of their

parties and organizations and as individuals. But due to the demands of the RCP of Argentina, UCE and the Communist Party of Peru for amendments during the days of the seminar, the JCG agreed to have the General Declaration subjected to further amendments by all participants of the Fourth Conference before 26 December 1993.

Copies of the General Declaration as amended and finalized have been forwarded to you. As of 26 December 1993, there were thirteen parties and organizations signing it. As of now, there are fifteen. Twelve of these are parties invited to participate in the Fourth Conference but two of them are unable to come. Eight participated in the Third Conference.

The list of approving parties and organizations is as follows:

Marxist-Leninist Organization of Afghanistan

Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina

Marxist Workers' Party of Australia

Pan Africanist Congress (Azania)

Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD)

Communist Party of India (ML-Janashakti)

Communist Party of India (ML-Provisional Central Committee)

Communist Party of India (ML-Red Flag)

Communist Party of India (ML-Towards New Democracy)

Communist Organization of Luxemburg (OCL)

Groep Marxisten-Leninisten of the Netherlands

Communist Party of the Philippines

Isci (Workers' Party of Turkey)

Nucleo del Partido Comunista Revolucionario de Uruguay

L'Union de la Mouvanse Progressiste de Zaire

The General Declaration is offered for signing by parties, organizations and individuals until 26 December 1994. Those of us who wish to sign it can still do so. The JCG is of the view that this document can be the basis of study discussions in our respective parties.

Those who previously signed the General Declaration on or before 7 November 1993 have been requested to examine the General Declaration as amended and finalized in order to decide whether they

wish to have their signatures retained or not.

The General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought is available in the following languages: Bengali, Chinese, Dutch, English, Farsi, French, German, Indonesian, Pilipino, Spanish and Turkish.

9. The International Newsletter

The Communist Unification of Spain was unable to edit and publish the International Newsletter for reasons explained in a letter of the aforesaid organization dated 15 November 1993 to the JCG. Copies of this letter have been distributed to you.

Because of the importance of the newsletter in preparing the Fourth Conference, the Intermediate Conference decided to give the JCG the responsibility of editing and publishing the newsletter.

Under the direction of the JCG, the newsletter came out with two issues before the Fourth Conference. To gather the materials for every issue, the prospective participants of the Fourth Conference were requested to submit their contributions.

The JCG should continue to publish the *Newsletter*. It has been the collecting point for information from all the participants and is the ready source of information for publication. It needs the *Newsletter* for the effectivity of its work.

At the same time, the JCG needs support for the translation of the *Newsletter* in English, French, German and Spanish. Contributors should submit their articles in as many of the languages as possible.

10. Financing of the International Conference

Because of the enlarged participation in the Fourth Conference, the scale of the organizational and technical requirements involves a considerable amount of financing. There are also participants whose transport fares have been paid for by the JCG.

The JCG therefore urges all participants to pay their participation dues according to the formula of one-half of one percent (0.5 percent) of total membership dues in their respective parties and organizations and to give special contributions according to their ability.

Now and in the future, there are participants that cannot make

special financial contributions and that have to be provided with air fare in order to attend our conferences.

We propose to such participants to forward to the JCG handicrafts, music and video cassettes and literature that can be sold and whose total proceeds or net income can help to defray expenses of the International Conference.

11. The Workers' Aid Organization

The International Workers' Aid Organization will be discussed as a major item in the agenda of the Fourth Conference. But reference to it is made in this report to stress the importance and practical need for it and to cite some realization of it.

The financing of the International Conference can be more efficiently raised if the international workers' aid organization exists and provides an expanded system of selling products that participants wish to sell.

12. The Future of the Joint Coordinating Group

As the concluding point in this report, the JCG wishes to make some recommendation regarding its future subsequent to the Fourth Conference.

We recommend that JCG remains a coordinating group which implements the decisions taken by the International Conference and its Intermediate Conference and which has no power outside the aforesaid decisions.

We further recommend the following:

a. The JCG should consist of four or five regular members and two alternate members that can convene and work together as often as before and at no great expense in preparation for the next Intermediate Conference and the Fifth Conference. The JCG should reflect as much as possible the international character of the conference and have members that come from at least three different continents or global region.

b. The criteria for choosing the members of the JCG, especially the chairperson, should include: keen interest in promoting the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

international authority and prestige in actual revolutionary struggle, enjoyment of the confidence of the participants and the ability to unite the various participants, *continuity of experience and tested interest* in the International Conference and ability to raise the necessary resources, facilities and other means.

We urge all the participants of the Fourth Conference to make suggestions on the composition and tasks of the JCG.

We propose to the Fourth Conference to put JCG in charge of determining the place and time of the Fifth Conference and making preparations for it.

The next two years of the existence and further development of the International Conference are crucial because of the further worsening crisis of imperialism and the rising revolutionary trend. There is a need for increased activity and efficiency in the JCG in accordance with the consensus of the International Conference.

We hope that the Fourth Conference can put into the appropriate resolution the decision that participants belonging to the same continent or global region form conferences to propagate the resolutions and decisions of the International Conference and at the same time create a wider and richer basis for the further development of the International Conference. We also hope that the International Conference can hold a broad anti-imperialist solidarity conference and a seminar on socialism in the next two years.

The Fourth Conference will allow all of us ample time for lively and enlightened discussions. We hope that these will bring forth the wisest resolutions and decisions for strengthening our unity and effectiveness along the proletarian revolutionary line.

The already acute and ever worsening general crisis of capitalism provides the favorable conditions for the International Conference to play a major role in encouraging and helping bring about the resurgence of the anti-imperialist and socialist movement under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat on an international scale.

We are optimistic that the Fourth Conference will constitute a brilliant milestone in the history not only of the International

Conference but also of the entire international communist movement.
May we achieve the utmost success in the Fourth Conference. ■

THESES ON THE WORLD SITUATION

SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MARXIST-LENINIST
PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS
APRIL 1994

1. Sharpening of the general crisis of imperialism, new developments in economy and politics

The very processes which have enabled the major industrial capitalist countries to dominate the world and temporarily overcome their recurrent crisis of overproduction since the late '60s are the same processes which have brought about an unprecedentedly deeper and wider crisis of overproduction and a new stage in the general crisis of imperialism.

These processes include the following:

a. the dominance of supermonopolies in the industrial capitalist economies and in the world capitalist system;

b. the rapid adoption of ever higher technology in the pursuit of greater profit by the supermonopolies in industry and services (computers and automation) and in agriculture (including genetic engineering);

c. the use of public finance (especially noncorporate taxation and public borrowing) and the suction of private funds (including pension and other savings funds of employees) for the benefit of the supermonopolies, especially for mergers, pure speculation, research and military production;

d. the neocolonial deployment of surplus goods and surplus capital (direct investments and loan capital) to achieve domination over less industrialized capitalist countries and raw-material producing countries; and

e. the unprecedented integration of the world capitalist system, causing the crisis of overproduction in raw materials and industrial

products and the stagnation and collapse of entire economies in the third world and the former Soviet-bloc countries, pauperization and social turmoil on an unprecedented scale and the intensifying competition and drive for a redivision of the world among the major imperialist countries.

High technology (beyond the electromechanical and chemical processes of the past) is displacing both the white and blue collar workers, causing massive unemployment. The winning capitalist firms adopt still higher technology in order to raise their productivity and increase profitability, wipe out their competitors and cause the tendency of national productivity levels to fall for extended periods.

The tendency of industrial production growth rates to decline in all the industrial capitalist countries has accelerated since 1988. Effective demand continues to fall and there are large inventories of unsold goods. There are conditions of prolonged recession and in fact depression in the industrial capitalist countries. The GNP rate of growth conceals the true economic picture because of the nonproductive bloat in the private service sector and the jobkilling character of new investments. The general tendency of the profit rate to fall is being countered by cost cutting measures at the expense of the proletariat and the people.

Public funds have always been raised through direct and indirect taxes extracted from the proletariat and the people and through wanton public borrowing. These funds have been used to finance supermonopoly operations, mergers and speculation, intranational and international, and military production. To maximize the public funds it can take, the monopoly bourgeoisie is cutting down social services and social welfare payments. To raise its profits, it is vigorously privatizing state-owned public utilities, throwing out public employees in large numbers and jacking up the charges on the general public.

The neocolonial deployment of surplus goods and surplus capital has plunged the former Soviet-bloc countries and third world countries into a prolonged state of depression (that started since the late '70s). It stimulated the collapse of the revisionist-ruled regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, the Soviet Union and Mongolia in the period of 1989-

91. These countries have long suffered from the overproduction of raw materials and some manufactures, the worsening terms of trade and the burden of servicing foreign loans.

Even the few economies in East Asia, which have been assigned to produce consumer goods for the industrial capitalist countries, are now threatened both by reduced consumption in these countries and by efforts to revive the manufacturing of the same type of goods in areas within or closer to them.

The depression in the third world and the former Soviet-bloc countries serves to contract the world capitalist market and the field of investment. The large inventories of unsold goods in the industrial capitalist countries constrain productive investments in the raw-material exporting countries. The huge accumulated debt burden of the neocolonial client-states is discouraging further lending by the industrial capitalist countries. Thus, the general crisis of capitalism is surfacing in the imperialist countries and the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is steadily unfolding.

Bourgeois economists hypothesize that the collapse of the revisionist-ruled regimes would open a wider field of investments for the Western and Japanese supermonopolies. In fact, the general policy of these supermonopolies is to dump their surplus goods, buy only into the most profitable manufacturing enterprises and cause the host economies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to deteriorate further. Already buffeted by competition, the supermonopolies are afraid of and opposed to the renovation and expansion of the industries of Russia and the other former Soviet-bloc countries.

The United States is out to maintain and enlarge its global hegemony at the expense of Japan and Western Europe. It can revive and step up its industrial production and competitiveness at the expense of the other industrial capitalist countries. It is consolidating its control over NAFTA, the whole of Latin America and the oil resources in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. It is engaged in a sharpening competition with Japan over East Asia and Southeast Asia.

It goes along with Western Europe in the exploitation of Africa and

the former Soviet-bloc countries by dumping goods and buying only the most profitable enterprises but pushes Western Europe to take more financial responsibility for the overhead costs of infrastructure-building and military intervention. Germany leads in seeking comprehensive control of Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia.

The rottenness of the political system in industrial capitalist countries is becoming more and more obvious as traditional major parties of the monopoly bourgeoisie are exposed in corruption scandals in connection with the supermonopolies. The people are disgusted with such parties, and the proletariat and the people engage in general strikes and other mass actions against the worsening economic and political conditions. Since 1992, the crisis has undercut the anticommunist ideological and political offensive of the imperialists.

The monopoly bourgeoisie uses high-tech mass media to play up the so-called failure of socialism and all kinds of sensational events in order to obscure the growing class struggle in capitalist society. While Marxist-Leninist parties are still small or absent, the new social-democratic (neorevisionist), old social-democratic and green parties offer themselves as alternatives to the traditional major parties of the monopoly bourgeoisie in several major capitalist countries. In the United States, the duopoly of the Democratic and Republican parties is still deeply entrenched and holding.

In all capitalist countries and in their client-states the monopoly bourgeoisie is systematically using petty-bourgeois ideology and propaganda to preempt, slander and discredit Marxism-Leninism and socialism. It is funding petty-bourgeois dominated "nongovernmental" organizations as tools for obscuring the responsibility of imperialism and local reaction for the widespread poverty, environmental destruction, ethnic conflicts, gender discrimination and so on.

In several major capitalist countries, parties, groups and movements of bourgeois nationalism, neofascism, racism, ethnocentrism and religious prejudices are arising and being funded by certain sections of the monopoly bourgeoisie to preempt and threaten the progressive forces and to give the state authorities the pretext to suppress the progressive forces, especially the Marxist-Leninist parties and

organizations.

The worst reactionary forces are conspicuously at work, where civil wars and ethnic and religious conflicts are raging, in the former revisionist-ruled bureaucrat capitalist states and in the third world countries. The domestic big bourgeoisie and other reactionaries have used these armed conflicts to consolidate their power over the people. The imperialists have also fanned up these conflicts and used them as pretext for intervention and takeover. There is social turmoil in all the continents of the world. There is a new world disorder more widespread and intense than in the bygone period of the bipolar world.

2. The development of the class struggle in the imperialist countries and conclusions for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics

The general crisis of imperialism is bound to worsen. There is no solution but social revolution. Just as the worst forms of reaction are reemerging in the industrial capitalist countries, the question of socialist revolution is once more coming to the fore. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie has surfaced.

The imperialist countries themselves have increasing difficulties in settling among themselves their differences over production, trade, finance, currency and security matters. They are in a process of national and regional consolidation. While we currently see the United States, Japan and Western Europe as the three centers of world capitalism, we cannot underestimate the reassertion of Russian imperialism as an upsetting factor because the Russian monopoly bourgeoisie cannot completely shut down its industries against its own interests. The Chinese monopoly bureaucrat bourgeoisie is also another factor in a much-constricted capitalist world.

In every industrial capitalist country, the worsening crisis of overproduction is providing the conditions for the upsurge of the class struggle between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat, including the great mass of unemployed. This is bound to increase popular disgust at the monopoly bourgeoisie (Christian-democratic, old social-democratic, liberal, etc.), and lead to the further discredit of the

traditional major parties of the monopoly bourgeoisie as well as the *new social-democratic and green parties* in electoral politics, the rise of strikes and other concerted mass actions outside the pro-imperialist framework, the provocative challenge from the fascists and the ultimate rise of the Marxist-Leninist party through revolutionary mass struggles.

