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Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership: Martial Law and the Communist Parties of
the Philippines, 1959–1974

By

Joseph Paul Scalice

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

South and Southeast Asian Studies
in the Graduate Division of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Associate Professor Jeffrey Hadler, Chair
Professor Peter Zinoman
Professor Andrew Barshay

Summer 2017

**Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership: Martial Law and the
Communist Parties of the Philippines, 1957-1974**

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Joseph Paul Scalice

Abstract
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Joseph Paul Scalice

Doctor of Philosophy in South and Southeast Asian Studies

University of California, Berkeley

Associate Professor Jeffrey Hadler, Chair

In 1967 the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) split in two. Within two years a second party – the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) – had been founded. In this work I argue that it was the political program of Stalinism, embodied in both parties through three basic principles – socialism in one country, the two-stage theory of revolution, and the bloc of four classes – that determined the fate of political struggles in the Philippines in the late 1960s and early 1970s and facilitated Marcos' declaration of Martial Law in September 1972.

I argue that the split in the Communist Party of the Philippines was the direct expression of the Sino-Soviet split in global Stalinism. The impact of this geopolitical split arrived late in the Philippines because it was initially refracted through Jakarta. It was in the wake of the massacre of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965-66 that the PKP sought out new contacts with International Communism and in so doing were compelled to take sides in the raging dispute between Moscow and Beijing.

On the basis of their common program of Stalinism, both parties in the wake of their split sought to form alliances with sections of the ruling class. The pro-Moscow party allied with Marcos, who was pursuing ties with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. They facilitated and supported his declaration of Martial Law, murdering the members of the party who opposed this position. The pro-Beijing party responded by channeling the massive social unrest of this period behind the leadership of Marcos' political rivals. When Marcos declared martial law and arrested his rivals, the movement which had been subordinated to them died. The CPP channeled all residual mass opposition into the armed struggle in the countryside.

I based my analysis on the copious documentary record produced by the CPP, PKP and their front organizations at the time, which I correlated carefully with contemporary newspaper accounts. Using this material, I have been able to trace the day-to-day vicissitudes in the political line of the party and the rhetoric used to justify it. On this basis I document that the one unaltered thread woven throughout the entire immense tangle of shifting political tactics and alliances was the program of Stalinism.

All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet “ripened” for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only “ripened”; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. *The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.*

— Leon Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*

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Preface

There are a great many people to whom I owe a debt of thanks.

Pride of place in a work so intimately tied to archival materials must go to librarians.

Throughout my work I was assisted greatly by the marvelous staff of librarians at UC Berkeley. In particular, I am grateful to the tireless and friendly help which I received from Rebecca Darby in the Newspaper and Microforms library; the entire staff at both the Interlibrary Services and North Regional Facility; and Virginia Shih of the South/Southeast Asia Library. A scholar could not ask for better help than that which they provided.

Even more, I am grateful to the staff of unnamed librarians at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, who courageously and conscientiously collected and filed all of the political journals, manifestos and ephemera of the late 1960s and 1970s. When martial law was declared most radicals burned all of their political documents. Were it not for the trove carefully preserved in two steel cabinets in the Diliman library a great deal of history would have been lost. This collection eventually became the Philippine Radical Papers. I could not have written this dissertation without this collection, and I extend to everyone involved in the preservation of this material my heartfelt thanks.

Managing all of the archival material which I collected was an immense task, and so, with the enthusiasm of a true geek, I extend thanks to Debian, Mendeley, Zim, Git, JabRef, Vim and \LaTeX .

There are a number of scholars whose ideas and support have enriched this dissertation. I am grateful, in particular, to Carol Hau, Bomen Guillermo, and Mark Allison.

On the Berkeley campus, I had the privilege of working with, and being mentored by, a number of exceptional professors, whose insights and ideas inspired my own work. I am grateful in particular to Peter Zinoman, Penny Edwards, Andrew Barshay, and Dick Walker.

One could not ask for a more humane and knowledgeable mentor than Fred Choate, who spent countless hours in discussion with me, repeatedly drove me to and from the archives at Hoover, and served as an endlessly reliable source of

information on the Russian Revolution and Leon Trotsky.

David Brown and Evan Blake have been the embodiments of true friendship. Through a very difficult period in my life, they have been constant sources of support, humor and comradeship, for which I extend my sincerest thanks.

To Dante Pastrana – *isa kang tunay na kaibigan at kasama. Ang aklat na ito’y sana’y tutulong sa ikatatagumpay ng ating adhikain at layunin: ang pagtaguyod ng isang pangkat ng Ika-apat na Pandaigdigang sa Pilipinas.*

I truly could not have written this dissertation without the unfailing support of Jeff Hadler. Jeff was my intellectual mentor on the Berkeley campus, a humane and honest scholar and a marvelous teacher. I had the privilege to call Jeff my friend for twelve years. Throughout this period he wisely steered my scholarship, went far out of his way to support and nurture my work and intellectual development, and was the source of much good humor along the way. Jeff was my professor when I was an undergraduate and my mentor and friend as a graduate student. He signed this dissertation less than two weeks before he died, and the world dimmed slightly with his passing. And thus I inscribe this dissertation,

To Jeff Hadler, one of the best men I have had the privilege to know –

To my parents, Roger and Janet Scalice, in honor of the courage and integrity of my father, who “even though he did not know where he was going, obeyed and went”, and the unfailing compassion of my mother –

To Herminio Aquino, *isang tunay na Ama kahit ako’y manugang lamang*, in honor of his kindness and boundless hospitality –

To Blanche, from whom I have learned more of my adopted land than anyone else, in honor of twenty-five shared years, however rocky they may have become at times –

And to my children, Christian, Elizabeth and Nathaniel, my greatest delights in life –

I gratefully dedicate this work.

JOSEPH PAUL SCALICE
Oakland, California
July 2017

Note on Translation and Orthography

One of the more difficult tasks in writing this work was dealing with the stilted political Tagalog of the Stalinists. A dishonest idea rarely finds beautiful expression, and a dishonest concept in translation fares even worse. Most of the literature in Tagalog – leaflets, manifestos, articles – produced by the Communist Party in the period leading up to Martial Law seems to have been first conceived in English. The mixed metaphors and vituperation were then translated into Tagalog without any consideration for the new language – Stalinist English wearing Tagalog clothing. The result was far from pleasant. Trotsky wrote that reading Stalin’s *Problems of Leninism* “evokes the sensation of choking on finely-chopped bristles.”¹ While I have painstakingly translated the prose of the CPP as honestly and accurately as possible, I have not made it pleasant.

I have included selections from the original Tagalog where I thought it necessary to be absolutely clear what was being said. In the majority of cases, however, I have included only my translation, as incorporating the Tagalog originals would have resulted in a work of considerably greater length.

I have used Pinyin transliterations of Chinese names and places throughout, and have retained the use of Wade-Giles only in the titles of existing works. This involved updating the spelling used in the documents produced by the CPP and their contemporaries. In keeping with widely established scholarly practice, however, I have not transliterated Chiang Kai-shek as Jiang Jieshi.

I have used the place names of Manila that were current at the time. Isaac Peral, Lepanto, Azcarraga, and the Philippine College of Commerce have all now been renamed. The evolution of place names reflected the political dynamic of the country. The names of politicians were plastered over the older Spanish names, often taking a decade before the new names were accepted by the population. Thus Azcarraga became Recto.

But while you may now land at Ninoy Aquino International Airport, if you head east you will still arrive in Forbes Park, and north will take you down Taft Avenue, until you arrive in Plaza Lawton. Some names have not changed.

¹Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects* (Seattle: Red Letter Press, 2010), 178.

Abbreviations

AB	<i>Ang Bayan.</i>
ABM	<i>Ang Bayan</i> – Microfilm.
AK	<i>Ang Komunista.</i>
ALCC	Arthur Leroy Carson Collection.
AM	<i>Ang Masa.</i>
APL	<i>Asia Philippines Leader.</i>
BP	<i>Bandilang Pula.</i>
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) Papers.
CTRB	Charles T. R. Bohannon Papers.
CUSDPR	Confidential U.S. State Department central files. Philippine Republic, 1955-63.
DSUMC	David Sullivan US Maoism Collection, TAM 527.
EGL	Edward Geary Lansdale Papers.
IGP	Ira Gollobin Papers.
IWCTR	International War Crimes Tribunal Records.
JHP	Joseph Hansen Papers.
JSAP	James S. Allen Papers.
Kal	<i>Kalayaan.</i>
LCW	Lenin, V.I., <i>Collected Works</i> , vols. 1-45.
LSHC	Library of Social History Collection.
Mal	<i>Ang Malaya.</i>
MB	<i>Manila Bulletin.</i>
MC	<i>Manila Chronicle.</i>
MECW	Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels, <i>Marx–Engels Collected Works</i> , vols. 1–50.

MP	Harry Magdoff Papers.
MT	<i>Manila Times</i> .
PC	<i>Philippine Collegian</i> .
PekRev	<i>Peking Review</i> .
PFP	<i>Philippines Free Press</i> .
PH	<i>The Philippines Herald</i> .
PR	<i>Progressive Review</i> .
PRP	Philippine Radical Papers Archive.
PSR	Sison, Jose Ma., <i>Philippine Society and Revolution</i> .
QCMZ	Mao Zedong, <i>Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung</i> .
SCPW	Sison, Jose Ma., <i>Specific Characteristics of People's War in the Philippines</i> .
SND	———. <i>Struggle for National Democracy</i> .
SSCM	Mao Zedong, <i>The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: From the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward</i> .
SWMTT	———. <i>Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, vols. 1–5</i> .
SWPR	Socialist Workers Party Records.
TLBNP	The Tamiment Library Boxed Newspapers; Periodicals.
TnB	<i>Taliba ng Bayan</i> .
WLT	Trotsky, Leon, <i>Writings of Leon Trotsky, 14 vols</i> .
WMZ	Mao Zedong, <i>The Writings of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976, vols. I–II</i> .

Stalinism and Martial Law



— 1 —

Introduction

Martial Law and the Communist Parties of the Philippines

There is an ominous feeling to reading through Philippine newspapers from the late 1960s and early 1970s. No other period in Philippine journalism can quite compare to it; a wide range of dailies and weeklies were in circulation, some of a very high caliber; the quality of their writing and the breadth of their opinion is striking. And then suddenly, abruptly – silence.

September 22 1972 marks the last day of every Filipino newspaper in the archive. Martial law had been declared and the extraordinary ferment of the preceding period was over. The papers, and the radio and television stations, all ceased under executive fiat only to reemerge later, a quiescent media operated by the cronies of the dictator. It was not just the media, however, that were silenced. The streets fell silent as well. On September 21, fifty thousand people had gathered in Plaza Miranda to denounce the threat of martial law. The day after it was declared, no one gathered, no one rallied, the nation seemingly acquiesced. Al McCoy wrote “In declaring martial law . . . the president would ask the Filipino people to trade their democracy for stability. By their silence and compliance, the majority would tacitly accept his Faustian bargain.”¹ That there was silence is irrefutable, but what was its origin? Was it truly tacit consent and the trading of democracy for stability?

Martial law came as a surprise to no one. It was easily the most anticipated event of the decade. People had been warning of it, advocating it, denouncing it, in the daily press and in mass protests since before the First Quarter Storm of January to March 1970, and yet the opposition to martial law, which had a mass following among workers, youth and the peasantry, was utterly unprepared. It was above all this lack of political preparation that allowed Marcos to declare martial law. The culpability for this rests squarely with the Communist Parties of the Philippines.

The Communist Party of the Philippines split in 1967, the fracture lines of

¹Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, The Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2009), 372.

the party following the geopolitical fault lines drawn between Moscow and Beijing. Both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) based their politics upon the Stalinist program of building socialism in a single country and despite their shared border these two great economies never merged, each pursued its own national interest in keeping with its Stalinist perspective. In an organic and necessary manner, and not through the perfidy of any individual leader, the national interests of Moscow and Beijing diverged and conflicted. An uneasy comradeship turned into a war of words, which in turn, became a bloody, treacherous affair that split the Communist movement throughout the world.

The tensions arrived late in Manila, where the Communist Party had largely liquidated itself in the mid-1950s in the face of military and political repression. As it rebuilt in the early 1960s, its international ties were mediated almost entirely through Jakarta. In the wake of the mass murder of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965, the Philippine party sought to establish new international ties and in the process they necessarily had to choose between Moscow and Beijing. The older leadership of the party largely remained loyal to Moscow; the youth section under Jose Ma. Sison followed Beijing and was expelled in April 1967. Sison and his cohort founded a new Communist Party by the beginning of 1969.

The program of building socialism in a single country made paramount the political task of securing the borders and trade of the country in which socialism was to be constructed. International socialist revolution was no longer the order of the day, but rather the securing of alliances, diplomatic gains, and trade deals with other countries, in opposition, above all to Washington. This required intimate ties with a section of the ruling class within these countries. The task for the Communist Parties within each country therefore was not to organize the working class to seize power, but to secure the support of a section of the bourgeoisie for trade and diplomacy with the Communist Bloc. To this end they heralded to the working class and peasantry that the tasks of the revolution were national and democratic only, and not yet socialist. In this national democratic revolution a section of the capitalist class, they claimed, would play a progressive role. The Communist Party leadership could on this basis offer the support of workers, the youth, and peasant groups, to a section of the bourgeoisie, and in return they asked for support for the foreign policy interests of the Communist Bloc. This was the program of Stalinism.

As Moscow and Beijing broke apart and attacked each other, rival Communist Parties within a single country sought to secure the support of one or another section of the ruling class for their wing of the Communist Bloc. This was precisely what the Moscow-oriented (PKP) and Beijing-oriented (CPP) Communist Parties did in the Philippines. As Marcos opened ties with Eastern Europe and engaged in trade with Moscow, the PKP increasingly gave its support to his administration, facilitating his implementation of martial law by carrying out terrorist acts throughout the city to provide a pretext for its declaration. Marcos

provided its leadership with comfortable salaried positions and facilitated their travel to Moscow, even after his military rule was securely in place. The P K P endorsed his declaration of martial law and supported his dictatorial regime, murdering their own members who opposed this policy. The C P P meanwhile negotiated ties with Marcos' leading rivals, mobilizing the vast, angry unrest of the time behind the interests of Aquino, Lopez and Osmeña. Rather than building an independent opposition in the working class and peasantry to the threat of dictatorship, they subordinated these classes to the bourgeois leadership of Aquino and his allies, and received in exchange their growing support for Beijing. On declaring martial law, Marcos arrested a section of the bourgeois opposition and the majority either acquiesced to dictatorship or left the country. The few, like Aquino, who defied Marcos, remained in jail. With the bourgeois leadership of the opposition gone, the C P P was at a loss. Fifty thousand people had protested on September 21; less than a month later tying a piece of paper inscribed with a political slogan to the leg of a chicken and loosing it in the market was depicted by the C P P as a revolutionary act. The party was utterly unprepared. They hailed the declaration of martial law as the onset of the revolution and directed all residual political dissent to take up arms in the countryside. And quiet reigned in the streets of Manila.

In this work I will examine how the political program of Stalinism was the determining factor in the fate of revolutionary struggles in the Philippines in the 1960s and 1970s. Stalinism was not the development of Marxism; it was the bureaucratic excrescence of inequality in the isolated and backwards Soviet Union. It was the gravedigger of the revolution, not its continuation. In the opening chapter I will deal with the historical emergence of Stalinism and trace its political effects through the Sino-Soviet split of the late 1950s and early 1960s. This historical examination will allow us to understand the origins and implications of the program and stock political vocabulary of the P K P and the C P P. I will then show how Stalinism split the party and repeatedly subordinated the working class to the capitalist class. From support for Macapagal to the betrayal of the explosive port strike in 1963; and from the support for Marcos in 1965 to the call for his ouster in 1970 – at every turn the C P P brought the working class and peasantry under the political leadership of the capitalist class in the name of the program of Stalinism. The impact of this program is almost beyond measure. It shaped art and literature in the Philippines; promoted a truly backwards and misogynist conception of the role of women; and determined the shape of the study of history. The halls of academia in the Philippines were ineluctably bound up in the discourse and politics of Stalinism. I have only adumbrated its broader implications. Future scholarship should take this matter further.

Existing scholarly interpretation

Benedict Anderson opened his work, *Imagined Communities*, with the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, depicting this as the “first large-scale conventional war waged by one revolutionary Marxist regime against another.”² Anderson depicted this as a scholarly quandary, claiming that the persistence of nationalism, particularly in what he termed “revolutionary Marxist regimes,” was “an uncomfortable anomaly for Marxist theory and, precisely for that reason, has been largely elided, rather than confronted.”³ He wrote this in a book in which he mentioned Stalin and Stalinism not once, and Trotsky only once and in passing. Anderson should have known better. The dispute over nationalism was at the core of revolutionary Marxism in the twentieth century, with Trotsky and the Fourth International defending Marxism’s commitment to international socialism and the working class, and Stalinism fighting for a nationalist perspective. What Anderson disingenuously termed “revolutionary Marxist regimes” were in fact Stalinist, and had rival national interests and geopolitical alliances. To attempt to account for the persistence of nationalism in these regimes through the modular and resilient imagining of nation without addressing the political program of Stalinism and its historic roots is a bankrupt endeavor.

Failure to seriously examine the relationship between Stalinism and nationalism has diminished many otherwise serious scholarly works. As anti-Communist scholarship of the mid-twentieth century churned out volumes, on an almost industrial scale, denouncing various leaders as being Communist, a range of liberal scholars pushed back. Many of these figures, they argued, were in fact truly nationalists and their Communist allegiance was but a means of achieving nationalist ends. Rather than examining the historic and programmatic roots of Stalinism, these scholars located the roots of ‘Communist’ nationalism in ‘localization.’⁴ Where anti-Communist scholarship claimed that local Communists were simply following the dictates of Moscow, liberal scholarship attempted to assert local agency, claiming that the leaders of the local Communist Party adapted and localized Communism to their own ends. The impulse behind this scholarship may have been a healthy one but the end result was largely parochial.

This scholarly focus on the local and the national failed to take seriously what was being localized and adapted, i.e., the program of Stalinism. Stalinism was a global force with a coherently articulated program. It was not the ideas of Marxism, of the *Communist Manifesto*, or even of Lenin that were being localized; it was Socialism in One Country, the two-stage theory of revolution

²Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 1, emphasis in original.

³*Ibid.*, 3.

