

Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors*

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Our basic principles are set forth in the documents of reestablishment such as "Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party," the Party Constitution, and the Party Program. As proletarian revolutionaries, we must always measure ourselves according to these principles.

These principles include 1) the repudiation of modern revisionism and adherence to the following: 2) theory of Marxism-Leninism, 3) class analysis of Philippine society as semi-colonial and semi-feudal, 4) general line of a new democratic revolution, 5) leading role of the working class through the Party, 6) theory of people's war and the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside, 7) concept of a united front along the revolutionary class line, 8) democratic centralism, 9) socialist perspective and proletarian internationalism.

Through the years, the overwhelming majority of Party cadres and members adhered to these basic principles and has won great victories in carrying the Philippine Revolution forward. At the same time, there have been gross deviations and errors of a few elements which have caused grievous damage to the Party and the revolutionary mass movement.

As matters stand today, the correct line and those who adhere to it prevail and can further prevail over the wrong line. The enemy is daydreaming when it boasts of the capability to defeat the Party and the people in 1992 and 1993. The ruling system is wracked by an ever-worsening political and economic crisis. There is increasing violence among the political factions of the exploiting classes. The pre-industrial semi-colonial and semi-feudal economy continues to be plundered by the local exploiting classes and multinational firms and banks. The crisis drives the broad masses of the people to resistance providing the fertile ground for the armed revolution and the legal democratic movement.

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We must stand firm as proletarian revolutionaries like the Bolsheviks did when capitalism expanded rapidly to become modern revisionism in the period before World War I and when the classical revisionists dominated the Second International. We must stand firm like the communists did when they fought fascism before, during, and after World War II. We must stand firm, right now, in another dark period when capitalism seems to be unchallenged and unbeatable as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the revisionist ruling parties and regimes and their replacement by undisguised bourgeois class dictatorships and capitalist regimes.

The chronic crisis of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal social system is ever worsening and provides the conditions for the development of our protracted armed revolution. We see the ever growing contradictions among the capitalist powers, between them and the increased number of debt-ridden neo-colonies, between the local ruling classes and their foreign masters on the one hand and the oppressed and exploited peoples and nations on the other, and, finally, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

All the counterrevolutionary campaigns of violence and deception will fail if the Party sums up its experience well and if it criticizes, repudiates, and rectifies the major errors and deviations that have seriously damaged and now threaten the very life of the Party and the revolutionary mass movement. The Party can further strengthen itself by basing itself on previous and continuing achievements, by conducting criticism and self-criticism in an all-round rectification movement and by correctly setting forth the new tasks.

In the face of enemy assaults and of deviations and errors we call on all Party cadres and members to reaffirm our basic principles; identify and rectify the major deviations, errors, and shortcomings; and strengthen our Party ideologically, politically, and organizationally.

The worst deviations and errors arise from petty-bourgeois impetuosity and subjectivism characterized by flights from the concrete conditions and the current strength of the revolutionary forces. It combines wishful thinking for the armed urban insurrection with army "regularization." This takes away cadres and resources from mass work in order to build prematurely higher and unsustainable military formations (companies and battalions) and top-heavy staff structures. This is misrepresented as an adjustment

on or refinement of the theory and practice of people's war, or as a superior theory or strategy altogether. Now, we are confronted with an unprecedented loss of mass base and other related problems.

It should be made clear, however, that we are still far stronger in several respects than we were in 1968, 1977, or 1980. There is a firm ground for further leading the masses (arousing, organizing, and mobilizing them) and launching the offensives (mass actions and armed tactical offensives) that we are capable of.

Under conditions of a drastic decline in strength in certain areas, there are certain elements who persist with their impetuosity. And there are others who swing from an ultra-left position to a rightist position. It is of crucial importance that we trace the ideological, political, and organizational roots of our major errors and shortcomings so that we can correctly take our bearings and strengthen the Party and the revolutionary mass movement

There can be countless specific achievements and specific problems to cite. In general, the Party has considerable strength and vitality to solve the long running problems and overcome the unprecedented setbacks caused by these major deviations, errors, and shortcomings that have had the most considerable impact on the current status and further development of the Party and the revolutionary movement. We can further strengthen ourselves and carry the revolution forward.

In the Field of Ideology

We have availed ourselves of the great treasury and have drawn from it the basic principles that cause in the stages of the new democratic revolution, socialist revolution, and communism. We must continue to do so or else suffer the fate of the revisionist ruling parties (including their camp followers) which started to revise and depart from basic revolutionary principles more than three decades ago and which eventually disintegrated in the recent years.

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. We can persevere in revolutionary struggle, promote the rights and interests of the people, stay on the correct line, and win further victories only if we have firm ideological moorings. We must therefore undertake theoretical studies seriously.

Political studies and activism are absolutely necessary in order to arouse, organize, and mobilize the masses. But these are not enough. We must not limit ourselves to the study of the national situation from time to time. We also must not swing and sway with the current hype in the bourgeois mass media nor buckle down to pressure coming from unstable and unreliable allies. We must constantly be clear about our theory and our ideas. We must constantly be clear about the interests of the proletariat and the oppressed people in our country and throughout the world.

We must maintain and further develop our Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method. We must constantly improve our knowledge of the materialist philosophy, historical materialism, political economy, scientific socialism, the new democratic revolution, party building, people's war, and the building of the united front.

Since the reestablishment of the Party, theoretical study had had three levels: the basic level focusing on Philippine history, society, and revolution and our basic document; the intermediate level focusing on the comparative study of the Philippine revolution with the Chinese and other revolutionary movements, using our seven-volume selection of Mao's works; and the advanced level focusing on the basic principles of Marxist-Leninist theory, using the most important works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao for reading and study by individual Party members and use by Party branches.

But since the late 1970s, we have increasingly departed from the foregoing structure of theoretical education and have given less attention to the works of Mao. Writings of lesser importance and lesser relevance to our revolutionary struggle have gained more attention among Party members although in a superficial manner.

Also, since the late 1970s, except for short periods of educational drives of limited coverage, there has been a gross lack of study courses and study materials for theoretical education at the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Copies of even the basic documents of our Party's reestablishment and other important basic writings have dwindled and disappeared for extended periods of time. The works of the great communist thinkers and leaders have also become scarce and unavailable to the Party rank and file.

Low level of Theoretical Education

The undeniable consequence of this neglect of theoretical education is the widespread low level of theoretical knowledge among Party cadres and members. There is a growing failure to evaluate the revolutionary experience of our own Party and people as well as those of other countries, past and present Cadres with a low level of theoretical knowledge have been organizationally promoted and are prone to serious deviations and errors not only in ideology but consequently, also in political and organizational work.

There is wide ground for subjectivism to arise in the Party, including the dogmatist and revisionist trends. Instead of the promotion of a comprehensive, complete, and all-sided view of things and theoretical development from a proletarian stand, there is a narrow, one-sided, and fragmentary view of these, depending on what sort of deviation certain elements wish to promote.

For instance, there are elements who exaggerate the current role of their urban area of work and eclectically take out of historical context certain dramatic events, e.g., the Petrograd and Moscow uprisings, the Vietnamese uprising of 1945, the Tet Offensive of 1968, and the Nicaraguan final offensive of 1979, to devise a “new strategy” of armed urban insurrection and dogmatically superimpose or counterpose it to the entire theory and practice of people’s war.

People’s war does not exclude armed insurrection at the appropriate time, like the widespread revolutionary upsurges in many Philippine provinces in 1896-98 and 1898-99 against Spanish colonial rule, then against the US war of aggression, and those in Central Luzon in late 1944 and early 1945 against the collapsing Japanese forces. In their respective times, the Philippine revolutionary army and the Hukbalahap were the rallying points of both the organized and spontaneous masses.

A successful popular insurrection is premised, aside from other factors, on the disintegration of the counterrevolutionary army and on the existence of a new armed revolutionary force. To deny the necessity of developing people’s war and building the people’s army in stages while the enemy force is still intact is not only to demagogically take advantage of a natural desire for quick victory but to lead the revolutionary forces to self-destruction.

Even when the wholeness of a certain thing or process is well perceived and even when the two contradictory aspects are recognized, errors have been committed either in identifying which are the principal and the secondary aspects under certain conditions at a given time or, after identifying the principal aspects, in completely or virtually negating the secondary one.

Take for instance the current of thought leading to the boycott error of 1986. The central leadership was correct in declaring that the 1986 snap presidential election was farcical and that Marcos would cheat and win in the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) count. So up to a given set of circumstances and within a certain period of time, the principal aspect was obviously for Marcos to remain in power. Indeed, Marcos would “win” by COMELEC count and Batasang Pambansa (National Legislature) proclamation.

But the secondary aspect could rise to the principal position upon a change of circumstances, like the military mutiny engineered by the United States and the popular uprising that arose due to the convergence of both the organized reactionary forces (including the Catholic Church) and the progressive forces. As early as November 1985, the high potential of the secondary aspect rising to the principal position was already discernible.

In the handling of contradictory aspects, errors can also arise from trying to blend or reconcile the principal with the secondary aspect. Dialectical materialism requires that a whole thing or process is understood by knowing both the principal and secondary aspects or, in a complex thing or process, both the main and the secondary contradictions.

For example, one line is correct like the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside in accordance with the theory of people’s war. Another line is wrong, like aiming for total victory or a share of power with the bourgeoisie so soon without necessarily building the people’s army in stages until it is strong enough to smash the bureaucratic-military machinery of the reactionary state in the cities.

In the name of Party unity, the wrong line is not at all identified as such, especially because it pays lip service to the theory of people’s war and the leadership of the Party, and also because it contains certain elements of short-term validity, like more effective offensives by bigger military formations

before the mass base is greatly reduced or lost. There is in effect a blending of the correct line and the wrong line which allows the latter to make a big headway until the Party wakes up to the ultimate losses.

The grossest example of the failure to recognize the principal and secondary aspects of a certain thing or process is the *Kampanyang AHOS* (AHOS campaign, the anti-informer hysteria in Mindanao). The grave violations of civil rights, the unjust taking of lives of comrades and other individuals, and the attendant devastation of the revolutionary forces by this campaign are so strikingly clear and revolting. But some elements who have risen in rank within the Party rationalize that the campaign is correct because it probably succeeded in eliminating real deep penetration agents (DPAs) even if hundreds upon hundreds of good comrades and innocent people were victimized and killed.

Various reasons extraneous to the flow of events under the responsibility of the Mindanao Commission from the early 1980s to the latter part of 1986 are provided to cut off the real connection of the wrong ideological, political, and organizational line to the anti-informer hysteria in order to lay the blame for this hysteria on extraneous factors. The worst proposition put forward by some elements is that *Kampanyang AHOS* was a revolutionary success.

It is not a matter of arbitrary choice that in the structure of theoretical education a large part should be allotted to the study of the works of Mao and the Chinese Revolution., Mao represents a stage of theory and practice which is a major development of Marxism-Leninism. His works bring Marxism-Leninism deeper into the East. And this arose from semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions basically similar to those of the Philippines.

The Chinese and the Vietnamese examples of people's war bear closer relevance to the current people's war in the Philippines than any other armed revolution abroad. These examples demonstrate that the chronic crisis of the semi-feudal conditions is the ground for a protracted people's war and, to this day, they remain the best available and most relevant to our struggle.

We have learned basic principles from both the Chinese Revolution and Mao's works as the Vietnamese revolutionaries have. We have applied them according to our own conditions without copying dogmatically or

mechanically any pattern of experience. Let us cite some important differences from the Chinese experience in people's war: 1) In addition to using the countryside to divide and weaken the forces of the enemy, we have used the archipelagic character of the country to further divide and weaken them. 2) The Chinese people's army used regular mobile warfare in the strategic defensive. like the Vietnamese, we have done so with guerilla warfare. 3) A whole period of agrarian revolution involving peasant uprisings and confiscation of land preceded the more successful campaign of rent reduction and elimination of usury during the anti-Japanese struggle. We have pursued what we call the minimum program of the agrarian revolution before the maximum one.

The Two Stage Revolution

The objective conditions and the subjective forces of the current Philippine revolution are such that it can fulfill the two-stage revolution (new democratic and socialist) first defined by Lenin and elaborated on by Mao. The Philippine revolution is therefore similar to the Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Cuban, and other revolutions and could thus proceed from the new democratic to the socialist stage. In this sense, our revolution belongs to a level higher than that of revolutions that have had to emerge from more backward colonial - and even racist - political and economic domination (Eke much of Africa) or those in which the revolutionary leadership is not determined to make a socialist revolution (like in Nicaragua).

The worst kind of dogmatism resulting in the worst damage to the Party is the superimposition of the Sandinista paradigm on our successful practice of people's war and the unacknowledged recycling of the Jose Lava idea of quick military victory in large parts of the Party and the revolutionary movement - at first in Mindanao since the early 1980s and then on a nationwide scale from the mid-1980s onward.