The Marxist-Leninist party has to build itself ideologically, politically and organizationally along the proletarian revolutionary line within the ranks of the party and among the worker masses and to fight along the socialist line among the entire people. With its proletarian revolutionary integrity assured, the Marxist-Leninist party can engage in united front with other political forces on any or all issues in order to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses towards the socialist revolution.

The cadres and members of the Marxist-Leninist party must maintain independence and initiative even as they unite, cooperate and coordinate with other forces. To keep their revolutionary integrity, they must continue to criticize and repudiate revisionism and be willing and ready to cooperate with the nonproletarian but progressive forces. They must seek to prevent the monopoly bourgeoisie from prolonging its rule by rotating in government the *new social-democratic or neorevisionist parties* and the traditional political parties.

The high-tech mass media in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie are a crucial problem that must be solved in a political and technical manner. The Marxist-Leninist party and the revolutionary movement must adopt and use the new techniques in communications in order to carry out some kind of guerrilla warfare in communications against the big bourgeoisie. A multitude of small units can beat the big mass media. The revolutionary message should be able to run in workplaces, neighborhoods and places of leisure. On the walls, the revolutionary slogans can appear and in large sports events the revolutionary streamers can also appear. Eventually, there shall be ways to divide, paralyze or take over the big mass media at crucial moments.

General strikes and other forms of concerted action can be made *most dramatic and effective* by blockades on the houses of high state officials and the monopoly bourgeois in addition to blockades on official

buildings, occupation of factories and offices and interdiction of roads and other supply lines.

The most fertile ground for class struggle in Europe today is still Russia and other former Soviet republics, and the second-rate industrial capitalist countries in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. Special attention must be paid to stimulating the formation and growth of Marxist-Leninist cells and parties here. A small seed in any of these countries is likely to grow and multiply in the few years to come.

The blatant exponents of capitalism and subordination to Western capitalism have been rapidly discredited. But communism and socialism are still widely misunderstood due to decades of revisionist misinterpretation and malpractice since 1956. And many of the revisionist renegades currently present themselves as repentant "communists", as bourgeois nationalists or as social-democrats in order to seize the initiative from the undisguised agents of Western capitalism.

For a genuine Marxist-Leninist party to arise, there must be a ceaseless explanation of modern revisionism and Soviet social imperialism and a vigorous denunciation of both Western and Russian imperialism. The proletarian revolutionaries and anti-imperialists must seize the initiative from the bourgeois nationalists and new social-democrats of monopoly capitalism.

3. The development of the struggles for national and social liberation and conclusions for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics

Neocolonialism has been most devastating to countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the revisionist-ruled countries since the late '70s. The ranks of impoverished neocolonies have expanded, as to include most of the former Soviet-bloc countries, most of the Russian republics and most provinces of China. There are also oppressed nations and peoples in North America, Japan and Western Europe.

The economic ruination of the countries of the third world and the former Soviet bloc has been such that the oppression and exploitation of the people has become worse than that during colonial times.

However, there can be no return to direct colonial rule. The imperialists avoid administrative and political responsibility for running any neocolony. They prefer to retain control through economic and financial means and are satisfied with letting the local taskmasters rule. In certain countries, imperialist military intervention and aggression under the pretext of defending the sovereignty of other countries, UN peacekeeping, human rights and humanitarian aid have been carried out and there have been actual proposals for UN trusteeship for some countries (Somalia and Zaire).

Since the '80s, foreign monopoly capitalism has dulled the perception of economic devastation wrought by neocolonialism through the sham promotion of bourgeois democracy or the replacement of military juntas and authoritarian regimes which were in the first place instigated and installed by US imperialism in the '70s, the bourgeois media hype about the globalization of industrial development, particularly the "success" stories of East Asia (the four tigers and the coastal provinces of China), the promotion of "peaceful settlement" of "regional conflicts" and the accelerated restoration of capitalism and overthrow of the revisionist-ruled regimes from 1989 to 1991.

The "democratized" neocolonial client-states continue to reel from worsened political and economic crisis. Under the slogans of economic liberalism, the predominantly agrarian economies have become more underdeveloped and impoverished and even the few so-called newly industrialized countries (including Mexico, Argentina, Brazil and the like) continue to sink economically. The "economic tigers" of East Asia and the coastal provinces of China are vulnerable to the crisis of overproduction. The socioeconomic and political conditions in central and western China have been degraded to a level worse than what obtained under Kuomintang rule.

The so-called regional conflicts have not been really settled but have proceeded as in Afghanistan, Angola and Kampuchea. The disintegration of Yugoslavia has resulted in civil war of major proportions, especially in Bosnia. Several areas of the former Soviet Union have become hotbeds of civil war, especially Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and some Asian republics of Russia. There is

constant danger of civil war in Russia and armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

The oppressed nations and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the former Soviet-bloc countries cannot escape neocolonialism unless they wage revolutionary struggles for national and social liberation against imperialism. The struggle for national and social liberation is ever more valid and urgent today. As a matter of fact, the main contradiction is still between imperialism and the oppressed nations and peoples. The neocolonies contain the overwhelming majority (at least three-fourths) of humanity.

Monopoly capitalism as the enemy of the people is starkly clear in a global situation in which one of the monopoly capitalist powers (the Soviet Union in the past) can no longer pretend to be a friend of the people in the struggle for national liberation. In fact, the Soviet Union was a greedy and ruthless social-imperialist and neocolonial power, riding roughshod over the nations and peoples of Eastern Europe and other neocolonial client-states in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In turn, it came under increasing neocolonial control and manipulation by the economically superior Western capitalist powers.

The states and national liberation movements previously "supported" and influenced by the Soviet Union urgently need to review and rectify their strategy and tactics. The revolutionary movements and states have to repudiate modern revisionism and at the same time fend off the inducements and impositions of the undisguised imperialists. In the new world situation, all the oppressed nations and peoples are confronted by the imperialist powers, with no one among them pretending to be socialist. Also gone is the situation when advantages and disadvantages are drawn from the contention between U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

Armed revolutionary movements for national and social liberation, led by Marxist-Leninist parties, are still few. But they play the signal role of upholding the torch of armed revolution while the new post cold war period of revolutionary struggle is veritably at the beginning. The economic devastation and social turmoil wrought by neocolonialism is bound to produce more widespread armed revolution.

There is a high potential for armed and unarmed revolutionary movements for national and social liberation in the former Soviet-bloc countries, in most parts or the whole of China, in most of Asia, Africa and Latin America, but only if Marxist-Leninist parties would arise to lead the people, seize the initiative from the bourgeois nationalists and new social-democrats and wage an anti-imperialist struggle for socialism.

The armed revolutionary movement for national and social liberation in a medium-sized archipelagic country like the Philippines can persevere and aim for victory in the new-democratic revolution. But to consolidate the power of the proletariat and to carry out the socialist revolution and construction, the Communist Party of the Philippines must have the direct and indirect support and assistance of other revolutionary movements in the world, must at least benefit from social turmoil worse than now and must at best cooperate with a socialist country.

The armed revolutionary movements under the leadership of Marxist-Leninist parties and some anti-imperialist states are at the core of the anti-imperialist struggle for national and social liberation. Marxist-Leninist parties truly interested in the liberation of the oppressed nations and peoples can have the most intimate ideological and political understanding among themselves. But it is at the same time possible and necessary for them to encourage and support the anti-imperialist resistance of movements and states that are not led by Marxist-Leninist parties.

4. The tendencies of revisionism after the collapse of the Soviet Union

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the principal base of modern revisionism is China. The restoration of capitalism is misrepresented as Chinese-style socialism. However, unlike the Soviet ruling party in the past, the Chinese ruling party does not spend much resources and effort to persuade the world that it is still Marxist-Leninist.

In fact, it takes every effort to assure the United States and the other imperialist powers that it is not engaged in any international anti-

imperialist activity. It continues to maintain friendly bilateral relations with all sorts of parties but has no special revolutionary interest in having relations with communist and workers' parties. It shuns and avoids the phrase proletarian internationalism.

The sole or main preoccupation of the Chinese ruling party is no different from that of the Chinese state, which is to promote capitalist-oriented reforms and integration into the world capitalist system. As regards Southeast Asia, the unified and overriding line of the Chinese state and party since the late 1970s has been to promote "regional peace, stability and economic development" for the sake of China's modernization. In other words, the line is the liquidation of Marxist-Leninist parties and the revolutionary armed struggle.

It is of crucial importance to the Communist Party of the Philippines to describe clearly what the Chinese state and ruling party are because for a long time already their Dengist line and degeneration have been used by the imperialists and local reactionaries as arguments against the Philippine revolution and the CPP. As the Chinese state and ruling party further degenerate on the road of capitalist restoration, they increasingly become a source of confusion, discredit and serious harm to the CPP and the Philippine revolution.

It is the duty of Marxist-Leninist parties to differentiate themselves from revisionist parties. At the same time, they must seek out and encourage Marxist-Leninists in a country like China, which is the homeland of Mao and where there is the powerful legacy of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

Despite the Chinese ruling party's loss of revolutionary interest in having distinct comradely relations with foreign communist and workers' parties, there are parties that gratuitously call China socialist and the Chinese ruling party as Marxist-Leninist wholly or in part. The failure to recognize the essential character of the Chinese state and party since 1976 can give rise to revisionist thinking.

The ongoing restoration of capitalism in China is more important than anything else to the Chinese state and party as well as to the imperialist powers. The Communist Party of the Philippines is ever united with the Chinese proletarian revolutionaries and the Chinese

people in fighting for socialism and with all Chinese patriots in opposing imperialism.

Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Soviet ruling party, which had been the principal global promoter of modern revisionism since 1956, the successor parties of the disintegrated Soviet ruling party are still major promoters of modern revisionism. The biggest successor party is the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which claims a membership of 500,000 and which has inherited from its predecessor party most of the nomenclatura and local party assets. Its line pays lip service to Lenin and Stalin, mixes up Brezhnevism with blatantly bourgeois ideas and denounces Gorbachov and Yeltsin.

Other smaller offshoots of the old revisionist party are the Russian Workers' Communist Party, which is based among the trade unionists; and the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, which is based among the intelligentsia and is desirous of the restoration of the Soviet Union. Both parties have major concurrences with the line of the main descendant party. The direct continuer of Gorbachovism and advocate of "liberal" communism is the Socialist Workers' Party. It is close to Pravda, which has become a strictly capitalist venture in bourgeois opposition to Yeltsin.

Outside the former Soviet Union, all revisionist parties closely associated with the Soviet ruling party are in varying states of decomposition. Some are undergoing fragmentation, with the main part converting to bourgeois nationalism and/or social democracy, while others have gone into all-round liquidation and cannibalizing of party assets by the smartest party bureaucrats. More than 35 years of modern revisionism (1956-1991) did a thorough job of liquidating Marxism-Leninism ideologically, politically and organizationally in the Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe, Mongolia, Western Europe, North America, Oceania, Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, there are still significant survivors among communist parties formerly associated with the Soviet ruling party. These include ruling and nonruling communist parties.

The Communist Party of Cuba and the Korean Workers' Party assert their adherence to national independence and socialism. They

have a history of securing their own national independence and mass base, despite their respective previous partnerships with the Soviet party and the crucial importance of their diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union. The long-running pro-Soviet ruling parties in Indochina have adopted policies similar to those of the Communist Party of China.

The Communist Party of Portugal and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) retain a large mass following and have criticized Gorbachovism in defense of Stalin and Brezhnev. The Communist Party of France is also a survivor but remains vulnerable to liquidation because it has liquidated among others the principle of democratic centralism and is promoting the anti-Stalin line of the Gorbachovites. The Communist Party of Japan is another party which is being drawn towards liquidation, similar to what has happened to the Communist Party of Italy.

In the absence of a strong Marxist-Leninist party, a revisionist party with a traditional trade union following may retain or change its communist name and make electoral gains for a while because of the public disgust at the traditional big parties of monopoly capitalism (e.g. Christian democrats, social democrats and liberal democrats) and because of the public vigilance against the neofascists.

But history has repeatedly shown that the electoral success of the revisionists within the bourgeois political system is the beginning of failure and disaster. It preoccupies them with reformism and tokenism, keeps them out of the revolutionary struggle or invites the crushing blows of the class enemy. In other words, the Marxist-Leninists cannot be discouraged by the new social-democrats. They have all the time ahead, if they just do their revolutionary work and strengthen themselves.

5. The situation of the international revolutionary movement and perspective of the International Conference

The objective conditions for making revolution are favorable. The general crisis of imperialism is acute and worsening. Even the leaders of the world capitalist system admit that there is a new world disorder.

This is true in all the industrial capitalist countries and in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the former Soviet-bloc countries and Yugoslavia.

However, the Marxist-Leninist parties and other subjective forces of the revolution are still few, small and weak. The most important of these revolutionary forces are the Marxist-Leninist parties leading armed revolutionary movements and those persevering in the revolutionary mass movement in preparation for the armed overthrow of the big bourgeoisie and all reactionaries.

The common task of all the revolutionary forces is to propagate the study and application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and promote the armed revolution, the revolutionary mass movement and proletarian internationalism.

At the moment, there are no ruling parties and states that do more than assert their adherence to national independence and socialism, hold their own national ground against imperialism and call for political and moral support from the proletariat and peoples of the world. Other ruling parties closely associated with Soviet social-imperialism in the past have undergone either disintegration or further degeneration and capitulated to Western and Japanese monopoly capitalism.