⁴Huỳnh Kim Khánh, for example, wrote of Communism as the “grafting of Leninism” onto nationalism in Vietnam. (Huỳnh Kim Khánh, *Vietnamese Communism: 1925-1945* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982]).

and the bloc of four classes. What is more, undergirding the scholarship on the localization of Communism was a narrow conception that the ambit of local agency was constrained to the boundaries of the nation-state. Local communist leaders did more than implement and adapt the program of Stalinism to the cultural, linguistic and political specificities of their country. In the process, they shaped global Stalinism. They were full participants in the implementation and shaping of a fluid, international political movement. As we will see, the policies of Aidit and the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) – the ‘localization’ of Stalinism in Indonesia – made possible the massacre of 1965-66. The impact of this event profoundly shaped global Stalinism. It precipitated the shift of the Japanese Communist Party from the camp of Beijing to that of Moscow; it set off the split in the Philippine Communist Party; and it was a significant factor leading to the launching of the Cultural Revolution in China in May 1966. The parochial nature of scholarship on localization finds its sharpest expression when dealing with the impact of the Sino-Soviet split. Communist Parties in every country split within a few years of each other. This cannot be treated as a national phenomenon and yet existing scholarship generally treats the split as if it were the product of domestic disputes and local machinations.

Thus, the rather tired chicken-and-egg debate – were the leaders truly Communists or nationalists at heart – finds clear resolution in a historical understanding of Stalinism. Stalinism sought to bring into alignment the interests of a section of the national bourgeoisie within each country with the interests of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union or China. Stalinism thus fed a double dose of nationalism to the working class, promoting both the national interests of local capitalists and of the bureaucracy of Moscow or Beijing, and coated the pill with phrases of Marxism and the heritage of the Russian Revolution. This work is thus not only a significant revision of the literature on the Communist Party of the Philippines and the origins of martial law, it is also, to an extent, a revision of the literature on Communism throughout the region. It points a way forward. To understand the role of the Communist Parties in Southeast Asia, it is necessary to grapple seriously with the program of Stalinism and this cannot be done without dealing with its alternative, Trotskyism.

The bulk of existing scholarly work on the Communist Parties of the Philippines was based on research conducted from the mid-1980s onward, the vast majority of which rested on interviews with members, former members and fellow travelers of the CPP and the PKP.⁵ While a certain amount of written material was cited by these scholars, the historical argumentation, from Chapman (1987) to Caouette (2004), has been based almost entirely on interviews. These

⁵Preeminent among these works are Kathleen Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993: A Story of its Theory and Practice* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2001); Dominique Caouette, “Persevering Revolutionaries: armed struggle in the 21st century, exploring the revolution of the communist party of the Philippines” (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2004).

scholars did not account for, in any of their analysis, the fact that the political position of the members and former members of the CPP had fundamentally altered. These were not attempts on the parts of the interviewees to honestly reconstruct the events which they experienced and in which they participated. There were axes to grind and new political alliances to be made.

Most importantly, the geopolitical situation was fundamentally altered and the CPP's orientation, which flowed from its geopolitical alliances, had altered as well. In the 1960s and early 1970s, all of the writings of the CPP and the PKP were explicitly formulated in the light of the Sino-Soviet split, but by the time the interviews were being conducted, the path of capitalist restoration in China was well-trodden and the CPP was looking for a new political ally. Having been released from prison by President Aquino, Sison traveled abroad beginning in June 1986 and he declared that "the single most important reason for my travel was to seek international solidarity for the Philippine revolution and promote the cause of revolutionary internationalism."⁶ The primary source from which Sison sought solidarity and aid was the Soviet Union under the leadership of Gorbachev, and he stated that ties with the Soviet Union would provide "political and material support for the CPP," anticipating that the international diplomatic support of Gorbachev would greatly strengthen the CPP's bargaining position with the newly installed Aquino administration.⁷ In the face of China's stark refusal to provide aid to the CPP, Sison was looking toward Moscow for assistance. He did not disown Beijing, but attempted to straddle the divide between the powers, and in the Philippines, the leadership of the CPP hailed the crushing of workers' resistance in Tiananmen by the bureaucracy as a victory against revisionism. Sison needed to rehabilitate the party's ties with Moscow and to do so it was necessary to bury the party's entire struggle against "Soviet revisionism." He stated,

In the past, articles in party publications did not deny that the major means of production were under public ownership but argued that the Soviet Union was state capitalist supposedly because Soviet officialdom – then described as bureaucrat monopoly bourgeoisie – was privately appropriating profits through large remunerations, perks and other devious means.

These articles were not the result of direct investigation of the Soviet economy and society by Filipino revolutionaries and social researchers but were based on secondary sources coming since 1963 –

⁶Jose Ma. Sison and Ninotchka Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World – Portrait of a Revolutionary* (Manila: Ibon Books, 2004), 150.

⁷Jose Ma. Sison and Rainer Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1989), 196. While this book was published in 1989, the initial draft was circulating in mimeographed form in 1987. (Patricio N. Abinales, "Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution: A Critique of an Interface," in *Fellow Traveler: Essays on Filipino Communism* [Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2001], 9–101).

when the great ideological debate was raging – from parties with which we had been aligned. Of course, the CPP takes full responsibility for the positions taken in these articles and is now desirous of sending study and research groups to the Soviet Union.⁸

The accusation of “state capitalism” against the Soviet Union was thus, Sison claimed, an innocent mistake made on the basis of inadequate data and indirect analysis. He turned to the question of the accusation of “social imperialism,” which they had likewise leveled against the Soviet Union. This was a criticism, he claimed, of the actions and ideas of Brezhnev and he argued that “Gorbachev himself is now critical of the tendency of the Brezhnev leadership to use Soviet military might abroad.”⁹ On this basis, Sison announced his support for the economic and political policies of Mikhail Gorbachev.¹⁰ As capitalism was actively being restored in the Soviet Union and China, Sison dropped all of his criticisms of revisionism, or relegated them to the past.

In interviews conducted during this period, Sison thus recounted a narrative of the party’s history in which he downplayed the question of the Sino-Soviet split as a matter of secondary importance. When the Stalinist bureaucracy dissolved the Soviet Union and Deng Xiaoping opened China to global capitalist exploitation, the Communist Party of the Philippines broke up. One of the fragments retained the name. In interviews conducted with Sison after 1991, he depicted the party as having been engaged in an autonomous development and the split with the PKP as having been based on something other than the fundamental dispute of global Stalinism. These calculations shaped every interview which he gave as well as those given by other leading members. Francisco Nemenzo, for example, writing in 1984, likewise tried to bury the geopolitical under the local: “Since the split occurred at the peak of the Sino-Soviet dispute, what was essentially a domestic affair acquired an international complexion. Some observers, unaware of the intramural bickering in 1967, interpreted it as the local expression of a global trend.”¹¹ Nemenzo was aware that this was not the case; he had been the head of the editorial board of the PKP flagship journal,

⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 183.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., 186. It is outside the scope of this work, but Sison later accused his opponents in the party of having sought rapprochement with the “revisionist” and “anti-Communist traitor” Gorbachev. *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View* was never published in the Philippines. Sison it seems never shopped it for publication in the country, as this was not its intended audience. It was calculated to secure new international support for the CPP from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. When the CPP translated the book into Tagalog and published it online, they dropped the International Chapter – Chapter 8 – entirely, and renamed the book “A View from the Inside.”

¹¹Francisco Nemenzo Jr., “Rectification process in the Philippine communist movement,” in *Armed Communist Movements in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Gower Publishing Company Limited, 1984), 76.

Ang Komunista from 1971 to 1972, where he oversaw the publication of a series of attacks on Sison and the CPP for being agents of Beijing.

The initial works on the Communist Party of the Philippines in the 1980s were journalistic accounts based on interviews with members and ex-members.¹² The scholarly works that followed shared a number of commonalities, most significantly they were based on interviews and they attempted to cover the history of the party from its founding in 1969 up to its fragmentation in the early 1990s. A number of insights can be gained from these overviews, and I have gratefully used their works in writing this one. Their dependence upon interviews and later writings, however, means that while they can be used with caution to reconstruct a basic timeline, they are sadly less than useless in dealing with the political causes of the split and struggles at the founding of the CPP. Their sources obscure what is essential and their accounts often uncritically repeat the self-serving lies of a leadership which was looking to bury its past. To gain an understanding of the orientation and actions of the CPP and PKP, it is necessary to carefully work through the voluminous quantity of written material produced by the parties and their front organizations in the period leading up to martial law. A meticulous review of a series of newspapers published in the period from 1959 to 1972, in conjunction with the literature, both published and internal, of the Communist Parties, reveals a very different picture than the one thus far depicted in works based almost entirely on interview accounts.

Among the arguments which have been put forward to account for the split are differences over age and the question of armed struggle. The PKP, it is argued, was an aging and conservative organization and the new blood of Sison and his allies rebelled against this leadership and established a new party. This argument overlooks a great many facts. Sison was well-integrated within the PKP, and responsible for its political line, prior to any tensions emerging between himself and rival leaders; he was thus part of the 'conservative' leadership which supported Macapagal in 1963, for example. A number of older PKP members supported the new CPP, most notably Angel Baking. More significantly a majority of the party youth remained with the PKP in the youth organization the Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino [Free Unity of Filipino Youth] (MPKP) which substantially outnumbered the youth wing of the CPP from 1967 to 1970. Although it played a role, age was far from the decisive factor in the split between the parties. In the same manner, the attitude toward armed struggle was not a decisive factor as both the CPP and the PKP had armed wings. The PKP escalated its armed struggle in the 1970s, publishing an entire paper dedicated to extolling the victories of its armed forces both in the countryside and in the city.

Ken Fuller's account of the split is something of an exception to the other

¹²Two stand out – Gregg Jones and William Chapman. Of these two, Jones is by far the better work. (Gregg Jones, *Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement* [Boulder: Westview Press, 1989]; William Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution: The New People's Army and Its Struggle for Power* [New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987]).

scholarly works. Fuller recognized that the root of the split was geopolitical and that the CPP and PKP split along lines drawn between Beijing and Moscow. Fuller's account, however, is nothing but an apologia for the actions of Moscow and the pro-Moscow PKP. He depicted the split in an entirely one-sided and often dishonest manner, articulating without any critical distance or objective examination the positions of William Pomeroy, the leading theoretician of the PKP's international ties.¹³

None of this is to argue that while interviews with the leaders of the Communist Party are untrustworthy, somehow the documents which they produced are truthful. I show in this work that the leadership lied in their documents and lied repeatedly. The documentary record is copious, however. In this I relied above all on the forty-three boxes of documents contained in the Philippine Radical Papers Archive housed at University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman and subsequently microfilmed by Cornell University. I digitized every page, and carefully indexed each item. Many items were misdated, others were of obscure origin. By working over this material repeatedly, I was able to reconstruct – to triangulate on the basis of lies, half-truths, and honest accounts – an understanding of what had transpired. Much of this material was ephemera: single page fliers announcing a demonstration on a particular issue, and many were undated because they were handed out a day before the rally, but I was able to reconstruct the date of almost every item on the basis of vocabulary and topical references. I found that it was imperative to locate the original documents. Reprinted material was frequently redacted without any indication that it had been revised. Often the redactions articulated a perspective which drastically altered the one put forward previously. The only accounts I found trustworthy were contemporary ones. These might also have been dishonest, but they were the lies which were told at the time, and that in the end is what matters. I have simplified things for the reader where possible. The written record is replete with multiple nicknames for various figures and a specialized internal vocabulary with a vast array of acronyms in both English and Tagalog for the various organizational structures of the party and its activities. Having waded through this myself, I saw no reason to inflict it on the reader.

Trotskyism as political alternative

There is a culture about the Communist Party of the Philippines simultaneously inflected by amnesia and nostalgia. The party enthusiastically endorsed Macapagal in 1963, sending the newly formed Worker's Party into a formal coalition with his government, and then two years later fiercely denounced him and allied with Marcos. They did not account for their prior support, they buried it – “Oceania

¹³Fuller wrote in his introduction, “This volume was conceived in the front room of William and Celia Pomeroy's house in Twickenham.” (Ken Fuller, *A Movement Divided: Philippine Communism, 1957-1986* [Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2011], vii).

had always been at war with Eastasia.” This cultivated amnesia was combined with a nostalgia for an imagined past. Young people joining the party or its front organizations learn of the First Quarter Storm and the Diliman Commune, events which are never understood historically, but are simply appreciated as the great moral lessons of the past, examples of the revolutionary heroism of their predecessors. This is not entirely baseless. The youths and workers who fought in the battles of the 1960s and early 1970s were often heroic, and I strove to write this work with a tone of sympathy, even admiration, for those who proved so capable of self-sacrifice and endless labor. The best layers of an entire generation fought courageously, many were tortured and killed by a brutal dictator. But to what end? Here the only honest means of honoring the struggles of this generation is to subject to trenchant criticism the program and machinations of their leaders. The sacrifices made by these youths and workers were first demanded and then dispensed with by Stalinism, which ensured that their lives were no more than grist on the millstone of dictatorship.

To honestly engage in this trenchant criticism requires posing the question: was there an alternative? Criticism should not be a mere negative litany of the failures of the leadership, while articulating no way forward. Such criticisms are cheaply made and lend themselves most to anti-Communism and political passivity. What is needed here is a counter-factual history, a history which poses alternative possibilities and raises the question of what might have been.¹⁴ The task of the historian is not simply to detail what happened, but to explain why, which entails arguing from a complex series of causes to their effects. To do this without indulging in fatalism, requires “examining the historical process in the full range of its possibilities,” and accounting for why one thing occurred and not another.¹⁵

I argue in this book that the decisive subjective factor in Marcos’ successful declaration of martial law was the Stalinist leadership of the Communist Parties of the Philippines. If I am correct in this, a question must be raised: could alternative leadership – not simply different men and women, but a different political program – have resulted in a different outcome? To be credible this alternative program cannot be a utopian scheme concocted in the author’s brain after the fact, or the product of a speculative flight of historical fancy. It must be the genuine historical rival of Stalinism, fighting on a global scale at this historical juncture for a programmatic alternative: Trotskyism. Where Stalinism sought to transform Marxism into a program of nationalism and class collaboration, Trotskyism fought for an internationalist perspective based on the independence

¹⁴On ‘counter-factual histories’, see Eric Hobsbawm’s “Can we write the history of the Russian Revolution?” in Eric Hobsbawm, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), and David North’s response, “Leon Trotsky and the Fate of Socialism in the Twentieth Century: A Reply to Professor Eric Hobsbawm” in David North, *The Russian Revolution and the Unfinished Twentieth Century* (Oak Park: Mehring Books, 2014).

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 71.

of the working class. Throughout this work, at key inflection points in the development of the political struggle in the Philippines, I will examine the rival perspectives of Stalinism and Trotskyism as a means of exploring the possibilities latent within each political juncture.

Why Trotskyism was absent in the Philippines is a question which I cannot yet fully answer. Its roots lie in the founding of the Communist Party in the 1930s under the leadership, above all, of the Stalinist Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA). Stalinism was in a close alliance with Roosevelt at the time and Washington facilitated the travel and activities in the Philippines of James S. Allen of the CPUSA. Throughout his travels in the Philippines, Allen was assessing in his letters to his wife Isabelle Auerbach, whether or not certain individuals were “with Trotsky.”¹⁶

While in the 1960s and 70s, Trotskyism was entirely absent from the Philippines, Trotsky himself was the subject of constant conversation. His name functioned as a kind of political swear word, largely devoid of content, which was routinely deployed against political enemies. Nemenzo, for example, writing under the pseudonym Frunze, denounced Sison for carrying out a “Trotskyite maneuver,”¹⁷ and Sison in turn denounced Nemenzo for “anarcho-Trotskyism”; both were avowed Stalinists. Behind the imprecations lay a nervous awareness that there was a revolutionary alternative to their politics. It is well past time that Trotskyism was given its own voice in the Philippines.

¹⁶See, for example, 22 Sep 1938 in JSAP, Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁷Quoted in Teodosio A. Lansang, “One More View from the Left,” *APL*, May 1971, 45

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Socialism in Two Countries

The Sino-Soviet split confronts us with a conundrum: how was it possible that the two massive economies of China and the Soviet Union, both ostensibly engaged in building socialism, did not merge? What is more, how was it that within a decade of the Chinese revolution they were antagonists, and within two decades had come to blows and split the world communist movement? The answer lies in the program of Stalinism, which subordinated the international interests of the working class to the national interests of the ruling bureaucracy in both Moscow and Beijing. I lay out in this chapter, in a necessarily schematic and terse form, the roots of the struggle between Stalinism and Trotskyism and its historic implications, and using this analysis I examine the emergence and growth of the Sino-Soviet dispute as the logical and necessary development of Stalinism.

2.1 Stalinism

The Theory of Permanent Revolution

The basic ideas of the theory which found their sharpest and most developed expression in the writings of Leon Trotsky – and which are correctly associated with his name – did not originate with him. As Trotsky wrote –

The expression “*permanent revolution*” is an expression of Marx, which he applied to the revolution of 1848. In Marxist literature, naturally not in revisionist but in revolutionary Marxist literature, this term has always had citizenship rights. Franz Mehring employed it for the revolution of 1905-07. The permanent revolution, in an exact translation, is the continuous revolution, the uninterrupted revolution.¹

¹Leon Trotsky, *The New Course* as quoted in North, *The Russian Revolution and the Unfinished Twentieth Century*, 235.

The roots of the theory of permanent revolution can be traced to the foundational moment of Marxist political strategy – the revolutions of 1848-49 in Europe, drowned in blood in the streets of Paris. Marx and Engels assessed the paroxysms of class struggle which had shaken continental Europe and the role which the bourgeoisie everywhere had played in suppressing the working class.² While the tasks posed by this revolutionary struggle were bourgeois and democratic in character, the events of 1848-49 revealed that the protagonist in the struggle to achieve these ends was no longer the capitalist class but the emerging force of the proletariat. As the revolutionary demands of the working class intensified, the alarmed bourgeoisie united with the landed aristocracy in the violent suppression of the barricades, betraying the revolution. Summing up the experiences of 1848-49, in their “Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League” in March 1850, Marx and Engels stated that the paramount political task was securing the political independence of the working class as the bourgeoisie were no longer a progressive force in society. Regarding the petty-bourgeoisie – the urban middle class, small merchants, as well as the peasantry, Marx and Engels wrote “The relation of the revolutionary workers’ party to the petty-bourgeois democrats is this: it marches together with them against the faction which it aims at overthrowing, it opposes them in everything by which they seek to consolidate their position in their own interests.”³ They continued

While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and with the achievement, at most, of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians in these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. For us the issue cannot be the alteration of private property but only its annihilation, not the smoothing over of class antagonisms but the abolition of classes, not the improvement of existing society but the foundations of a new one.⁴

The task of Communists, according to Marx and Engels, was a permanent revolution that entailed the conquest of state power by the working class and the

²The historical evolution and emergence of the ideas of Permanent Revolution, from Marx and Engels in March 1850 to Trotsky in 1906, are documented in Richard B. Day and Daniel Gaido, *Witnesses to Permanent Revolution: The Documentary Record* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2009).