(Missing page [no. 8] in CPP document - Eds.)

The effort to apply the Bolshevik model to the Philippine revolution and at the same time diminish the importance of the works of Mao Zedong - which are the more relevant to the conditions of the Philippines - have encouraged a trend to deviate from the comprehensive structure of the basic intermediate and advanced levels of theoretical education.

The apparently avid students of Lenin and Bolshevik history eventually over focused on the issue of the 1978 and 1986 elections and neatly divided themselves into the boycott and participation sides of the debate. Because the Party was banned by the enemy from participation, the boycott side always came out the winner in the internal debates. Despite objections of Party cadres on the formulation of the issue as well as practical suggestions from them, the Party center did not fully take into account how our Party conducted itself in the 1969 and 1971 elections and, of course, in reactionary institutions and organizations, and how the Vietnamese comrades during the Vietnam war overrode the electoral exercises staged by the Saigon regime.

Eventually, there was the promotion of the so-called “political leadership” course concentrating on Bolshevik history and strategy and tactics and Lenin’s work. This was used by some elements for pushing the notion of insurrectionism and for squeezing out the further study of the theory and practice of people’s war. The dogmatic ambush was executed not only upon the appropriate structure of our theoretical education but also upon what should be our efforts to sum up our own rich experience of people’s war and raise it to the level of theory. Instead, there is the preference to go back to a single foreign example or to a part of it in an attempt to validate an erroneous line, the line of urban insurrectionism, and to superimpose it on our living practice of people’s war.

The trend to lessen the reading and study of Mao’s works and to deviate from the appropriate and correct structure of our theoretical education and knowledge appears to have been encouraged by the attacks on Mao Zedong in China with regard to the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as well as by the lessened militance of the Chinese party in the world anti-imperialist movement. Even then, the Chinese communist party did not attack Mao for his teachings on the new democratic revolution and the socialist transformation of Chinese society. These teachings continue to be valid and enlightening to the Philippine revolutionary movement.

Worst kind of Disorientation

The worst kind of disorientation first arose when the Mindanao Commission incorporated ideas of spontaneous mass uprisings and armed urban insurrection from Central America into the theory and practice of

people's war and put forward the idea of "launching uprisings and insurrections as final direction of the struggle in the cities" or as the "highest form of political struggle to be achieved." (Cf., "Mga Tala sa Estratehiya at Taktika ng Ating Digmaang Bayan [Notes on the Strategy and Tactics of Our People's War]," 1982; and "Batayan sa Pagpapaunlad at Papel ng Kilusan sa Puting Purok sa Buong Estratehiyang Digmang Bayan sa Mindanao [Basics for the Development and Role of the Movement in the White Area in the Whole Strategy of People's War in Mindanao]," n.d., p.6.)

Manifesting a lack of understanding of basic theory, the Mindanao Commission in several major documents redefined the term "political" and counterposed it to or put it on the same plane as "armed" or "military." Political struggles are defined by these documents as "those that are based principally on popular forces waged principally in urban areas" while "armed struggle" is defined as "principally launched in the countryside and principally relying on the armed forces or the army focused on the objective of defeating the military forces of the regime. ("Batayan..." p. 6.) Our armed struggle, which is a people's war, is denied its character as a revolutionary political mass movement. The mere wish for an armed urban insurrection virtually relegates the people's army into being merely a "regularized" military force not unlike that of the enemy's.

Let us remind ourselves without end that the people's war has a revolutionary political nature and that the people's army itself is an armed mass organization. Our people's war is within the framework of the national democratic revolution. And within the and-feudal framework, there is the necessary political integration of armed struggle, genuine land reform, and mass base building. Our armed struggle is a people's war - a revolutionary political mass movement encompassing all forms of struggle, legal and illegal, armed and unarmed. And a people's army is able to grow and prevail over a vastly superior enemy military force essentially because of popular participation and support.

The actual depreciation of the theory of people's war (notwithstanding the lip service to it as something still valid or as something useful in the past) by those exaggerating the possibility of total victory through armed insurrection, irrespective of the strength of the people's army, did not offend those in charge of the Party and the people's army in Mindanao because the latter themselves were interested in quick military victory without painstaking and solid mass work. Thus, it was possible for the

proponents of urban insurrection and those of “regularization” (i.e., building bigger military units and staff at the expense of mass base-building) to agree to the same documents.

The deviation assumes its worst form by adopting a successful but flaky foreign model taking it out of the context of its history and exceptional conditions and superimposing it on the Party’s and the Filipino people’s own revolutionary practice. It is correct to say that the Party should learn from all revolutionary experiences abroad. But we should know how to evaluate and rate them according to their significance and relevance to the Philippine revolution.

Even while total victory has not yet been achieved in the new democratic stage of the Philippine revolution, the Party has acquired a lot of experiences which can be studied and raised to the level of theory. It has created various forms of revolutionary forces. It has built Red political power in a considerable portion of Philippine territory. It has yielded writings that are significant. But petty-bourgeois faddists get bored with the fine of the Party and see no great achievement unless the cities are seized.

Even at the present stage, the development of the Philippine revolutionary movement is at a level higher than that of other revolutionary movements which are better known in the international press. They get the attention of the international media mainly because of the more backward forms of oppression (like outright colonialism and racism) that they contend with, or because their national status has gained recognition in United Nations resolutions. But those who do not seriously study theory underrate the achievements of the Philippine revolution and overrate the foreign models on the basis of mere coverage in the world mass media and not on the basis of the potential and actual advances in the path of the two-stage revolution.

Our Line against Revisionism

Since the early 1980s, the deviation from the and-revisionist line of the Party has been prompted by a desire for rapid military advances, be these the Jose Lava type of quick military victory or the “strategic counteroffensive” within-the-strategic-defensive type. The National Democratic Front, like the Palestinian Liberation Organization and other liberation movements, could try to establish friendly relations with the

revisionist ruling parties and regimes in the early 1980s. However, some elements wished to override the preemptive relations between the Lava group and the revisionist ruling parties and even wanted to repudiate the and-revisionist fine of the Party in order to establish “fraternal” relations with these revisionist ruling parties and secure material assistance.

In 1984, there was already the draft of a policy paper on the international situation and line on international relations which toadied up to the Brezhnev ruling clique and unnecessarily attacked China even if the Soviet Union and its flunkies in the Lava group were collaborating even more closely with the Marcos fascist regime. In 1985, this paper was read to the Central Committee plenum which decided to subject it to further study.

At any rate, it was circulated and promoted by the International Liaison Department until it was counteracted in 1987 and replaced in 1988 by anew policy paper which upheld the correct principles of party-to-party relations and the basic principles of socialism. But this new policy paper also accepted at face value the avowals of Gorbachev with some amount of tactful critical observations.

Thus, even beyond 1989, there are elements within the Party who continue to adulate Gorbachev on a simplistic notion of anti-Stalinism (which holds Stalin responsible even for the revisionist ruling parties and regimes since 1956). They do not believe that the revisionist ruling parses and regimes have collapsed and that their “fallen” leaders (misleaders) and their relatives have characteristically become ex-communists, and anti-communists, and business entrepreneurs. (They are now openly milking the state enterprises and privatizing the social wealth of the proletariat and the people in collaboration with the flagrant anti-communist regimes which oppress and exploit the proletariat and people and persecute the genuine communists.)

The criticism and repudiation of modern revisionism are basic components of the theoretical foundation and reestablishment of our Party. No leading organ can do away with the basic documents of the Congress of Reestablishment short of a new congress. And why should anyone at this point consider doing away with the critique of modern revisionism or capitalist restoration when, in fact it has been vindicated and proven by the blatant restoration of capitalism and the class dictatorship

of the bourgeoisie in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? The shame that properly belongs to the Lava revisionist group should not be shifted to or shared by the Party.

Inside and outside the Party, there are a few but articulate elements espousing ideas of insurrectionism, populism, liberalism, social democracy, and the like who have been influenced by the swindling and wrecking operations of the Gorbachovite crew in the Soviet Union and who have derided, denigrated, and attacked the basic principles of the Party. Just as it is important to take the most responsible among them to account for celebrating Aquino in the past as the champion of democracy and economic recovery, let us take them to account for continuing to celebrate Gorbachev as the ideologist of socialist renewal and democracy.

The glib advertising job of Gorbachev has turned out to be a cover for the total negation of Marxism-Leninism and the entire course of Bolshevik history; for capitalist restructuring; for the rise of the bourgeois class dictatorship; for unleashing nationalism, ethnic conflicts, and civil war; and for the emergence of all kinds of monsters, including racism, fascism, and rampant criminality.

The imperialists and those who echo them wish the proletarian revolutionaries in the Philippines to become shamed and demoralized by the collapse of the revisionist ruling parties and regimes and to give up Marxism-Leninism and the Philippine revolution. Let it be stated forthrightly that the theory of Marxism-Leninism has proven to be the correct guide in the making of the new democratic revolution and in the laying down of the political and economic foundations of the socialist system.

The New Great Challenge

At the same time, the Party recognizes that the truly new great challenge for Marxist-Leninist theoretical and practical work is the problem of combating modern revisionism, preventing the restoration of capitalism, and continuing the socialist revolution. The greatest contribution of Mao to Marxist-Leninist theory is the recognition of this problem and his attempt to solve it. That attempt met with temporary success for a number of years but eventually failed. The Paris Commune of 1871 succeeded briefly and failed. But the theory of proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship was not invalidated by the failure of the Paris Commune. After forty-six years, the first proletarian state would arise.

It took thirty to forty years to build socialism (proletarian dictatorship and socialist economic construction) among more than a billion people. It took another thirty to forty years for modern revisionism to peacefully evolve into blatant capitalism and the full restoration of bourgeois class dictatorship in several countries.

It is an advantage of the Philippine revolution that it is still at the stage of the new democratic revolution to see how socialism was built elsewhere only to be subverted and destroyed. We, as proletarian revolutionaries, have the advantage of availing ourselves of proven Marxist-Leninist theory in the new democratic revolution and the socialist revolution and construction as well as of learning lessons from the peaceful evolution of socialism to capitalism and, prospectively, from an inevitable resurgence of the anti-imperialist and socialist movement. By learning positive and negative lessons in revolutionary history, the Philippine revolution will have the opportunity to contribute to the effort of building socialism and preventing the restoration of capitalism in more effective ways.

In the meantime, especially after the bourgeois euphoria over the downfall and disintegration of the revisionist ruling parties and regimes, we witness today the aggravated problems of the world capitalist system. The most developed capitalist countries are increasingly in contradiction with each other over economic, financial, trade, and security matters. High technology is accelerating the insoluble capitalist crisis of overproduction. The world market continues to shrink and can be maintained only by loans that cannot be paid back because the client states, without exception, are debt-ridden and are squeezing each other out in the export trade, yielding no surplus to save them from further indebtedness while incurring more budgetary and trade deficits.

In fact, social turmoil and violent upheavals are occurring with increasing frequency throughout the world, despite the peace rhetoric of the "new world order." Food riots, coups and counter-coups, ethnic strife, civil wars, and various types of violence are bursting out in the Third World and in the new client states of imperialism in East Europe. Even in the capitalist countries, the economic recession is causing unemployment cutting down social welfare measures, generating social tensions, and breeding racism and racist violence against immigrant workers from the Third World.

In due time, from the new world disorder, the anti-imperialist and socialist movements will arise. By force of circumstances, the Marxist-Leninist parties will retain their proletarian revolutionary integrity and continue to wage revolutionary struggles. Some parties that will reemerge in countries where revisionist parties have disintegrated or degenerated will once more wage revolutionary struggles at a new and higher level under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism and under the banner of proletarian internationalism.

In the Field of Politics

The most outstanding achievement of the Party and the Filipino people has been the resumption and advance of the Philippine revolution at a new and higher historical level since 1968. The new democratic revolution surpasses the old democratic revolution of 1896. It is led by the proletariat through the Party and it has a socialist perspective. The Party is at the center stage in the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution.

The Marxist-Leninist analysis of the history and present state of the Philippines by the Party has raised the level of theoretical and political knowledge as well as revolutionary activity far above that established during the 1939-38 period of the old Communist Party of the Philippines and the subsequent period of the old merger party of the communist and socialist parties (which included that of the Lava opportunists and their pseudo-communist successors).

By virtue of its clear definition of the character and current stage of the Philippine revolution, its motive forces and its enemies, its tasks and socialist perspective, the Party has been able to build itself and wield effectively the revolutionary armed struggle and the united front against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and push forward the national democratic revolution of the Filipino people.

Due to the leadership provided by the Party, the level of revolutionary consciousness and struggle of the Filipino people has risen as never before. The organization of the basic toiling masses of workers and peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie along the national democratic line has risen as never before. Red political power has emerged in extensive areas of the countryside, defended by the New People's Army and the masses even while the cities are still under the control of the reactionary forces.