In the outstanding case of China, which under Mao's leadership was the adversary of Soviet social-imperialism, capitalist restoration has gone so deep and so wide that the main preoccupation of the state and ruling party in the international field is to maintain and expand its economic and political relations with the major capitalist powers and to shun the international propagation of Marxism-Leninism and participation in any anti-imperialist activity abroad.

The International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations is an ideological and political forum. The participants are bound by the principles of independence, equality, noninterference, mutual support and cooperation. Decisions and resolutions can be made only in accordance with the principle of consensus and unanimity.

While participation in the International Conference carries certain ideological qualifications, such as a positive attitude towards Stalin and Mao, the Conference can undertake ideological and political seminars

open to a wider range of parties, organizations and individuals. These seminars can serve to propagate and test the validity of the ideological and political consensus within the International Conference, without decisions and resolutions having to be taken.

The International Conference and its participants can also initiate or join conferences in order to promote anti-imperialist solidarity on a political basis, irrespective of the ideologies of the participants. These anti-imperialist conferences afford the International Conference and its participants the opportunity to develop mutual support and cooperation with all kinds of political forces fighting against monopoly capitalism and all reaction.

Special attention should be given to friendly relations and cooperation with all anti-imperialist forces and with all the forces interested in fighting for genuine socialism in countries formerly and currently ruled by revisionist parties. ■

GENERAL DECLARATION OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Fourth Conference of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations was held in April 1994.

Seventeen parties and organizations from four continents were represented. Among them were:

- Marxist-Leninist Organization of Afghanistan
- Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina (PCR)
- Bangladesh Workers' Party (BWP)
- Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD)
- Organisation Communiste de Luxembourg (OCL)
- Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninists)
- Groep Marxisten-Leninisten (Rode Morgen), Netherlands
- Workers' Party of Norway (AKP)
- Partido Comunista del Peru (Patria roja)
- Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)
- Unificacion Comunista de Espana (UCE)
- Nucleo del partido Comunista Revolucionario de Uruguay
- Workers' Party of Yugoslavia
- Revolutionary Organization from Zaire

Six parties and organizations agreed to attend the Fourth Conference, contributed to preparations for it, but were unable to attend because of unavoidable reasons.

All the participants in the Fourth Conference, except the observers, approved the *General Declaration* on the basis of consensus and unanimity.

The Conference passed the agenda and approved the resolutions on all topics of the agenda. Below are the six resolutions on

ideological-political issues.

1. **"The Sharpening of the General Crisis of Imperialism and New Developments in Economy and Politics"**

1. With the collapse of Soviet social-imperialism, bipolar interimperialist contradiction has given way to sharpened multipolar contradictions among all the major powers — the United States, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Russia.

The heightened global integration of the capitalist mode of production as a result of the unprecedented use of high technology and of finance capital has exacerbated the contradictions within the economic structure of imperialist capital and all the contradictions within the imperialist system. The interimperialist struggle among the capitalist powers and monopolies for economic and political spheres of influence and for military dominance has intensified.

2. *The current general crisis has intensified the principal contradictions in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. As before, the imperialists are shifting the effects of the crisis to the oppressed countries. The ongoing enormous destruction of productive forces continue to inflict ever greater suffering on the proletariat and the masses of the people. But the intensity of the crisis has recoiled upon the imperialist powers themselves. Massive unemployment and cutbacks on social gains have extended to the metropolis of imperialism and have undermined the pervasive control/influence of monopoly capital on the masses.*

3. From these, favorable conditions have arisen for the development of a new upsurge of the revolutionary movement internationally against hegemonist ambitions (hegemonism), imperialism and all reaction and for national liberation and socialism. This is manifested by the upsurge and the growing political consciousness of the workers' and people's struggles in the imperialist countries as well as by the growth of militant anti-imperialist mass movements of the working class and people of the oppressed countries.

Imperialism has manifested its strategic weakness more clearly. This does not mean, however, that tactically its capability of dealing

blows on the masses has diminished. Imperialism will not collapse automatically; it must be overthrown. Thus, the subjective factors for this must be created:

- Unity in struggle between the movement of the workers in the imperialist countries and that of the oppressed masses in the dependent, colonial and semicolonial countries.
- Building and strengthening revolutionary vanguard parties of the working class.
- Developing the practice of proletarian internationalism.
- Struggling against revisionism as an essential factor for the achievement of a new high tide in the struggle for national and social liberation and for socialism.

2. "The Development of Class Struggle in the Imperialist Countries and Conclusions for Marxist-Leninist Strategy and Tactics"

1. *The current crisis of capitalism has led to attacks on the living conditions and historical gains of the working class and the rest of the people in the imperialist countries on a scale unprecedented since World War II. The increasing impoverishment of the masses has impelled social tensions and political unrest and instability. The objective basis for developing the revolutionary movement is favorable in most of the imperialist countries, including such imperialist metropolis as the United States, Japan, Europe and Russia. The working masses are increasingly being challenged to resist the effects of the rivalry among the monopolies.*

2. Although there is an upswing in the people's and workers' struggles in the imperialist countries, social conditions alone do not suffice in effecting their transformation into revolutionary struggles. It is necessary to build in each of these countries a Marxist-Leninist/Mao Zedong Thought party capable of integrating theory with practice and leadership with the masses.

3. There is a gap between the objective and the subjective conditions; i.e., the level of the building of revolutionary parties to exploit the situation and lead the struggles towards a revolutionary direction. Racism, bourgeois chauvinism and neofascism spurred by

the economic crisis and by monopoly bourgeois policy pose a special danger directed particularly against peoples and nations oppressed by the imperialist system.

4. Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations must participate in struggles and at the same time take initiative in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people to defend both their immediate and long-term interests. Communists must gain trust by going into the center of the struggles. They must assume the task of giving direction to the struggle against the capitalist system and in so doing defeat reformism and revisionism in order to achieve leadership in the workers' and peoples' movement.

5. While the main responsibility of Marxist-Leninist parties is to develop the class struggle in their own countries, it is also important in the current world situation to strengthen proletarian internationalism and cooperation among themselves and the class struggles in various countries. It is also necessary to strengthen the links between the struggles of the working masses in the imperialist countries and those of the masses in the oppressed countries.

It is the responsibility of revolutionary parties to take advantage of the situation in order to bring about an upswing in the struggle for socialism by taking steps to move from the defensive towards the offensive. This means making a distinction between the strategic weakness of imperialism and its tactical strength.

3. The Development of the Struggle for National and Social Liberation and Conclusions for Marxist-Leninist Strategy and Tactics

The oppressed nations and peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America and in most countries of the former Soviet bloc are the overwhelming majority of the people of the world. They are the most exploited economically, financially, politically and culturally. Their national independence has been undermined and negated. Their dependence has been aggravated by further integration into the world capitalist system.

In these last years, their conditions have aggravated as a

consequence of dictates of the transnational corporations and banks, so-called structural adjustment programs (SAP), imposed through the World Bank and other multilateral agencies, restriction to raw-material production and lopsided investments, ever deteriorating terms of trade, extraction of superprofits through transfer-pricing by foreign monopolies and ever growing debt burden. The imperialists brandish the slogans of neoliberalism to extort more antinational privileges in investments and in the market, to privatize public assets and to impose austerity measures, wage freezes, cuts in real income and massive unemployment on the people.

In the mode of production of a majority of oppressed countries, landlord exploitation through land rent and sharecropping together with semifeudal, precapitalist and even more primitive forms of exploitation persist. Class polarization and social turmoil are mounting. This has engendered increasing mass resistance.

U.S. imperialism and the other imperialist powers have arrogated unto themselves the "right to intervene" in order to secure the "new international order". They have mounted an ideological offensive to justify the liquidation of the right to self-determination of peoples and the sovereignty of states. They have threatened and intervened — in many cases under the umbrella of the United Nations — in Iraq, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Yugoslavia, Georgia. At the same time, the imperialists and the reactionaries are unleashing such monstrosities as chauvinism, militarism, fascism, ethnocentrism or tribalism, racism, religious fundamentalism and the threat of recolonization against the people.

The objective conditions for waging the struggle for national and social liberation are favorable. The exposure of the bankruptcy of modern revisionism and of neocolonialism practiced by the defunct Soviet social-imperialism, pretending as the "natural ally" of oppressed nations and peoples, opens the way further for genuine Marxist-Leninist parties to grow in strength and advance. The people of Afghanistan opened a new chapter in the anti-imperialist struggle.

There are Marxist-Leninist parties leading the revolutionary mass movement and the protracted people's war. In varying degrees, they

are significant in their own countries. There are states defending national sovereignty and independence against imperialism. And there are anti-imperialist struggles.

The Fourth Conference supports the revolutionary struggle being waged by the oppressed nations and peoples for national and social liberation. The oppressed nations and peoples must wage the revolution in two-stages — *new-democratic, followed by socialist* — under the leadership of the proletariat and within the context of the world proletarian revolution.

Until now, the countries of the oppressed nations and peoples are the main arena of counterrevolutionary violence, social turbulence and armed revolutionary resistance. The new world disorder is most conspicuous in the areas of the oppressed nations and peoples. The proletariat in the oppressor countries must unite with the struggle for national and social liberation in the in the dependent countries, colonies and semicolonies.

Parties adhering to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought are the decisive factor in the rebuilding of the international workers' and communist movement. They must creatively integrate Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought with concrete conditions and practice in their respective countries.

All possible forms of revolutionary struggle must be waged in the struggle for national and social liberation. Ultimately, armed revolution for the seizure of political power is necessary for the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution before proceeding to the socialist revolution. Marxist-Leninist parties are encouraged to study where and under which concrete conditions the strategy and tactics of protracted people's war as in the Philippines can be developed. Protracted people's war enables the proletariat and the people to build and accumulate Red political power.

The Fourth International Conference supports the struggle of peoples for their national sovereignty and independence, for national liberation against imperialism. These constitute an international united front, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, against imperialism.

4. The Tendencies of Revisionism after the Collapse of the Soviet Union

1. All parties present emphasized that common among their roots had been their struggle against Khrushchovite modern revisionism, which surfaced at the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and particularly the defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the right to revolutionary violence.

2. Revisionism is the most dangerous form of bourgeois ideology as it acts to corrode class consciousness within the working class and impedes the struggle for socialism. Modern revisionism can only be overcome through resolute struggle to uphold and develop the proletarian ideology. The struggle against modern revisionism is necessary above all to guarantee preparations for a new upsurge for socialism. Without overcoming the influence of revisionism within the working-class movement, there can be no new upsurge for socialism.

3. The discussion dealt critically with the development in the People's Republic of China. There was wide divergence of views over the assessment of the reforms of Deng Xiaoping and the character of the state and society of the People's Republic of China and the class character of the Communist Party of China. Therefore, all participating organizations emphasized the need for further critical analysis of the concrete social process in China and the continuation of discussions on this question. The basis of this is independent formation of opinion and analysis by each individual organization.

4. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, modern revisionism has in practice decisively suffered bankruptcy. This has led to a weakening of the international revisionist tendency. Against this backdrop, various new forms of revisionism have emerged to join the old. Revisionism has changed in concrete appearance but its basic character remains. All the participating organizations emphasized the great importance of Mao Zedong Thought in the struggle against modern revisionism, notwithstanding their varying ideological-political foundations.

5. Tactical cooperation, for example in anti-imperialist solidarity, is possible with certain forces coming from revisionist tendencies. However, such cooperation must be dialectically related to further

debate in the struggle against revisionism.

5. The Situation of the International Revolutionary Movement and Perspective of the International Conference: Further Work until the 5th Conference

1. Character and Principles of the Conference

It is necessary to hold international conferences of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations at regular intervals. The main objective of these conferences, which are held in different countries, is to facilitate ideological-political exchange and to help develop unity on important ideological and political questions. The basis for participation in the International Conference is the defense of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and involvement in the struggle against modern revisionism. Cooperation among the Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations is based on the following principles:

a) Independence and equality, mutual respect, mutual support and cooperation;

b) Noninterference in the internal affairs as well as in the bilateral or regional relations of any party or organization by other parties and organizations;

c) Consensus and unanimity in decision-making; and

d) Gradual achievement of unity; no public debate among the parties/organizations and no public criticism or attack by any party/organization on another.

2. Rules of the Conference

Each conference shall decide its own rules based on those of the previous conference. The International Conference is a forum. Each organization is responsible for the conclusions it draws from the conference.

3. Criteria for the List of Participants

The Fourth Conference has adopted the following criteria for the list of participants of the 5th Conference:

a) Adherence to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought;

b) Struggle against modern revisionism and a positive attitude towards Stalin and Mao; and

c) Acceptance of the Rules of the conference.

The invitation list of the Fifth Conference shall be decided through consultations. Each participant can make suggestions for invitations to the next conference.

(...)

Participants are called upon to actively promote the spirit of the International Conference and, when possible, initiate regional conferences.

"International Workers' Support Organization"

1. Taking into account the resolutions signed by nine organizations in the Third Conference, the Fourth Conference acknowledges and respects the initiative of various participants to take initiative in starting to build an international workers' and people's support organization. For this reason, this organization is independent of the International Conference.

(...)

Towards its conclusion, the Fourth Conference took a unanimous decision to hold the Fifth Conference and elected the Joint Coordinating Group to prepare it.