³MECW, vol. 10, 280.

⁴MECW, vol. 10, 281.

creation of socialist property relations on an international scale and to this end the working class needed to fight for its political independence from all other class forces. Marx and Engels wrote

Even where there is no prospect whatever of their being elected, the workers must put up their own candidates in order to preserve their independence, to count their forces and to lay before the public their revolutionary attitude and party standpoint. In this connection they must not allow themselves to be bribed by such arguments of the democrats as, for example, that by so doing they are splitting the democratic party and giving the reactionaries the possibility of victory. The ultimate purpose of such phrases is to dupe the proletariat.⁵

They concluded that workers “must do the utmost for their final victory by making it clear to themselves what their class interests are, by taking up their position as an independent party as soon as possible and by not allowing themselves to be misled for a single moment by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeois into refraining from the independent organization of the party of the proletariat. Their battle cry must be: The Revolution in Permanence.”⁶

The question of the nature of the revolution was posed again at the beginning of the twentieth century in Russia, where the belated character of capitalist development raised the contradictions involved to a qualitatively more complex level. Three basic conflicting characterizations of the Marxist conception of revolutionary struggle in Tsarist Russia emerged – the stagist perspective of Plekhanov and the Mensheviks; Lenin’s understanding of the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry; and Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution. At stake in the debate were three basic questions: who were the revolutionary actors? What were the revolutionary tasks? And what was its geographical scope?⁷

Plekhanov at the the head of the Menshevik wing of Russian Social Democracy, argued beginning in the 1880s that given the belated development of Russian capitalism, the tasks of the revolution in Russia were bourgeois and democratic in character. These were immense tasks – the overthrow of the Tsar, the construction of institutions of democracy, and the ending feudal relations in agriculture – and the objective economic conditions for the creation of socialism simply did not yet exist in Russia, Plekhanov argued. Given that the tasks of the revolution

⁵MECW, vol. 10, 284.

⁶MECW, vol. 10, 281.

⁷In the following I rely particularly on Trotsky’s development of this question in his August 1939 work, *Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution*, in WLT, 1939-40, 55-73.

were capitalist ones, the class who would dominate the new society would necessarily be the bourgeoisie. When sufficient capitalist development had occurred, a second stage of revolution would begin, this time a socialist one, under the leadership of the working class. In the first stage of the revolution, therefore, the working class would necessarily have to ally with a section of the capitalist class. Finally, because it was a bourgeois democratic revolution, and not yet a socialist one, the scope of the revolution was confined to the national borders of Russia. Plekhanov's answers to our three basic questions were thus that the capitalist class, the working class and the peasantry would be carrying out a bourgeois democratic revolution within the boundaries of the nation. An international socialist revolution led by the working class would follow after a necessary period of capitalist development. David North aptly characterized Plekhanov's conception, "The central problem in this perspective was that it sought to interpret the nature and tasks of the democratic revolution in accordance with a formula that had been overtaken by history."⁸

By the beginning of the twentieth century the faults in Plekhanov's formulae were becoming increasingly clear and the failed revolution of 1905 put these conceptions to the test and revealed the need to rework them. Writing in 1905, Vladimir Lenin, head of the Bolshevik wing of Social Democracy, argued that the most fundamental of bourgeois democratic tasks lay in the revolutionary solution to the agrarian question, through the seizure and nationalization of the landed estates. This was, Lenin insisted, a bourgeois and not yet a socialist measure; however, he argued, given the growing force of the working class, the capitalist class were now opposed to any expropriatory measures and would thus fight against the basic revolutionary tasks. The capitalist class could no longer play a progressive role. The revolutionary actors according to Lenin were thus the proletariat and the peasantry, who would be carrying out the bourgeois democratic revolution, and given that the bourgeoisie were opposed to the basic tasks of this revolution, it would be excluded from power and the proletariat and peasantry would exercise a joint class dictatorship. Lenin further argued that the interconnected nature of global capitalism meant that a successful democratic revolution in Russia would precipitate crises, sparking socialist revolutions in Western Europe, and thus, while the Russian revolution would be carrying out bourgeois democratic tasks, the scope of the revolution would not stop at the national boundaries of Russia.

Leon Trotsky, who was a central figure in the 1905 revolution, writing in *Results and Prospects* in 1906, fundamentally moved beyond the answers provided by Plekhanov and Lenin, elaborating the possibility of a socialist revolution in Russia. Lenin's joint dictatorship, he argued, would find it impossible to limit itself to bourgeois democratic tasks. How would a workers and peasant government respond to striking workers who demanded control of production?

⁸North, *The Russian Revolution and the Unfinished Twentieth Century*, 238.

Would they insist on limiting the workers' demands within the boundaries of capitalism and side with the owners, or would they side with the working class? On point after point, Trotsky demonstrated that it was impossible for a workers government to limit itself artificially to the implementation of bourgeois democratic measures, and would, in the defense of the revolution, be compelled to begin carrying out socialist measures. What is more, Trotsky argued, Lenin's idea of a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry was an impossibility. The peasantry was an embryonic class, containing within itself both proletarian and bourgeois tendencies. It was a small property owning class, and as such tended to side with the bourgeoisie; it was an impoverished and exploited class, and its revolutionary impulses brought its interests into alignment with the proletariat. The peasantry would thus follow the leadership of either the capitalists or the working class. The task therefore was for the creation of a workers state, and for the working class to lead the revolution with the support of the peasantry. Finally, given that the tasks of the revolution were necessarily socialist, the scope of the revolution had to be international. Trotsky answered our basic questions thus: the revolution would need to bring about a proletarian dictatorship with the working class leading the peasantry; the revolution needed to go beyond bourgeois-democratic measures and begin to implement socialist ones; and the revolution could only be completed on the world stage. The fate of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky insisted, rested with the victory of international socialism.

Trotsky wrote "The completion of the socialist revolution within national limits is unthinkable. . . . The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on the international arena, and is completed on the world arena. Thus the socialist revolution becomes a permanent revolution in a newer and broader sense of the word; it attains completion only in the final victory of the new society on our entire planet."⁹ For Trotsky the question is Russia, or any other country of belated capitalist development, ready for socialist revolution thus found its resolution in the answer that global capitalism was ready for socialist revolution. The character of any national revolution was determined by this larger whole and could not be conceived of in isolation from it. Writing in 1930, Trotsky elaborated

The above-outlined sketch of the development of the world revolution eliminates the question of countries that are "mature" or "immature" for socialism in the spirit of that pedantic, lifeless classification given by the present program of the Comintern. Insofar as capitalism has created a world market, a world division of labor and world productive forces, it has also prepared world economy as a whole for socialist transformation. . . .

The world division of labor, the dependence of Soviet industry upon

⁹Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, 313.

foreign technology, the dependence of the productive forces of the advanced countries of Europe upon Asiatic raw materials, etc., etc., make the construction of an independent socialist society in any single country in the world impossible.¹⁰

When Lenin returned to Russia in April 1917, he issued his April Theses, which set the course for the Bolshevik Party over the course of the revolution. He repudiated his previous conception of the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry” and ended the Bolshevik Party’s critical support for the bourgeois provisional government.¹¹ He called for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the carrying out of socialist measures, and it was thus the perspective of permanent revolution which provided the program of the Bolshevik Party in October 1917. While Lenin and Trotsky were the core leadership of the October Revolution, Stalin played a negligible role in the events of 1917.¹² Lenin and Trotsky both understood that the fate of the Russian Revolution rested with the international struggle of the working class for socialism and they threw themselves into intense collaboration to securing this end. Trotsky led the Red Army in defense of the newly established workers state in the civil war, as the white forces of Kornilov and a host of international powers attempted to reclaim Russia.

The Revolution Betrayed

Isolated by the crushing of the 1918 revolution in Germany, during which Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered, and in the face of a devastated infrastructure in the wake of the First World War and the Civil War, the workers’ government faced immense challenges. In these conditions, the most historically advanced property forms were combined with generalized want, leading to inevitable inequality; socialized production accompanied bourgeois distribution. Rather than an administrator of things, the bureaucracy came to function as the administrator of human beings, becoming the “gendarme of inequality,” and increasingly a separate and privileged caste. Stalin emerged at its head as the highest embodiment of the interests of this caste. Trotsky described this process

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¹⁰Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, 314.

¹¹Similarly, when Lenin wrote his *State and Revolution* in August 1917, he explicitly repudiated the possibility of a joint class dictatorship.

¹²On the Russian Revolution, see Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2004); Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks in Power: The First Year of Soviet Rule in Petrograd* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007); Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, trans. Max Eastman (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2008).

We have thus taken the first step toward understanding the fundamental contradiction between Bolshevik program and Soviet reality. If the state does not die away, but grows more and more despotic, if the plenipotentiaries of the working class become bureaucratized, and the bureaucracy rises above the new society, this is not for some secondary reasons like the psychological relics of the past, etc., but is a result of the iron necessity to give birth to and support a privileged minority so long as it is impossible to guarantee genuine equality.¹³

North writes, “Though he did not realize this himself, Stalin was articulating the views of an expanding bureaucracy which saw the Soviet state not as the bastion and staging ground of world socialist revolution, but as the national foundation upon which its revenues and privileges were based.”¹⁴ This perspective, grounded in the economic interests of the bureaucracy, gave birth to the political program of building socialism in one country. This idea, enshrined as policy, carried in embryo all of the political betrayals of Stalinism in the twentieth century. Trotsky wrote, “The Stalinists asserted that the USSR could arrive at socialism if only it was not thrown back by the intervention of imperialist armies. From this it followed that the realization of Soviet socialism required not the overthrow of world imperialism, but its neutralization through diplomatic means.” While neither Trotsky nor Lenin excluded diplomatic agreements with bourgeois powers, these were tactical in nature and always subordinated to the development of international socialist revolution, and above all, the political independence of the world proletariat. For the Stalinist bureaucracy, however, securing the diplomatic and geopolitical national interests of the Soviet Union became the highest priority.

In service to the theory of Socialism in One Country, Stalin and the bureaucracy refurbished the Menshevik theory of a two-stage revolution. Using this stagist conception they instructed communist parties around the world to enter into an alliance with sections of the “progressive national bourgeoisie,” using this political support as leverage to negotiate diplomatic ties and secure the borders of the Soviet Union in the service of socialist construction. This program led to repeated betrayals of the working class. During the Second Chinese Revolution of 1926-27, Stalin instructed the CCP to ally with and support Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang (GMD) in carrying out the national democratic revolution. Trotsky fought against this perspective, calling for the CCP to organize independently on a socialist basis. Trotsky repeatedly and urgently warned the CCP that the GMD would brutally betray them, and as early as 1925, Trotsky had demanded

¹³Leon Trotsky, *Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going?* (Detroit: Labor Publications, 1991), 47.

¹⁴David North, “Introduction,” in *Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going?* (Detroit: Labor Publications, 1991), xxi.

an organizational break with the Guomindang.¹⁵ Chiang and GMD slaughtered the Chinese Communists at Shanghai in April 1927, and Stalin then instructed the Communist Party to support the “left” GMD in Wuhan, under Wang Jingwei. In July 1927, Wang led his wing of the GMD to unleash another wave of executions and slaughter of the CCP.

Trotsky organized the Left Opposition against these betrayals, waging a protracted and principled fight against the consolidating power of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Each successive defeat on the international arena increasingly facilitated by the program of Stalinism, further isolated the working class in the Soviet Union, weakening the position of the Left Opposition and strengthening the hand of Stalin. The workers state – a transitional form between capitalism and socialism – degenerated.

Trotsky concluded that the Soviet Union was a “transitional” society whose character and fate had not yet been decided by history. If the working class succeeded in overthrowing the Stalinist regime and, on the basis of Soviet democracy, regained control of the state, the USSR could still evolve in the direction of socialism. But if the bureaucracy retained power and continued to stifle, in the interests of its own privileged position, the creative possibilities of the nationalized productive forces and central planning, a catastrophic relapse into capitalism, ending with the destruction of the USSR, was also possible.¹⁶

The defeat of the CCP in 1927 made possible the defeat and expulsion of Trotsky from the CPSU and he was exiled first to Alma Ata, then to Prinkipo.

Stalin had hoped that the expulsion of Trotsky would deprive him of the possibility of developing the activity of the Opposition in the Soviet Union. But he had underestimated Trotsky’s ability to command the attention of a world audience. Though deprived of the trappings of power, Trotsky was the intellectual and moral embodiment of the greatest revolution in world history. In contrast to Stalin, who represented a bureaucratic machine and was dependent upon it, Trotsky personified a world-historic idea which found through his writings its most brilliant and cultured expression.¹⁷

¹⁵Gregor Benton, ed., *Prophets Unarmed: Chinese Trotskyists in Revolution, War, Jail, and the Return from Limbo* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 4 fn 9; Harold R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2010). Trotsky’s struggle over this question is copiously documented. (Leon Trotsky, *Leon Trotsky on China*, ed. Les Evans and Russell Block [New York: Pathfinder, 1976]). The politics pursued by Stalin in China were intimately connected to the defeated revolution in Indonesia. (Ruth McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* [Jakarta: Equinox, 2006]).

¹⁶North, “Introduction,” xi.

¹⁷Ibid., xxiii.

The Theory of Socialism in One Country necessarily transformed the program of the Comintern. Trotsky wrote, “By the theory of national socialism, the Communist International is downgraded to an auxiliary weapon useful only for the struggle against military intervention. The present policy of the Comintern, its regime and the selection of its leading personnel correspond entirely to the demotion of the Communist International to the role of an auxiliary unit that is not destined to solve independent tasks.”¹⁸ Trotsky, now at the head of the International Left Opposition, did not immediately call for a new international, but for the reform of the Comintern and the national Communist Parties in keeping with the program of permanent revolution.

The Founding of the Fourth International

It was the role played by the Comintern in the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany and the absence of criticism in the wake of this devastating defeat for the working class that led Trotsky to call for the formation of a new International. Trotsky wrote insistently and repeatedly to warn the German working class of the imminent danger posed by fascism, calling for the Communist Party to form a united front the Social Democratic party against this threat.

The Comintern responded to the defeats which its prior policies had caused by launching in 1928 the ultra-left Third Period policy, which declared that a period of continuous and uninterrupted radicalization of the masses had opened and that social democratic parties of workers were in fact now the political twins of fascism. On the basis of this Stalinist policy, the German Communist Party disregarded Trotsky’s warnings and denounced the Social Democrats as “Social Fascists,” who were essentially indistinguishable from the Nazis. The German Communist Party boasted that after Hitler rose to power and destroyed the Social Democrats, the Communists would take power – their slogan was “after Hitler, us.” Trotsky wrote “Worker-Communists, you are hundreds of thousands, millions; you cannot leave for any place; there are not enough passports for you. Should Fascism come to power it will ride over your skulls and spines like a terrific tank. Your salvation lies in merciless struggle. And only a fighting unity with the Social-Democratic workers can bring victory. Make haste, worker-Communists, you have very little time left!”¹⁹

As a result of the criminal policies of the Communist Party, Hitler was able to take power without a shot in 1933. The Comintern “issued a statement endorsing the policies which it had pursued and absolved itself of any responsibility for the defeat.”²⁰ Trotsky wrote

¹⁸Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, 315.

¹⁹“For a workers’ united front against fascism,” 8 Dec 1931, in Leon Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* (New York: Pathfinder, 1971), 181-2.

²⁰North, “Introduction,” xxiv.

The Moscow leadership has not only proclaimed as infallible the policy which guaranteed victory to Hitler, but has also prohibited all discussion of what had occurred. And this shameful interdiction was not violated or overthrown. No national congresses; no international congresses, no discussions at party meetings; no discussion in the press! An organization which was not roused by the thunder of fascism and which submits docilely to such outrageous acts of the bureaucracy demonstrates that it is dead and that nothing can revive it. To say this openly and publicly is our direct duty toward the proletariat and its future. In all our subsequent work it is necessary to take as our point of departure the historical collapse of the official Communist International.²¹

The response of Stalin to Trotsky's stated intent to form the Fourth International was the murderous fury of the Moscow Trials and the purges. In 1936-7, Stalin oversaw the political genocide of the entirety of the old Bolshevik party of 1917, attempting to drown the danger of Trotskyism in blood. Internationally, the Comintern moved markedly to the right, joining the League of Nations, and forming popular front alliances with bourgeois governments including support for Roosevelt. This was followed by the 1939 Molotov-Ribentrop pact between Moscow and Nazi Germany. These policies led to betrayals of the working class throughout the world, subordinating them to the bourgeoisie at every turn. In Spain the Stalinists, working on behalf of the bourgeois Republican government, were directly responsible for the physical suppression and murder of workers and peasants who had seized control of factories, which made possible the consolidation of power by Francisco Franco.

The turn by the USSR toward direct collaboration with the international bourgeoisie was complemented by the intensification of state repression within the borders of the degenerated workers' state. The inner connection between these parallel processes is generally ignored by bourgeois historians, who find it politically inconvenient to examine why the heyday of popular frontism – when Stalinism was being feted in the salons of the intellectual trend-setters – coincided with the wholesale extermination with the USSR of virtually all those who had played a leading role in the October Revolution and the civil war. The blood purges which were launched with the opening of the first round of the Moscow Trials in August 1936 were intended not only to eradicate all those who might become the focus of revolutionary opposition to the bureaucracy, but also to demonstrate to the world bourgeoisie that the Stalinist regime had broken

²¹“It is necessary to build communist parties and an International anew,” 15 Jul 1933 in Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, 552.

irrevocably with the heritage of 1917. A river of blood now divided Stalinism from Bolshevism.²²

In 1938 Trotsky and the International Left Opposition succeeded in founding the Fourth International. The founding document of the Fourth International – *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* – declared “The Fourth International has already arisen out of great events: the greatest defeats of the proletariat in history. The cause for these defeats is to be found in the degeneration and perfidy of the old leadership. The class struggle does not tolerate an interruption. The Third International, following the Second, is dead for the purposes of revolution. Long live the Fourth International!”²³ The program of the Fourth International called for the fight for the political independence of the working class in the international struggle for socialism. Within the Soviet Union the task was not a social revolution, to alter property relations, but a political revolution, for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy by the Soviet working class, to rescue the worker’s state from its bureaucratic degeneration.

Stalin answered this political program by deploying GPU assassins around the globe to exterminate the leadership of the Fourth International, murdering Rudolf Klement, secretary of the Fourth International, Lev Sedov, Trotsky’s son and a leader of the Fourth International, and others. Finally in August 1940, a Stalinist agent, Ramon Mercader, succeeded in murdering Trotsky with an ice pick in his home in Coyoacan, Mexico. The Fourth International and its program of Permanent Revolution, however, lived on.