As a result of the adoption and implementation of the correct political line of the Party, the masses run into millions under organs of political power and in mass organizations in both urban and rural areas. The Party, the New People's Army, and other revolutionary forces are in substantial portions in the thousands of villages and hundreds of towns in the 65 out of 73 provinces of the Philippines and exercise influence throughout the archipelago.

The revolutionary political nature of the armed struggle (taking the form of a people's war) is determined by the general line of national democratic revolution. Our armed struggle is pointless if it is off this line. The people's army is itself a mass organization and a mass movement. Its armed struggle in the countryside is integral to genuine land reform and the building of the mass base (organs of political power and mass organizations).

The Problem and Nature of Deviations

But there have been deviations from our analysis of Philippine society, the general line of new democratic revolution, and the strategic line of people's war under the guise of "innovating on," "refining," and "adjusting" them.

In the long period of the Marcos regime and subsequently during the Aquino regime, the semi-colonial and semi-feudal status of Philippine society has remained unchanged. In fact, it has deepened and aggravated. The Philippine social economy has become even more backward, agrarian, pre-industrial, semi-feudal, and wracked by an insoluble crisis than at the time of the Party's reestablishment. The political system has been increasingly characterized by violence among political and military formations of the exploiting classes.

But there are elements who are wittingly or unwittingly influenced by the imperialist propaganda that the Philippines has been industrializing, developing, and urbanizing, especially during the Marcos period of expanded big comprador operations financed by huge amounts of foreign loans. Among the reasons given by the Lavaite group for collaborating with the Marcos regime was that the latter was industrializing the country and that it only needed to be swayed from the neo-colonialist to a nationalist path of industrialization.

Somehow, a few elements in the Party seem to have been contaminated by this kind of ideas and question the proposition that Philippine society is not semi-colonial and semi-feudal, especially before a thoroughgoing explanation of the Philippine mode of production was made in 1983. Some of these elements manipulate the term ‘urban’ in a manner as to deviate from the Party’s class analysis of Philippine society, the general line of new democratic revolution, and the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside.

They claim that the Philippines is more than forty percent urban and is far more urban than China or Vietnam ever was. They echo the statisticians who arrive at the figure by adding to the population of Metro Manila (including the great number of transients who are seasonal odd jobbers, students, and the like from the rural areas of Luzon) that of the provincial cities and capitals (which have small commercial cores) and the *poblaciones* (centers) of municipalities.

They also claim that more than fifty-five percent of the rural population consists of farm workers, without distinguishing the modern machine-operating farm workers from the overwhelming majority of traditional farm workers (more than ninety-five percent) who are still poor peasants or who are their direct outgrowth.

On the basis of these misleading statistics, a straw figure is set up that the Party has overemphasized rural work to the neglect of urban work. The erroneous line of combining armed urban insurrection and “regularization” or the premature building of unsustainable military formations is pushed to replace the theory of people’s war and building the people’s army in stages. In the first half of the 1980s, the white area (areas still controlled by the state, and where the underground movement is on the defensive and clandestine) Party committees of Mindanao claimed the plains adjoining the small provincial cities and capitals as their turf and tried to limit the area of the New People’s Army to the hinterlands in certain regions of the island.

There is a gross lack of understanding of the theory of people’s war and the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside. This strategic line is not an arbitrary edict for a permanent condition. It simply means that when the people’s army cannot as yet seize the cities, the revolutionary forces have to accumulate strength first in the countryside where reactionary power and control is relatively weaker and where there is a wide area of

maneuver for the people's army to launch tactical offensives, accumulate armed strength, and engage in mass work.

Conditions in the future will arise to allow the people's army and the people to finally seize the centers of municipalities, provincial capitals, minor cities, and major cities (in that probable order) in mass uprisings led by the Party. But it will be foolhardy to believe that Metro Manila could fall in an uprising led by the Party even before the backbone of the enemy forces is broken in the countryside or before such forces go into a process of final disintegration.

The EDSA uprising in 1986 involved both a military mutiny and an anti-Marcos or anti-fascist uprising. But the United States, the reactionary classes, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Catholic Church were still in a position to determine the outcome of the uprising. They undertook the balance of forces in their favor. They were out to change one reactionary ruling clique with another, notwithstanding the popular uprising.

Building the people's army in stages is ridiculed by certain elements who have not really studied the theory of people's war and who obviously do not believe that it is necessary for the NPA to smash the reactionary armed forces and replace it in the end. We have seen how the NPA started from scratch in 1969 and grew. The people's war will certainly have to go through a middle stage of development before it can totally and finally defeat the enemy forces and replace them.

The initial, middle, and final stages of the people's war cannot be dismissed as useless concepts by those who hold the opportunist notion that urban armed insurrection and imported heavy weapons can replace the full development of people's war. When the term probability (closer to realization than the term possibility) instead of certainty is used to refer to the stages of people's war, it is to give allowance for non-realization or defeat due to deviations and errors like those committed by the Mindanao Commission against the line of people's war.

The expression "left opportunism" is apt when it refers to demagogically taking advantage of the natural desire for quick and easy victory while leading the revolutionary forces to defeat and self-destruction. Urban insurrectionism and military adventurism have so far been the gravest form of left opportunism in the history of the Party since 1968. These are

retrogressions to the fine of urban guerilla warfare (Carlos Marighela) and the foco theory (promoted by Regis Debray), which some elements tried to promote within the Party in the early 1970s but which were effectively combated by the Party.

Before the Party could be reestablished in 1968, there was almost a full decade of mainly urban work among workers and the youth by the proletarian cadres together with a few veterans in the revolutionary movement. Upon the reestablishment of the Party, there were more proletarian cadres in the cities than in the countryside. They emerged from the resurgent anti-imperialist and anti-feudal mass movement that was based in Metro-Manila.

Soon after the Party reestablishment, with hardly 200 Party members concentrated in Metro-Manila, the Party was able to carry out the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and all other mass actions in the 1970-72 period. From these mass actions would emerge a few thousand mass activists who would become Party members.

The declaration of martial law compelled many of the Party members and activists to go to the countryside in 1972 onward. But it is to the credit of the Party that it has always maintained the general fine of new democratic revolution through people's war since its reestablishment. That was how the proletarian cadres from Metro-Manila were aroused and motivated to join up with the good remnants of the old people's army to form the New People's Army in the countryside in 1969.

The pattern has been for cadres produced by the urban-based mass movement to go from the cities to the countryside. Without such a pattern inspired and directed by the Party, there would be so few cadres or none at all to build the people's army, the mass organizations, and the organs of political power in the countryside. This pattern has promoted the people's war.

But since the early 1980s, some elements dispatched from Metro Manila kept themselves in the small cities of Mindanao and generated a fine of armed urban insurrection under the supposed influence of the Sandinista victory. They combined this fine with the adventurist fine reminiscent of the 1949-50 frenzy of the Jose Lava leadership in forming companies and the battalions without giving the necessary attention to

building the Party and the mass base (the organs of political power and mass organizations). The advocates of these two combined lines in the Mindanao Commission positioned themselves in one provincial city after another.

Application and Consequences of the Insurrectionary Line

Inherent to the line of seizing power through urban uprisings with the aid of a few prematurely enlarged NPA units that lacked extensive and deepgoing mass base was the undermining and lessening of the interest of Party members and mass activists in going to the countryside to do revolutionary work. The cadres were encouraged to stay in leading and staff organs of the urban-based Party organization and legal mass organizations. They failed to recognize that the peasant masses do not by themselves produce the kind of cadres and other personnel that the urban areas produce and which the rural areas need.

In conjunction with the urban insurrectionists, the executive committees of regional Party committees, following the line of quick military victory, served at the same time as the regional army commands but increased the layers of staff and built companies without minding the necessary balance and interaction of the military formation and the mass base. The larger military formations and increased layers of staff were formed and took cadres and material resources away from the various forms of mass work.

For a while, from 1981 to 1983, the military offensive companies, oversized companies, and coordinated companies were effective. Fighters were recruited rapidly. But mass work and the mass base in the countryside deteriorated and dwindled at the same time. As the enemy military forces increased, the companies and oversized companies of the people's army were forced into a purely military situation. Thus, the enemy forces could use to their advantage their military superior forces.

A people's army can use most effectively the principle of concentration in offensives if it has an extensive and deepgoing mass base. But in a purely military situation, it is, of course, the truly larger military force that gains the upper hand and wins. By 1984, many of the fifteen or so NPA companies suffered loss of the mass base due to the wrong line and enemy offensives. These companies could neither launch nor win tactical offensives.

In the small and easily watched over cities of Mindanao (Davao City for one is not really the biggest city in the world; beyond the commercial core of a square kilometer, it is rural.), cadres who were in the manhunt list of the enemy were carried away by their “insurrectionary” mentality, displaying themselves in mass actions rather than effecting and guiding solid organizational work.

The *welgang bayans* (people’s strike) were more of transport paralyses rather than mammoth rallies of the people. On such occasions, armed units set up “checkpoints” to block the highway. At assembly points, a few hundred to a few thousand people converged. At the same time, the armed city partisans heated up these small cities beyond the capacity of the manhunted cadres to conceal themselves. In 1984, the principal leaders of the Mindanao Commission obviously had extreme difficulties staying in Mindanao and were forced to shift to Cebu City, which was beyond the Commission’s jurisdiction.

Under conditions of setbacks and extreme difficulties due to effective enemy operations in the cities and the countryside, those members of the Mindanao Commission who were left behind were prone to oversuspiciousness and panic about the possibility that there were DPAs in their midst who were tipping them off. Believing that their fine was correct and victorious and could be fouled up only by the enemy agents within the Party and the movement, they were ready to believe the report from certain political detainees in early 1985 that there were large numbers of enemy DPAs in the Party, the people’s army, and the mass organizations and institutions. They believed that the Party was being infiltrated over a long period of time through the white area organizations and that the agents were already being mobilized in late 1985 or early 1986 to bring down and destroy the revolutionary movement. Thus, in 1985 and onward, the anti-informer hysteria started and raged in Mindanao.

The resultant devastation was unprecedented in the entire history of the Philippine revolution. Never has the enemy inflicted as much damage to the revolutionary forces in so short a period of time. The wrong political fine resulted in setbacks that were already clear in 1984 and then in self-destruction from 1984 onward. On the basis of mere suspicion, close to a thousand people (including cadres and mass activists) became victims of civil rights violations and severe punishment. Due process was completely

disregarded as panic and hysteria took over. The Party membership fell abruptly from 9,000 to 3,000. The effective armed strength fell down to that of the 1982 level.

The principal instigators, planners, implementers, and abettors of this crime against the individual victims, the people, the Party, and the revolutionary movement refer to a “first draft of Bicol” (*unang borador ng Bikol*) as their guide and claim revolutionary success in eliminating enemy agents at the expense of so many innocent comrades and individuals in the Party and the revolutionary movement. They wrought destruction at a rate and in absolute numbers the enemy had never before achieved frontally in so short a time. They trampled on the basic civil rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights of the Rules of the Provisional Revolutionary Government issued in 1972 and by the Party Constitution and the Rules of the New People’s Army.

Despite the devastation wrought which victimized comrades and the people of Mindanao, those responsible have not accounted for their political and criminal responsibility but instead have been promoted to national positions in the Party and allowed to spread their wrong fine at the further and bigger expense of the Party and the revolutionary movement

The Cost to the People’s Army

Uncriticized, unrepudiated, and unrectified, the combined line of armed urban insurrection and quick military victory has spread on a nationwide scale and has resulted in unprecedented nationwide damage and setback to the revolutionary movement

The line of armed urban insurrection has capitalized on the rejection by the Party of the boycott error in 1986 by overstating this error, even after rectification, in order to obscure the incomparably far bigger error and earlier devastation of revolutionary forces in Mindanao. It also capitalized on the rejection of the boycott error by interpreting it as a vindication of the fine of armed urban insurrection.

By itself, the line of armed urban insurrection is isolated and impotent but damaging to the Party and the revolutionary movement because it encourages Party cadres and members who are needed in the countryside to stick to the cities and, worse, it combines with the advocates of military “regularization.”

The line of rapidly building companies and battalions within limited areas, top-heavy military staffing, and of drawing cadres away from the work of expansion and consolidation among the people started to spread in 1985 through the military conferences of the general staff (later called general command) of the NPA. This put forward puerile premises such as the following: we have covered all the strategic points in the country; the number of our guerilla fronts is enough; our mass base is wide enough; etc. Ergo, the time had come to build the NPA vertically, regularize it, build the army organization separately from the Party, and specialize in military work and fighting.

The central leadership of the Party has from year to year tried to stress the need for extensive and intensive guerilla warfare founded on a wide and deepgoing mass base without prejudice to building sustainable guerilla companies that are dispersed for mass work when not fighting or not in training exercises. Thus, at certain points, downward adjustments have been made in the number of companies rapidly formed or these have been redeployed in accordance with the strategy and tactics of guerilla warfare. But the general trend has been for the NPA general command to argue for and push its own line, despite lip service to the absolute leadership of the Party.