The General Resolution is supported by:

Marxist-Leninist Organization of Afghanistan • Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina (PCR) • Bangladesh Workers' Party (BWP) • Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD) • Organisation Communiste de Luxembourg (OCL) • Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninists) • Groep Marxisten-Leninisten (Rode Morgen), Netherlands • Partido Comunista del Peru (Patria roja) • Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) • Unificacion Comunista de Espana (UCE) • Nucleo del partido Comunista Revolucionario de Uruguay • Revolutionary Organization from Zaire • Workers' Party of Yugoslavia ■

ON REFORMISM IN THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

BY THE SECRETARY OF THE PEASANT BUREAU
OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

This is a critique of petty-bourgeois reformism which some leading elements of the defunct national peasant secretariat (NPS), surreptitiously injected into the revolutionary or the national democratic (ND) peasant movement since 1989. It discusses the origins and circumstances surrounding the development as well as the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois reformism.

Since September 1992, these elements in NPS aligned themselves with the factionalists and splittists and thus excluded themselves from the Party. Since then, they have exposed and isolated themselves even more from the revolutionary peasant movement by openly espousing and systematizing the line of economism and reformism.

We call on all Party members and cadres in the peasant movement to actively combat reformism. Rooting out this disease that has afflicted especially the party organizations in the legal peasant movement is part of our current rectification movement.

Brief Historical Background

Petty-bourgeois reformism in the revolutionary peasant movement was systematized in the September Theses (Septhe)¹ pushed by leading elements of the defunct Peasant Secretariat (NPS).² It took the specific form of community organizing (CO) or the so-called fast-track issue-based inclusive organizing (FISO), with the "immediate objective of launching peasant uprisings as part of popular uprisings or

¹ Refer to *Rebolusyon*, Series 1993, No.3, July-September, pp.39-48.

² The Peasant Secretariat (PS) was a central staff organ of the Central Committee. Like most central staff organs before the rectification movement, it was city-based. Most of its staff-members were detached from the revolutionary peasant movement in the countryside.

insurrections that are bound to erupt during convulsions of the ruling system³.

Although Septhe set the build-up of an upsurge in preparation for insurrection as the immediate objective of the peasant movement, the wish for "peasant uprisings" was to be achieved through mainly legal fast-track issue-based sweeping (inclusive) organizing in the plains and coalition-building based on socioeconomic issues. Moreover, Septhe proposed that guerrilla warfare in the countryside should be merely supportive of and secondary to the mass movement in the plains.

The NPS misleaders based Septhe on their estimate of an impending "convulsion" of the system which the revolutionary forces could take advantage of by taking Septhe line. The Septhe also aimed to hasten recovery of the revolutionary mass base, which by 1989 was seen to have suffered drastic contraction.

They toyed with the concept of preparing for insurrection through FISO and actually experimented with it for a year by deploying "countryside teams" in 1989 before systematizing and putting the concept into a document in September 1990. However, as early as May 1990, the NPS presented a plan for peasant uprisings (AKMA) as part of the insurrection which it estimated to come within the next two years. This was in line with the plan for insurrection which Ricardo Reyes was peddling to Party forces at that time.

Septhe was discussed and finalized in two "countryside team" conferences called by the NPS in September and December 1990. According to the NPS misleaders, Septhe was their counter position to the EC-CC's "Tasks of the Revolutionary Peasant Movement for Advancing in the '90s" (henceforth, TRPM).⁴ In a consultation in February 1991, the EC-CC criticized the Septhe for deviating from the line. The NPS misleaders "agreed" to set it aside in favor of the EC-CC's TRPM. In reality, however, they maneuvered to have Septhe disseminated and passed off as part of the Party's official orientation for the peasant movement. They called a conference of peasant

³ From "September Theses" in *Rebolusyon*, op cit., p.46

⁴ Published in *Rebolusyon*, Series 1991, No. 2, April-June

cadres in March 1991 to devise means by which the NPS and the forces under it could circumvent the EC-CC's disapproval of Septhe.

When the document "Fulfill the Requirements of the Current Stage" was published, they rejected the document allegedly not for its content but because it violated an earlier agreement between the NPS and the EC-CC not to make public the latter's criticism of Septhe.

What the NPS misleaders deliberately omitted by this excuse is the fact they never withdrew nor criticized the Septhe among the forces under the NPS. In fact, they surreptitiously incorporated the Septhe piece by piece into TRPM, making it appear consistent with the strategic line of protracted people's war. Thus, discussions of TRPM which the NPS conducted among cadres in the peasant movement were used for propagating insurrection through the CO/FISO line.

In 1991, the legal peasant organizations (LPOs) were reoriented to conform to Septhe through a series of "organizing conferences". A "retuning, refocusing and refinement" of their orientation was made purportedly because of its "overemphasis on politics", lack of "legal dynamism" and insufficient attention to socioeconomic work among the peasantry. Within the legal peasant organizations, the NPS misleaders spread the lie that the peasants were tired of the political struggle: "Pudpod na ang tsinelas sa kamamartsa wala pa ring pagbabago sa buhay nila./ They have worn their slippers thin by marching but no improvement has come to their lives." Thus politics was unduly de-emphasized and the struggles of the peasants were focused almost exclusively on seeking "palpable gains" or going for "claim making" (notwithstanding lip service to "eco-pol struggles") supposedly "to sustain the peasants' interest in their organization".

The concept of "legal dynamism" of the LPOs was redefined to mean that — according to the bidding of the NPS misleaders — the Party core within the peasant organizations could disregard the policies of the Party. It also meant that the NPS misleaders would exercise exclusive command over such Party core as their instrument of control over practically the entire legal peasant movement under the slogan of "operating through the legal structure" or, in their deceptive language, "respecting legal dynamism". "Respecting legal dynamism"

simply meant implementing the wishes of these misleaders in the NPS.

Likewise, the service institutions were reoriented to concentrate their projects in the plains, coastal areas and along major lines of communications. At the same time, legal project implementation became their sole concern.

In line with its concept of issue-based organizing and coalitions, the NPS launched several campaigns between 1990 and 1992.

In 1990 the NPS launched "tambak butil" (a campaign to force the National Food Authority to buy rice directly from the peasants) and made it the main struggle in the open peasant movement. Initially, the campaign met with some degree of "success" but eventually deteriorated into plain trading transaction benefiting the rich peasants and small traders rather than the poor and middle peasants who, in the first place, had little or no grains to sell to the NFA.

The alliance of organizations of grain farmers was launched as a result of the campaign. This alliance consisted of "traditional" peasant organizations and was designed to be the grain farmers' main vehicle in the struggle for "immediate economic benefits".

In 1991 the NPS launched the coco campaign among the peasants in coconut-producing areas. The campaign called for the distribution of land planted to coconuts in areas where this is allowed by the law and for leasehold where this is also allowed by the law. It was supposed to be a comprehensive campaign, employing both legal and illegal tactics and legal as well as underground forces. Later, when pressed why the campaign demand did not transcend the provisions of the reactionary law, the former secretary of the NPS said that it was the unity within the NPS that the land reform program of the reactionary regime is part of the agrarian revolution.

The NPS used the coco campaign to launch an alliance of coconut farmers at the local and national level. None other than the ND organizations joined the alliance. At any rate, the alliance was pushed through. Some chapters of the existing LPOs were disaffiliated from their mother organizations and others were allowed to maintain dual membership to give a semblance of a mass base to the new "alliance".

Eventually, the new coco alliance would become preoccupied with

the struggle for the 30 billion pesos coconut levy which fell into line with the scheme of a few politicians to get a hold on the funds. The alliance signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to organize peasants for the purpose of implementing the so-called Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) of the reactionary government.

Aside from the crop-line alliances, the NPS also pushed for the building of provincial coalitions by bringing together ND legal organizations and "traditional" peasant organizations. These were intended to become the base of a national peasant organization with which they planned to supplant the existing legal peasant organizations (LPOs).

At the zenith of the planned peasant coalition-building was to be the confederation of crop-line alliances and some national LPOs whose provincial chapters were themselves alliances and a confederation of peasant organizations from different political groups.

The plan was never realized. But effort to realize it undermined the political orientation of the ND LPOs, derailed them from the correct line, wasted time and resources and wrought damage to the ND peasant movement even before the objective of drowning the ND LPOs in a sea of crop-line alliances and "traditional" or actually nondescript peasant organizations could be reached.

Between 1990 and 1992 the NPS vainly put into motion its plan for an upsurge leading to an insurrection. The plan called for "gigantic mobilizations" combined with "insurrectionary" and other actions in the regions.

Still in pursuit of Septhe, the NPS mobilized its forces in the 1992 elections in an all out campaign for a presidential and vice presidential tandem whom it claimed to be progressive, pro-peasant and pro-land reform. What was comic about the NPS' all-out support for this presidential tandem was that the latter never acknowledged the support. In fact, the presidential candidate considered the NPS' forces coming out openly for him a liability. Nonetheless, the candidate had the full support of the NPS, which went to the extent of setting up a

"machinery" to help in his campaign.

The NPS' conduct was inspired by the wishful thinking that the 1992 elections would turn out to be similar to the 1986 snap election. In short the government's candidate would win by fraud, would anger the people and would result in another EDSA "uprising"; the difference being, of course, that the NPS had been "prepared" to grab the opportunity and "play to win". This idea was dismissed by the forces under the NPS as *ridiculous*. Nevertheless, their participation in the campaign was engineered through the "building the electoral machinery" of the peasant movement in line with the NPS misleaders' concept of "addressing the electoral struggle positively"

Parallel to the preparation for insurrection through the CO/FISO line was the seepage of reformist and other counterrevolutionary ideas into the service institutions of the legal ND peasant movement long before the NPS' line fully degenerated into *petty-bourgeois reformism*. The fall of the Marcos dictatorship and the so-called "new democratic space" became a condition for reformist ideas, especially those regarding the state and classes, to thrive.

Thus the analysis that the Aquino regime was "liberal-democratic" and that progressives shared in the exercise of state power flourished. Pseudo-Marxist methods of analysis substituted for dialectical materialism; old and new nongovernmental institutions raced against each other in concocting "development paradigms" while foreign funding agencies pushed for "a development agenda" within the "new democratic space". Service institutions adopted corporate structures, method and style of management and became "professionalized" (i.e., bourgeoisified). All these tended to erode the activist and progressive character of the service institutions. What started out as ND activists' organizations became gradually transformed into fountainheads of *petty-bourgeois reformism*. Reformist ideas from the service institutions started to infect the legal peasant organizations.

By 1991 while the plan for insurrection was being implemented full blast, the NPS opened up the ND forces under its leadership to bourgeois populist and reformist ideas of the "popdems" and the "socdems". Representatives of the latter two groups were asked to

deliver their "inputs" on revisionist theories of the state and civil society, classes and development during meetings of ND and Party formations. They made the Party and its principles the subject of ridicule. Thus they attacked the Party for "statism", "vanguardism", etc. On the other hand, they held up populist ideas like "pluralism", "community organizing" and such pseudo-Marxist analytical framework as structural and conjunctural analysis, with not a word mentioned in criticism of their anti-Marxist content. "Popdemism" was passed off as the "new ND line", supposedly an improvement over the line and strategy of the Party.

In conferences, consultations, meetings of the legal as well as underground organizations, the NPS propagated FISO, the principal role of the legal struggle, and "legal dynamism" and at the same time denigrated the national democratic line and the strategy of protracted people's war.

As the seepage of reformist and populist ideas into the LPOs increased, the line of CO/FISO as preparation for "insurrection" gradually gave way to the line of CO/FISO for "development" work. Immediately prior to their disauthorization in April 1993, the NPS misleaders circulated in March a draft orientation of its main organizing arm - "PX". The two versions (legal and underground) of the orientation paper systematize the "CO" for "development" line and thus the line of reformism. A sequel to the orientation paper - "A Critical Study of Reaffirm", which lays down more "comprehensively" the basis of the reformist line - was also circulated.⁵

The above papers echo the position of the "popular democrats" (PD) or "popdems" on all major questions from state and civil society, strategy, socialism, reforms and revolution, and "development work" as laid down in "Statement of PD Revolutionaries" and "Reimagining Revolution"

In brief, the "PX" orientation paper criticizes the strategy of people's war for being "biased towards armed struggle" and for its supposed

⁵ Since this article was written, a number of articles discussing this line have been published by persons formerly belonging to NPS.

lack of appreciation of the significance and strategic role of the legal forms of struggle. It traces this alleged rigidity to "statism". It argues for a strategy that is open to "organic development" and capable of assimilating different forms of struggle, especially those that emphasize "small quantitative and qualitative changes" while "macro changes are not quite in place". It also argues for non-political party, non-state movements in civil society. Finally it prescribes CO and "integrated development" as the operative concept.

The "Statement of PD Revolutionaries" argues exactly along the same line — "armed struggle determinism", "civil society being sacrificed at the altar of state power" and "statism". It concludes with "empowerment and sustainable development" as the way to "social transformation" which is nothing more than the old civic community organizing paradigm dressed up in the new lingo of "development" and ecologism. The line has nothing to do with people's empowerment or development or transformation. It has only empowered, developed, transformed and enriched a clutch of messianic bureaucrats happily funded by foreign funding agencies to chant the message of petty-bourgeois reformism in the "new" language of development.