Chinese Revolution

The CCP emerged out of the tragedy of 1926-27 in China as a party based almost entirely in the peasantry. The party abandoned its urban and working class roots, the class basis for a Trotskyist perspective, increasingly based its political strategy on peasant-based guerrilla warfare and, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, retained and developed all of the programmatic elements of Stalinism. Writing to the Chinese Left Opposition in September 1932, Trotsky analyzed the role of the Stalinist leadership in China,

The Russian Narodniks used to accuse the Russian Marxists of “ignoring” the peasantry, of not carrying on work in the villages, etc. To this the Marxists replied: “We will arouse and organize the advanced workers and through the workers we shall arouse the peasants.” Such in general is the only conceivable road for the proletarian party.

²²North, “Introduction,” xxix.

²³Leon Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* (New York: Labor Publications, 1981), 42.

The Chinese Stalinists have acted otherwise. During the revolution of 1925-27 they subordinated directly and immediately the interests of the workers and peasants to the interests of the national bourgeoisie. In the years of the counterrevolution they passed over from the proletariat to the peasantry, i.e., they undertook that role which was fulfilled in our country by the SRS when they were still a revolutionary party. Had the Chinese Communist Party concentrated its efforts for the last few years in the cities, in industry, on the railroads; had it sustained the trade unions, the educational clubs and circles; had it, without breaking off from the workers, taught them to understand what was occurring in the villages – the share of the proletariat in the general correlation of forces would have been incomparably more favorable today.

The party actually tore itself away from its class. Thereby in the last analysis it can cause injury to the peasantry as well. For should the proletariat continue to remain on the sidelines, without organization, without leadership, then the peasant war even if fully victorious will inevitably arrive in a blind alley.²⁴

The social character of the party was transformed. “In 1925–26, ... peasants comprised only five per cent of the party’s membership. ... But as early as November 1928, 70 to 80 per cent of the party membership was made up of peasants. And by 1930, Zhou Enlai reported to the September plenary meeting of the Central Committee that out of a total membership of 120,000, ‘the industrial worker-members only number a little more than 2,000.’”²⁵ Stalin took note of this changed composition of the party and the man who most clearly represented these forces, and as early as September 1930, he “was beginning to look him [Mao Zedong] over as a possible future leader of the party.”²⁶ Mao represented layers of the party based in the peasantry, and in the wake of the GMD massacres of the working class in 1927, Mao’s star rose within the CCP as the party shifted to the countryside. Mao’s consolidated his hold on power by waging a purge within the party in late 1930, looking to root out alleged Guomindang agents, and by October his forces had killed more than one thousand Communists in Jiangxi. Forces loyal to Mao attacked companies of Red Army troops that were seen as not implementing his line of eradicating the rich peasants, and in the thick of conflict with the forces of Chiang Kai-shek, these CCP cadre were subjected to torture and execution.²⁷ The drive to organize the Chinese working class in

²⁴“Peasant war in China and the proletariat,” 22 Sep 1932, in Trotsky, *Leon Trotsky on China*, 585.

²⁵Max Shachtman, “Introduction,” in *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966), viii.

²⁶Alexander V. Pantsov and Steven I. Levine, *Mao: The Real Story* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012), 236.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 241-43.

the cities meanwhile suffered a deadly blow, when on May 21 1931 the entire membership of the Central Committee of the Trotskyist Unification Congress in China were arrested.²⁸

In 1931 Chiang Kai-shek, ignoring the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, launched a series of campaigns of military encirclement against the Communists in southern Jiangxi. Beaten back at every turn, the CCP in October 1934 chose to move its forces through difficult mountainous terrain and arrived in Yan'an, in the "barren high plateau of Shaanxi," a year later, a journey which would be celebrated by the party as the Long March.²⁹ In truth, the Long March was a disaster; nearly 100,000 set out from Jiangxi, but nine out of ten died along the way, harried by the forces of Chiang Kai-shek, and only eight thousand arrived safely in Yan'an.³⁰ Throughout this period, Mao's political rise continued.

The paramount concern for Stalin and the Moscow bureaucracy was securing the borders of the Soviet Union, and in East Asia this meant using an alliance of the CCP and the Guomindang against Japan to keep Tokyo's focus on China and away from the USSR. Stalin, facing the inevitability of war on the western front, did not want a simultaneous conflict on his eastern border or a repeat of the disastrous Russo-Japanese war. All political tasks in China were, for the CPSU, subordinate to this overriding imperative: the CCP must form a united front alliance with Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang. Chiang loathed and feared the Communists far more than he did the Japanese army in Manchuria. Over the course of the United Front alliance, he repeatedly instructed his forces to attack the Communist units which the CCP leadership, in keeping with instructions from Moscow, had placed under his command. These attacks on the CCP forces were often carried out with arms supplied by the USSR. Stalin and Mao both repeatedly excused and justified Chiang's behavior, doubling down on the alliance of the CCP and the GMD.

It took the arrest of Chiang by a northern warlord, Zhang Xueliang, in collaboration with the CCP in December 1936 in Xi'an to compel Chiang to enter into an alliance with the party. During the Xi'an incident, Mao and the leadership of the CCP wanted to execute Chiang Kai-shek, in order to facilitate a relationship with other leaders of the Guomindang. Stalin overruled this and insisted on freeing and working with Chiang. "Stalin's point was that the arrest and execution of Chiang Kai-shek would inevitably deepen the split in Chinese society and make things increasingly difficult for Stalin. In November 1936, just a month prior to the Xi'an incident, Nazi Germany had concluded an Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan that was aimed at the Soviet Union. Thus, for Stalin,

²⁸Benton, *Prophets Unarmed*, 11.

²⁹Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 25.

³⁰Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization, Second Edition*, trans. J.R. Foster and Charles Hartman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 642.

converting Chiang Kai-shek into an ally was a matter of life and death.”³¹ Zhou Enlai negotiated Chiang’s release on the condition that he forge an alliance with the CCP and accept the Red Army units, as the “Eighth Route Army”, under his command. To facilitate ties with Chiang, Stalin instructed Mao that “the CCP should play a leading role in a common national resistance war, suspend its revolutionary program, and focus on fighting the external enemy – Japan – rather than domestic opponents.”³²

To implement the policy of uniting with Chiang Kai-shek, who had slaughtered the uprising of Chinese workers a decade before, it was necessary for the Stalinist leadership to eliminate the danger of any struggle for the independence of the working class. Stalin deployed his “best pupil,” Wang Ming whom he gave direct instructions on November 11, 1937, to “‘take measures’ to eradicate ‘manifestations of Trotskyism in the actions of the CCP leadership,’ and ‘[u]sing all available means, intensify the struggle against the Trotskyites ... Trotskyites must be hunted down, shot, destroyed. These are international provocateurs, fascism’s most vicious agents.’”³³ Wang Ming had carried out such an anti-Trotskyist crusade at the beginning of the 1930s, and at the end of 1937, Stalin again turned to him to eliminate the Trotskyist opposition. The two “main imports” of Wang Ming and the Returned Student in the first half of the 1930s were “anti-Trotskyism and the purge. Tens of thousands of people in the CCP’s rural bases were ‘unmasked’ as ‘Trotskyists,’ ‘Anti-Bolsheviks,’ ‘Social Democrats,’ and ‘Guomindang agents’ in the 1930s and executed.” In 1938, the anti-Trotskyist purges resumed with the return of Wang Ming, and “the word ‘Trotskyist’ became synonymous in party usage with ‘Japanese spy.’ This new wave of anti-Trotskyist hysteria was a Chinese echo of Stalin’s purge of his rivals among the Soviet Union’s old Bolshevik leaders, nearly all of whom were framed as Trotskyists and executed in the course of the Moscow show trials.”³⁴

With the Japanese invasion south of the Great Wall in July 1937, Mao led the CCP to adopt a strategy of guerrilla warfare as a means of not engaging all of their forces in conflict with Japan, but of retaining at least a quarter of the

³¹Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 300–1.

³²*ibid.*, 316. To carry out these instructions, “the CCP Central Committee ... expressed its readiness to rename the Soviet government the government of the Special Region of the Chinese Republic and to rename the Red Army the National Revolutionary Army, which would be directly subordinated to the Central Government of the Guomindang and the Military Council in Nanjing. Moreover, it agreed to introduce a democratic system of general elections in the Special Region and to stop confiscating landlords’ land.” (*ibid.*, 304).

³³*Ibid.*, 317.

³⁴Gregor Benton, *China’s Urban Revolutionaries: Explorations in the History of Chinese Trotskyism, 1921-1952* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, 1996), 60–61. Kang Sheng, who would become the “the Maoists’ chief inquisitor in the Cultural Revolution” was trained by Wang Ming and the НКВД and played a leading role in the anti-Trotskyist campaign of 1938. He later shifted his allegiance from Wang Ming to Mao and used the same techniques he had honed against the Trotskyists against Mao’s opponents in 1966. (Benton, *Prophets Unarmed*, 15 fn. 50).

forces in abatement for the possibility of conflict with Chiang, whom they did not trust. This strategy was not, however, a rejection of United Front with the Guomindang, but a move to win over what Mao characterized as the middle forces within it. He wrote at the time that “There are some elements inside the Guomindang that waver between the GMD and the CCP. This creates favorable conditions for us to win the Guomindang over to our side.”³⁵

Working with Chen Boda in 1939, Mao elaborated the political perspective of the Chinese Revolution in two works: the first, published in December 1939, was an article “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party” and the second, published in January 1940, was a pamphlet, *On New Democracy*. These works would be integral components of what would later be known as Mao Zedong Thought. Stalinism around the globe was doubling down on nationalism and alliances with the bourgeoisie. The failure of a great many scholars to examine the political character of Stalinism is here particularly marked, as a majority depict these writings of Mao as a deviation from the ideas being put forward by Moscow. Lüthi claims that these works were written in opposition to the conceptions of Stalin’s *Short Course*.³⁶ The only point of opposition which Lüthi cites however is the contention that the Chinese revolution is bourgeois-democratic and not proletarian-socialist, revealing a remarkable failure to comprehend Stalinism. Wylie describes *On New Democracy* as the “highest expression of Mao Zedong Thought”, but nonetheless fails to understand what was new about it. He writes, “[W]hat is its particularity, or, in other words, what makes it distinctively Chinese? The answer is to be found in Mao’s concept of the ‘united front, an alliance of several revolutionary classes.’ Whereas the Bolshevik proletarian revolution accorded revolutionary or quasi-revolutionary status only to the proletariat, the petit bourgeoisie, and the peasantry, the Chinese new-democratic revolution will accord quasi-revolutionary status to the so-called national bourgeoisie as well, and will include them in the revolutionary united front.”³⁷ Despite Wylie’s superfluous ‘quasi’, what is extraordinary is that at the heart of a book dedicated to Mao’s “sinification” of Marxism, there is no concept of the basic program of Stalinism. What was being localized is utterly ignored. The same error is repeated in work after work. Heinzig writes “In January 1940, Mao distanced himself clearly from the ‘Soviet Road.’ The ‘Chinese democratic republic that we desire now’ could be a ‘new-democratic republic,’ he stated.”³⁸ Pantsov, however, correctly writes “[Mao’s] new works . . . contained nothing new in principle. This new policy fully corresponded with Stalin’s geopolitical strategy. It is worth noting that just when Mao was elaborating his conceptual

³⁵Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 314.

³⁶Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 27.

³⁷Raymond F. Wylie, *The Emergence of Maoism: Mao Tse-tung, Ch'en Po-ta, and the Search for Chinese Theory, 1935-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 119.

³⁸Dieter Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China 1945-1950: The Arduous Road to Alliance* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 27.

foundation, Stalin began to think about dissolving the Comintern. This was not a coincidence.”³⁹

Mao was innovating and building on the ideas and program of Stalinism in *On New Democracy* but it was not the character of the revolution which he was developing but the state which the revolution would produce. Mao followed Stalin’s line to the letter: a section of the bourgeoisie was revolutionary and should be allied with, and the tasks of the revolution were not yet socialist but national and democratic in character. This raised a question which had not yet been answered by Stalinism: when a Communist Party took power in alliance with a section of the bourgeoisie what would be the class character of the new state? Would the Communist Party and the organizations of the working class take the form of an opposition to the bourgeois government during an interim period in which capitalism was built? No, Mao answered. The bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, working class, and peasantry would form a joint coalition government with a shared set of revolutionary interests. The working class and bourgeoisie, Mao claimed, would exercise a joint dictatorship in opposition to imperialism. They would do so through their respective political parties which would form a coalition and in China this coalition would be formed between the GMD and the CCP. This joint dictatorship of capitalists and workers was a conception utterly antithetical to Marxism, but it was the logical development of Stalinism and Stalin embraced it. The revolution carried out by the united front was thus, Mao argued, not a bourgeois democratic revolution, but a revolution of “a new type,” a “New Democratic” revolution. The basic conceptions had not altered, but had been developed to a new level: the capitalist class was revolutionary and it was not yet time for a socialist revolution.

The programmatic ideas of Stalin and Mao were in complete consonance; the national interests of the CCP and the CPSU, however, were diverging. Stalin needed the CCP and GMD to act in concert against the Japanese to prevent Japanese incursion into the Soviet Union and the opening of a devastating Eastern front as the Soviet Union already confronted the imminent ending of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and the opening of war with Germany. Stalin thus insisted on support for Chiang. Mao was convinced of the need for a united front with the GMD, but he had no trust for Chiang who repeatedly attacked the forces of the CCP despite the fact that they were formally units under his command. Mao’s strategy of guerrilla warfare and preserving some of his forces for future combat with Chiang was not in keeping with Stalin’s agenda and Stalin pressured the CCP to launch larger conventional initiatives. He instructed them to carry out trench warfare in the second half of 1940. While Stalin was sending these directives Chiang was ordering the GMD to attack the CCP and in December 1940 GMD forces killed seven thousand CCP troops in the New Fourth Army.⁴⁰

³⁹Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 332.

⁴⁰Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 47.

Despite Mao's requests that the Soviet Union curtail military aid to Chiang, the overwhelming majority of Soviet aid continued to flow to the GMD not the CCP. The CCP cadre were being shot down with Soviet weaponry. The GMD attack on the CCP was seen as a sign that Chiang was about to ally with Japan, but Stalin claimed this was because of pro-Japanese forces in the ranks of the GMD who were close to Chiang and that support for Chiang would win him to the side of the CCP. Following Stalin's instructions, Mao "issued the word that they should protect Chiang Kai-shek from the influence of 'the hidden pro-Japanese clique' and be friendly to him."⁴¹ Chiang, he asserted, should be pressured into the camp of Washington. This would retain his loyalty to the CCP and opposition to the Japanese. The Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact concluded in April 1941, freed Tokyo to invade further south from Manchuria and forced Chiang into the camp of opposition to the Japanese. Stalin continued to instruct the CCP to improve ties with Chiang, and Chiang continued to harry the forces of the CCP. When in May 1943, looking to consolidate the Popular Front alliance, Stalin dissolved the Comintern, the CCP "greeted the idea with relief" and declared that "all Communist parties would now become 'more national'."⁴²

Mao had been consolidating power within the CCP in a rectification campaign which he launched in 1942. While he deviated not an iota from the political conceptions of Stalin, Mao nonetheless gave the most fully formed expression to the separate national interests of the CCP in opposition to the dictates of Moscow. His rival for leadership of the party was Wang Ming, who clearly spoke for the CPSU leadership. In a foreshadowing of future political disputes, Mao used the "mass line" as a weapon to silence to his opponents. The mass line argued that the correctness of a political perspective depended on its conformity to the experiences of the masses and that a leader could be justified on the grounds of his unquantifiable proximity to the masses. Wang Ming was a foreign trained intellectual and Mao's intellectual training lagged far behind the rest of the leadership of the party. Throughout his career this was a source of vulnerability for him and he therefore turned the tables on his opponents by attacking intellectuals as "book-worshippers" who were distant from the masses. Mao thus secured his hold over the party against his intellectual rivals by stating that theoretical knowledge could only be validated by closeness to the masses which in practice amounted to a threat to mobilize the peasantry to silence his opponents within the party. Mao's consolidation of power against Wang Ming culminated in the Seventh CCP Congress which "buttressed Mao's preeminent leadership role."⁴³ It created the position of party chairman for Mao and adopted a new party constitution, which placed "Mao Zedong Thought" as the "ideological foundation of the CCP". The Constitution declared that it "guides its entire work

⁴¹Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 47.

⁴²Ibid., 56.

⁴³Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 27.

by the teaching which unites the theories of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of the Chinese revolution – the Thought of Mao Zedong.⁴⁴

The end of the war set off a scramble for Manchuria, as Stalin sought to secure the region as a buffer against Washington and the GMD. As he pulled Soviet troops out of the region, Stalin secretly arranged for the transfer of weaponry and facilities to the CCP looking to establish firm geographical hold for the Chinese party in the region from which they could negotiate friendly relations with Chiang Kai-shek as a means of securing the borders and diplomatic interests of Moscow. He instructed Mao not to start a civil war in China but to cooperate with the GMD regime.⁴⁵ Where precisely it would be geographically divided was unclear, but Stalin's core political conception from 1946 until the middle of 1949 was to the division of China between a territory under the CCP which could serve as a buffer state for the CPSU and a US protectorate under the GMD with which the CCP would attempt to establish friendly ties. The idea of a unified China under Mao Zedong, who had already demonstrated that on several occasions that he would not unquestioningly follow the dictates of Moscow, was something Stalin opposed. A divided China would keep the borders of the Soviet Union secure and the CCP manageable. A unified revolutionary China meant political independence for Mao and the danger of US incursion.

The decisive factor in the successful seizure of power by the CCP was the simultaneous intransigence and weakness of Chiang Kai-shek. Despite repeated attempts by the CCP to negotiate a truce, Chiang was continuously belligerent as both his forces and the economy crumbled beneath him. In 1946 the GMD attacked the forces of the CCP in Manchuria.

[F]rom the spring of 1947, the Communist PLA, as it had begun to call itself in the meantime, undertook a massive counteroffensive and controlled all Manchuria by November 1948. It now pushed south, marched into Peiping at the end of January 1949, crossed the Yangtze in April, conquered Nanking at the end of the month, and occupied Shanghai in mid-May.⁴⁶

Pantsov writes

the Guomindang forces were falling apart and the generals and officers were powerless to improve the situation. The fighting spirit of the soldiers had collapsed while “in the Chinese Communists the fervor was fanatical.” Chiang Kai-shek's army demonstrated a complete incapacity to fight. Corruption and localism flourished in all of

⁴⁴Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 341. The main report of the Congress was Mao's “On Coalition Government”, which developed the ideas of “New Democracy”.