The consequences have been destructive to the revolutionary movement. The rural mass base was reduced by twelve percent in 1989 from the base year of 1986 and now by forty percent. According to one estimate, which may fully take into account the drastic reduction of armed strength in Mindanao in 1985-86, the armed strength of the NPA has fallen to that of the 1986 level.

For twenty years, it has been a matter of pride for the reestablished Party to declare annually that there was an all-round increase of strength of the revolutionary movement. The enemy could concentrate in certain areas of regions and inflict damage but the movement would increase in strength elsewhere and on a nationwide scale.

In 1971, the revolutionary forces were, in the main, suppressed in the second district of Tarlac, with the enemy using from 1969 to 1971 a full division (Task Force Lawin), paramilitary forces (BSDUS, Barrio Self-Defense Units), and "civic action" to try to run down an NPA force of merely 200 fighters. But revolutionary work in Isabela, started in early 1969, had already created a mass base several times larger than the one in Tarlac.

Then came the time when the forces in Isabela were contained in the forest region by the enemy from 1972 to 1976 due to the stubborn and wrong maintenance of three companies within the enemy encirclement. But the guerilla forces and the mass bases in the other regions of the country were significantly growing from 1974 onward. Eventually, not only was the territory recovered but several more provinces were gained in Central Luzon from 1972 onward.

Only in 1989 would the Party start to register a nationwide reduction of the rural mass base. We comforted ourselves by saying that that was not much in view of the escalation of the enemy onslaughts and that in fact we grew in strength because we became even more tempered in the struggle. We tended to adduce the reduction to the assaults of the enemy and not to take into full account errors within our ranks.

Some of our “new” strategists have revealed their ignorance of Mao’s teachings on people’s war by expressing their mystification over the enemy’s “war of quick decision” and “gradual constrictions. They are dumbfounded just because the terms used by the enemy sound new to them. These are old terms.

And in so many places in the past and now, where we have good cadres in command, we have overcome the same enemy strategy and tactics.

It suits the enemy forces to go on a war of quick decision or strategic offensive in view of their military superiority in the number of troops, weapons, logistics, and training. But at the tactical level, where they wish to win battles, they fail because they lack popular support. So, they resort to what they call “gradual constrictions or “blockhouse” warfare combined with the fielding of “special operations teams,” organization of paramilitary forces, and engagement in a sham kind of mass work.

What the proponents of quick military victory have done is to build prematurely large and unsustainable units that siphon off cadres from mass work and that sit in one, two or three barrios or in a forest camp most of the time. The result is that the enemy can force us to fight in a purely military situation. If we do not rectify this error, the enemy can continue to wreak graver damage on the revolutionary forces.

As a case in point the enemy poured ten to twenty battalions into Samar in the early 1980s. The NPA had no battalion to speak of but the NPA and the revolutionary forces grew in the course of guerilla warfare. Now with the enemy having only eight battalions on the island and with the NPA having its own battalion unit, there have been certain unprecedented losses in the Party, people's army, and mass base. The "battalion" is bogged down by sheer logistical needs and its troops and staff have been reduced in 1990 by fifty percent from its peak strength of 500 fighters. The battalion staff is equivalent to a third of the total number of Red fighters. The mass base in the entire island has been sharply reduced.

Among the good cadres, there is a strong recognition of the fact that the premature formation of unsustainable companies and battalions does not result in quick military victory but in preoccupation with logistical needs, isolation and passivity, defeats, and other forms of disaster.

Various departments and layers of staff take away cadres and resources from mass work. The result is reduction of the mass base. There is consequently the tendency to look upward and outward for logistical support when food supply and the contributions of the masses and taxes from the local businessmen and landlords do not suffice for the needs of the companies and battalions.

As they should, some companies and battalions do mass work and production when possible. But then the Red fighters complain why they should be in large concentrated formations even when they are not fighting the enemy as much as they had thought before. But of course, if they fight more often without the mass base and the source of material support they would fare worse in warfare.

The worst cases of premature and unsustainable companies are those that sit in one, two or three barrios or in a forest camp. They use their very size as an argument for not dispersing and engaging in mass work and production or helping the people. They say that they have to act like a standing army, ever alert and specialized in fighting, because the enemy might catch them unaware in a dispersed mode.

These companies acquire the reputation of being lazy, ravenous, and big but not active in fighting. Oftentimes, the people speak of the so-called first generation NPA in squads and platoons as real NPAs and those in

companies as fake because they do not engage in mass work and production nor help the people. “Regularization” has meant alienation from the masses.

At one time, we boasted of dozens of companies and some battalions. But the ratio of the number of company-sized offensives to the number of companies is very low. We must squarely face the question of why bigger but fewer military units have resulted in fewer tactical offensives and a drop in our armed strength

The Winning Line for the People’s Army

The Party must exercise its absolute leadership over the people’s army by deploying Party cadres properly. The Party leadership in the army command Must not be allowed to pay hp service to the comprehensive Party leadership and yet proceed to take all initiative in building a “separate” structure each for staffing. Thus, the Party and in grabbing all Party cadres within its reach should not be “left behind” only to be told to catch up in building and consolidating the mass base when its limbs have been cut off precisely because the army has preempted the personnel and resources. The Party has to take the initiative in deploying cadres and resources properly and take full command of the people’s army.

It is wrong to maintain big formations in absolute concentration when these are not on tactical offensives or training exercises. The people’s army should be like a net which is drawn in when it is to engage in battle with an enemy force that it is sure of defeating; and it spreads out when not fighting in order to perform mass work and other tasks.

Considering the amount of weapons the NPA has, it is wiser to have the regional command lead a company as rallying point for the entire region. When not fighting, such a company should be in relative concentration with the headquarters platoon within the radius of a few barrios and the squads in the other platoons can be deployed within a wide radius of more barrios per squad. Such a company can do fighting and other tasks, move from one guerilla front to another to launch an offensive, or to perform other tasks with the augmentation or coordination of the guerilla front units.

It is wiser to multiply the number of guerilla fronts with platoons as the rallying point and squads and half-squads spread out within a wider radius for mass work. The objective should be to attain extensive and intensive guerilla warfare throughout the country. We should be able to make the monster bleed from thousands upon thousands of wounds.

It is wrong to say that the number of guerilla fronts is already enough and that the point is to verticalize the armed strength into a few big formations. This is self-constriction which falls into the kind of war that the enemy wants us to fight because it allows him to beat us in his war of quick decision and gradual constriction which is based on his superior military forces. The combination of painstaking mass work and guerilla warfare is still our winning fine at this stage of our people's war. This lays the horizontal foundation for the vertical growth of the people's army in due course.

We must not be awed by the brigades and battalions deployed by the enemy. Let us apply the law of contradiction in our warfare. The enemy is not always in solid large formations. The rough countryside and the archipelago objectively divides the enemy forces. There is no large enemy formation that does not divide itself according to several functions and that does not make its parts vulnerable to our attack. We can use guerilla tactics to induce the enemy force to divide itself and unwittingly provide us with part after part that we can wipe out

Where we cannot as yet raid a big camp successfully, we must find success in ambushing the part of the enemy that we can wipe out on the road. Where we cannot as yet [match] regular enemy troops, we can find success in repeatedly seizing arms from police and paramilitary units through appropriate operations.

It is wrong to say that luring the enemy in deep, letting him move around blind and deaf, and letting him punch the air when we cannot fight to win are outmoded tactics. These are useful at any stage of the people's war. The winning line is to fight only the battles that we can win. The losing line is to stick out big heads or to overreach. Another losing fine is not to fight even the battles that we can win. All the way we assume that we expand and consolidate the mass base.

One long-running problem in our mass work is that the Party in the armed units is satisfied with having only the organ of political power or a semblance of it in localities. The number of people in the mass organization are very few. We Must solve this problem by organizing as fully as possible the workers, peasants, youth, women, children, and cultural activists. And we must develop the organs of political power, supported by working committees for mass organization, education, defense, land reform, production, finance, health, arbitration, cultural affairs, and so on. These can be drawn from mass organizations.

It is of urgent necessity to organize the masses. But getting organized is not enough. Mass campaigns must be launched. Through these, the masses can develop their own power and effect change for their social and economic well being.

The key campaign to benefit the peasant masses is the campaign for the realization of the minimum land reform program and increased production. There are some elements who have not achieved much in carrying out the minimum program of land confiscation. We have had more than enough negative experience in this kind of overreaching - in trying to achieve what we cannot yet achieve.

Elements of the maximum program may be carried out only against despotic landlords (those who harm the peasant masses and farm workers and refuse to negotiate with them) and land grabbers so that we can still take advantage of the split between the despotic and enlightened landlords. We Must prevent the landlords (big, medium, small) from uniting against us so as to allow us to further develop our strength among the peasant masses not only in the current guerilla fronts but also in the more extensive areas to which we Must expand.

The Boycott Decisions and the Insurrectionists

The boycott error of 1986 has been rectified but it deserves some attention in this discussion for the purpose of comparing or relating it to other errors. It has been so overstated and drummed up that it has overshadowed the incomparably far bigger and more destructive line of armed urban insurrectionism and military adventurism. Here is a clear case of subjectivism, a gross failure to see all the major errors and evaluate them properly.

Before and after the reestablishment of the Party, the proletarian revolutionary cadres have had an extensive experience in working within the reactionary institutions, organizations, and processes. It is permissible and necessary for cadres and Party groups to be assigned to work within the reactionary trade unions, churches, the army of the enemy, and so on. And, of course, certain legal organizations, even if patriotic and progressive, can operate viably and conduct legal political struggle by complying with the requirements of legality. For instance, they cannot declare in their documents that they are for the armed revolution. But neither is it correct for them to gratuitously declare themselves against armed revolution. As a matter of fact they can always assert the sovereign right of the people to decide on what it takes to defend their freedom.

It is not unprincipled for a Party member to have a legal occupation and carry legal documents. Neither is it unprincipled for a Party member or a Red fighter under arrest to retain the services of a lawyer and wage a legal struggle in order to defend his rights and prevent the enemy from doing worse to him.

But the question about Party cadres and Party groups operating in legal political parties and alliances and in the reactionary political electoral process aroused bitter debates in the past. Such debates were over the 1978 and 1986 elections called by the Marcos fascist regime. Each time, one side was for boycott and another for participation.

The term boycott was used by the broadest spectrum of anti-fascist opposition, including the Party and the anti-Marcos reactionaries, to isolate the Marcos regime in the 1981 elections. In the 1984 elections, the Party leadership again referred to its position as boycott and this went along well with the boycott position of the broad anti-fascist popular movement and most of the anti-Marcos reactionaries. In both the 1981 and 1984 elections, the 1978 boycott decision of the Party appeared vindicated. But the 1986 boycott position became problematic because, this time, the middle and backward sections of the anti-fascist movement opted for critical participation. Even among the advanced sections of the masses, there was great opposition to the boycott fine.

We are most concerned about the bitter internal debates over the 1978 and 1986 elections. An understanding of these leads to a general understanding of the reactionary electoral processes and the correct stand and approach of the Party.

The issue in the debate is always formulated as a choice between boycott and participation. Those on the boycott side have the advantage of winning the debate on the simple ground that in the first place, the Party is banned and cannot participate and anyway, the electoral process is reactionary on the whole, if not exclusively.

But should the issue always be formulated as a choice between boycott and participation? Cannot the issue be formulated within the Party as one of whether or not the Party deploys Party cadres and groups that are not known as such outside of the Party in order to operate in the reactionary electoral process, promote the national democratic line, attack the enemy, and support the progressive side, party, alliance or candidates? The Party itself is not participating because it cannot as a matter of revolutionary principle. And even if it wants to, it cannot due to the enemy ban on the Party. The Party's own line of armed revolution regards elections as farcical. But the Party certainly can do something by way of revolutionary dual tactics through Party cadres and groups that are not publicly known as such.

Revolutionary dual tactics are employed by the Party to reach a greater number of the people and to counteract the enemy's counterrevolutionary dual tactics of misrepresenting the electoral exercise as a democratic one. Of course, in reality, it is actually monopolized either by the reactionary clique or by all the exploiting classes through a multiplicity of bourgeois reactionary parties. It is intended to deceive the people into believing that they participate in a democratic process.

In the elections of 1969 and 1971, the Party kept to its anti-revisionist line of not considering these reactionary elections as the sole or principal way of achieving revolutionary change or basic reforms and described these as farces on the whole and in essence. But the Party could issue statements on what constitutes democracy or what makes a truly democratic exercise. It can promote the national democratic line and encourage the legal progressive forces and candidates to take the patriotic and progressive line.

The central leadership took a decision to boycott the 1978 elections. In the process of making the decision, the leadership of the Manila-Rizal Party organization argued for participation but were outvoted and were therefore bound to abide by the decision. But they did not carry out instructions for implementing the boycott hence, disciplinary measures

were meted out to the regional leadership for failure or refusal to implement the Party position and for distributing a position paper to other regions.