At the height of the struggle against the erroneous line within the Party in 1992, the NPS misleaders openly boasted of a "new ND" or "new left" formation consisting of "breakaway" ND groups like themselves and reformists outside the revolutionary movement. This "new formation" has been in existence for sometime, if not formally, informally as an out-and-out reformist alliance brought about by the capitulation of the NPS misleaders and a few former-activists-turned-bureaucrats in the legal ND peasant movement to the petty-bourgeois ideology.

At present, the elements from the defunct NPS, like the "popdems" and the "social democrats", busy themselves in seeking "convergences" with and in fact serving the US-Ramos regime. Thus they collaborate or enter into cozy relationships with (or more accurately, serve) certain agencies of the reactionary government in "organizing" peasants, and rely on government sponsored "cooperatives" and peasant organizations for their "mass base". They

directly serve the US-Ramos regime by pushing for the "positive aspects" of CARL and entering into "agreements" with agencies of the reactionary government for the implementation of government programs. These they do while pushing for their "alternative development" agenda (alternative not to the agenda of Ramos' Philippines 2000 but to that of the revolutionary movement).⁶

Since September 1992, the leading elements of the now defunct NPS have aligned themselves with the splittists and openly advocated an outright reformist line. They have since then isolated themselves from the revolutionary peasant movement.

In 1992-93, the misleaders of defunct NPS embarked on a plan to "pick up the pieces of a moribund national peasant organization" and project the semblance of a split in that organization. The "new organization" to come from the "split" was ballyhooed as an improvement over the old organization for "putting equal emphasis" on land reform and productivity and as the "second biggest peasant organization" next only to the ND peasant organization. The intended project fell flat because the announced "split" in the old organization on the basis of politics had been a figment of the NPS' imagination and also because the leaders had been bought off not to join the "split".

The Class Basis of Reformism

To understand petty-bourgeois reformism, we must look into its class base and the condition of that class in the process of production. Petty-bourgeois flabbiness stems from the fact that the petty bourgeoisie is squeezed between the big capitalist class and the proletariat. The petty bourgeois dreams of becoming a big bourgeois but his dreams can be easily scuttled by the vagaries of the semifeudal and neocolonial order maintained by the exploiting classes. Thus the petty-bourgeois fears being pushed into the ranks of the proletariat.

On the other hand, he recognizes the miserable conditions of the

⁶ *This so-called agenda is not an alternative to the CARP and Ramos' Philippines 2000 (MTDP) but to the agrarian reform program of the revolutionary peasant movement.*

proletariat and the peasantry and the necessity of reforms. However, such recognition does not spontaneously extend to the recognition of the necessity of revolution. A revolution led by the proletariat is feared by the petty bourgeois since it also extinguishes outrightly his dreams of joining the big bourgeoisie.

Thus the petty-bourgeois settles only for reforms, for improvements in the system which he think are necessary to dampen the flames of revolution and preserve his position, or, otherwise, protect it from the onslaught of the big bourgeoisie. Thus the wish for petty production to stay on in the face of the rampaging attack of big capital or the threat of a socialist revolution by the proletariat.

The petty-bourgeois reformists in the peasant movement recognize the need for "social transformation" but such a transformation should be a "mix of the best of both worlds", of capitalism and socialism, which is capitalism, albeit, "improved".

They pay lip service to the Leninist theory of the state and recognize the class nature of the state and "ruling class violence". But in the same breath they say it is possible to transform the state in a "peaceful, evolutionary way."

For the peasantry they prescribe a district level ("bio-district") "integrated development" in a vain attempt to "block" the incursions of imperialism into the peasant economy, mitigate the negative effects of the cash economy and to protect the environment while land reform is not "quite in place."

Their overall intention is to reform the system, make it more bearable for the exploited masses of workers and peasants, "empower" them in the hope that such "empowerment" would prevent the latter from turning to armed struggle as a necessity or, if not totally, at least, only "on a case-to-case basis" in the long run.

Thus they wish to foist their leadership, which in essence is petty-bourgeois, over the peasantry and the entire revolutionary movement only to lead it astray. Wearing the mantle of "pluralism", they seek to mislead the revolutionary masses and other formations away from the revolutionary path to the path of parliamentarism, legalism, economism and reformism.

They are for "empowerment" but they fear the armed peasants now actually building revolutionary power in the countryside. The only empowerment that these petty-bourgeois reformists are interested in is their own; they wish to exercise power and impose their will over the organized peasantry and prevent them from taking their destiny into their own hands through revolution.

The Philosophical Grounding

The "popdems" and the ex-NPS misleaders run along the old line of reformism and anticommunist "third force" experimented by the American Jesuits in the '30s and pushed further after the war through the Ateneo alumni bigshots in the Magsaysay clique, Fr. Hogan's Institute of Social Order, Manglapus' Christian Social Movement and Fr. Jose Blanco's "socdem" groups. This time, however, the new "third force", the "popdems" who now call themselves PD "revolutionaries", looks secular rather than religious-inspired although it is still linked to the old religio-sectarian "third force".⁷

Whereas the old religio-sectarian reformists banked mainly on the papal encyclicals and posed as the "third force" between capitalism or liberalism and socialism or Marxism, the new third force present themselves as secular and use an array of petty-bourgeois ideas, anticommunist and pro-imperialist but downplay the religious factor.

The "popdems" play up bourgeois populism, misrepresent it as

⁷ *The "popdems" in the Institute of Popular Democracy (IPD) and the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement are akin to the "third force" angle in the Jesuit psy-war effort, manifested through the Institute for Social Order since the early '50s to counteract the revolutionary movement in the Philippines. They are the direct continuers of the CIA-inspired PRRM organized under the auspices of the Joint Sino-American Commission on Rural Reconstruction (US-Kuomintang) through Dr. James Y. Chen. To this day, the PRRM is still CIA-directed through agents like PRRM chairman Manuel Manahan, a long-time CIA asset who died only recently this year. The visible funds of the PRRM are ostensibly raised by PRRM executive officers mainly from West European funding agencies but secret funds come from the CIA to guarantee PRRM existence. These secret funds are known only to Manahan, Horacio Morales and top PRRM finance officers.*

similar to but superior to the national-democratic line and echo the ideas and language of the U.N., the U.S. AID, the Ramos regime, the Western funding agencies, etc. They have become increasingly anticommunist in a blatant way, after a long period of trying to penetrate the national-democratic movement and liquidate the CPP from within.

One of the three leading figures of the "popdems" is a former technocrat of the U.S.-Marcos regime without any religious pretensions. But the two other leading figures have longstanding connections with religious-inspired social action. It is not surprising therefore that they cooperate very well with the ex-NPS misleaders who got their earliest social action training from the religio-sectarian Federation of Free Farmers and the "socdem" group.

In the period of ideological-political laxity, these elements were able to creep into the Party and generate an anti-Marxist and anti-Leninist ideological line and also an antinational and antidemocratic political line which they misrepresented as the refinement and improvement of Marxism-Leninism and the national democratic line, respectively.

While the "popdems" have by and large shed off all pretensions at being Marxists, the ex-NPS misleaders use the phraseology of dialectical and historical materialism to package their reformism quite differently. The packaging may be different but the counterrevolutionary content is exactly the same. The "popdem" bigwigs insist that they are "PD revolutionaries"⁸ while the ex-NPS misleaders insist on misrepresenting themselves as proletarian revolutionaries.

In attempting to put their petty-bourgeois reformism on "Marxist" philosophical grounding, they couch their reformist notions in phrases lifted from Marxism. Dialectical materialism, class nature of the state, classes, etc. are all invoked in the vain attempt to present the petty-

⁸ *This clutch of pseudo-revolutionaries are jetsetting and office-bound bureaucrats with high salaries and generous expense accounts in their well-funded bourgeois-populist institutions. By waving the rags of the poor in the Philippines, they collect "development" funds from foreign funding agencies.*

bourgeois reformist line as "revolutionary" and "superior" to that of the Party.

But they cannot hide their disdain for Marxism nor their fear of the results of the dialectical materialist method. They expose their aversion to the proletariat and other oppressed classes. Thus they vulgarize dialectics. They invoke the principle of constancy of change but isolate this from the integral laws governing the dialectical movement of things or processes. They forget the unity of opposites, change from quantity to quality, and interrelationship of things or the law of contradiction which governs the movement of things and processes. With their warped understanding of dialectics, they revise the Marxist theories of the state, revolution, classes and dictatorship of the proletariat, etc., which in the first place are products of the rigorous application of materialist dialectics.

They are driven by petty-bourgeois subjectivism. They cannot distinguish the principal from the secondary. They overblow certain aspects of a phenomenon far beyond their actual significance, isolate these from their total context, and — unable to see beyond surface appearances — are easily infatuated by the "newest ideas" and fads drummed up by the bourgeois media, even if these are antiquated and merely recycled or refurbished. Thus, the essence of a thing is completely glossed over, resulting in a confused analysis of the thing being studied. This is the root of the reformists' metaphysics and eclecticism on issues of major significance to the peasant and the whole revolutionary movement.

Take the case of the theory of the state and civil society. The class nature of the exploitative state is not denied outrightly, neither is the division of society into classes. However, the hegemony of the ruling class over the state apparatus is misrepresented to allow for the concept of "power-sharing" between the ruling class and the people. The essentially coercive character of the state is glossed over. The cleavage of society into irreconcilable classes is denied by the concept of a "civil society organizing itself" and "exerting pressure against the excesses of the state through popular struggles". The idea pushed among the exploited and oppressed classes is that the state can

change in a peaceful, evolutionary way. Hence, the petty-bourgeois reformists invert the relationship between the state and civil society.

Another example is what the reformists call a strategy that is open to "organic development" and to "innovations" which actually negates the Party's line and strategy. They accuse the Party of being unfaithful to dialectical materialism supposedly because it "raises strategy to the level of basic principle" ("Iniangat ang ating istrategiya bilang batayang prinsipyo") and deny the principality of an aspect of contradiction.

Thus strategy is detached from its class basis to justify petty-bourgeois reformist "innovations" allowing the "organic development" (i.e., negation) of the strategy of people's war. "Everything is and is not" is invoked to justify the isolation of strategy from its class basis, deny the necessity of defining the principal form of struggle and justify "innovations" which turns revolutionary strategy into its opposite.

Dialectics, it is true, teaches that things are in constant change — that "a thing is and is not." This, however, is by no means what dialectics is all about. The dialectical movement of processes is determined by two contradictory aspects. The dominant aspect (or in a complex process the fundamental contradiction) determines the nature of the thing or process. Moreover, dialectics views things in their inter-relationship.

The subjectivist method glosses over rather than grasps the essence of a thing; mixes up the principal and the secondary. This method of analysis inevitably results in a shaky position on many questions which cut across the whole realm of revolutionary theory and practice: the relation of armed struggle and other forms of struggle, insurrection and protracted people's war, the primacy of the peasants' struggle for land, increasing productivity and land reform, etc. In all cases the reformists end up with a confused perception of the relations between aspects of a contradiction ("equal significance") or a reverse relation between the principal and the secondary aspects.

Because of their failure to grasp contradictions, the petty-bourgeois reformists trap themselves in the bourgeois theory of the state, class collaboration, legalism and parliamentarism, and insurrectionism. They confuse reforms with revolution and class collaboration with

revolutionary activity.

A Revisionist Theory of the State

Petty-bourgeois reformists and proletarian revolutionaries have diametrically opposed conceptions of the nature of the state and class society. From this stem their differences over other fundamental principles of the revolution.

The reformists use the so-called civil society-state framework in analyzing Philippine society and get trapped in the bourgeois theory of the state. Sometimes, they do not deny outrightly the class character of the state or the cleavage of society into classes. They even go on further and declare that "class struggle is the motor of history." However, they assert that the ruling classes do not have hegemony over the whole state apparatus all the time. The people may share with the exploiting classes control over the state machinery depending on the accumulated strength of the contending classes or organized civil society to influence the state internally. This means that the state, itself being shared or internally structured by contending classes acts accordingly and at certain times may act contrary to the interest of the ruling classes. Moreover, at certain "conjunctures" the state may give "decisive concessions" even if contrary to the interest of the ruling classes if only to preserve itself.

They push the idea that the state and civil society are "relatively independent" of each other. Aside from the assertion that the state does not have to act at all times as an instrument of the ruling class, they also assert that this relative independence between state and civil society allows for the organization of civil society to check the excesses of the state through "popular struggles", to institute quantitative and qualitative changes ("relative transformation"), to put up parallel structures for governance or influence structures of the state machinery.

This theory is typically petty-bourgeois and revisionist and is in direct opposition to the Leninist theory of the state and classes. It denies the essential nature of the state as a coercive instrument of class rule — the special body of men standing above society by which one class

violently suppresses another. It also denies the Leninist principle that the state is a product, and an admission of the irreconcilability of classes; that this state is necessary to contain the class antagonism so that society will not consume itself in intermittent and endless struggle.

Civil society organizing itself to gradually effect "transformation" of the state through a multiplicity of means (which practically includes everything except armed struggle) is a petty-bourgeois parliamentarist illusion. The reformists see a lot of opportunities to transform the state, so many positive aspects in the policies of the US-Ramos regime that blind them to the fact that the US-Ramos regime, first and foremost, represents imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

Thus, they cheer the approval of the Local Government Code (LGC), praise the US-Ramos regime for involving the NGOs and POs in the formulation of Philippines 2000, call on the workers and peasants to concentrate their efforts on chasing after seats in the Local Development Councils, to step up "claim-making struggles", take advantage of the positive aspects of CARL, of Philippines 2000, etcetera. They see all these as affirmation of the devolvement of powers and resources to civil society, of empowerment, of the peaceful and evolutionary transformation of the state.