⁴⁵Keesing's Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 1.

⁴⁶Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 419.

the units. The vestiges of militarism were also strong. Commanders did not want to risk their units, viewing them primarily as sources of their own political influence in society as well as of enrichment. ... the government's inability to stimulate economic development was also quite evident. In 1946 inflation gripped the country. From September 1945 to February 1947 the value of the yuan dropped by a factor of thirty. In 1947 the monthly rate of inflation reached 26 percent. The crisis continually worsened. ...

The number of strikes soared. In 1946 in Shanghai alone there were 1,716 strikes. By the spring of 1948 the government was forced to introduce rationing in the major cities, and in order to increase grain reserves introduced compulsory purchase of grain at reduced prices. The measure alienated the Guomindang's natural ally, the well-to-do peasants. The broad masses of the population grew dissatisfied with Chiang Kai-shek's domestic policies.

The CCP took advantage of the situation and rallied various political forces around itself.⁴⁷

Among the various political forces who supported the CCP was a section of the GMD known as the Revolutionary Committee of the Guomindang, headed by Sun Yat-sen's widow, Song Qingling.⁴⁸ Throughout the campaign Mao actively sought to expand the party's base of support among the capitalist and landowning classes. "By 1948 Mao had shelved the slogan not only of land redistribution, but also those of rent and interest reduction, thereby guaranteeing the party the neutrality of the landholders in the countryside and expediting the Guomindang's defeat by isolating it from its social roots."⁴⁹

By the beginning of 1949, as the GMD suffered defeat after defeat, Stalin still pursued his policy of dividing China and in January he sent Anastas Mikoyan to instruct Mao to stop the forces of the PLA at the Yangtze river. Mao forged ahead, however, and by the middle of 1949 the imminent victory of his forces was obvious. In July, Liu Shaoqi traveled to Moscow to negotiate the support of the USSR for the new regime to be inaugurated in China under the CCP. Liu's report to Stalin, which Stalin annotated, stated the political perspective of the CCP. Eventually, he claimed, the working class would have to enter into struggle against the capitalist class, but "At the same time, however, they have to make compromises to reach the necessary and appropriate agreement and to form a bloc with the national bourgeoisie in order to concentrate their forces against the external enemy and over China's backwardness. ... We are of the opinion that it will take 10 to 15 years to achieve this."⁵⁰ Stalin responded to report

⁴⁷Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 352-353.

⁴⁸Ibid., 358.

⁴⁹Ibid., 392.

⁵⁰Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 212.

by instructing the CCP to pursue a policy of “long-term cooperation with [the national bourgeoisie] to bring it into the anti-imperialist camp.”⁵¹ He explained how this should be effected. “The CCP should offer the national bourgeoisie favorable conditions; that is, it should impose protective tariffs.” He added that the constitution should enshrine the rights “of entrepreneurs and rich peasants to hold property, and of foreigners to do business in China.”⁵² Having received assurances that the CCP would defend private property and thus would not imperil the ties of the Soviet Union with the bourgeoisie around the world, Stalin extended the CCP an offer of a credit of US\$300 million, subject to interest of 1% per annum, and distributed in \$60 million per annum units in “the form of equipment, machines, materials, and goods.”⁵³

On September 30, the CCP formed a multiparty coalition government along with the Revolutionary Committee of the Guomindang. The next day in Beijing, Mao proclaimed the the People’s Republic of China and on October 2 Moscow recognized the new government. In December Mao traveled to Moscow to meet with Stalin for the first time. Stalin “talked about what was troubling him most, namely, New Democracy and its relationship to socialism. He clearly emphasized that ‘the Chinese Communists must take the national bourgeoisie into consideration.’ He also tried to soften Mao’s harsh position toward the Western world, pointing out that ‘there is no need for you [the Chinese] to create conflicts with the British. . . . The main point is not to rush and to avoid conflicts.’ Mao had to reassure Stalin that they would not touch the national bourgeoisie and foreign enterprises ‘so far.’”⁵⁴ Heintzig writes

One might have assumed that the discussions Mikoyan held in Xibaipo and Liu Shaoqi and Mao Zedong held in Moscow dealt primarily – or certainly not least – with problems involving their shared ideology and the world revolution. Today, as archival documents on the talks become accessible, we know that these questions played little or, in the case of Mao’s stay in Moscow, practically no role. *Neither side was particularly interested in settling ideological disputes or arranging a strategy for world revolution. Instead, they were both concerned with classical national interests.*⁵⁵

2.2 The Sino-Soviet Split

Adjacent to the borders of the Soviet Union, the landmass and economy of China, catastrophically underdeveloped and immensely populated, were now under

⁵¹Heintzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 224.

⁵²Ibid., 225.

⁵³Ibid., 202.

⁵⁴Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 369.

⁵⁵Heintzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 421, emphasis added.

the firm control of a fellow Stalinist party. Under the pressure of capitalist opposition at home and the overwhelming economic requirements of the war on the Korean peninsula, Mao moved toward nationalization measures long ahead of the schedule which he had agreed to with Stalin. Within three years of the revolution he announced that the nation was embarking on the construction of socialism. The national tensions between Moscow and Beijing, however, did not diminish, they sharpened. The two nations, each looking to construct socialism within their own national boundaries, had conflicting geopolitical and domestic interests and tensions between them mounted.

Economic construction in China could proceed along one of two possible paths, internationalism or nationalism. Internationalism required the integration of the economies of the Soviet Union and China and throwing all of the considerable political weight of the revolutionary government of the working class which this unification would form behind world socialist revolution. Stalinism was intrinsically opposed to this perspective. The nationalist development of China's economy, however, necessarily entailed conflict with Moscow. Where Moscow sought to enforce upon China a conservative plan of development as a source of raw materials for the Soviet Union, the CCP, if it was to stabilize its rule in the face of capitalist restoration and the threat of war on its immense imperiled borders – Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Tibet – had to develop and develop at a breakneck pace. This development above all required the drastic improvement of agriculture.

The dispute between Moscow and Beijing closely followed Mao's own political rise, decline, and apotheosis. Mao embodied the national interests of the Beijing bureaucracy as fully as Stalin did that of Moscow; his rule was the political exorcism of the privileged caste at which he was the head. Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping represented more conservative layers of the bureaucracy who were content to develop the Chinese economy along the lines dictated by Moscow, but this entailed the cultivation of China as a mere subsidiary to the development of the Soviet Union. Mao was a less traveled and less educated man; he was tied to the countryside; he resolved political crises through the mobilization of willpower rather than strategy; and his character thus was the subjective embodiment of the objective requirements of an independent Stalinist program in China.

There existed within the confines of the Stalinist program – nationalism and class collaboration – sufficient flexibility to include the distinct conceptions of Mao. He expressed the priority of the countryside over the city, of agriculture over industry, and this program expressed the economic and social conditions of China. The opposition mounted to this perspective by Liu, Zhou and Deng was tepid at best, weak-willed; they accepted each of the vulgar power plays of Mao with a weary shrug. Genuine opposition to Mao could not be mobilized along the lines of pointing to the traditional development of the Soviet Union under Stalin, but would have entailed establishing the priority of the city over

the countryside, the leadership of industry over agriculture, of the proletariat over the peasantry – and therein lies the rub. The only possible viable opposition to the rural communalism of Mao was the independence of the working class. This required an international program in opposition to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Given the catastrophic conditions of Chinese development it was inevitable that any nationalist program would take an agrarian course of a similar nature to that outlined by Mao. This accounts for the impotence of the more traditional Stalinist opposition under Liu, Deng and Zhou. The rural leadership of Mao, who was most closely identified with the peasantry, was thus the clearest expression of Stalinism in China. The tragedy of 1926 and 1927 shifted the base of the CCP from the working class to the peasantry and its leadership into the hands of Mao Zedong. In his mediocrity, anti-intellectualism, political doggerel, and voluntarism, Mao encapsulated the character traits required by Stalinism for the political situation in China. The more belated and rural the development, the more would these traits be accentuated, and thus the shadow of Shanghai and Wuhan hangs over the political career of Pol Pot.

Maoism was thus not something separate from Stalinism. It was the right-wing mutation compelled upon the nationalism of Stalinism in countries of catastrophically underdeveloped economy; it was the excrescence of an excrescence.

The dispute between Moscow and Beijing was one of the most significant political developments of the twentieth century. It split the working class around the globe and sharply hastened the restoration of capitalism in both the Soviet Union and China. Lorenz Lüthi writes “The Sino-Soviet Split was one of the key events of the Cold War, equal in importance to the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Second Vietnam War, and Sino-American Rapprochement. The split helped to determine the framework of the second half of the Cold War in general, and influenced the course of the Second Vietnam War in particular.”⁵⁶

The precipitation and exacerbation of the split with Moscow rested almost entirely with Beijing and in particular with Mao. Moscow repeatedly attempted to pursue a conciliatory diplomatic policy, while looking to control Beijing through subterfuge and economic pressure. To step out from under the shadow of Moscow, Mao resorted to extreme rhetoric, vulgar public denunciations and the deliberate pursuit of a policy which led to armed conflict. Lüthi is correct when he writes, “The PRC was more active in bringing about the break up with the Soviet Union. Particularly in the 1960s, Beijing controlled the pace of the relationship’s deterioration and its eventual collapse, while Moscow was often left having to react to recurring provocations.”⁵⁷

The development of the Sino-Soviet split and Mao’s drive to develop the

⁵⁶Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 1.

⁵⁷Ibid., 12.

Chinese economy and consolidate his own hold on power are the international and domestic faces of a single process. The history of the period from 1949 to 1971 – from the successful revolution to the opening of ties with Washington in opposition to the Soviet Union by means of secret negotiations with Kissinger – is marked by a series of lurching zigs and zags by Mao, each calculated to preserve his power and advance his agenda. Each abrupt shift was launched by a purge of his political rivals and often was punctuated by an attack on the working class. A political understanding of the development of this split and the vicissitudes of Mao's rule is essential for comprehending the politics of Stalinism in any corner of the world from 1949 onward. Such a political account has not yet been written and what follows is thus a necessary excursus.

The CCP's original intent, as Mao and Liu had agreed in discussions with Stalin, was for an extended first stage of national democracy and collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Events compelled a far more abrupt course. The flight of the majority of GMD capital to Taiwan, the need to suppress a civil war in the countryside in opposition to the CCP's land reform program and the economic exigencies of the Korean conflict, compelled the nationalization of a considerable portion of industry. The concern of the CCP leadership throughout this process was to retain its hold on power, above all by appeasing the remaining sections of the bourgeoisie in China. To do this it was necessary to suppress any movement of the working class.

The vital first step for the CCP in the construction of New Democracy was land reform, the breaking up of the large landlord estates and their distribution to the peasantry as small-holder private property. "The Agrarian Reform Law, adopted by the government on June 28, 1950, likewise corresponded fully to the spirit of people's democracy. Land was given to the peasant as private property, and the rich-peasant economy was preserved. 'The policy of preserving the rich-peasant economy,' Liu Shaoqi said in his report to a session of the All-China Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council (CPPCC) in June 1950, 'is not a temporary policy but one intended for the long term. In other words, the rich-peasant economy will be preserved for the duration of the entire period of New Democracy.'"⁵⁸ Mao was concerned above all to stabilize the national bourgeoisie, and as such would allow no moves against the rich peasantry. In March 1950, having just returned from the USSR, Mao wrote regarding the land redistribution that the land of the "semi-feudal rich peasants" should not be touched. He stated that "our united front with the national bourgeoisie has already taken shape politically, economically, and organizationally, and yet the national bourgeoisie is closely tied to the question of land. In order to stabilize the national bourgeoisie, it seems more appropriate not to touch the semi-feudal rich peasants for the moment."⁵⁹

⁵⁸Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 396.

⁵⁹WMZ, I, 67-68.

At the same time, Mao needed to rein in anyone in the party who sought to move against capitalist property relations. As the state necessarily took over the property holdings of the capitalists which had fled China, those remaining behind became increasingly nervous. In June Mao noted that “As a result of social and economic restructuring and some damage that the war has caused to industry and commerce, many people are dissatisfied with us. At present our relationship with the national bourgeoisie is very tense; they are worried day and night and extremely dissatisfied.”⁶⁰ This concern needed to be remedied. “We should improve relations with the national bourgeoisie through reasonable adjustments in industry and commerce and tax adjustments so that the relations will not be too strained.” He added, “We must make this principle clear to the cadres and moreover prove with facts that it is both correct and necessary to unite with the national bourgeoisie . . . Uniting with them would be advantageous to the laboring people.”

While waging its campaign in Korea, the PLA was also engaged in the suppression of resistance in the countryside in China. “[T]he CCP encountered fierce resistance from its social antagonists and the civil war acquired a mass character, affecting millions of persons. According to probably conservative official figures, by the end of 1951 more than two million people had been killed in the course of the struggle. Another two million had been imprisoned and sent to labor camps. This war continued, but no further statistics were published on the number of victims. According to data compiled by Russian China specialist Colonel B.N. Gorbachev, 39 corps of the PLA, or more than 140 divisions numbering some 1.5 million troops, participated in these battles.”⁶¹

In response to the need to fund the support for the Korean struggle and to sustain economic development in the face of the cost of civil war, Mao was compelled to push for additional measures extending the power of the state over private property. In this matter, he was opposed by sections of the CCP more closely tied to Moscow, among them Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai. Always he encountered behind the opposition to any move against property rights the shadowy figure of Joseph Stalin. “Between 1949 and 1953, not only Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, but Chen Yun and several other leading CCP officials expressed moderate views regarding New Democracy, even in unofficial conversations with representatives of other communist parties. In their muted opposition to Mao, these leaders relied upon the authority of Stalin, whose advice was not to hasten the construction of socialism.”⁶² Mao sought to regulate the interaction between capital and the state, through mandatory purchasing contracts and other similar measures, not at the level of ownership but in the marketplace, where the state was able to dictate the terms of purchase and sale. The capitalist

⁶⁰WMZ, I, 104.

⁶¹Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 392.

⁶²Ibid., 396.

was still free to exploit workers for profit, provided he sold to the state on terms of its dictation. Mao sought to secure the support of capitalists and intellectuals to these measures. Among the points agreed upon by an enlarged meeting of the Politburo in February 1951 was “It is necessary to unite intellectuals, industrialists, and businessmen, leading religious figures, the democratic parties and democratic personages on the basis of the struggle against imperialism and feudalism and to carry out education among them.”⁶³

The capitalists, however, rebelled against the state regulated market and sought to circumvent it, largely by means of massive corruption through which sections of the bureaucracy enriched themselves. In response, in December 1951 the CCP launched the three anti’s and five anti’s campaigns. The three anti’s, which lasted until October 1952, “opposed corruption, waste and bureaucratism inside the party and state organs,” while the five anti’s, which lasted until June 1952, targeted “bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts, and stealing economic information for the purpose of commercial speculation by the owners of private commercial and industrial enterprises.”⁶⁴ On January 26, Mao insisted on unity “with the law-abiding capitalists ... against those capitalists who are violating the law”.⁶⁵

In a speech in August 1952 before the Standing Committee of the CPPCC, Mao made clear that the primary impetus for the CCP’s encroachments on capitalist freedoms was the budget deficit created by the conflict in Korea. As a result of the war, expenditures were, he declared, “in excess of revenues, and that was a problem. That is why the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party convened a meeting last September and called for increased production and strict economy. In October, I repeated this call at the Third Session of the First National Committee of the Political Consultative Conference. The subsequent campaign to increase production and practise economy brought to light rather serious cases of corruption, waste and bureaucracy. In December the movement against the ‘three evils’ was launched, and this was followed by the movement against the ‘five evils.’”⁶⁶ He added that “Last year [1951], what we spent on the war to resist US aggression and aid Korea more or less equalled our expenditures for national construction; it was fifty-fifty.”

If the capitalist class would abide by state regulations and not undermine the incipient efforts to achieve a planned economy, the CCP would not infringe on their rights to extract a profit from the working class. In a letter dated September 5 1952, Mao wrote

In the present stage we allow for the existence of the bourgeoisie, but they must be engaged in enterprises that are beneficial to the state

⁶³SWMTT, V, 48.

⁶⁴WMZ, I, 235.

⁶⁵SWMTT, V, 65.

⁶⁶SWMTT, V, 78.

and the people, and must not be involved with the “Five Poisons.” This is the leadership of the working class on the bourgeoisie and is stipulated in the Common Program.

*It is not possible, or proper for us to step out of this line and demand that bourgeoisie accept the working class ideology or, so to speak, [for us] to disallow such things as the bourgeoisie’s making money by exploitative means...*⁶⁷

The coming to power of the Communist Party, the nationalization measures compelled upon the party by the flight of capital and by the exigencies of the Korean War, and the need to grant greater shopfloor autonomy to the working class in order to secure its support – all of these developments produced a radical response in the working class who sought to compel the party, which claimed to be the leadership of the working class, to carry out socialist measures. The CCP was determined not to do this and had repeatedly pledged itself to defend the profit interests of capitalists who were willing to collaborate with the new regime. It was thus necessary to suppress the working class in order to maintain the support of the capitalists. The key to the suppression of the working class was the removal of any potential independent leadership and thus the CCP needed above all to target the Chinese Trotskyists. In December 1952 one thousand Trotskyists and their relatives were “netted up in a nation-wide raid and sent to jails and labor camps. Not until June 1979, after twenty-seven years in Mao’s jails, did Zheng Chaolin, aged seventy-nine, and a dozen other elderly survivors step into relative freedom in Shanghai. The Chinese Trotskyists were one of the few groups not rehabilitated after 1978. Wu Jimin confirms they were treated as badly as or worse than the Guomindang ‘war-criminals’ after 1949.”⁶⁸

In March 1953, Mao wrote that “Agricultural production is the overriding task in the countryside; to it all other tasks play a supporting role.” However, because of small-scale peasant holdings, which had been created by the party, “Any ‘plan’ for agriculture or any ‘assignment’ for the rural areas which goes beyond this [guidance and co-ordination] is bound to be unworkable.”⁶⁹ In order for planned agriculture to be possible, and Mao saw this as the ‘overriding task,’ it was necessary that cooperative and then collective farming practices be established. Mao was opposed in this conception, however, by Zhou and Liu, who argued that “a lack of farm machinery made collectively owned farms counterproductive.”⁷⁰ Looking to secure support for his more aggressive moves toward the cooperatization of agriculture, in late 1952 Mao brought northeast military commander, Gao Gang, whose forces had implemented certain collective

⁶⁷WMZ, I, 283, emphasis supplied.