The central leadership decided to reorganize the Manila-Rizal Party organization. But for several years, there was no effective replacement of the members of the Manila-Rizal Party committee who had either been expelled, suspended or reassigned. The Executive Committee of the Central Committee tried to run the Party organization and the mass movement in Metro Manila through central staff organs.

In the absence of an effective regional leadership, the district Party committees, local Party branches, and the country-based mass organizations were neglected and fell into disarray. The disarray in the Party organization in Metro Manila disabled the Party from bringing about the upsurge in the mass movement which was already joined in by a broad range of political forces. This upsurge was well signaled by the so-called noise barrage immediately after the farcical elections.

The Party had anticipated this upsurge in 1974 on the basis of advances made among the workers and the youth in that year. There were expectations that the workers and the urban communities would rise up in an unprecedented manner in the last years of the 1970s at the latest. But these expectations could not be realized as a consequence of the boycott decision of 1978 and the disciplinary actions in 1979.

The central staff organs, especially the National Commission on Mass Movements, would promote Metro Manila-based national mass organizations of which were then weak, but they did not pay sufficient attention to the growth community organizations and basic Party life at the grassroots level. They laid stress on sweeping propaganda, building administrative structures related to the urban-based growth national mass organizations, and coordinating these for mass mobilizations. Thus was laid the ground for bureaucratism.

This kind of bureaucratism involved central staff organs dividing among themselves aspects of work over the mass organizations, acquiring excessive political discretion, and developing a unilateral topdown command system. These staff organs became, in practice, sources of political authority and tended to herd Party cadres and members into the administrative

structure of mass organizations. By 1986, Party members were already critical of the existence of “two or three Party centers” in addition to the Executive Committee of the Central Committee.

Basic Party life in communities, factories, and other work places would be neglected for a long time. So, to this day, all-round Party life - ideological, political, and organizational - remains weak at the basic level. Party cadres and members are piled up in administrative positions and in Party groups at various levels of mass organizations. They are lacking in basic Party life at the grassroots level.

It was in the 1983-86 period that the Party and progressive urban mass organizations were able to recover significantly due to the powerful anti-fascist popular current that was let loose by the Aquino assassination. The killing of Aquino was an event that signified the extreme political and economic crisis of the fascist regime and the entire ruling system.

The boycott decision of 1978 had more damaging consequences than the 1986 boycott error. But the latter has been played up by honest elements who seek redress from the 1978 boycott decision as well as by other elements who have succeeded for a long time in obscuring the far more devastating error in Mindanao which weakened the revolutionary forces there as early as 1984 and the anti-informer hysteria in 1985-86 and who continue to promote the wrong line which caused the error.

The 1986 boycott was a major tactical error, as correctly described by the central leadership. During the short electoral campaign period, it separated and isolated the advanced section of the masses from the other sections which took the anti-fascist and anti-Marcos line. There was a failure to recognize that Marcos's cheating in the elections would incite the people to an unprecedented uprising as well as cause a grave split in the reactionary armed forces. The Party went into a vigorous effort to impose its sectarian will on organizations and alliances with a mass and united front character for the duration of the snap presidential elections campaign period.

However, the Party leadership regained its composure and initiative when it called for the nationwide popular resistance in alliance with all anti-fascist and anti-Marcos forces immediately after the farcical elections.

Nevertheless, party outsiders overstate the boycott error of 1986 in order to push their own erroneous fines and agenda. But they are not significantly rebuffed by the Party. There are those who claim - against the incontrovertible facts - that because of the 1986 boycott error the Party and the mass organizations and alliances missed out in the EDSA mass uprising that caused the downfall of Marcos. They go so far as to negate the role of the Party and the revolutionary movement in the 1983-86 mass actions and in the longer process of undermining and isolating the fascist regime.

In overemphasizing the role of the spontaneous masses and the supposed lack of participation of the revolutionary and legal progressive forces, there are those who stress the role of their own small petty-bourgeois organizations and obscure the role of the US, the Catholic officialdom, and the reactionary classes in the making of the mass uprising cum relatively bloodless mutiny. The fact was that there was a convergence of organized contradictory forces and spontaneous masses against the widely detested regime.

However, the most fantastic claim is that made by some proponents of urban insurrectionism. They claim that were it not for the boycott error, the revolutionary forces could have brought down the ruling system together with Marcos by leading the spontaneous masses to victory, as in Nicaragua in 1979. Or at the least they say, there could have been a sharing of power with the Aquino clique, the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM), and the like. They therefore consider the boycott error of 1986 as the biggest error of the Party although they are responsible for the incomparably far bigger ideological, political, and organizational errors and the resultant anti-informer hysteria which devastated the Party and the mass movement in Mindanao from 1985 onward.

How could they expect the Party to seize power when the year before the EDSA uprising the revolutionary forces and people in Mindanao were already being ravaged by the logical and real consequences of the erroneous fine of urban insurrectionism cum military adventurism? But they have promoted themselves and their wrong line within the Party by overstating the boycott error of 1986 and obscuring their own far bigger errors.

The Nature of the NDF

The Party has a revolutionary class line in building the united front for the national democratic revolution and for armed struggle. There is a structure of requirements for the revolutionary united front to exist and develop along the revolutionary class line of the Party.

First, there must be the leadership of the working class through the Party which has initially recruited its members from the trade union, youth, and urban-based mass movements and from the remnants of the previous revolutionary movement.

Second, there must be the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry, with the Party arousing, organizing, and mobilizing the masses and building the New People's Army and the peasant associations led by the Party.

Third, there must be a still broader alliance of the toiling masses of workers and peasants with the third basic force of the revolution, the urban petty bourgeoisie, through the underground National Democratic Front and other alliances aboveground.

Fourth, there must be a still broader alliance of the positive forces of the revolution, linking the basic forces of the revolution with the national bourgeoisie. There is yet no significant organizational expression of the united front of the positive forces, although members and groups of the national bourgeoisie cooperate with the revolutionary movement in areas where the armed revolutionary movement and the trade union movement are strong.

Fifth, there can be an alliance with certain sections of the reactionary classes against the most reactionary Clique. This was well manifested on a nationwide scale in the anti-fascist struggle. Enlightened landlords and businessmen have shown cooperation by paying their taxes to the people's government and have cooperated with the Party, the NPA, NDF, and mass organizations on such matters as land reform, wage relations, elections, etc.

Sixth, the broadest alliance can be ranged against the narrowest target the reactionary clique that is ruling or the one most favored by US imperialism. We fight and defeat one most reactionary clique after another and in the process we accumulate revolutionary strength.

The Party must play the vanguard role in representing the immediate and long-term rights and interests of the working class and must be able to distinguish in class terms the stable and reliable allies from the unstable and unreliable ones.

But as early as in 1975, there was a notion to do away with the Marxist-Leninist language in *Ang Bayan* specifically in the use of the politically precise term “anti-Marcos reactionaries” when referring to such allies as Benigno Aquino, Diosdado Macapagal, and Joaquin Roces. There was the misunderstanding that such allies as Lorenzo Tañada and Jose W. Diokno, who, in fact took a clear-cut patriotic and progressive line on major issues, would feel referred to and be turned off by the term.

Thus, the term faded towards the end of the 1970s. What replaced it was the ideologically strict term “bourgeois reformists,” used in the debates between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. This term was applied so widely by the central leadership up to 1986 as to lump together with reactionary elements and forces some of the basic as well as positive elements and forces of the revolution. The result was a certain amount of confusion within the Party.

One side used the term to support a sectarian position. Another would reverse it by taking a liberal position. One extreme begot another. Thus, certain elements of the Party in the National Organization Commission (NOC) would go so far as to describe the Aquino regime as a liberal democratic regime rather than as a US-supported big comprador-landlord regime. Echoing the American bourgeois mass media, they propagandized the fine that the new reactionary regime was liberal democratic.

Errors keep on arising in united front work. There are those who equate the united front with the entire people and then accuse the Party of instrumentalizing the people when the Party speaks of the armed struggle and the united front as weapons of the Party. They do not understand that the working class leadership through the Party, the armed struggle through the NPA, and the united front through the NDF and other formations or

informal cooperative relations are all functional aspects of the revolutionary movement. They are all weapons or instruments of the Filipino people in the national democratic revolution.

There are also those who wish to equate the NDF with the entire united front and make the NDF a catch-all federation which assumes the leadership over the Philippine revolution and in which the Party is politically and organizationally subordinated not only to a “federal center” but to one with a preponderance of petty bourgeois formations.

There are those who erase from the history of the NDF the role and initiative of the Party in its formation and who eliminate the leading role of the working class in united front. Upon the elimination of the proletarian leadership, then the democratic revolution envisioned is nothing but a recycling of the old liberal revolution and the passing hegemony of the petty bourgeois formations and ideas on behalf of today’s exploiting classes. In fact, the program of the NDF has been overwritten and diluted several times under the wrong notion that even after the seizure of political power (the basic completion of the new democratic revolution) the goal is not to build the socialist society but the national democratic society” under the influence of the (now failed) Sandinista program of “multi-party democracy” (no socialist revolution) and “mixed economy” (no socialist construction) and the policies of revisionist regimes whose cornerstone is the elimination of the leading role of the working class.

Despite all such efforts aimed at expanding the NDF, it remains an underground united front organization of the basic forces of the revolution (working class, peasantry, and urban petty bourgeoisie) which accept the new democratic line, the armed struggle, and the leadership of the working class. Should there be a retreat or should there be a reaffirmation of what the NDF is as a formal united front organization of the basic revolutionary forces?

Even as the NDF remains as it was originally envisioned in 1973 (of course with appropriate scaling down of the unrealized expectation of 1973 that it is the entire united front of all patriotic and progressive classes), it is possible to strengthen it internally and then proceed to seek out allies who do not wish to be within the NDF fold but within varied frames of bilateral and multilateral relations.

Strengthening it internally means reaffirming the NDF as the most advanced united front organization of the basic revolutionary forces along the new democratic line, developing those underground member organizations (even if led or influenced by the Party) other than the Party and the NPA and creating the councils and commissions to assist and pave the way for the people's government at various levels.

Rather than have the concept of federation, it is more flexible to adopt the principle of confederal, consensual, and consultative relations of component organizations within the NDF. This is the way to override such questions as to whether the NDF is under the democratic centralism of the Party or is it the other way around. This is also to keep the door indefinitely open to groups and individuals that wish to join, depending on the circumstances and strength of the revolutionary movement.

Seeking out groups as allies does not mean only dealing with those willing to join the NDF. It also means establishing bilateral or multilateral relations with them on a consultative and consensual basis. Such allies might prefer to deal with the NDF from the outside and possibly on an equal footing within a wider frame. Since 1986, the much expanded legal alliances have shown the way of how to build them on a consultative and consensual basis without having to choose between federal and unitary forms of organization or without getting mixed up about these forms of organization.

The Peace Negotiations

Proposals for peace talks and national unity between the revolutionary forces and a new government were publicly aired by the prominent leaders and forces in alliance against the fascist regime in the 1983-86 period. These proposals served to expand and firm up the united front, both formally and informally.

Upon coming to power, Aquino released the political prisoners as she had pledged to (to in an attempt to court the support of the national democratic movement and called for a cease-fire as she has expressed interest in it before becoming president.

It was correct for the Party to declare its willingness to engage in peace talks or, as the Aquino regime preferred to call them, cease-fire talks. To have done otherwise would have been to appear as being opposed to peace in the face of Aquino's offer of cease-fire talks. In the first place, the Party's national democratic line is the line for a just and lasting peace. Thus, it was decided that a negotiating panel of the National Democratic Front would represent all the revolutionary forces.

But before agreeing to formal bilateral negotiations or signing a cease-fire agreement the NDF should have taken all the time to engage in talks about peace talks until such time that a substantive agenda and other terms could be agreed upon to the mutual satisfaction of the two sides. Even before the sixty day cease-fire agreement the NDF could have taken initiatives in launching propaganda. It could also have exposed the other side as the intransigent one, especially on the substantive issues. The NDF could have rebuffed the other side every time it threatened to end the pre-cess-fire talks.

It was erroneous though to allow the pre-cess-fire talks to be held exclusively in the Metro Manila area. The sickly condition of one of the negotiators of the reactionary government Senator Jose W. Diokno who was deeply respected by the NDF, dictated that Metro Manila be the constant venue of the pre-cess-fire talks. It was also erroneous to agree to a sixty-day cease-fire agreement without any agreement on a substantive agenda for serious peace negotiations. The declared purpose of the cease-fire agreement was merely to create the atmosphere for an undefined substantive dialogue during the cease-fire period.