The reformists deny the reality that the state is a dictatorship of one class over another and, consequently, deny the necessity of smashing this state machinery to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat to free the oppressed classes itself and the whole of society.

Proletarian revolutionaries, on the other hand, recognize the nature of the state as a coercive instrument for class rule and the irreconcilability of classes. Thus they bring this to the necessary conclusion that the proletariat must smash the state apparatus of the ruling class and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Having adopted a bourgeois and revisionist theory of the state and class society, the reformist proceed to confuse reforms and revolution. They assert that "relative transformation" is possible even when the necessary changes at the macro level are not quite in place," that "reforms and revolution feed on each other; one forms part of a continuum of empowerment of people and communities." Thus reforms

and revolution are mixed up. Or revolution is seen as the accumulation of reforms.

To the average political activist the difference between revolution and reforms is clear. Reforms *per se* are changes within the context of the existing system, revolution is a change in the system.

Reforms replicated endlessly do not a revolution make. By themselves they simply "improve" the exploitative system and help it to survive. Genuine revolutionaries know that the struggle for reforms must be deliberately and consciously linked to the struggle to overthrow the system for it to serve the revolution. Revolutionaries engage in the struggle for reforms in pursuit of and not as a substitute for revolution.

The reformists certainly pay lip service to the principle of reforms serving the revolution and object to any insinuation that they do not link reforms to revolution. However, what they mean by this is an accumulation of reforms, of "quantitative and qualitative changes" would add up to a revolution, that the "empowerment of peoples and communities", would render resort to arms unnecessary. Thus "empowerment" is substituted for revolution or at best postpones it indefinitely until peaceful reforms are exhausted and armed struggle gets the "full legitimacy that it deserves."

The So-Called "Organic Development of Strategy"

Starting from a revisionist theory of the state, the reformists then argue for a multiplicity of means and a strategy that is open to "organic development" in order to "transform" the state.

They mechanically define strategy as the "summation of means". This they take to be the combination of forms of struggle to effect "social transformation".

Or they define it as the "blueprint" which is capable of "organic development" According to them, this means the capability to assimilate practically anything in the process even to the point of overturning whatever blueprint they had at the outset. Thus, in effect, they deny the need even for their own "blueprint" for "transforming" the state and society.

Even as a "summation of means" or as a "blueprint" open to "organic development", their concept of strategy is one which is not anchored on the basic conditions prevailing in society ("the fundamental relations between classes in society may not have changed but strategy can change"). Neither does their strategy address the question of main and secondary forces nor the main and secondary forms of struggle. According to them, "Mao's categories of main and secondary forms of struggle can be dangerous..."

Any party seriously engaged in revolution appreciates the importance of a correct and well-defined strategy. It is absolutely necessary for the victory of a revolution. Correctness is based on a correct analysis of objective conditions prevailing in society and is tested in practice. Strategy defines among other things the forces, main and secondary forms of struggle, the probable stages of the revolution. It guides the revolutionary forces at every stage, in defining the line of advance.

What the reformists want in proposing an open-ended strategy is to render the revolution directionless. According to them, strategy can change anytime. More than this, however, is their objective to entrap the revolution in legalism and parliamentarism.

Thus, they attack the strategy of protracted people's war for being "biased" towards armed struggle and "total military victory." They criticize the proletarian revolutionaries for supposedly dogmatically equating revolution to the armed struggle. They supposedly reject dogmatism and "armed struggle determinism". Thus, they deny the necessity of seizing political power as the precondition to social revolution. They prescribe a multiplicity of forms of struggle for effecting social transformation and pontificate that the legal arena is the "less optimized" arena of the revolution and, moreover, the arena where opportunity for "empowerment" is greater. What they wish altogether is to liquidate the revolutionary armed struggle.

From another angle they attack protracted people's war for supposedly being a "rigid strategic frame" which is incapable of "organic development." They put forward so-called lessons from the "crucible of practice", and argue that the strategy of protracted people's

war is incapable of assimilating these lessons from practice." They claim that the strategy is "rigid" for its "limited appreciation" of:

- the importance of work in the lowlands and urban centers;"
- the possibility "that even before the final offensive, explosions or uprisings can take place in the urban center;"
- the open and legal methods of organizing "because organizing in the countryside was for the agrarian revolution and for the sustained intensifying struggle";
- the role of "the open mass movement in the urban center... in the question of state power given certain conditions in the conjunctures";
- importance of development plans in "organizing in definite areas";
- importance of work in the bureaucracy;
- the "strategic importance of the electoral arena", of peace negotiations;" and so on.

This supposed "dogmatism" and "rigidity" is then blamed on statism. According to them, "Statism refers to the tendency of focusing attention almost totally on the smashing of an essentially fascist regime without giving due regard to immediate needs, small but significant changes in relations and step by step process in eroding reactionary state power before total victory."

In the first place, the assertion that protracted people's war does not give "due regard to immediate needs" betrays a total ignorance of the theory and, more importantly, the actual practice of people's war. Agrarian revolution, the main content of protracted people's war, comprehensively addresses the immediate as well as the strategic demands of the peasantry through the overthrow of feudalism. Reduction of land rent, breaking up of large landed estates, increase in farm wages, raising prices of farm products, reduction of interest rates on loans, building cooperatives, raising productivity are among the actual achievements of the revolutionary peasant movement. In terms of working for the immediate interest of the peasantry, the petty-bourgeois reformists cannot claim any similar achievements.

By carrying the agrarian revolution forward step by step, the

revolutionary movement gains the support of the peasantry for the armed struggle and the building of revolutionary political power in the countryside. Thus the economic and political power of the landlord class is eroded and supplanted by revolutionary political power of the peasantry.

But the criticism of the rigidity of protracted people's war is directed not so much at its presumed failure to accommodate the "different forms of struggle" or its "disregard for the immediate needs of the peasantry" but more at rendering armed struggle only as one among many forms — bourgeois elections, peace negotiations, development work, work within the bureaucracy, etc. and at substituting reforms for revolution. Consequently, armed struggle is made secondary to all or any of the legal forms of struggle, if not totally disregarded.

Worse is their strawfiguring of protracted people's war as "focusing attention totally on the smashing of an essentially fascist regime" and their posturing about their giving "due regard to immediate needs". However, when one connects this to their claim of focusing on "non-political party, non-state movements" in society, then it is clear that they want to substitute revolutionary activity with counterrevolutionary reformism.

The question of seizure of political power is central to any revolution. Revolutionary social change entails the seizure of state power by the revolutionary class. This proceeds from the fact that the state is essentially the armed instrument of the ruling class. Thus, revolutionary change can be achieved only with the revolutionary class seizing political power through armed struggle.

Thus, the efforts of genuine revolutionaries are directed at capture of political power. This the reformists call "statist" and quite understandably since they think that reforms can substitute for revolution and legal "empowerment" can lead to a transformation of the state and render resort to arms irrelevant in the long run.

Genuine people's empowerment is achieved by arousing, mobilizing and organizing the people; by building the revolutionary mass organizations, the people's army and the organs of political power under the leadership of the party of the revolutionary proletariat. This

revolutionary process of gradually weakening reactionary state power and building revolutionary political power is a reality the reformists would rather dismiss. What they want to substitute for this revolutionary process is the participation of the peasantry in structures provided by the reactionary state such as the local development councils dominated by the landlord class or "alternative" structures of governance which in reality are extensions and tools of the reactionary state (e.g. "people's councils") in the vain hope of "transforming" these and the whole state machinery in the long run.

The Line of CO/FISO for Insurrection

Before the NPS' reformism matured into the CO for "development" line, it first came up with the line of community organizing for insurrection in Septhe. While Septhe on the surface appeared to be a Left opportunist error, its content is Right opportunist ; it is, in essence, reformism with an insurrectionary shell.

Septhe sets insurrection as the immediate direction and in the same breath prescribes a combination of CO, economic organizations and coalitions allegedly because it is the faster track to peasant organizing; an "improvement" over the solid organizing. Thus, while aiming for an insurrection — a direct challenge to the existing state power — Septhe empties peasant work of its revolutionary content which is necessary in building a force capable of toppling the reactionary state.

Septhe contradicts itself and certainly cannot achieve what it sets out to achieve. In practice, Septhe meant focusing the peasant struggle on peripheral issues in the legal arena and diverting it from the fundamental question of land reform and dismantling feudal structures. Cadres and activists in the peasant movement raced against each others in trying to launch mobilizations on any issue as the frequency of mobilizations became the narrow measure of success. Peasant leaders spent more time following up cases in the offices of government agencies ("claim-making") than engaging in political work among the members of peasant associations and among the peasantry in general.

A semblance of success was initially achieved with the orientation

set by Septhe. However, these spurts of activities quickly died down as these were not consolidated into solid political gains and in spite of the fact that organizers were encouraged to misrepresent the actual purpose of these mobilizations in an attempt to create even an artificial upsurge. For example, in the areas affected by Mt. Pinatubo volcanic eruptions, mobilizations were misrepresented as being for the purpose of distributing relief goods. In the end, the large mobilizations Septhe envisioned as part of the upsurge never materialized because organizing, being issue based, did not result in any higher political consciousness.

The immediate objective of upsurge leading to an insurrection was based on Septhe's estimate of an impending "convulsion" of the ruling system which the revolutionary forces could "take advantage of" and "play to win" or, failing that, force a "strategic shift" in the balance of forces between reaction and revolution.

This wishful thinking is typical of the positions taken by the ex-NPS misleaders on a lot of questions. The insurrectionary strategy — with "play to win" as the main objective — was superimposed on the strategy of protracted people's war. Peasant uprisings were supposed to be a contributing factor for effecting a strategic shift in the balance of forces supposedly within the context of protracted people's war.

Further, "Hinggil sa Pambabaluktot ng KT-KS sa September Theses" (On the EC-CC' Twisting of the September Theses) raves against the EC-CC for supposedly disregarding the lessons of history — of EDSA — and for insisting on the "original". By this the ex-NPS misleaders mean that EDSA would have been an "opportunity" which the revolutionary forces could have taken advantage of ("pagsunggab sa oportunidad") and "played to win". Therefore, according to them, the EC-CC is wrong in insisting on the "original", on the strategy of protracted people's war. The article declares, "EDSA proves that an uprising can occur at the early stage of the people's war. It also proves that a regime can be overthrown in an uprising as a form of struggle in combination with armed struggle and other forms of struggle."

The ex-NPS misleaders have not drawn the lessons correctly, years after EDSA. They lament the supposed failure of the revolutionary

movement to snatch victory from it. They fail to recognize the actual balance of forces between revolution and reaction at that time. Thus, they draw the wrong conclusion that the revolutionary movement could have snatched victory from the EDSA uprising.

And in peddling their insurrectionary strategy the ex-NPS misleaders denigrate the theory of protracted people's war and its stages of development because, according to them, these tend to prolong the process and dampen initiatives to "take advantage of opportunities." The process of step by step building of political power in the countryside to accumulate strength is rejected in favor of going immediately, irrespective of the balance of forces, for a seizure of political power.

Septhe goes on to denigrate solid mass organizing. It decries it as a slow process and unduly biased towards the preservation of forces. Thus, fast-track issue-based sweeping organizing is supposedly combined with, but is actually substituted for, solid mass organizing. This is supposed to correct the deficiencies of and improve on solid mass organizing. In claiming to have improved on solid mass organizing by combining it with FISO or CO, the reformists succeed in demonstrating their confusion. Solid mass organizing makes use of class analysis; CO denies class analysis ("inclusive"). Moreover, revolutionaries wage sweeping propaganda and enter into broad alliances on the basis of class analysis in order to serve and facilitate solid organizing.

By "taking advantage of opportunities", the ex-NPS misleaders mean dismantling the whole range of building Red political power in the countryside and supplanting it with a mainly legal, inclusive, sweeping approach to organizing. Even as this insurrectionary strategy is to be based on forces accumulated over years of conducting people's war it denigrates people's war for "emphasizing the preservation of forces" and adhering to the antifeudal class line.

The document "Fulfill the Requirements of the Present Stage" and EC-CC's critique of Septhe have more than sufficiently explained that rushing into the next stage (or playing to win) without sufficient strength or running far ahead of the present level of development of the

revolutionary forces is to plunge into disaster. Both documents emphasize the absolute necessity of building the revolutionary forces step by step and advancing in stages before the move to capture political power on a nationwide scale.

Septhe sets an upsurge leading to an insurrection as the immediate objective/direction of the peasant movement. It proposes to achieve this objective through a mainly legal, issue-based, sweeping approach to peasant organizing and a focus on peasant struggles for "palpable gains." This approach is supposed to be a "fast track" method of organizing, fast enough for the ex-NPS misleaders to create an upsurge and uprising at about the time of the 1992 elections.

That issue-based, inclusive (disregarding the class line) organizing for "eco-pol" struggles (economic "struggles", actually petitions addressed to government, or what the "popdems" call "claim making") can mature into an uprising to successfully challenge the existing state power is either a big joke or a quack's prescription.

There is nothing to support the ex-NPS misleaders' claim of the efficacy of their fast track method. The present strength of the revolutionary movement is a product of painstaking solid mass organizing which adheres to the class line and creatively combines sweeping propaganda and consolidation in a step-by-step building of the peasant organizations. What the ex-NPS misleaders have created by using FISO are spurts of actions that fizzle out or campaigns that benefited a few rich peasants and small traders rather than the poor and middle peasants.