⁶⁸Benton, *Prophets Unarmed*, 2.

⁶⁹SWMTT, V, 91.

⁷⁰Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine, 1958-1962*, trans. Stacy Mosher, Jian Guo, and Edward Friedman (New York: Farrar, Straus / Giroux, 2012), 209.

agriculture measures, to Beijing, where he installed him as chair of state planning and communicated to him his desire to see these measures pushed past his party opponents. Gao Gang, along with an ally, Rao Shushi, moved to displace Liu and Zhou in order to pursue Mao's agricultural policies. On March 26 the CCP Central Committee passed a resolution promoting the pooling of land for agricultural cooperatives.

Stalin had opposed all attempts to negotiate a conclusion to the Korean War; his death in March 1953 "opened the way to a quick armistice."⁷¹ With the drive toward the cooperatization of agriculture now underway, and with the armistice in Korea temporarily ending any compelling need to carry out further encroachments on private property, the paramount task for Mao and the CCP in 1954 was to achieve a degree of stability both internally and geopolitically. No longer needing him, and looking to maintain his ties with Liu and Zhou, Mao turned on Gao, and in a December 1953 Politburo meeting, he denounced him for attempting to form an "anti-party alliance." Gao Gang was driven from power and in 1954 he killed himself.

Looking to shore up his hold on power in Moscow, Khrushchev sought immediately to improve relations with the other Stalinist bureaucracies, and particularly the CCP, positioning himself not as a great leader but as a fellow Communist, and the CPSU as an equal, fraternal party. Khrushchev greatly expanded economic aid to China in September 1953. By 1954 the Soviet Union began to turn over Port Arthur to China and Khrushchev expanded economic aid yet further. In return he sought Chinese support for his power struggle against Malenkov, who was forced out of his position as Premier in February 1955.⁷² While Khrushchev's maneuvers provided the CCP with significantly greater freedom in the policies they chose to implement, Mao privately regarded the new First Secretary of the CPSU as a buffoon and saw his moves to improve relations as an act of weakness. Beijing worked to establish new terms for interaction with Moscow, seeking to preclude a return to the older, domineering relationship.

The scar stretching across the thirty-eighth parallel did not bring a sense of geopolitical security, however. Beijing still needed to secure its borders at a great many points, above all Tibet, Vietnam, and the Taiwan strait. Looking to secure its borders, Beijing drew up the five principles of peaceful coexistence in 1954 in Panscheel, securing a truce with India over Tibet, and the principles served as the groundwork for the 1955 Bandung Conference. Likewise in 1954, China worked with the Soviet Union "to convince the victorious North Vietnamese to accept the temporary division of the country."⁷³ Washington brought pressure to bear upon Beijing in the First Taiwan Straits Crisis, however, in which the US seriously weighed the use of nuclear weapons. Mao responded with voluntarist

⁷¹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 36.

⁷²Keesing's Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 4, 10.

⁷³Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 35.

bluster, and in his communications with the Finnish ambassador on January 28, 1955, he declared that nuclear war would hasten the victory of socialism.

While the CCP sought to restabilize itself geopolitically by a mixture of diplomatic conciliation and military provocation, on the domestic front the party sought to secure its position by means of what Mao termed “state capitalism,” which he declared in September 1953 to be the mechanism whereby “the transformation of capitalism into socialism is to be accomplished.”⁷⁴ By this formulation, Mao did not mean that the state would function as a capitalist, but that it would implement a series of public-private partnerships, in which the state would gradually assume control of companies. This gradual acquisition would provide capitalists, who nominally retained partial ownership, with a fixed five percent interest rate on corporate profit which the CCP guaranteed would last for a decade. In a country with a catastrophically underdeveloped infrastructure, with widespread illiteracy and malnutrition, Mao and the CCP proposed to sanction the state transfer of a massive social surplus into the hands of a few private individuals over the course of a decade, dramatically reinforcing social inequality.

Mao defined three forms of state capitalism – “joint state-private management; orders placed by the state with private enterprises to process materials or manufacture goods, with the state providing all the raw materials and taking all the finished products; and similarly placed orders, in which the state took not all but most of the finished products.”⁷⁵ He warned, however, that “some workers are advancing too fast and won’t allow the capitalists to make any profit at all.” Mao envisioned the process of converting private enterprise into state capitalist enterprises to take three to five years, while he estimated that the transition to socialism would take fifteen years, or three five-year plans. He concluded that “we can and should persuade the workers in private enterprises to act in the same way as those in state enterprises, namely, to increase production and practise economy, emulate one another in labor, raise labor productivity, reduce costs of production and raise both quantity and quality, thus serving the interest of both the state sector and the private sector and that of labor and capital.”⁷⁶ Thus, to secure the support of the capitalists, whose business holdings the state would gradually buy out, the CCP committed to “persuade” workers to increase their productivity in private enterprises.

While the nationalization of industry thus proceeded in a gradual and conciliatory manner, the economic pressure to continue and accelerate the cooperatization and collectivization of agriculture did not diminish with the end of the Korean War. Chinese agriculture was dominated by unplanned small-scale peasant holdings, where production was carried out with rudimentary implements and centuries-old techniques. It was utterly incapable of sustaining even

⁷⁴SWMTT, V, 112.

⁷⁵SWMTT, V, 112-113.

⁷⁶SWMTT, V, 114.

slightly accelerated industrial development. The imbalance between agriculture and industry had worsened in the wake of the revolution as a result of the break up of the large estates and the redistribution of land to small peasant proprietors. “The social leveling consequent to the agrarian reform exacerbated the crisis of underproduction since it led to an increase in peasant consumption and diminished the marketable surplus. As Liu Shaoqi remarked to the new Soviet ambassador, Vasily Kuznetsov, on November 9, 1953, ‘if the peasants are sufficiently well-fed, then grain production in the country suffices only to meet their needs, but the cities are without grain. ... In the present circumstances we are still not in a position to allow the peasants to eat as much as they want.’”⁷⁷ In an initial attempt to respond to this crisis, Mao introduced a state monopoly in grain in November 1953 which mandated the compulsory purchase of grain from peasants at fixed prices. In opposition to Liu and Deng he continued to push for the cooperatization of agriculture, prior to technical development, writing to them in July 1954, “Carrying out the technical revolution, that is, the gradual introduction of mechanization and the implementation of other technical transformations in the countryside is a secondary task. ... Various possible technical changes [should be introduced] on the foundation of cooperatization.”⁷⁸

The first Five Year Plan (FYP), drawn up with extensive assistance from Moscow, had accentuated the imbalance, which if not rectified spelled imminent crisis for the CCP regime, a danger which was greatly heightened by the need to repay Soviet loans. Mutual trade between China and the Soviet Union increased “6.5 times from 1950 to 1956. By 1955, over 60 percent of China’s goods exchange was with the Soviet Union.”⁷⁹ The early years of the PRC saw an immense influx of Soviet investment in the Chinese economy, the majority of it in the form of loans. China contracted around one and half billion rubles in debt from the Soviet Union in the form of development loans from 1950 to 1960. “Except for the Stalin period, when hard currency was used for settlement, the PRC paid off its debt primarily through the delivery of strategic materials and agricultural products.”⁸⁰

Soviet loans fueled industrial expansion, while rural development lagged behind. The loans started to mature in 1956 without any prospects for more to be granted; at the same time Chinese repayment in strategic goods and rural products increased significantly. By then, Chinese agriculture had to be sufficiently developed to sustain the industrial sector *and* produce adequate quantities for debt settlement.⁸¹

⁷⁷Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 413.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 416.

⁷⁹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 37.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 40.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 42.

Mao sought the solution to this crisis in an abrupt, drastic acceleration of cooperatization and collectivization which he launched in the second half of 1955. As he did with every sharp alteration in the political course of the party, Mao preceded this maneuver with a purge of “counter-revolutionaries,” attacking literary theorist Hu Feng and intellectuals whom he accused of being in Hu Feng’s circle. Hu was an ideal target for Mao’s purposes, as he had insisted that subjectivity and individuality needed to play a fundamental role in literature which could not be simply subordinated to the collective, and he had denounced the stifling of opinions and ideas under the new regime. The suppression of Hu Feng allowed Mao to label opponents of collectivization ‘counter-revolutionaries.’ In June 1955, Hu was denounced as a “Trotskyite,” as he and “about two hundred other writers and intellectuals were arrested . . . in the largest cultural purge that had yet been undertaken by the leadership of the CCP.”⁸²

Mao then launched the program of cooperatization which became known as the Socialist High Tide. In July 1955 Mao delivered a report in which he expressed the imperative behind the cooperatization of agriculture was to keep “the development of agricultural co-operation in step with our socialist industrialization.” He declared, “These comrades fail to understand that socialist industrialization cannot be carried out in isolation from the co-operative transformation of agriculture. In the first place, as everyone knows, China’s current level of production of commodity grain and raw materials for industry is low, whereas the state’s need for them is growing year by year, and this presents a sharp contradiction.”⁸³ By December, in his second preface to the volume *Socialist Upsurge in China’s Countryside*, Mao was hailing the success of the high tide, declaring that cooperatization had dramatically exceeded expectations and estimating that “we need only the calendar year 1956 in order basically to complete the semi-socialist transformation of agriculture.”⁸⁴

Things seemed very promising to Mao at the beginning of 1956. The support of the capitalist class had been secured through the program of “state capitalism,” and the cooperatization of agriculture was proceeding at a breakneck pace. Writing in December, Mao declared “In the past some people feared that it would be difficult to get through the pass [i.e. mountain pass] of socialism; now it looks as if this pass was also easy to get through.”⁸⁵ The anticipation of an economic upsurge, and of the easy pass into socialism, led the party to implement a general political liberalization as a means of securing the support of educated personnel and intellectuals. Where but six months prior Mao had carried out a purge of ‘counter-revolutionary’ intellectuals, he now sought to win their support, and in

⁸²SWMTT, V, 179; Kirk A. Denton, *The Problematic of Self in Modern Chinese Literature: Hu Feng and Lu Ling* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 2.

⁸³SWMTT, V, 197.

⁸⁴SWMTT, V, 239.

⁸⁵Roderick Macfarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, vol. 1: Contradictions Among the People 1956-1957* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 26.

January 1956, he began planning a campaign to achieve this end, which would become known as the ‘hundred flowers.’

The “hundred flowers” campaign was not launched until April, however, and in the interim Khrushchev delivered his secret speech on February 25 during the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in Moscow. The ramifications of this speech were immense, as its exposure of the brutal character of Stalin’s dictatorial rule contributed greatly to the fragmentation of global Stalinism over the course of the next decade.

The speech was not, however, a repudiation of the program of Stalinism. James Cannon, head of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, declared in a speech delivered on March 9, “They have repudiated the cult of Stalin, but they haven’t yet repudiated Stalinism and the crimes of Stalinism. That is something like a professional criminal pleading guilty to spitting on the sidewalk in the hope of avoiding a trial on the charge of murder. . . . It is not merely the cult of Stalin as a person, but Stalinism as a political system, that must be repudiated and overthrown. That can be done only by a revolution of the Soviet workers. The goal of this revolution is the unconditional repudiation of the Stalinist theory of ‘socialism in one country,’ which was the motivation of all the crimes and betrayals, and the reaffirmation of the Lenin-Trotsky program of proletarian internationalism.”⁸⁶

Khrushchev himself demonstrated the programmatic continuity of Stalinism in the second speech which he delivered at the Twentieth congress. Building upon the ideas of Stalinism, Khrushchev explicitly rejected the inevitability of war under capitalism and put forward the idea that socialism could be achieved through a peaceful transition; revolution was no longer necessary. He presented two possible paths: “either peaceful coexistence or the most destructive war in history. There is no third way.” Marxism had long posited that revolution was the alternative to war, not peaceful coexistence, for under capitalism war was inevitable. Khrushchev specifically repudiated this principle, stating “There is, of course, a Marxist-Leninist precept that wars are inevitable as long as imperialism exists. This precept was evolved at a time when imperialism was an all-embracing world system, and the social and political forces which did not want war were weak, poorly organized, and thus unable to compel the imperialists to renounce war. . . . At the present time, however, the situation has radically changed. Now there is a world camp of Socialism which has become a mighty force. In this camp the peace forces find not only the moral but also the material means to prevent aggression.”⁸⁷ The existence of the USSR according to Khrushchev thwarted monopoly capitalism’s drive toward imperialist war. Khrushchev was articulating the logical development of the Stalinist program

⁸⁶David North, *The Heritage We Defend: A Contribution to the History of the Fourth International* (Detroit: Labor Publications, 1988), 295-296.

⁸⁷Keesing’s Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 8-9.

of socialism in one country. The response to the threat of imperialist war was not international socialist revolution but the construction of socialism within the USSR. Khrushchev also broached the possibility of a peaceful transition to Socialism in countries around the world. The revolution in Russia had necessarily entailed the violent seizure of power. However, now with the support of the USSR, it was possible that other countries could take a parliamentary road to socialism. This policy would allow the Soviet Union to extensively collaborate with various governments around the world under the pretense that they were assisting in the peacefully implementation of socialism.

At the beginning of April, *Renmin Ribao* published the CCP's public response to Khrushchev's secret speech, entitled "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." The article declared, "To defeat powerful enemies, the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a high degree of centralization of power." This concentration could lead to abuses, to avoid which a leader needed to "keep close to the masses," and "consult them on all matters." The CCP argued that "It was precisely because of his failure to do this that Stalin, as the chief leader of the Party and the state, made certain serious mistakes in the later years of his work." The party cited the fostering of the "cult of the individual" as one of Stalin's great failures. The remedy, the CCP insisted, to the dangers presented by the failures of Stalin, was close adherence to the 'mass line.' Failure to adhere to the mass line, they wrote, raised "the great danger of using the machinery of the state to take arbitrary action, alienating themselves from the masses and collective leadership, resorting to commandism." Here, in thinly veiled form, Liu and Zhou were blaming Mao for the failures of the Socialist High Tide. The CCP's initial public assessment of Khrushchev's secret speech thus agreed with the basic accusations raised by Khrushchev himself, but the remedy which they proposed was specific to the Chinese party – the mass line. For the CCP leadership the antidote to the crimes of Stalin lay not in the political program of the party, but in an unquantifiable proximity to the masses on the part of individual leaders.

While this initial response to Khrushchev's speech articulated the perspective of the more conservative layers of the CCP leadership, Khrushchev's revelations presented an opportunity to Mao to distance the CCP from the political and economic policies of the CPSU. Over the course of 1956, he returned to the theme of Stalin's failures, gradually redefining them not as the cult of personality, but as an imbalance between industry and agriculture, a focus on mechanization rather than cooperatization, and other similar topics. February 1956 marked the beginning of Mao charting an explicitly divergent course for the economic development of the PRC. As he pursued this agenda, he gradually encroached upon and eroded the political power of Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping, all of whom adhered closely to Moscow's more conservative line of economic planning.

Mao's first step along this path was his "On the Ten Major Relationships"

speech, which he delivered in late April. He situated this speech in the context of Khrushchev's revelations, declaring, "[I]n the Soviet Union certain defects and errors that occurred in the course of their building socialism have lately come to light. Do you want to follow the detours they have made? It was by drawing lessons from their experience that we were able to avoid certain detours in the past, and there is all the more reason for us to do so now."⁸⁸ At the head of the list of detours to be avoided was the primary focus which the Soviet Union had placed on developing heavy industry. The USSR's "lop-sided stress on heavy industry to the neglect of agriculture and light industry results in a shortage of goods on the market and an unstable currency. We, on the other hand, attach more importance to agriculture and light industry."⁸⁹ Pursuing the Soviet pattern of development would lead to "grave problems arising from the glaring disequilibrium."

Initial data on the High Tide began to come in, however, and it was catastrophic. Production targets were not being met, the furious rush to meet exaggerated goals was producing low quality material that often could not be used. By the spring of 1956 famines had emerged in rural China. At the end of April, Mao launched the long-planned hundred flowers campaign, but he did so on a different footing than was originally intended. Rather than simply a campaign to recruit the support of intellectuals, he now situated this liberalization in the context of encouraging opposition to the policies of the Soviet Union, and thus to his rivals Liu Shaoqi and company. In a speech to an Enlarged Meeting of the Politburo, Mao formally announced that beginning in May the party would promote the campaign in art and literature of "let a hundred flowers bloom," and in academic studies "let a hundred schools of thought contend."⁹⁰ He then crudely declared, "We should not follow blindly but we should analyze. A fart can be fragrant or can stink. We can't say that all the Soviet Union's farts are fragrant." The liberalization campaign should thus serve as an opportunity to select only those aspects of Soviet policy which did not "stink," and, he added, "fragrant" policies could be adopted not only from the Soviet Union but from the capitalist world as well. "We should learn whatever is applicable, good things, [even if they are] in capitalist [countries], should be studied."⁹¹ Mao concluded that while these criticisms of Stalin and the Soviet Union "can be transmitted to the [special] district [Party] committee secretaries ... we are not prepared to discuss them in the newspapers or among the masses."⁹² Thus, for all the talk of the mass line, criticisms of leadership were to be kept secret. Mao would only make such criticisms public when they served his own political ends of using the mass line to oust his rivals.

⁸⁸SWMTT, V, 284.

⁸⁹SWMTT, V, 285.

⁹⁰WMZ, II, 70.

⁹¹WMZ, II, 71.

⁹²WMZ, II, 72.

By the end of August, Mao's use of Khrushchev's revelations as a pretext to insist that China push for an economic and political policy independent of the USSR reached its highest level. He delivered a speech at a preparatory meeting for the Eighth National Congress of the CCP in which his fundamental insistence was on the particularity of the Chinese revolution, and the paramount importance of building socialism within China. In other words, Mao used Khrushchev's criticisms of Stalin as an opportunity to insist that the preeminent task of the CCP was not world socialist revolution, but building socialism in one country, a task which gave to each national party its own independent character, separate from any other parties' example or instruction. He envisioned this construction taking place in an autarkic fashion, using the resources, and above all the manpower of China. He stated "Given fifty or sixty years, we certainly ought to overtake the United States. This is an obligation. You have such a big population, such a vast territory and such rich resources, and what is more, you are said to be building socialism, which is superior . . ." ⁹³ Mao rooted his faith in China's ability to carry out autonomous socialist construction in the country's vast territory, rich resources and, above all, large population. In carrying out this program, he argued that China needed to pursue a policy rooted in its own conditions and interests and, while therefore learning from others, not simply emulating or following them. Rather than a coherent global program of world socialist revolution, Moscow and Beijing would each pursue their own national interests in the building of socialism in one country. The rival national interests of China and the Soviet Union would take root in precisely this conception and over the course of a decade bring the two countries to the brink of war and split global Stalinism.