One reason given for the cease-fire agreement was that it would pave the way for a substantive agenda and for the formal peace talks. Another reason given by some elements in the Party was that it would allow the revolutionary forces to show their "human face" and to conduct propaganda on a nationwide scale through the dominant bourgeois mass media.

Still another reason given by other elements in the Party was that the people's army in Mindanao needed the cease-fire as a relief from the pressure of overwhelming enemy military forces as a device to allow supplies to reach isolated and besieged NPA units. Actually, the enemy forces in Mindanao were then in disarray due to the big split between the Marcos-Ver and the Enrile-Ramos camp. At any rate, some Mindanao

cadres had gone into localized cease-fires independent of the central leadership of the Party. They were in a difficult situation not simply because of enemy pressures but more essentially because of the ravages of the wrong line and the and-informer hysteria.

The Mindanao Commission had had the localist notion that they could run far ahead than the rest of the country and liberate Mindanao through a combination of offensives by enlarged “regularized” NPA formations and armed urban uprisings. Under conditions of self-destruction, namely the anti-informer hysteria, and the effectiveness of the enemy in purely military situations, they wished to find a way through localized cease-fires, even if these could induce a fragmentation of the national revolutionary movement and even if these would not really solve the problems wrought by the erroneous line that they had pushed in Mindanao. At any rate, there was a case of swinging from an ultra-left to a rightist position.

In the course of pre-cease-fire talks, the NDF negotiators were vulnerable to enemy surveillance. It was quite easy for the enemy intelligence agencies to cover the negotiators of the reactionary government and to follow the trail of those of the NDF. During the pre-cease-fire talks, no less than a member of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee was arrested.

During the cease-fire period, the NDF negotiating panel and the NDF representatives were able to conduct mass activities, demonstrating the popular support and sympathy for the NDF. But in the process, some underground cadres, Red fighters, reliable allies, and certain reliable villages and other areas were exposed to the intelligence agencies of the enemy.

The NDF got more than the usual amount of attention that it had gotten before in the bourgeois mass media. But after two weeks, the civil and military officials of the reactionary government were getting far more space and so got their kind of message through more strongly.

As the NDF negotiating panel demanded that substantive talks be undertaken, it became more obvious than ever before that the new pro-US reactionary government was interested only in a cease-fire for the following reasons: 1) to gain time for putting the reactionary armed forces in order because of the big split between pro-Marcos and the anti-Marcos camps;

2) to pretend as a champion of democracy, human rights, and peace; 3) to demand the submission of the revolutionary forces to the constitution of the reactionary government and the surrender of the New People's Army in exchange for the promise of general amnesty and reconciliation; 4) to put a stop to the momentum of the armed revolution and possibly to split the revolutionary forces in the process; and 5) to increase the surveillance stocks of the intelligence services.

The upsurge of the and-fascist movement and the decline of the Marcos regime in the 1983-1986 period had induced Party cadres who were on the enemy manhunt fist but belonged to the urban- based central organs to become lax with their security. The cease-fire induced among them more carelessness and laxity which continued even after the breakdown of the cease-fire. The enemy reaped a bonanza of intelligence data.

On March 29, 1988, the enemy started to carry out precision raids on the houses of central organs. They captured officials of the NPA general command, documents, equipment, and money. They proceeded to raid houses of the NDF and capture other underground personnel and stocks of documents within the same year.

As a result of the successful enemy raids, a sense of panic easily arose wrong some members of the Central Committee and a number of regional Party committees in 1988. The notion spread that the raids and arrests were probably due to DPAs. Then, there were claims of breakthroughs in investigation. Thus, the anti-informer hysteria emerged in several regions, especially in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog, and claimed scores of victims. The hysteria threatened the very life of the Party until the central leadership of the Party took firm steps to check and rectify the madness with clear guidelines on correct principles and methods of investigation, trial, and evaluation of evidence.

It must be noted at this point that the anti-informer hysteria can arise from effective enemy blows due either to a previous ultra-left or rightist error. To guard against further recurrence of this hysteria, the central leadership of the Party has issued the principles and methods of investigation, trial, and evaluation of evidence since November 1988. These served to strengthen the guarantees of civil rights that are in the Bill of Rights of the Rules of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the guarantees of

due process in the Constitution of the Party and the Rules of the New People's Army. The Party leadership has also issued comprehensive guidelines and detailed instructions on security since 1989.

As a result of some efforts to push a new round of talks between the NDF and the reactionary government from 1989 onward, the Party and the NDF have further worked out a comprehensive framework of peace negotiations in order to frustrate the attempt of the enemy to misrepresent itself as the champion of peace and to project the revolutionary forces as the source of violence so as to split the revolutionary forces from the people. The main points in the framework are the following:

1.) The strategic line is one of pursuing the national democratic line to attain a just and lasting peace.

2.) The NDF is a belligerent force in the civil war and not a mere insurgent force. It cannot negotiate with the reactionary government if not on an equal footing under international law.

3.) The legal and political frame is the set of mutually acceptable principles, the international norms, and the agreements that may be made.

4.) The substantive agenda includes the following: respect for human rights and international humanitarian law; social and economic reforms; constitutional, political, and electoral reforms; and the armed forces.

5.) There must be a reasonable timetable.

6.) The venue must be abroad for the mutual convenience and safety of the two sides.

7.) There must be a foreign state or interstate third Party acting in a certain capacity (intermediary, good offices or witness) to be agreed upon by the two sides.

8.) The domestic and foreign third party of non-governmental peace advocates can be consulted and be of help to the peace process.

The framework of the reactionary government is diametrically opposed to that of the NDF and is not at all a framework for peace negotiations but for killing the peace process *ab initio*. It includes the following points:

1. The NDF Must submit to the GRP constitution.
2. The NPA must surrender its arms and be liquidated.
3. In exchange for the foregoing two points, the GRP will offer amnesty and rehabilitation measures to the amnesty grantees.
4. Negotiations must be held in the Philippines.
5. If the NDF leadership refuses to agree to the foregoing points, then the GRP and the AFP will not enter into any formal bilateral talks with the NDF but will seek localized dialogues and cease-fire for the surrender of local leaders and forces of the CPP, NPA, and NDF.

The opposing frameworks are absolutely clear. Those who blame the Party and other revolutionary forces for the absence of formal bilateral talks between the NDF and the GRP cause harm to the interests of the revolutionary movement. Those who take the posture of being above the NDF and the GRP, avowing to be simply interested in doing away with the human costs of the civil war, and who simplistically consider both sides of the civil war as equally violent actually obscure the just and reasonable cause of the armed revolution and in effect rationalize the retention of the violent system of oppression and exploitation.

We must rebuff those elements who, without understanding the costs of prolonged cease-fires to the revolutionary will and forces of the people, exaggerate these as a way to broadening the united front and strengthening the mass movement for the purpose of an armed urban insurrection.

We must frustrate the reactionary effort to put the NDF at par with the mutinous factions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and with a multiplicity of non-governmental organizations of all political sorts (including the most reactionary ones) in a supposed peace process to attain a broad anti-imperialist front for an “armed insurrection in the medium term.” This is a puerile ploy.

We must also frustrate the attempt of some clerical elements to make the revolutionary movement accept the strategic hamlet by a simple change of name, like “zone of peace” or “zone of life.” Our revolutionary mass base is peaceful and full of productive life, unless the reactionary forces intrude and unleash death and destruction.

We must also put a stop to the practice of NDF cadres on the enemy manhunt list going to Manila to meet and talk about peace prospects with personalities who are under probable or certain surveillance. The repeatedly proven cost of such meetings should convince everyone that talks about peace are best delegated to those who are most secure and least vulnerable.

On the question of peace negotiations, we must slap down any ultra-left and yet rightist notion that if an armed insurrection is not possible, then we must seek a peaceful settlement with the enemy and depart from the armed revolution. We must also reject as a major premise of peace negotiations the notion that the NDF must seek peaceful settlement because it is supposed to be the trend in the world. A just peace in the Philippines is essentially something that the Filipino people will have to fight for.

If there can be no peace negotiations yet it is because the reactionary government is intransigent. The lack of peace negotiations only means that the revolutionary forces and the people under the leadership of the Party must work and fight more resolutely than ever to change the balance of forces in the Philippines.

In the Field of Organization

It is the outstanding achievement of the Communist Party of the Philippines that it has become a nationwide organization with deep roots among the broad masses of the people, especially among the toiling masses of workers and peasants. The Party and the masses it leads are in the urban areas and in the wide expanses of the countryside: in the plains, hills, mountain valleys, and seacoasts.

In the entire history of the Philippines, never has there been a revolutionary organization of such national scope and depth among the broad masses of people as the Party. The Party membership is in the tens

of thousands, consisting of cadres and members. Augmented by the revolutionary mass activists, the Party has surpassed the Katipunan of 1898 and far more the old Communist Party of the Philippines at any point in its history.

Party is present wherever the people's army, the underground and legal mass organizations, and the organs of political power it has created are. It is at the head and at the core of the revolutionary mass movement. It exists in new areas of growth as well as in traditional institutions and organizations.

The Party owes its strength to the cadres and members and to all martyrs who have adhered to and implemented the correct line of the Party and to the broad masses of the people who follow the leadership of the Party along the general line of the new democratic revolution against the imperialists and the local exploiting classes.

The Party is the advanced detachment of the working class and the Philippine revolution. Without this vanguard, the revolutionary mass movement along the new democratic line cannot arise and develop. Even the by-products of this movement such as petty bourgeois groups and trends of thought which are patriotic and progressive in varying degrees, cannot thrive without the growth and advance of the Party and the revolutionary mass movement. To attack the vanguard role and development of the Party is to try to defeat the revolution and bring back the worst forms of reaction.

The main organizational principle of the Party is democratic centralism. This is centralism based on democracy and democracy under centralized leadership. For further explanation, let us quote extensively from the Party Constitution.

The basic conditions of democratic centralism are as follows:

1. Leading organs of the Party at all levels shall be elected and shall be responsible to the Party organization or conference that elected them.
2. After free and thorough discussion, decisions taken by the Party are implemented.

- a. The individual is subordinate to the organization;
 - b. The minority is subordinate to the majority;
 - c. The lower level is subordinate to the higher level;
 - d. The entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee and the National Congress.
3. Leading cadres always pay attention to the reports and views of lower Party organizations and of the masses of Party members and constantly study concrete experiences and render prompt assistance in solving problems.
 4. Lower Party organizations give regular and special reports about their work to the organization above them and request instructions promptly concerning problems which require the decision of a higher Party organization.

However, democratic centralism is not just the democratic and collective process of decision-making. The decision must adhere to the basic principles for which the Party exists. These points are declared in the Party Constitution and Program and these are the guide to the definition of achievements, problems, and tasks; to inner Party democracy and discipline; and to the conduct of criticism and self-criticism.

Democratic centralism does not allow the violation of the Party Constitution, diminution and destruction of basic Party life, the practice of bureaucratism as well as ultra-democracy or liberalism, and disregard of one's own security and the security of others and the entire Party.

There must be a good account of the reasons for the failure of the Party to increase its membership and to further develop a comprehensive Party life, especially at the basic level. There are certain elements and certain trends of thought and action that prevent these.

The Central Leading and Staff Organs

For a long time already, there has been no Party congress. However, this has been made up for by the holding of plenary conferences of the Central Committee. In the history of other parties engaged in armed struggle, wide time gaps between Party congresses occur due to extreme difficulties posed by the enemy. The time gap in our case is, at any rate, extraordinary and must be dealt with.

But far more disturbing than a time gap is the tendency of certain elements since the 1980s to disregard and deviate from the basic principles and organizational rules set down by the Party Constitution and Program. The delay in the holding of a Congress may be regarded as a blessing in disguise insofar as the basic principles remain intact and can be reaffirmed by proletarian cadres.

It would be utterly disastrous now if in a Party Congress at any time in the 1980s, certain elements had succeeded in withdrawing the analysis of Philippine society, the anti-revisionist critique, and the theory of people's war from the Party Constitution and Program. As a matter of fact, these basic documents were invoked by the central leadership in 1985 to defend the Party line against attempts to push the line of hastening military victory through the combination of prematurely enlarged armed formations and armed uprisings. Ironically at that time, this erroneous line was already resulting in disaster but the reputation of those who pushed this line was high on the basis of temporary success in their military offensives in Mindanao in 1981-83.

At any rate, there is another obvious departure from the Party Constitution that has run for so long. The office of the general secretary which is required by the Constitution has been practically abolished. No leading organ can abolish this office which is tasked by the Constitution to take charge of daily administrative matters on behalf of the central leadership.

But there has been a proliferation of central staff organs directly under the Central Committee through the Executive Committee. These are meant to assist the central leadership (the Central Committee, Political Bureau, and the Executive Committee) and not to hamper, exhaust or ignore it.