FISO which the ex-NPS misleaders claim to have developed is nothing but a refurbishing of the old CO (community organizing) technique long ago rejected and criticized by the revolutionary movement for its reformism. Its main feature is organizing and mobilizing the people along an endless string of peripheral small issues. Community issues that cut across classes ("affects more people") are preferred. The farther the issue is from the basic issue of class exploitation, the better for the reformists. CO is supposed to be inclusive, classless. This endless process of fighting for small (palpable) "gains" goes on and on ad infinitum but never brings the

masses to revolutionary consciousness. In fact it is CO's objective to keep the people ever busy with a forest of small issues to keep them away from a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of their basic problems and the revolutionary solution to these.

The CO line is not based on class analysis and deliberately masks class contradictions and fundamental questions. In fact, it surrenders the leadership of the peasant movement to the "middle class" and, moreover, a "middle class" that is subservient to the interests of the comprador big bourgeoisie and foreign monopoly capitalists.

Solid mass organizing, as EC-CC has pointed out, was originally expounded by the CC in "Our Urgent Tasks" (OUT) to correct the haphazard method of organizing which was a common error prior to 1976. Due to the haphazard method of organizing of many at that time, elements not belonging to the basic masses (like rich peasants) or just plain unreliable elements (lumpen elements) were able to get into the mass organizations and organs of political power. At the slightest rise of enemy reaction, these elements cooperated with the enemy and exposed the revolutionary elements to him. Also, these were unreliable in the antifeudal struggle. The rectification of this weakness was for the revolutionary movement of momentous significance. The ex-NPS misleaders close their eyes this. The years immediately following OUT was a period of unprecedented growth for the revolutionary peasant movement.

"Inclusive organizing" which is devoid of class analysis and class line is a retrogressive step. It repeats an error that has been rectified. It certainly would bring the peasant organizations under the leadership of the rich peasants and dilute their anti-feudal line. It would also make them susceptible to infiltration by lumpen elements.

Septhe was injected wholesale into the orientation of institutions and LPOs under the misleadership of the ex-NPS elements. In the adaptation, the reformist flip side was made more prominent although "upsurge leading to an insurrection" remained as the immediate direction. Politics was de-emphasized and "socioeconomic work" emphasized.

The sharp decline in the LPOs' membership was blamed on their

respective orientations. Specifically it was blamed on "over emphasis on politics". Hence came the alleged need to de-emphasize politics and emphasize socioeconomic work; focus on "eco-pol" struggles for "tangible and palpable gains". These are supposed to sustain the peasant masses' interest in their organization. "Inclusive organizing" was combined with "crop line organizing" and coalition -building.

With issue-based and inclusive organizing, the peasant struggle for land was effectively relegated to a minor position vis-a-vis smaller issues that cut across the different strata of the peasantry. The so-called land reform program of the reactionary government was deemed a part of the agrarian revolution. Thus, the orientation of some legal organizations emphasized economic struggles never transcended the struggle for the implementation of the "positive" provisions of the reactionary Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law.

With the intrusion of the ideas of economism and reformism into the LPOs and service institutions, their orientation became a hodge-podge of populist rhetorics, despite lip service to the national democratic revolution and the strategy of people's war.

Citing supposed changes in the "political and economic terrain" in the countryside, the reformists insist on giving equal emphasis to the struggle for land and capital, to the struggle for land reform and increasing productivity.

The ex-NPS misleaders have never come up with any coherent set of data or analysis for their conclusion about our "overemphasis on politics" except to simply make the claim in order to justify their so-called emphasis on socioeconomic work and the struggle for "palpable gains". One has only to have a basic understanding of the history of the peasant movement to be able to debunk this absurd thesis. The peasant movement way back in history has always been at its best when linked to the revolutionary political movement. This is made necessary by the fact that the struggle for the smallest of the peasants' economic demands (as for instance the reduction of land rent and interest rates on loans) are immediately confronted by the armed political power of the landlord class.

But insofar as the recent dip in the membership of the LPOs is

concerned, the ex-NPS misleaders' insurrectionism and worship of spontaneity definitely contributed the greater share to it than the neglect of socioeconomic work. Precipitate actions aimed at wresting immediate gains in preparation for insurrections invited quick military suppression of unconsolidated LPOs. Despite the lip service to socioeconomic work, the ex-NPS misleaders did not give serious attention to it, much less to solid organizing for achieving solid socioeconomic gains for the masses. The dip in LPO membership is also linked to the other errors which have led to the reduction of the revolutionary mass base as discussed in the rectification documents.

The ex-NPS misleaders do not understand or rather deliberately confuse the contrast between land reform in the context of the ruling system and agrarian revolution in the context of developing the political power of the revolutionary forces in the countryside. The absurd conclusion that necessarily proceeds from their absurd analysis is that the fake land transfer undertaken by the Department of Agrarian Reform of the reactionary government falls within the purview of agrarian revolution.

Finally, without presenting solid empirical data, the reformists endlessly talk about changes in the "political and economic terrain" of the countryside to justify their "innovations" on the orientation of the peasant movement, if not the whole strategy of people's war. The objective is clearly to justify their liquidating or relegating the agrarian revolution to a minor position, and bolster their so-called "integrated area development work" in the service of counterrevolutionary reformism.

At its best, Septhe is a plain piece of petty-bourgeois radicalism with a reformist content. However, this radicalism gradually gave way to out and out counterrevolutionary reformism. It did not take long before the CO for insurrection line was discarded in favor of the CO for "development" line as the ex-NPS misleaders openly embraced petty-bourgeois reformism.

Full Blown Petty-Bourgeois Reformism

A closer look at Septhe and the practice of the ex-NPS misleaders,

shows that on both conceptual and practical planes, Septhe falls into the bourgeois populist frame. The "popdems" claim that they adhere to a multi-track strategy for "social transformation" capable of assimilating armed struggle as a "valid" form of struggle. Like the ex-NPS misleaders, they put premium on issue-based, inclusive organizing; on coalition building; on legal forms; and struggle for palpable gains.

However, unlike the "popdems" who now openly declare themselves as "PD revolutionaries" different from the proletarian revolutionaries, the Septhe proponents have tried to conceal their complete capitulation to petty-bourgeois reformism by paying lip service to people's war.

With "Orientation of PX Inc." and subsequent papers, however, the thin shell of radicalism is stripped off. As if the queer marriage between CO and insurrectionism in Septhe were not bad enough, the ex-NPS misleaders have gone further to openly adopt the bourgeois populism and reformism of the "socdems" and "popdems" wholesale. They have relapsed into the "social action" training provided to some of them by the Jesuits in the '60s.

True to form, the petty-bourgeois reformists set their "vision" on a society that "combines the best of two worlds." Their model of development supposedly has an "egalitarian bias" and is "ecologically sustainable." "Socialism" remains an inspiration to them but, of course, sans the dictatorship of the proletariat. Their vision is a "pluralist society" that brings together exploiter and exploited in harmony. It is, according to them, a society that is to be brought about by a "civil society" organized and "empowered" gradually taking over the functions of governance, checking the abuses of the state, taking control of resources and, gradually transforming the state through "popular struggles". In reality, this "civil society" is but a coopted petty-bourgeoisie organized in the service of the ruling classes for counterrevolution.

The petty-bourgeois reformists hope that social transformation would come in a peaceful evolutionary way, through "small but significant changes in the relations of people". They explore what combinations of approaches and struggles for "transformation of the state" are possible and conveniently forget the violent nature of the

state and the reality of class antagonism.

Coalition politics among different organizations and political tendencies both at the ground level and as part of a future democratic alternative is an extension of their concept of a civil society and inclusive organizing.

And while macro changes are "not quite in place" the "primary emphasis [is] on local self-help action by communities" and "on the forces, structures and initiatives of non-state, non-political party movements in civil society". This, they say, is the cure for the disease of "statism" of which the Party and the ND revolutionaries are supposedly afflicted. In fact, the reformists actively help keep the joint class dictatorship or the state of the big compradors and landlords by trying to obfuscate the question of state power.

The process by which civil society organizes itself to "check the excesses of the state" or gradually transform it and at the same time effect "relative transformation" or the institution of "quantitative and qualitative changes" on the ground or small defined areas is called "empowerment". "Empowerment," it is hoped, will render resort to arms irrelevant over time.

The reformists claim to put premium on the control of resources by people and communities and on ecologically sustainable economic growth — "on empowerment and sustainable development." "Empowerment and sustainable development" are supposed to be operationalized in integrated area development, financed by the crumbs from the reactionary government and foreign funding agencies and rationalized by the techno-language of the U.N., World Bank, U.S. AID, other foreign states' "development" agencies and some array of foreign private funding agencies based in the centers of world capitalism.

Thus, starting with their revisionist "theory" of classes and the state, the reformists end up with a barefaced apology for "development" or "poverty alleviation" framework whose record for the last 40 years since the United Nations declared the "development decade" has been the further impoverishment of the poor and the further enrichment of the rich. After all, if "civil society" can "check the excesses of the state,"

effect "relative transformation" in definite areas and replicate this all over the country "over time" to achieve a "critical mass" capable of effecting "social transformation", then the exploited can take their time and render resort to revolutionary armed struggle unnecessary.

The "development" paradigm has resulted in poverty aggravation, not alleviation. Paradigm after paradigm of essentially the same content but with changing phraseology, according to the current fad, has been discarded one after the other as its impotence is exposed. Poverty is more widespread today than it was four decades ago when the first development programs were introduced.

The crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal society continues to deepen. "Development" has, in fact, exacerbated poverty in no small measure. This is amply demonstrated by past and present productivity programs for the peasantry. The overriding impact of these programs has been ***to facilitate the extraction of surplus from the peasantry and increase the peasantry's role as a source of profits for multinational corporations and the big comprador and landlord classes.***

"Sustainable development" and "empowerment," the currently fashionable slogans of the U.N. and U.S. AID conjure the illusion of a paradigm that is not really an alternative to the current reactionary state but that is more emphatically directed against the revolutionary alternative. In fact, by misrepresenting token participation as "democratization" of the development process and foisting "supraclass" issues such as society as a whole being blamed for environmental degradation only succeeds in concealing the prime responsibility of the imperialists, the big compradors and big landlords for the destruction of the environment and in rendering these powerful malefactors a special service.

Sustainable development under a semicolonial and semicolonial society like the Philippines is an illusion. Imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism siphon off the surplus produced by the masses of workers and peasants and leave nothing for the genuine development of the economy. The reformists must wake up to this reality if they are at all serious even only about environmental

concerns and not just about their lucrative illusion-building, using the latest phraseology and funds from the big foreign funding agencies. Genuine development can only come with the downfall of the semifeudal and semicolonial system which is the cause of underdevelopment.

Even from the purely ecological perspective, sustainable development is impossible within the present system. At best, the imperialist-dominated big comprador-landlord state, particularly the US-Ramos regime at present, only pays lip service to ecological sustainability while in practice condones the destruction of the environment by foreign multinational and big comprador corporations.

With their idea of "relative transformation" and small "quantitative and qualitative changes" through "empowerment and sustainable development" the reformists obscure the reality that it is the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society that is the fetter to genuine self-reliant development. They misrepresent development work or "poverty alleviation" as a revolutionary process towards total social transformation. They denigrate agrarian revolution and falsely portray it as unresponsive to the peasantry's immediate needs, only to substitute it with their concept of "rural development".

Proletarian revolutionaries hold that it is through agrarian revolution that the interest of the peasantry is pushed forward comprehensively. Agrarian revolution responds to the basic demand of the peasantry for land and the elimination of various feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation.

By carrying out agrarian revolution, the Party wins over the peasantry to the side of the armed revolution, builds the people's army, peasant organizations and organs of political power in a step by step building of revolutionary political power in the countryside. Through the exercise of their political power, the peasantry is able to further advance the agrarian revolution, thus eroding the economic base of big comprador-landlord political power in the whole country.

Contrary to the reformists' claims that the revolutionary peasant movement does not pay attention to the peasants' immediate needs, agrarian revolution is a comprehensive program that addresses both

short term and long term needs of the peasants. In the first place, reforms in the feudal and semifeudal system in the countryside — rent reduction, increased wages of farm workers, breaking up of haciendas and the like immediately redound to the socioeconomic benefit of the peasants. Secondly, raising productivity and production are also major concerns. The achievements of the revolutionary peasant movement in terms of addressing the immediate interest of the peasantry are far, far greater than any that the reformists with their so-called development programs can possibly claim. Greater socioeconomic benefits and higher production have been made possible as a result of the establishment of Red political power in the countryside.

Instead of pushing agrarian revolution forward, the reformists are now busy collaborating with US-Ramos regime and calling for the implementation of the "positive" aspects of the reactionary CARL in operationalizing their "alternative paradigms". The alternative that these petty-bourgeois reformists (they be "popdem", "socdem" or "ex-NPS misleaders") present are alternatives to the revolutionary process rather than to the reactionary ruling system and are in the service of the latter.

The reformists, have made themselves tails of what they call the "developmentalist" state that is the US-Ramos regime. They find a lot of "positive" aspects in the programs of this regime. Conversely, "empowerment and sustainable development" are concepts acceptable to the US-Ramos regime. After all, the reformists say it may make "resort to arms irrelevant in the long run."

Historically, "development" has been dangled by the ruling classes as an alternative to revolution and is combined with the most violent repression of the peasants' struggle for political and economic gains. This is true with the present "development" programs of the reformists. The only difference perhaps is the present day reformists' use of revolutionary phrasemongering to mask the essentially reactionary character of these "development" programs.