Mao's political line of rapid agricultural development, in opposition to the pattern promoted by the Soviet Union, had not yet won out in the CCP. The ripples of the Socialist High Tide could still be felt. When, in September 1956, the CCP held its Eighth National Congress, the first party congress in eleven years, it was the conservative and Moscow-aligned voice of his political rivals which dominated the proceedings. Macfarquhar reports,

Effectively the Twelve-Year Programme had been shelved. There was no indication that it was discussed, let alone approved, at the CC's 7th plenum . . . as had originally been intended. Since the programme had been the centre-piece of the 1956 leap [Socialist High Tide], its abandonment, along with the attack on adventurism, symbolized the abandonment of the leap itself. Mao's first attempt to hustle the Chinese economy forward at a faster pace had failed.⁹⁴

The political resolution of the congress stated that

⁹³SWMTT, V, 315.

⁹⁴Macfarquhar, *Origins* 1, 91.

A decisive victory has already been won in this socialist transformation. This means that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in our country has been basically resolved, that the history of the system of class exploitation, which lasted for several thousand years in our country, has on the whole been brought to an end, and that the social system of socialism has, in the main, been established in China. ... However the major contradiction in our country ... in essence, is between the advanced socialist system and the backward productive forces of society.⁹⁵

The class struggle was effectively over, the CCP congress claimed. Technical progress, the development of machines and industry, this was the order of the day. The Congress made a set of conservative recommendations for the second Five Year Plan, and removed all references to Mao Zedong Thought from the party constitution.

Mao continued to push back, seeing an urgent need to develop Chinese agriculture as rapidly as possible. In his November speech to the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee, he continued to use the revelations regarding Stalin to advocate for an independent economic policy in China. He stated “we did suffer some disadvantages when we emulated some things of the later stages of Stalin’s leadership and transplanted them for application in China in a doctrinaire way. Today, the Soviet Union still has some advanced experiences that deserve to be emulated, but there are some other [aspects] in which we simply cannot be like the Soviet Union. For example, the socialist transformation of the capitalist industries and commerce, the cooperativization of agriculture, and the Ten Major Relationships in economic construction; these are all ways of doing things in China. *From now on, in our socialist economic construction, we should primarily start with China’s circumstances and with the special characteristics of the circumstances and the times in which we are situated.*”⁹⁶

Unlike the questions of the relationship of agriculture to industry and the speed of cooperativization, the method of “state capitalism” – of the state gradually acquiring capitalist industries and paying out interest to the former owners – was a point of complete agreement within the CCP leadership. Mao developed this idea in a remarkable speech delivered in the beginning of December to the Second National Convention of the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, an organization of business interests. Mao argued, clearly and insistently, that the capitalist class remained a progressive force in society even under ‘socialism.’ This was because “Politically, they oppose imperialism; therefore they have a dual nature, and being revolutionary is one aspect of their nature. Since the establishment of the people’s political power they have cooperated with the government, and now [their] enterprises have become joint state-private

⁹⁵Macfarquhar, *Origins 1*, 119.

⁹⁶WMZ, II, 185, emphasis added.

[enterprises]. In these good things one cannot say that the bourgeoisie was not useful to us; instead, they were useful, they were very useful. Workers do not quite understand this point, because previously they fought with the capitalists in the factories; [therefore] we should clearly explain [the situation] to the workers.”⁹⁷

Mao assured his audience on the topic of their greatest concern, “Regarding the actual duration of the fixed interest [payments], the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China has discussed this and feels that it should not be too short. ... the workers will oppose this; the workers will say that this is giving the capitalists too great an advantage. According to the reasoning of the workers, we ought to eliminate [payment to the big capitalists] immediately ... These [people] must be persuaded that if we [adopt a policy of] redemption, we must carry it out consistently and not [adopt a policy of] half-redemption and half-confiscation. China’s national bourgeoisie has a dual nature with a revolutionary aspect. ... We have to persuade the working people that we shouldn’t damage the interests of the big capitalists, that this is beneficial to the whole nation. ... the big [capitalists] play a very big role in the national economy, and it is inconceivable that harming their interests would be beneficial to the workers, to the peasants, to the country ...” He continued, stating that the workers “will oppose [the long duration of fixed interest] too. On this question they are in contradiction to the Party. Is this Right opportunism or isn’t it? Have we become the Party of the capitalists? We have to explain to them that this benefits the whole nation ... At first they will not understand what this benefit is.”⁹⁸

A key consideration in the CCP’s policy toward the capitalist class in China was the impact this policy would have on its alliances with bourgeois nationalist political figures around world. A policy conciliatory to capitalist interests at home, would win the support of allies abroad. Mao pointed out in his speech that an abrupt curtailing of interest payments would alarm foreign capitalists. He summed up this point, “We are taking care of the big capitalists. ... This can influence foreign capitalism and will be helpful in reforming the capitalists of the world. Nehru, Sukarno, U Nu, and even the French capitalist Pathe Corporation are all watching us.” In these calculations we get a clear sense of the political interconnections between the Stalinist program of socialism in one country and the two stage theory of revolution. Not only did the two stage conception serve the interests of socialism in one country, subordinating workers to the capitalist class in return for their support for the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy, but the pace and policies of national socialist construction were at the same time always calibrated to securing the support of capitalists abroad.

Mao concluded his speech, “We shouldn’t report it [this conference] in the newspapers ... If this conference is to be reported, just say ... that I spoke about

⁹⁷WMZ, II, 204.

⁹⁸WMZ, II, 208-209.

internal and external politics ... [but] don't mention the content. If the content were made public, the workers and the medium and small capitalists would all scold me. The Communist Party is [supposed] to communize property; how can there be reason for not communizing?"⁹⁹

Conciliation to the bourgeoisie and suppression of the working class were points of strong agreement throughout the Stalinist bureaucracies of Moscow and Beijing. Both greeted the uprising of Hungarian workers in November 1956 with calls for them to be crushed. "The brutal suppression of the Hungarian Revolution in November 1956, at the cost of 20,000 lives, decisively answered those who believed that Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes signified the beginning of a process of bureaucratic self-reform."¹⁰⁰ The events in Hungary followed those of an uprising of East German workers in 1953 and were followed by an uprising of workers in China in 1957. The political upheavals in Poland and Hungary in late 1956 were an expression of the social tensions which Khrushchev's secret speech had sought to stem. As Moscow sent tanks into Budapest, Mao and the Chinese leadership announced their support for the suppression of the Hungarian uprising. Liu Shaoqi, in communication with Mao, met with Khrushchev to demand that "Soviet troops must stay in Hungary and Budapest."¹⁰¹ The CCP supported, in fact demanded, that Soviet troops crush the Hungarian revolution.

In a speech at Pula on November 11, Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito supported the suppression of the Hungarian uprising, and denounced the Hungarian workers as "wild fascist and reactionary mobs."¹⁰² He argued, however, that the eruption of unrest in Hungary was a response to Stalinism, which he claimed was "not a question of the cult of personality alone, but of a system which had made possible the creation of that cult."¹⁰³ The systemic roots of Stalinism, according to Tito, lay not in its political program but simply in the "bureaucratic apparatus." On December 29, the CCP published a response in *Renmin Ribao*, "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in which they rebutted Tito's claim that Stalinism was a systemic problem, and insisted rather that Stalin's errors were simply a result of his distance from the masses. They asserted "Lenin, working under conditions which were much more complicated and difficult than those encountered by Stalin, did not make the mistakes that Stalin made. Here, the decisive factor is man's ideological condition." Rather than explaining the differences between Lenin and Stalin at the level of political program and the social function of the bureaucracy, they situated Stalin's "errors" in his failure to remain close to the masses. The CCP used their December article

⁹⁹WMZ, II, 210.

¹⁰⁰North, *The Heritage We Defend*, 303.

¹⁰¹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 60.

¹⁰²Document No. 96 in Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer, eds., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2002), 422.

¹⁰³Ibid., 420.

to elaborate on Mao's conception that national development was the preeminent concern of each individual Communist Party. "Marxism-Leninism has always insisted upon combining proletarian internationalism with the patriotism of the people of each country. ... each Communist Party must represent the legitimate national interests and sentiments of its own people. Communists have always been true patriots, and they understand that it is only when they correctly represent the interests and sentiments of their nation can they really enjoy the trust and love of the broad mass of their own people, effectively educate them in internationalism and harmonize the national sentiments and interests of the peoples of different countries." Internationalism was thus nothing more than the coordination of various national interests, a perspective which would lead to inevitable conflict. "To strengthen the international solidarity of the socialist countries," the CCP concluded, "the Communist Parties of these countries must respect the national interests and sentiments of other countries."

Nineteen fifty-six was the critical year in the CCP's conversion of businesses to joint state-private ownership. In Shanghai there were 375 joint and 22,602 private enterprises in 1955; by the end of 1956 there were 16,758 joint enterprises, while a residual six remained under private ownership. The fundamental shift had occurred.¹⁰⁴ While these new forms of ownership were referred to as "joint," this label was far more an expression of the intent of the CCP to retain the support of the capitalist class, both domestically and abroad, than an accurate description of ownership under the deformed workers state by the end of 1956. The former owners were converted into state employees, given management level positions and received income from the state in the form of guaranteed fixed interest at an annual rate of five percent of the company's profit.¹⁰⁵ "Except for the fact that the former owners clipped coupons, the joint-owned companies were in effect wholly state-run entities."¹⁰⁶

These conciliatory measures – guarantees of income, wealth, and prestige – in large measure won the support of the capitalist class to this conversion. "It was actually the working class that demonstrated the most resistance to CCP policies ... " The conversion to state ownership "led to the deterioration in the material condition of workers. ... The establishment by the CCP of official trade unions ... a transformation that took place after the state took over the means of production, led to a reduction in the living standards of manual laborers. The official trade unions, controlled by the state, defended the government, not the workers." Thus, for the Chinese working class then nationalization measures implemented by the CCP meant worsened working conditions and diminished pay, while they saw that for the bosses it meant a guaranteed share of the profits,

¹⁰⁴Mark W. Frazier, *The Making of the Chinese Industrial Workplace: State, Revolution, and Labor Management* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 134.

¹⁰⁵William Hinton, *Turning Point in China: an essay on the Cultural Revolution* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 23.

¹⁰⁶Elizabeth J Perry, "Shanghai's Strike Wave of 1957," *The China Quarterly* 137 (1994): 7.

positions in upper management and political prestige. Rong Yiren, the owner of a major textile mill was installed by the CCP in early 1957 as vice-mayor of Shanghai. The working class “began to express their dissatisfaction by means of strikes, which the local authorities managed to suppress with considerable difficulty. According to official data, between August 1956 and January 1957 there were more than 10,000 large and small strikes by workers and more than 10,000 strikes by students and pupils.”¹⁰⁷

These outbreaks of working class protest, emerging several months after the CCP had declared that the class struggle in China was over, and which they had barely managed to contain, preoccupied Mao in early 1957. On February 27 he delivered his “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People” speech before the Eleventh Session of the Supreme State Conference, in which he articulated the conception that there were two different types of contradictions: those between the enemy and “ourselves,” and those among the people. While contradictions between the enemy and ourselves were “antagonistic contradictions” those among the people were “non-antagonistic.”¹⁰⁸ The latter category – non-antagonistic contradictions – served both to explain why there was the emergence of unrest in the Chinese working class when class antagonisms had already been eliminated, and to account for the CCP’s continued support for the capitalists, for they were likewise a non-antagonistic contradiction. Mao was adamant on this latter point, “Where do we put the national bourgeoisie? In the first type of contradiction or the second? ... we all know that the national bourgeoisie cannot be put in the first type, in the category of contradictions between the enemy and ourselves. [This is] because the national bourgeoisie has a dual character: they are willing to accept the constitution, to accept socialist transformation, to walk the road to socialism. For these reasons the national bourgeoisie is different from imperialism, bureaucrat capitalism, and feudalism. Having these differences, the national bourgeoisie is willing to accept socialist transformation.”¹⁰⁹ To the peril posed to the CCP regime by the emergence of unrest in the working class, Mao raised the specter of mass executions and prison camps, rehabilitating the CCP’s terrorist methods exactly one year after Khrushchev’s secret speech. He asserted that China had adopted a correct policy regarding “counter-revolutionaries.” Where Stalin had erred “to the left,” killing too many people, and Hungary had erred “to the right,” killing too few, China had adopted a policy that generally only killed the correct number of genuine counterrevolutionaries. He asked, “Have there been any people unjustly killed? Yes, at the time of the great [campaign] to eliminate counterrevolutionaries ... 1950, 1951, 1952, ... there were. But basically there were no errors; that group of people should have been killed. In all, how many were killed? Seven hundred

¹⁰⁷Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 422.

¹⁰⁸SSCM, 132.

¹⁰⁹SSCM, 135-136.

thousand were killed, [and] after that time probably over 70,000 more have been killed. But less than 80,000.”¹¹⁰

The strike wave, however, appeared to be contained. In a speech delivered on March 20, Mao spoke of a willingness to tolerate “a few strikes,” and stated his intent to continue the policy of letting “a hundred flowers bloom.”¹¹¹ Less than two months later the impact of the declining living standards of the working class combined with the example of the Hungarian uprising to produce an explosion of working class anger in a “strike wave of monumental proportions” that threatened the foundations of CCP rule. Mobilized behind the slogan, “Let’s create another Hungarian Incident!,” the strikes involved 587 enterprises and nearly 30,000 workers in Shanghai.¹¹² The striking workers rapidly formed autonomous political organizations, independent of the party apparatus. They denounced party cadre as “scabs,” and declared that the unions were “breathing out the same nostril as enterprise management.”¹¹³ The striking workers often “took over the factory broadcast system,” and at many factories, workers manned the gates and denied entry to party and union officials because they were not wearing “shoulder-badge identification issued by the striking workers.”¹¹⁴ They began to put forward the slogan, “We workers need only a working people’s organization, not a union.”¹¹⁵ The autonomous workers organizations, initially formed in the factories, created a “united command headquarters” in order “to provide martial direction to the struggles.” The Shanghai uprising spread rapidly and between May and July workers in “Beijing, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Tianjin, Jingdezhen, Shanxi, Hebei, Chongqing, Guangxi” joined in what was becoming a coordinated political movement of workers with an inchoate international class consciousness.¹¹⁶

On April 30, Mao addressed a hastily convened session of the Supreme State Conference in Beijing. The seriousness of the situation was highlighted by Mao’s statement that “Some people worry that the People’s Government might be toppled,” which he proposed to remedy by sending political opponents to forced labor camps in the countryside.¹¹⁷ These measures were presented as being opposed to “bourgeois rightism,” and a figurehead opponent Zhang Bojun, head of the Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, was singled out by Mao as the “number one rightist.” The primary target, however, of the anti-Rightist crusade was the working class. Mao presented the mass eruption of working class anger as an expression of the fact that some people’s ideas “will never

¹¹⁰SSCM, 142.

¹¹¹SSCM, 362.

¹¹²Perry, “Shanghai’s Strike Wave of 1957,” 1, 11; Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 422.

¹¹³Perry, “Shanghai’s Strike Wave of 1957,” 18.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 16.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 14.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 22 fn. 99.

¹¹⁷SSCM, 364-5.

change. [It's a] conditioned reflex. Childbirth originally is actually not painful; but once public opinion says its painful, [it] becomes painful. To turn pain into painlessness, doctors have to do lots of work."¹¹⁸ Mao added that "In general, [this] is a new era with new tasks; class struggle has ended [and] war has been declared on nature."¹¹⁹ Workers who persisted in fighting against their exploitation and for political power when, as Mao assured his audience, the class struggle had already ended, were like foolish women swayed by public opinion to believe that childbirth was painful when in truth it was not. Objective conditions did not need to change, it was the thinking of workers that was at fault. Drastic measures were needed to remold their thought. On May 13, Mao published an article entitled, "Concerning Disturbances Among Workers," in which he argued, "In our country, workers are the masters of the state. In our enterprises, the leaders manage the enterprises on behalf of the state, which itself is led by the working class. Therefore, the leaders and the workers fundamental interests are the same. There is no antagonistic contradiction between them. ... In that case, why have strikes and petitions occurred?"¹²⁰ Mao's answer was the same as his April 30 speech: "conditioned reflexes," and added "if there are individual bad elements among the masses who deliberately cause trouble, their faces will be exposed and will be recognized by the masses."¹²¹

The Anti-Rightist campaign lasted "until late in the year, purging hundreds of thousands."¹²² Pantsov writes, "For the first time in the history of the C C P, the label of 'rightist bourgeois elements' was affixed to millions ... About half a million were incarcerated in labor reform camps."¹²³ The label "bourgeois elements," rather than simply "bourgeoisie," was used precisely because the primary victims of the campaign were not capitalists at all but members of the working class whose opposition to the party's rule earned them this label. The Anti-Rightist campaign did not alter Mao's line on the bourgeoisie an iota. He wrote on June 11 that most of the national bourgeoisie "have come to realize that socialism is the only way out for the Chinese nation and have therefore expressed a willingness to accept socialism."¹²⁴ Regarding workers, however, Mao issued a directive on June 8 which declared, "Factory workers should be clear about the over-all situation and must not stir up any trouble."¹²⁵ He added, "Questions of welfare and wages should not be brought up in this period, so that we can deal with the reactionaries in unison."¹²⁶ On July 18, during a conference in Qingdao, he stated that "The

¹¹⁸SSCM, 370.

¹¹⁹SSCM, 371.

¹²⁰WMZ, II, 542.

¹²¹WMZ, II, 544.

¹²²Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 72.

¹²³Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 442.

¹²⁴WMZ, II, 577.

¹²⁵SWMTT, V, 448.

¹²⁶WMZ, II, 562.

factories must absolutely not hinder production. ... The scope of the rectification is to be expanded. ... all the Rightists are to be sent to labor education.”¹²⁷ Mao saw the fate of the party’s rule at stake and during the same July conference he wrote, “By itself, the socialist revolution of 1956 on the economic front (that is, in the ownership of the means of production) is not enough, nor is it secure. This has been borne out by the Hungarian incident.”¹²⁸ He drew a parallel between the campaign and the “debate with Trotsky” over “whether socialism could be built in one country.”¹²⁹ As it was during both the fight with Trotsky and the recent Hungarian uprising, the security of the bureaucracy was again at stake; and as with these historical precedents, the Stalinists had but one answer: they drowned the incipient political revolution of the Chinese working class in blood.