But in so far as these central staff organs have increasingly acquired discretion and power, they have become so autonomous that they can [decide] on policies on their own without the prior approval of the central leadership; circulate so called orientation, strategy, program, and policy papers under the guise of drafts; seal themselves off for long periods of time from the comprehensive leading organs, especially the Executive Committee; and generate long meetings, long papers, and issues of controversy with other staff organs (e.g., NOC versus NUFC over slogans and procedural issues) and lower leading organs (e.g., NOC versus MR on

the issue of national democratic or socialist “orientation” of the workers’ movement). The controversial issues and papers are dumped from time to time on the central leadership, or the latter must run after them.

The central leadership assumes responsibility for this bureaucratic state of affairs which victimizes itself. As the daily core of the central leadership, the Executive Committee must issue the timely statement on major public issues, national and international; solve the problems promptly and decisively; and run the central staff organs with concise notes of instructions or directives. It must also restore the General Secretariat to take care of daily organs, define the limits of the functions of the staff organs, correct their style of work, transfer to the countryside those staff organs that properly belong there, and send to the regions and countryside the excess of urban-based staffers, especially those on the enemy manhunt list.

Whenever a major difference of view or controversy arises between staff organs or between a staff organ and a lower leading organ, the issue should be immediately reported to the Executive Committee and should not be prolonged nor generate long meetings, long papers, and disruption of work. Just as the Executive Committee and its executive officers are expected to issue timely guidelines, statements, and directives, the central staff organs and lower leading organs must make timely reports and recommendations.

The territorial (inter-regional) commissions are appointive staff organs. They must effect the timely exchange of communications between the Executive Committee and the regional committees. They can give the appropriate cover letter, including recommendations, to the Executive Committee. But they cannot priorly assume that they can make decisions on behalf of any higher leading organ on major issues that involve the question of compliance or noncompliance with the Party line.

The central leading organs, the Military Commission and the Party organization within the New People’s Army must see to it that no army command disregards the strategic line and comprehensive requirements of people’s war. Not even the general command of the New People’s Army can generate strategy papers and conferences and make decisions that run counter to or deviate from the strategic line of people’s war. The absolute leadership of the Party means that the Party decides the line and well-

balanced deployment of Party cadres and resources and ensures the growing participation and support of the people.

At no time should the Party and the masses be “left behind” chasing after the supposedly “independent and separate” initiative of any army command at any level. It is not the case that the Party leadership is the deliberate sluggard when initiatives that deviate from the strategic line gobble up cadres and resources for premature and unsustainable bigger military formations and staffs. At no time can the Party and the masses catch up with a line that gobbles up cadres and resources in a narrow way and which eventually leads to the drastic reduction of mass base and all-round disaster. It is the constant duty of Party cadres and members to assert the basic principles and implement the correct line rather than trail behind an erroneous one.

Certain elements in staff organs as well as leading organs based in Metro Manila and other cities tend to exaggerate the importance of their urban work by falling for the insurrectionist line as the principal way to seize political power irrespective of the development of the people’s war and the people’s army. The practical consequence has been the dwindling number of Party cadres with a good level of education and professional and technical competence and who are willing to serve the people in the countryside and join the people’s army.

The peasant masses and the countryside do not by themselves produce these cadres. If these are not provided by the urban areas, then the people’s war and the people’s army will decline and collapse and the legal progressive mass organizations and the armed city partisans become easy prey of the enemy. Violations of the specific line that the principal character of the urban struggle is legal and defensive can provoke a crackdown by the enemy on the highly vulnerable legal democratic mass organizations and even on the underground staff organs. Without the guerilla fronts and the rural mass base, where will our city-bred comrades go to pursue revolutionary work if they can no longer operate effectively in the urban areas?

The concept of armed city insurrection should cease to be the rationale for withholding cadres from the countryside in favor of the armed city partisan units and urban-based staff organs or the lopsided attention given to recruiting “brave” or “exposed” elements of dubious political commitment into the armed city partisan units.

While central staff organs enjoy a high degree of autonomy - some to the point of independent kingdoms - and lower leading organs have unquestioned political authority over their jurisdiction, there is an attempt by certain elements to deprive the Executive Committee of political authority and to reduce it to the status of the abolished General Secretariat.

The daily core of the central leadership of the Party is the Executive Committee. It can make decisions in accordance with basic principles in the Constitution and Program and the policies and standing decisions of the higher leading organs. It assumes responsibilities and risks within this frame. If there is no daily core of the central leadership, if the Executive Committee and its officers have no political authority and discretion between meetings of any higher leading organ, then the Party becomes headless and brainless on a daily basis.

Without the daily political authority of the Executive Committee, then it becomes possible for certain elements (including the enemy) to take advantage of the time gaps between meetings of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee. Any disrupter can claim to represent the PB or CC, to relay PB or CC decisions according to his own peculiar view and to do any mischief against the Party line because the PB, the CC or the Congress is not yet in session.

It must be understood that there is a series of delegation of powers from the general Party membership to the Congress to the Central Committee to the Political Bureau and to the Executive Committee; and a series of responsibility from the lower to the higher organ/s and organization/s. The Party Constitution even describes the Executive Committee as a direct organ of the Central Committee. It is superior to any individual member of whatever rank, although it is subordinate to the PB, CC, and the Congress.

Urban-Basing and Bureaucratism

The Party organization and mass organizations in Metro Manila and other urban areas have been the initial and continuing source of well-educated and professionally competent proletarian revolutionary cadres for the countryside since the beginning of the armed revolution.

When martial law was declared in 1972, a large number of Party members and mass activists wanted to go to the guerilla zones. However, only a few could be absorbed by these zones. Thus, there were many Party cadres and mass activists who had to be completely in the urban underground, especially in Metro Manila, under several staff organs and regional leading organs.

When guerilla fronts and zones increased significantly in 1974, the Party members and mass activists who had bided their time in Metro Manila were dispatched to various regions. This fine of deployment helped strengthen the armed revolutionary movement and laid the basis for the resurgence of the legal democratic movement on a nationwide scale.

As a result of the veritable dissolution of the Manila-Rizal leading organs and Party organization in 1979, the central leadership assumed responsibility for the Party and the mass movement in the National Capital Region and started to build and base central staff organs there by using Party cadres who are on the enemy manhunt list and, also, former political detainees.

In a short while, these vulnerable personnel would come under effective enemy surveillance and arrest operations in the early 1980s. But still, the lesson has not yet been subsequently learned that such types of cadres should not be based in Metro Manila to run urban-based central staff organs, and that certain organs are not to be based in Metro Manila.

The organizational line pursued is a reversal of the fine of the 1970s which held that cadres who are produced by the urban areas are dispatched to the countryside systematically in order to strengthen the armed revolution as well as to secure those Party cadres already exposed to and hunted by the enemy.

Leading organs of the Party have allowed staff organs or administrative structures based in urban areas to accumulate the bulk of Party cadres. Even the NPA general command (earlier called general staff) based itself since the 1980s in Metro Manila. The mentality is to accelerate the process whereby urban insurrection arises and commands can be issued from the big city through modern communications equipment to the people's army in the countryside. There was no end to special projects rationalizing the stay of the NPA general command in Metro Manila. These

projects were not delegated to offices or personnel that could stay in cities more safely and more effectively.

Despite all the lip service paid to people's war, a line opposed to it has been gaining influence to the detriment of the Party and the revolutionary movement. And such erroneous line has never been thoroughly criticized, especially with reference to the fact that the principal leaders of the urban-based commission and other organs in charge of Mindanao, where that line was first implemented, were either pushed out of the island or disabled by the enemy as early as 1984.

The NPA general command, together with the central staff organs of the Party, entrenched itself in Metro Manila along the erroneous line of positioning itself for an over-anticipated "sudden turn" in the situation that could give rise to an urban insurrection. Lured by the urban convenience of high-tech electronic means that enabled it to issue commands to the people's army in the countryside for offensives nationwide, the NPA general command tended to disregard in practice the principle of centralized leadership and decentralized operations. Related to this line of the NPA general command is the preoccupation with special projects which are considered essential for acquiring communications equipment, weapons, and financing from outside the country for the use of the prematurely enlarged military formations that cannot be supported by a declining mass base.

Some regional commands have also based themselves in urban areas. At the same time, the staffing at various levels of command - regional, guerilla front battalion, and company - has eaten up the stagnant and decreasing number of Party cadres.

When certain elements speak of regularization, they actually mean generating more staff levels and bureaucratization. Their designs of regularization on paper have gone too far ahead of the available personnel. At any rate, the predilection for building administrative structures and making top-heavy staffs has resulted in the phenomenon of gross bureaucratization within the Party.

There is no crescendo of Party cadres doing mass work and developing basic Party life at the grassroots level in both urban and rural areas. The more Party cadres are promoted to leading and staff organs, the more they

are taken away and alienated from basic Party life. This also means less Party members at the basic level and, thus, negligence in Party recruitment.

The limited recruitment of Party members is being done by staffers of the Party organs and by Party groups in mass organizations who feel compelled to do so because of staff requirements. Out of desperation, they often give priority to reviving longtime drop-outs from the Party or recruiting raw elements from the youth movement or wherever possible without promptly checking and raising their ideological consciousness and political level. Or they recruit non-Party staffers and give them tasks and responsibilities (including those reserved for Party members) without even bothering to give them Party education.

Staff organs have been a good training ground for Party cadres. However, there are elements without sufficient experience and competence in Party and mass work and are low in ideological, political, and organizational level who get promoted to higher staff organs and even get appointed to leading organs simply because they come from the staff organs. They learn to rule by being appointed first as “political officers” or “secretaries.”

There is reproduction of staffers rather than the development of basic Party life and the systematic recruitment of Party members from the advanced elements of the revolutionary mass movement within the period of candidature set by the Constitution. There is a big delay in providing the basic education and trial work needed for someone to become a full Party member.

What is often passed off as organizational work is the frequent reorganizing and multiple organizing of the same limited number of Party members into committees, commissions, task forces, secretariats, and so on. Issues and functions, although already well-covered or can be so by an existing body, become excuses for the creation of new bodies. There are those who are satisfied or preoccupied with mere administrative, contacting, and coordinating work. They think or act as if this is all there is to organizational work or Party life.

In ideological, political, and technical terms, personnel of staff organs are not always necessarily superior to the cadres leading the lower Party organizations, mass organizations, and legal institutions. But using the authority of the Party and the leading organ to which they are attached, they

impose themselves on the latter and are prone to threaten or use disciplinary action to assert their authority.

The staff organs have been the sources of “political officers” and “appointive” secretaries who have comprised one-person layers of authority between higher and lower organs or units on the basis of the arrogant proposition that no lower organ or unit qualifies to be a higher organ or unit.

The system of political officers, which is a bad copy of a good system in the people’s army (good because the political officer is integrated in the army unit) was abolished in 1986. But the promoters of bureaucratism have merely shifted to another name, the “secretary,” who is appointed by a higher organ and is not integrated in the organ or units of which he is the “secretary.”

Integral to the build-up of urban-based central staff organs and the stifling of basic Party life with mass organizations at the grassroots level in the course of growing bureaucratism was the generation of the fear of taking initiative and expressing views at lower levels within the Party because of the exemplary effect of the disciplinary measures meted out to Party cadres, organs, and organizations of Metro Manila in 1979.

Insofar as there are still Party cadres and members who are attending to basic Party and mass work and insofar as there are mass organizations which continue to grow or which can grow, there is a basis for combating bureaucratism and fostering ideological, political, and organizational life at the basic level rather than the compartmentalized kind of life in the administrative structure or bureaucracy.

The Party branches and groups in the trade unions, peasant associations, student and youth organizations, the people’s army, women’s associations, cultural activist groups, and so on should see to it that there is comprehensive Party life and growth and urge their current Party and mass members to create more local mass organizations on the basis of which more local Party branches can be built.

The Problem of Ultrademocracy

Bureaucraticism begets ultrademocracy. When there are no venues for free discussion within the Party outside of administrative bounds, then

Party members tend to speak out outside of these bounds and also outside of the Party. Without comprehensive ideological, political, and organizational life, Party members at one level of the organization can easily get the sense that their lives are compartmentalized and run from above. And thus, they tend to resist by becoming ultrademocratic or liberal.

When the boycott error of 1986 was under fire and was not resolved for several months, the floodgates of ultrademocracy were opened at various levels of the Party and among Party members in general. The Executive Committee, as it was then composed, was beleaguered. Certain central staff organs were acting like centers of comprehensive political authority. Some elements issued publications and promoted their own fines, Eke “critical support for the ‘liberal-democratic’ Aquino regime” and the fine of armed urban insurrection cum premature build-up of unsustainable higher military Formations. There was ideological and poh6cal osmosis between ultrademocratic elements in the Party and populists, liberals, “social democrats,” and other petty-bourgeois elements outside the Party who collaborated in denouncing the boycott error of 1986.