But if the petty-bourgeois reformists think they can mislead the revolutionary peasant movement with their recycled "poverty alleviation" schemes clothed in populist language, they are simply

wrong. Certainly a lot of paradigms, are being discarded and "thrown out of the window". As for the reformists' paradigm it is sure to be discarded by the Filipino peasantry and working class as the reformists thoroughly expose themselves as mere apologists and cheap hacks of the present system. ■

POLITICS IN COMMAND AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR URBAN-BASING

BY COMRADE FLORANTE DIMASUPIL

I suggest that in calling for and guiding the conduct of tactical offensives (TOs), we underscore and highlight the principle of "politics in command". This was inadequately stressed in the 25th NPA anniversary statements, which merely called for launching more tactical offensives where victory is certain. This call assumes that cadres who plan TOs are clear on the political basis. The past ten years' practice shows otherwise.

In the NPA's early years, or up to the first decade, the principle "politics in command" was known to every officer and fighter and effectively, because strictly, adhered to by our guerrilla units. In practical terms, political considerations — political preparations, feedback from the masses, possible effects of enemy reaction on our political work, handling of captured enemy soldiers, etc. — were always carefully deliberated on and weighed against military gains and cost. Consequently, military actions generally served to enhance the guerrilla units' and entire revolutionary movement's stock with the people, on top of the attainment of military objectives such as capture of firearms, information, and even enemy personnel. There was a notable decline in the conscious practice of this basic principle, as was reported and tackled in the Conference on Political Work¹ of 1991. With regularization, the purely military viewpoint gained headway and virtually swept aside the principle "politics in command".

We can cite several examples of how the entire military and political situation deteriorated as a result of putting purely military

¹ See *Rebolusyon*, Series 1993, No. 2 (April-June)

considerations on top of politics — clear instances of “winning the battles but losing the war”.

1) In 1987, a GC cadre who was also a KT member issued an unauthorized order to territorial and regional army commands to “hit hard” at the enemy in the wake of the August rightist coup attempt, aiming to create a destabilizing and insurrectionary situation. The Bicol forces responded by blowing up major bridges on the eve of the traditional Penafrancia fluvial procession, failing to anticipate that it would incur the masses’ wrath. The enemy was quick to capitalize on the opportunity we presented him on a silver platter. Then Chief of Staff Gen. Ramos promptly ordered the deployment of several additional combat battalions (Marines and Scout Rangers), and embarked on an intensive and extensive prop and psy-war campaign (e.g., moviehouses routinely and continuously showed the fallen bridge, the inconvenience and misery it caused the people, etc.). Placed on a defensive politically, there was no way we could oppose the increased militarization effectively. These enemy troops conducted SOT and clearing operations with impunity in our areas. The mass base on the plains closer to the highways which were not solidly organized (sweeping organizing by partisan units) crumbled easily. Even in the former consolidated areas, mass work and agrarian revolution had been neglected due to the guerrilla units’ shift in stress to military work, in the form of fixed “quotas” for tactical offensives. One form of neglect was the unit’s practice, when it enters an area, of going to the landlord to collect taxes (needed to fund the military operations) rather than spend time organizing and integrating with the masses. Regional records clearly show that overall work peaked numerically in the third quarter of 1987, and that the marked and continuous decline began on 1st qtr of 1988.

2) The Digos Incident goes by the same pattern. The MRGU wins all its battles against the religious fanatic groups around Mt. Apo, but the whole area is lost as the enemy takes advantage of the Digos incident to pour in troops and arm the vigilantes.

3) In one town in Bicol, an NPA unit ambushed a group of CAFGUs after it received orders to undertake tactical offensives. To fulfill its

quota, the same unit finished off the survivors of the first attack while they were attending the wake of the casualties. This was also in 1987. To this date, comrades have not been able to go back to this town.

4) The ABB "agaw-armas"... and finally, the gangster operations which became widespread from the N3 down to regional, front and district units, especially so-called special operations units. The greatest damage is inflicted not so much on our political relationship with the people but on our own ideological state.

Comment on a passage from "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as Guide to the Philippine Revolution"

"The urban basing and repeated arrests in 1988 and 1991 of the former NPA 'general command' in Metro-Manila and certain regional commands are negative examples for the entire Party and the people's army..." (*Rebolusyon*, Special Issue #1, February 1994, p. 60.)

1. It is true that from the time it was formed in 1980, the General Staff (first called "Central Military Staff", then "National Military Staff" before it was renamed "General Staff" in 1984) and eventually the 'GC' was urban based, and preoccupied itself not mainly with the problems of waging armed struggle in the countryside but with urban-based special operations and tasks.

But it was the KT then which should be singled out as the first and foremost to set the negative example for urban basing, more than the GS or GC. The "General Review of Policies and Decisions" states that after the 1981: With the belief that the basic alliance was already strong while work among the middle forces and on the broad united front was lagging very much behind, city-centered alliance work and political movement were made the priority. The central leadership based itself in the city, focused on the city-centered political movement and alliance work, and built and strengthened the city-based staff organs.

The KT did not only set a negative example, it was directly responsible for building and maintaining more and ever bigger urban-based staffs. And it was not just a matter of convenience nor

negligence, but deliberate and programmed, in accordance with a wrong political line that in turn resulted from a mistaken appreciation of the situation of our mass work.

2. The National Military Staff was merely one of such staffs. Initially, it consisted of (1) a Special Operations Unit, part of which was the Escape Struggle Group, which had already existed and operated in the NCR even before the NMS was constituted, (2) an Ordnance Staff, which was the formally disbanded but in effect merely streamlined MRD and (3) a special unit for importation. In 1982, the Research and Documentation Group would be formed, whose task was the compilation of intelligence information on the AFP and the drafting of a basic officers' course.

All of these staffs were urban-based. Initially, it was only the ordnans group that made it its business to send cadres to the CS (since 1977, when it was still known as the MRD) to directly investigate the NPA's ordnans needs and capabilities, test its prototypes, set up and train field ordnans staffs and take a direct hand in employing the devices it produced. The Medical staff, set up in 1985, would adopt the same style and method of work. In 1988, nearly the entire Political Department practically based itself in the countryside, spending large portions of the year in areas where it conducted political and military training courses and conducted investigations on the political work of the NPA. Ironically, the only member of the Political Department who was left behind in Metro Manila in 1988 was the Political Director himself, who was a GC and CC member and "had to attend to other GC and CC tasks in Metro Manila".

Not surprisingly, it would be the cadres and members of N1 (Pol Dept), N4 (Ordnans) and N5 (Medikal) who would have less problems comprehending the Party center's summing up, "Reaffirm...". These cadres and members would also be the ones who would promptly and without much ado respond to the center's call to reverse the trend on urban basing and base themselves in the countryside.

In contrast, the entire GC and almost all of N2 (Intelligence Staff, which was also urban based and bothered little to attend to the intel needs of the NPA in the field) attacked "Reaffirm..." and the Party

center no less, and opposed and resisted the rectification movement. As for the N3, it had been allowed by its "GC" commanders to degenerate completely into a bunch of roving rebel gangsters. When summoned, the CO "reported" to the responsible Party organs, but mainly to determine whether or not the "GC" was not cheating them out of their "share" in the loot from their gangster activities. By and large, rather than respond to the call to go to the countryside and wage the people's war which they had haughtily claimed to have capably led all these years, these elements have dropped out of the revolutionary struggle. The worst of them — the national 'commander' and his 'first vice-commander' no less — have completely reversed gear and have sunk to the depths of revisionism and counterrevolution, attacking people's war as dogmatist and militarist!

It is not an understatement to say that the N1, N4 and N5 cadres had a clearer view than the GC of the conditions and problems of the NPA in the countryside, including the problems of waging the armed struggle. Glaring proof of this are the papers prepared and submitted by the GC to the 1989 Command Conference. These were grossly unrealistic — setting annual quotas for national, interregional and regional coordinated campaigns without the slightest idea of its requirements and conduct — and failed to address the greater problem, already pointed out by the PB and reported by the field commands, of correcting the imbalance between horizontal and vertical forces, recovering the lost mass base, and waging widespread guerrilla warfare.

In this conference, which provided a rare occasion for the staff cadres to consult with each other, a common observation and criticism was that the GC did not seem to be paying attention to the staffs' reports not only on their field work but also on the field conditions and problems in general. These cadres pointedly raised the question on why the GC did not base itself in the countryside. The GC's response was that it had "important matters to attend to in the city, and it was precisely the staffs' task to attend to work in the countryside which the GC could not".

3. The "GC"'s neglect of the armed struggle in the countryside is

merely another form of the Party center's neglect of the requirements for waging people's war principally in the countryside. The KT's shift of stress to urban work is still another form, and the more decisive one. It is the bigger error because it resulted in the KT's failure to lead the people's war in its entirety, to oversee and take the lead, for instance, in building the mass base and undertaking agrarian reform. The 'GC', after all, was merely an implementing arm. It was the KS, through the MC, which should have led the people's army in waging people's war.

Until 1987 when the MC was formally reconstituted as a distinct body, it was the KT which performed the MC's functions. Thus, it was the KT, and eventually the MC, more than the 'GC', which should be faulted for the errors of military adventurism and even for urban basing that not only led to the neglect of CS work but also compromised the Party's security.

This is not to say that the GC did not have its own self-propelled military adventurism. The GC attempted — and succeeded — in many instances to circumvent absolute Party leadership especially on the matter of gangsterism, the use of Party funds, and some issues related to the importation of armaments. But for a long time, it had no need to circumvent the MC and KT on the question of regularization (building large formations and separate command structures, and importing armaments) and urban basing. After all, it was only in 1990 when the "SCO" concept was formally withdrawn; and even then, it was not thoroughly criticized and repudiated. The MC's and PB's wholesale approval of the 1989 Command Conference papers underscore this shortcoming.

4. The KT and Party staff organs and territorial and regional committees were as much the subject of the series of arrests from 1986 to 1991 as was the "GC". . . . As for the regional commands, it was rare for a regional command to base itself in the urban areas before the leading regional committee itself does. Generally, regional commands would be the last to base themselves in the urban areas.

But it is also true that even before the Mindanao military cadres were promoted to national positions in 1984, they had already adopted urban-basing as a work style. The Mindanao Military Staff that took

over after the promotion of cadres to the GS in 1984 was practically wiped out in a series of raids in Jan 1985 in Cebu. The MS chief and M2 head were killed in an ambush, while two ranking deputies (one of them for special operations) were arrested. (March-April 1994)

Postscript April 1994

5. In shifting its base to the CS in late 1989 or early 1990, the KT decisively rectified its earlier error of urban basing. On the other hand, the GC resisted, circumvented and defied the KT's instructions to base itself in the CS and persisted in preoccupying itself with urban-based "special operations". It would only be much later, after the Rectification Movement had picked up momentum, that the truth behind the GC's criminal activities would be revealed. Little wonder that the GC would balk at giving up the comfort and wealth it was accumulating in the city. This resulted in the subsequent arrest of all the members of the GC, one after another, from 1990 to 1991. For this, the GC rightfully deserves to be cited as the negative example insofar as persisting in urban basing despite contrary policies is concerned. ■

Editorial Comment

1. The reminder about the need to emphasize putting "politics in command" in direct connection with calls for armed tactical offensives is correct. However, politics in command is implicit in the entire article both in the tactical and the strategic sense. Only the phrase "politics in command" was not used. The statement is full of passages referring to the national democratic line, absolute Party leadership over the NPA, concrete political tasks of the NPA, etc. But in view of grave errors in the past, there is really need for direct, explicit and emphatic reference to politics in command when a call is made for armed tactical offensives.

In the period of the Party's ideological and political laxness, it was not only in military work that the principle of putting politics in command of our work tended to be forgotten. This applied also to other areas of work, especially socioeconomic work.

2. The criticism and demand with regard to tracing the responsibility of both Party central leadership (CC, PB, EC and MC) and General Command for urban-basing are factually based, correct and consistent.

In the first place, the central leadership was responsible for the wrong line and laying the ground for the "Red area-White area" schema and the GC urban-basing to arise since the early '80s or even late '70s. Although the concept of "strategic counteroffensive" (SCO) started with pushing insurrections in third and fourth class municipalities, this started the undermining of the strategy and tactics of protracted people's war by proposing as early as 1978 the baseless leap from early to advanced substage and by the early '80s another baseless leap from advanced substage to the SCO.

The tendency to hold GC more responsible than higher organs is due to the following:

- a. the GC chief and others have consistently opposed rectification at least since 1989;
- b. the GC chief and other accomplices were also in the EC and PB; and
- c. there is a deliberate separation of those who are for rectification and those who are bitterly opposed to it since 1992 (comprehensive and deepgoing rectification).

At any rate, we agree with your observation that the central leadership as well as the GC must be held responsible, with the proper qualifications. By way of redressing the tendency to underplay the responsibility of the central leadership, we have published your letter in the current issue.

The passage that you commented upon is in no way an attempt to minimize the responsibility of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee nor the entire Party Central Committee for the error of urban-basing. It is merely to emphasize the point that the very organ directly concerned with overseeing and directing the armed struggle in the countryside was based in the city. In other sections of the article, the extent of the responsibility of the Party's Central Committee and its central organs are acknowledged in the same way that it is acknowledged by the CC's 10th Plenum in the General Review as cited. ■

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