Under conditions of ultrademocracy, those elements responsible for the incomparably far bigger error and disaster in Mindanao were able to ride on the campaign against the boycott error of 1986. They obscured or kept their silence on the error and disaster and some of them had the gumption to claim that had it not been for the boycott error of 1986 the people would have been able to seize political power or share it with other forces. The Politburo had limited itself to taking the Executive Committee to account for the boycott error.

There are certainly plenty of free discussions and debates prior to consensus or voting in leading as well as staff organs in the Party. In the leading organs, the range of subject matters is naturally wider than in staff organs. In the staff organs, there is an element of specialization but it is always related to the general framework of the revolutionary struggle.

Instead of there being no democracy in leading or staff organs, there has been the prevalent notion that the Party leader presiding over the meeting is no more than a mere moderator who is not assumed to have a stock of knowledge and experience, who has not evaluated the items in the agenda, and whose main role is nothing more than to let everyone have

a more or less equal share in the discussion. In fact, participants in meetings can repeat the same point several times and talk their heads off. Even patently wrong ideas get more time than correct ones. Thus, the phenomenon of overly long meetings has risen, costing those meeting and the Party much time, energy, and resources.

Another reason for the long meetings is the failure to distinguish the work and study meetings, to evaluate the items put into the agenda and set the direction of the meeting. A discussion on the national situation or certain national issues is often the best kind of discussion available in these meetings. Too much time is spent on the discussion of administrative and procedural matters. And when personal relations like marital problems and allegations of sexual offense are taken up, there are not only a few overly long meetings but a protracted series of such. There should be a more efficient way of handling these and avoiding disruption of the normal flow of work.

So much time is taken away from political and organizational work. Party cadres are aware of this kind of loss and complain about it. But the loss of time for theoretical and political education is rarely lamented because the level of theoretical and political knowledge has gone down and because the most active Party members are absorbed in political and administrative meetings and paper work.

In the relationship between higher leading organs or organizations and lower organs or organizations, there is a one-way vertical top-to-bottom kind of bureaucratism. In major instances, as in the promulgation and implementation of the EC decision for a boycott of the 1986 elections, there is such a type of bureaucratism. For a long period of time already, the representatives of central staff organs appear like big bosses and moneybags when they show up in meetings of the representatives of mass organizations.

But there are more cases of ultrademocracy in which mere staff organs and lower leading organs take major decisions even against the Party line without bothering to consult the higher leading organ. The UFC could proceed with a peace process framework” that degrades the NDF and is detrimental to the interests of the revolutionary movement It also proceeded with the NDF Congress without the EC or the PB being able to go over the draft documents and plans. *Ang Bayan* could publish articles against the

decisions of the central leadership and against the anti-revisionist line of the Party.

There are certain elements who keep on writing “strategy,” “orientation,” and even “policy” papers which deviate from and attack the Party line. They even manage to use some central staff organs to promote the wrong line on the national and international scale. Notwithstanding the disastrous results of their line, they continue to tout it

For refusing to implement the boycott decision of the central leadership with regard to the 1978 elections and for distributing their position paper to other regions, the members of the Manila-Rizal committee were meted out disciplinary measures. For failing to convene the Political Bureau on the subject of the 1986 elections boycott the Party chairman then found it necessary to resign from his position in 1986.

But there are privileged elements who attack the Party by publishing articles nationally and internationally (from *Praktika* to *Debate*, *Philippine Left Review*). They attack the line of the Party and degrade the revolutionary forces before the enemy. They use the personnel, relations, and facilities of the Party to attack the Party fine even while they have yet to be called to account for their anti-Party actions.

Under the guise of reacting to bureaucratism, there are certain elements who whip up ultra-democracy in order to question and oppose the basic principles, line, and policies of the Party, to disinform the Party membership; to misrepresent provoke, and turn the Party inside out. Ultra-democracy or liberalism is as bad as bureaucratism. It can confuse, degrade, endanger, and even disintegrate a revolutionary Party that allows the

Influences of liberalism, populism, social democracy, and other petty bourgeois trends - and even of imperialist and modern revisionist propaganda (especially Gorbachovite) - are seeping into the Party. There are ultrademocratic elements who attack the leading role of the working class, the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution, democratic centralism, and other basic principles of the Party. Some of them go to the extreme of demanding that the Party go beyond the framework of or disregard its basic Marxist-Leninist principles because these are supposed to constitute fundamentalism. They demand that the leading organs of the Party give up their responsibilities.

Just as they simplistically hold Stalin responsible for everything that has gone wrong under the anti-Stalinist revisionist regimes long after the death of Stalin, they wish to put the stigma of their specious definitions of Stalinism on the Party. The Party will not allow itself to be wrecked from within by those stereotyping it by any epithet and by those trying to damn it by some analogies. We know exactly how Gorbachev pushed the fine of negating the entire course of Leninism, socialism, and Soviet history under the guise of totally negating Stalin.

Among those who are whipping up ultrademocracy are elements who are responsible for the gross violation of the civil rights and brutal victimization of a large number of Party and non-Party members. The Party is determined to hold such elements to account for their deeds no matter how many issues they drum up to sidetrack the one which concerns their responsibility and no matter how much anti-Party “conjuncture” they find with other promoters of ultrademocracy.

Security Problems in Urban Areas

Learning lessons from the long experience in urban underground work since the beginning of the ongoing armed revolution and giving due attention to the precision raids and arrests by the enemy in 1988 onwards, the central leadership has issued a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions on security for all Party cadres and members since 1989.

Among the problems recognized by the guidelines and instructions are the following:

1. Party cadres and members are far more vulnerable in the cities than in the countryside.
2. There have been several years of laxity in security, rising in the 1983 to 1986 period, further rising in the 1986-87 cease-fire period and onward, and still further rising.
3. Party cadres on the manhunt list of the enemy have accumulated in urban areas and are endangering themselves and others by being in contact with former political detainees, personalities, organizations, and institutions under probable and certain enemy surveillance.

4. Party cadres on the manhunt list themselves and persons they have been in contact with and places and facilities which they have used are already under surveillance and are practically in boxes of the enemy's intelligence agencies.

5. The precise capture of important Party cadres, documents, equipment, and other things prejudices the safety and security of the people and of resources and paves the way for further enemy surveillance and action.

6. Modern equipment and facilities (telephones, computers, radios, and so on) facilitate our work but if improperly used help the enemy more as they would watch over or capture these.

7. The enemy accumulation of information from captured documents in computer disks and on paper as well as from tactical surveillance of fixed points (persons, houses, buildings, and public places) used by the Party and related personnel give the enemy the basis for its confidence in long-term surveillance.

8. That the enemy has not yet captured all cadres and things already within his knowledge means that he captures some and leaves others as tracers to more cadres and things.

Corollary to the practical instructions given to secure the safety of Party and related personnel, the most important instruction is for Party cadres and members on the manhunt list to leave Metro Manila and other urban areas for the countryside in order to cut-off the enemy. Other Party cadres and non-Party persons who can work legally in the urban areas can meet in the countryside whenever necessary.

The comprehensive guidelines and instructions have been ignored and violated. It is a fact that Party cadres on the enemy manhunt list have insisted on staying in Metro Manila except for brief periods when they show token compliance with the security guidelines and instructions. The best proof is the continuing capture of such Party cadres and volumes of computer diskettes and documents under their care.

What is needed is a more fundamental criticism of this phenomenon of Party cadres on the enemy manhunt list and central staff organs sticking

to Metro Manila and other urban areas. The ideological and political roots of the concentration of central staff organs (including the NPA general command) and Party personnel in urban areas must be pulled out. For their own good and for the good of the revolutionary movement and the people, all those unsuitable for Party work in urban areas must be ordered to go to the countryside to help expand and consolidate the mass base. The urban-based organs which are more appropriately based in the countryside must be based there.

It is true that since the start of the armed revolution, it has been recognized that there must be Party cadres posted in the urban areas in order to facilitate communications within the regions and between the regions and the central leadership because of the specific archipelagic character of the Philippines. But why is it that even after the rebuilding of the legal mass organizations and the further development of the united front since the 1980s, Party cadres on the enemy manhunt list and not cadres who can work legally and viably in the urban areas, are in charge of work and communications in such areas? Why is it that leading and staff organs that should be best positioned in the countryside are based in and elaborated on in the urban areas?

Why should the NPA general command and its central staff organs, which should be in the countryside, be based in Metro Manila? Why is it that exactly at the time that the general command was stating that all the strategic points of the country had been covered by the people's army, that the number of guerilla fronts were already enough, and that the main point was to build companies and battalions, the NPA general command chose to base itself in Manila?

There is now a dangerous situation which arises from the fact that Party cadres and members are concentrated in urban-based administrative structures such as the central staff organs and the Party groups in the multi-layered national mass organizations. These administrative structures in the urban areas are extremely vulnerable to the enemy in the event of a general crackdown or ceaseless piecemeal arrests.

Under the instigation of the US, the enemy wishes to deliver one big blow against the movement before May 1992. For this reason and for the long term positive development of the armed revolution, the Party must now withdraw immediately all Party cadres on the enemy manhunt list from

the urban areas, streamline the central staff organs in favor of work at the grassroots level, and transfer to the countryside those cadres and organs that properly belong there.

However, it is not enough to transfer cadres on the enemy manhunt list to the countryside. A rectification and re-education campaign must be carried out among them. They must reaffirm the basic revolutionary principles, line, and the strategy and tactics of the Party. They must be disabused of whatever conveniences, habits, thoughts, and illusions that have kept them in the urban areas. They must accept that they have to stay in the countryside on a long-term basis in order to contribute to the recovery of lost ground and to expand and consolidate the revolutionary movement

If they go to the countryside without sufficient rectification and reeducation, they will be dissatisfied with being assigned there. They will contaminate others with wrong ideas and dissatisfactions that they have and they will soon be back in the urban areas after one more short stint of token compliance with the order to go to the countryside. What the countryside now needs are more cadres who are determined to serve the people and advance the revolutionary cause.

The Rectification Movement

It is now a matter of life and death for the entire Party to reaffirm its basic principles, assert its correct line, and criticize, repudiate, and rectify those major deviations and errors which have run for so long (overlapping with half of the existence of the Party and armed revolution) and which have brought about unprecedented setbacks to the Party, the New People's Army, and the entire revolutionary movement.

These major deviations and errors could have been more destructive were it not for the perseverance of the overwhelming majority of Party cadres and members who uphold the basic principles and are determined to carry out the revolutionary cause forward. Thus, we think that the Party has the principles, revolutionary personnel, mass support, and all-rounded strength to check and overcome the dangerous trend brought about by the deviations and errors.

In the light of the basic principles, we have identified and evaluated the major deviations and errors and the serious damage these caused to the

Party and the revolutionary movement. We must criticize, repudiate, and rectify these. The rectification movement should raise the Party's level of theoretical knowledge, political consciousness, and practical activity. The Party membership should be mobilized to join and support this movement. Only those who oppose this movement and who are incorrigible should come under disciplinary action, including removal from the Party. There is a big and essential difference between the incorrigible and those who are willing to rectify their errors.

It is important for the appropriate organ to formulate the most pointed questions on facts and issues to be posed to and answered individually by those responsible for the most serious deviations and errors. If they are to answer collectively, there will be difficulties that can delay the process either because it is objectively difficult to convene the pertinent collective or there is no desire on the part of certain individuals to make any collective assessment. Only after the inquiry from individuals concerned may their collectives be convened, if necessary and possible.

We anticipate that there will be elements who will oppose or deflect the rectification movement by using the following tactics:

1. Continuing to question and attack the Party's basic principles no less in order to dogmatically insist on the erroneous line;
2. Detaching the erroneous line from the serious adverse consequences;
3. Confusing the evaluation of tile deviations and errors by playing down bigger errors and playing up lesser ones;
4. Confusing the evaluation of collective and individual responsibilities;
5. Generating new and old issues of lesser importance and relevance to the major problems and unprecedented setbacks that we now face;
6. Retaliating against well-founded criticism by making unfounded attacks;
7. Attacking the many in order to conceal a few in error.

At every level of the Party, in any organ, the central leadership must not hesitate to remove from the Party any element who is responsible for any major deviation or error and who, instead of accepting responsibility, continues to systematically attack the Party fine or is incorrigible and resorts to any of the aforesaid tactics to deflect or defeat the purpose of the rectification process. We must also serve serious warning to those elements who resort to ultrademocracy by campaigning outside of the appropriate Party channels or by going beyond the bounds of the Party.

It is a fair estimate to make that only a few will be removed from the Party due to the gravity of the error for which they are responsible or due to the loss of conviction to the revolutionary cause and to the basic principles of the Party. In this regard, the slogan of the Party is “A bit fewer but a lot better,” to paraphrase Lenin and Mao.

There may be those who are no longer fit to remain in the Party for ideological reasons such as the loss of conviction to all or any of the basic principles of the Party. They can be considered allies if they can still cooperate with us on political issues, provided they do not become special agents of the enemy by attacking the Party and capitalizing on their previous association with or inside knowledge of the Party. ☸