In November 1957, the leaders of world Stalinism, among them Mao Zedong, gathered in Moscow on the fortieth anniversary of the October Revolution and issued a declaration signed by all Communist countries, except Yugoslavia. The 1957 Moscow Declaration affirmed Khrushchev’s basic contentions during the Twentieth CPSU Congress: imperialist war was not inevitable under capitalism and a peaceful, parliamentary transition to socialism was possible. The document stated that “The working class, the democratic forces and the working people everywhere are interested in tirelessly strengthening fraternal contacts for the sake of the common cause, in safeguarding from enemy encroachments the historic political and social gains effected in the Soviet Union – the first and mightiest Socialist power – in the Chinese People’s Republic and in all the Socialist countries, in seeing these gains extended and consolidated.” The Stalinist leadership assembled in Moscow pledged that workers around the globe would defend the interests of the Socialist bloc, and not that this bloc would fight for world socialist revolution. The interests of the Stalinist bureaucracies were paramount. Relations between the countries of the socialist bloc, meanwhile, were subordinate to the socialist construction of each individual member of this bloc, and internationalism was merely the federation of common national interests. The signatories committed themselves to “educating all the working people in the spirit of combining internationalism with patriotism.”

The Moscow Declaration asserted that “The defense of peace is the most important world-wide task of the day,” and added that “The participants in the meeting declare that they support the efforts of all states, parties, organizations, movements and individuals who champion peace and oppose war, who want peaceful coexistence, collective security in Europe and Asia, reduction of armaments and prohibition of the use and tests of nuclear weapons.” On the basis of this statement, the document called for the union of workers and capitalists throughout the world in opposition to the “big monopoly group of capital” – a

¹²⁷WMZ, II, 645.

¹²⁸SWMTT, V, 478.

¹²⁹SWMTT, V, 479.

handful of capitalists, they stated, who were “chiefly responsible for the arms race.” They declared that “The interests and the policy of this handful of monopolies conflict increasingly not only with the interests of the working class, but the other sections of capitalist society: the peasants, intellectuals, petty and middle urban bourgeoisie.” World peace could thus be achieved – while capitalism was still ruled the majority of the globe – not through socialist revolution, but through an alliance with a section of the capitalist class. In addition to this subordination of all political struggle to the “defense of peace,” the Moscow Declaration stated that “The working class and its vanguard – the Marxist-Leninist party – seek to achieve the Socialist revolution by peaceful means. This would accord with the interests of the working class and the people as a whole as well as with the national interests of the country.” The assembled Stalinist leadership thus committed themselves to the struggle to achieve revolution by peaceful means, which would be effected through a “popular front” in order to “unite a majority of the people, to win state power without civil war and ensure the transfer of the basic means of production to the hands of the people.” This would be carried out by securing “a firm majority in parliament” and transforming “parliament from an instrument serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie into an instrument serving the working people.”

In sum, the Moscow Declaration of 1957 revealed just how completely the Stalinist leadership had abandoned and betrayed the principles of the October Revolution. It called for a popular front throughout the world – including in the advanced capitalist countries – of the working class with a section of the bourgeoisie, in defense of ‘peace’ and the national interests of the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies. In pursuit of this popular front, they called upon workers to wage a peaceful, parliamentary struggle, which would necessarily entail voting for their bourgeois allies. Within the Socialist bloc itself each member country was to pursue its own independent construction, and instill within its people a sense of “patriotism” which would be coordinated with “internationalism,” a word which had been reduced to a catch-phrase for the limited, federated interests of the collective Stalinist regimes.

China was a leading signatory to the Declaration despite some concerns regarding the idea of the peaceful transition to socialism, which they voiced on November 10 in a polite, secret memo to Khrushchev. The memo stated that both peaceful and non-peaceful transitions to socialism should have been included, but that despite this reservation the CCP supported the existing document.¹³⁰ Mao, however, began publicly articulating far sharper disagreements. He repeatedly asserted during the Moscow gathering that nuclear war would bring about socialism, and he declared during a speech, “The whole world has 2 billion 200 million people, possibly it will lose a third; or even more, possibly it will lose

¹³⁰The memo can be found in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 105-108.

half ... but there will be another half; the imperialists will be hit completely, [and] the whole world will become socialist; and after a couple of years, it will again have 2 billion 200 million people, probably more.” “The head of the Italian communist party, Palmiro Togliatti, asked ‘Comrade Mao Zedong? And how many Italians will survive an atomic war?’ Mao calmly replied, ‘None at all. But why do you think that Italians are so important to humanity?’”¹³¹ The Soviet Union was alarmed by the perspective being put forward by this ally to whom they had committed to supply nuclear technology.

Khrushchev had in the Moscow document an opportunity to maneuver for better relations with Washington, and in March 1958 he wrote to Eisenhower offering a unilateral cessation of nuclear testing. In the same year, Washington deployed nuclear missiles to Taiwan precipitating the Second Taiwan Straits crisis. Mao saw in the conciliatory positions of the Soviet Union toward Washington the abandonment of China in the midst of a war crisis. It was imperative to redouble efforts at independent economic development and Mao thus embarked on the Great Leap Forward.

The Great Leap Forward of 1958 to 1960 – the headlong collectivization of agriculture and the precipitous, erratic production of steel – led to the deaths of tens of millions from starvation. This radical shift in the CCP’s development strategy was driven above all by Mao’s awareness of immense geopolitical pressure. Washington was tightening a noose around China; war seemed imminent. With its considerably more advanced economy ensconced behind the geographical buffers of Eastern Europe and China, Moscow was pursuing a conciliatory policy toward US imperialism which expressed a starkly different set of national interests. Where the USSR had nuclear arms and a seat at the United Nations, China had neither. Beijing was not in a position to follow the course being pursued by Khrushchev. To be economically and politically beholden to Moscow under these circumstances was perilous. The Marxist perspective that world socialist revolution carried out by the international working class was the answer to the danger of imperialist war was for Mao and his cohort but an occasional slogan in which they placed no real trust and which had no bearing on their political strategy. The nationalist program of Socialism in One Country presented the CCP with only two alternatives: either capitulate, first to Moscow and then to Washington; or prepare to break with Moscow and pursue a reckless course of autarkic economic development. Mao chose the latter; China would prepare to go it alone. This required repaying China’s immense debt to the Soviet Union, a measure which entailed a drastic increase in grain production. At the same time, China needed to accelerate preparations to meet the threat of war with Washington and an extreme ramping-up of steel production was therefore re-

¹³¹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 77; Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 445-6. Mao sounded remarkably like Gen. Buck Turgidson in *Dr. Strangelove* – “I’m not saying we wouldn’t get our hair mussed...”

quired. Mao led this campaign with a lethal combination of voluntarism and dictatorship, first working, and then starving, the people to death.

Mao used the energy and political weight of the anti-Rightist crusade to press ahead with his plan to rapidly collectivize agriculture. From the failure of the Socialist High Tide policy in 1956 until the end of 1957, Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi had opposed Mao's accelerated agricultural plans as 'rash advance.' Beginning in October 1957, Mao pushed back. During the Third Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee, Mao revisited the declaration of the Eighth Congress that the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat had been fundamentally resolved. Mao now declared his disagreement with this perspective, arguing that "since the Rightists are making frenzied attacks this time, it should be said that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the primary one."¹³² This contradiction, however, did not entail a fight against capitalists, but against "bourgeois ideology," which Mao stated, "also exists among the workers." He continued, "For the time being, we will not mention this in the newspapers. . . . If we suddenly declared that the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is primary . . . it will cause squabbling among the laboring people."¹³³ In this manner, Mao turned the threat of the Anti-Rightist crusade against Liu and Zhou, who had been the principal advocates of the idea that class struggle had ended.

Carrying this threat in his pocket, Mao delivered the concluding speech to the plenum in which he turned his attention to what would become the Great Leap Forward. "In my opinion," he declared, "China must depend on intensive cultivation to feed itself."¹³⁴ He directly criticized the slow down of the latter half of 1956, when "the demand for greater and faster results was dropped, and with it the demand for better and more economical results was swept away, too," by some comrades who had labeled the advance as "rash."¹³⁵ By January 1958, at the Nanning Conference, Mao directly attacked Zhou for the anti-rash advance line. Zhou responded with self-criticism, denouncing his prior position as "a type of right-deviating conservative mentality."¹³⁶

Mao repeatedly pointed to the fact that the policies which he was pursuing were directly opposed to those of the Soviet Union. On March 20, he stated, "There are two lines for building socialism: is it better to go about it coldly and deliberately, or boldly and joyfully? . . . In forty years, the Soviet Union has been able to produce only such a little bit of food and other stuff. . . . [T]here are more of us, and the political conditions are different, too: we are livelier, and there is more Leninism here. They, on the other hand, have let part of Leninism go by

¹³²WMZ, II, 689.

¹³³WMZ, II, 689.

¹³⁴SWMTT, V, 486.

¹³⁵SWMTT, V, 491. In the same speech Mao spoke of the CCP having "fundamental differences with Khrushchev." (SWMTT, V, 495).

¹³⁶Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 141.

the boards, they are lifeless and without vitality.” This bold, joyful spirit would carry China forward in the face of nuclear war, for US imperialism was a “paper tiger.” On May 17 he declared, “It has always been the case for the small to defeat the big and for the weak to conquer the strong. The small and the weak have vigor, while the big and the strong do not.” He then added

Since a world war is possible, we must prepare for it. ... Do not be alarmed either if there should be war. It would merely mean getting people killed and we’ve seen people killed in war. ... Not very many people were killed in the two World Wars, 10 million in the first and 20 million in the second ... We have no experience in atomic war. So, how many will be killed cannot be known. The best outcome may be that only half of the population is left and the second best may be only one-third. When 900 million are left out of 2.9 billion, several five-year plans can be developed for the total elimination of capitalism and for permanent peace. It is not a bad thing.

This spirit of voluntarism, in which the will of the people transcended and triumphed over objective circumstances and rational planning, ran throughout every speech that Mao delivered in 1958 and 1959. He declared “[T]he 600 million people of China have one outstanding [advantage]; it is poverty and backwardness. ... At first glance, this is bad, but actually it is good. Poverty arouses them to change, to action, to revolution. On a blank sheet of paper one can write the newest, most beautiful characters, one can create the newest, most beautiful pictures.”¹³⁷ In his notes on Soviet Economics, Mao directly opposed this conception to Lenin’s ideas. “Lenin says ‘The transition from capitalism to socialism will be more difficult for a country the more backward it is.’ This would seem incorrect today. Actually, the transition is less difficult the more backward an economy is, for the poorer they are the more the people want revolution.”¹³⁸ As poverty and blankness were assets, so too ignorance was better than “great learning,” as Mao stated on March 22, when he cited the examples of Sakyamuni, Sun Yat-sen, Confucius, Jesus and Marx as “young people without great learning” who founded “new schools of thought.” By the end of March, Mao had embraced the label “rash advance,” as encapsulating the spirit of his new policy. Speaking in Chengdu to an enlarged meeting of the Politburo standing committee he declared “In comparing the two methods, one a Marxist ‘rash advance’ and one a non-Marxist opposition to rash advance, which should we adopt? I believe we should adopt the rash advance.” He continued, “Ever since ancient times, innovative thinking has always originated with under-educated young people. ... History shows that those with little education overturn those

¹³⁷Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 455.

¹³⁸Mao Zedong, *A Critique of Soviet Economics*, trans. Moss Roberts (New York and London: Monthly Review Books, 1977), 50.

who are well-educated.”¹³⁹ He stated “Having high targets that can’t be achieved is subjectivism, but there’s no great harm in it, and it doesn’t call for a hard spanking.”

The popular will, rooted in poverty, blankness and ignorance, required a great leader to mobilize it, and thus Mao officially revived the cult of personality. In the same conference at Chengdu, Mao declared, “There are two kinds of cult of the individual. One is correct, such as that of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and the correct side of Stalin. These we ought to revere and continue to revere for ever. It would not do not to revere them.” He added, “When Chinese artists painted pictures of me together with Stalin, they always made me a little bit shorter, thus blindly knuckling under to the moral pressure exerted by the Soviet Union at that time.” The uniqueness of the Chinese experience and political strategy needed to be upheld, in opposition to the Soviet Union, and at its center should be the figure of Mao Zedong. Mao began to style himself as a modern Qin Shihuang, the first emperor of a unified China and brutal founder of the Qin dynasty. Speaking in May Mao declared, “What did he [Qin Shihuang] amount to? He only buried alive 460 scholars, while we buried 46,000. In our suppression of the counter-revolutionaries, did we not kill some counter-revolutionary intellectuals? I once debated with the democratic people: You accuse us of acting like Qin Shihuang, but you are wrong; we surpass him 100 times. You berate us for imitating Qin Shihuang in enforcing dictatorship. We admit them all.” In August, Mao declared that “[The ways of] Marx and Qin Shihuang have to be combined.”¹⁴⁰ On this basis, as a modern Qin Shihuang mobilizing the will of the masses, Mao sought to build Socialism in One Country, and he called upon the population to carry out “selfless labor.” His entire policy was predicated on the massive overworking of the peasantry and working class, to whom he allocated two days of rest a month and from whom he demanded ten hours of work a day. He added however, that workers and peasants imbued with the “communist spirit” would work longer hours than this, for “Not to rest, that is the communist spirit.”¹⁴¹

In May 1958, the Eighth National Congress of the CCP held its second session.¹⁴² Mao replaced the phrase “rash advance” with the formulation “leap forward,” and the party adopted the General Line of “go all out, aim high, and build socialism with greater, faster, better, and more economical results.”¹⁴³ The party leadership began to speak of the the extraordinary anticipated results of their policies as “Sputnik grain yields.” To meet steel production goals, Mao launched a campaign of using so-called “backyard furnaces,” where small com-

¹³⁹Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 143.

¹⁴⁰SSCM, 405.

¹⁴¹SSCM, 449.

¹⁴²The first had been held in September 1956.

¹⁴³Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 154, 129. One is reminded of Marx’s phrase in *Capital* dismissing the shoddy ideas of Wilhelm Roscher – “More! Less! not sufficiently! so far! not altogether! What clearness and precision of ideas and language!” (MECW, vol. 35, 102-103, fn. 2).

munities could smelt steel. Lüthi writes that “labor shortages” were “induced by the wasteful steel production with backyard furnaces [that] had left the harvest rotting in the fields.”¹⁴⁴ The backyard smelting produced metal of such poor quality that it was useless for any practical purpose, but despite this fact Mao doubled the 1958 steel production quota in June, with only six months left to meet the expanded target. In August, in a series of speeches at Beidahe, Mao began promoting the idea of “People’s Communes.” These vast units founded on large-scale but rudimentary peasant agriculture, in addition to providing an immense surplus to the state, were meant to be self-sufficient economically, administratively and militarily. In the event of war, they were envisioned as being self-sustaining. The first communes had appeared in April 1958 and by mid-August when the Enlarged Politburo passed a resolution endorsing them, “20 percent of Chinese peasants had joined them.”¹⁴⁵ “By the end of October the number of rural communes has grown to 26,576, with an overall household participation rate of 99.1 percent.”¹⁴⁶

The Great Leap Forward produced massive famine and Mao would later claim that he was ignorant of the depth of the crisis. “An evaluation of *Neibu cankao* – the internal reference news for the top party leaders – reveals that he must have known the terrible truth.”¹⁴⁷ Yang Jisheng estimates that 36 million people died of the famine caused by the Great Leap Forward.¹⁴⁸ Sixty percent of the deaths in China’s Great Famine occurred “from the winter of 1959 to the winter of 1960.”¹⁴⁹ In both late 1958 and the middle of 1959, Mao was directly confronted by party leaders with the evidence of the utter failure of his policies. Had he reversed course, or had Zhou, Liu and the other leaders of the CCP mounted a serious opposition to him, the majority of deaths, amounting to over ten million, would have been avoided. For Mao the imperative was the repayment of debts to the Soviet Union and the rapid preparation for war with Washington. All other matters were subordinate. The Great Famine which resulted was not a natural catastrophe, not even in part; it was a calculated political strategy that tolerated genocide to achieve its ends.

In late November, the Sixth Plenum of the Eighth CCP Central Committee criticized what it termed the “Exaggeration Wind,” the grossly overblown production estimates in both agriculture and industry. A speech delivered by Mao on December 12 reveals that he temporarily reined in the Great Leap Forward in order to stabilize his hold on power. “I made a mistake at the Beidahe Conference. Concentrating on the 10.7 million tons of steel, the people’s commune, and the bombardment of Quemoy, I did not think of other things. The Beidahe Confer-

¹⁴⁴Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 106.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 87.

¹⁴⁶Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 16.

¹⁴⁷Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 116.

¹⁴⁸Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 422.

ence resolution must now be revised. I was enthusiastic at that time, and failed to combine revolutionary fervor and the practical spirit.” These errors, he claimed, were the result of falsified statistics by some comrades, and rectification and re-education were thus needed. This brief retreat did not last, and in February 1959 Mao declared, “There has been an air of cutting back for two months. Now it is 1 February. We must go all out. The general line cannot be changed. It is still to go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results. We must exert out utmost efforts. ... go all out, strive for the upper reaches, not the middle reaches, nor the lower reaches. There was some cutting back in November and December. The people needed a rest. It is nothing unusual to relax a little, but we must exert efforts again.” This would require the mass suppression of the peasantry. On February 27, Mao stated, “As everybody can see, there exists at present in our relationship with the peasants a rather tense state of affairs ... the state’s task of purchasing agricultural products ... is to date still partly uncompleted. Furthermore, throughout the entire country ... there has appeared almost everywhere the practice of the peasants’ ‘concealing production and dividing it among themselves’ and great unrest about food grains, edible oils, pork and vegetables being ‘insufficient.’ The large scale of the unrest clearly surpasses that of both the 1953 and the 1955 periods of unrest over food.”

Mass starvation spread across the country. In April, the State Council Secretariat report on food shortages revealed that more than twenty-five million people did not have food, but Mao and the Central Committee continued to treat “the food shortages as a localized and ‘temporary crisis.’”¹⁵⁰ The CCP continued with its policy of forcible procurement of grain, the majority of it destined for export to the Soviet Union in debt repayment. “In the course of the year, China’s grain exports reach an all-time high, equivalent to 5 million tons of unprocessed grain. ... Large quantities of oil products, fresh eggs, meat, and fruit are also exported.”¹⁵¹ Chinese data from the 1990s revealed that 310,000 people died of famine in 1959, but “[a]s the quality and quantity of food declined, the communal kitchens became bastions of privilege for cadres, who always managed to eat their fill.”¹⁵²

As the catastrophic outcome of the Great Leap Forward became apparent – both its total failure to meet the goals of steel production and the growing famine throughout the countryside – open opposition to Mao’s policies emerged within the party. The opposition was led by Peng Dehuai, head of the PLA, a man with close ties to Moscow. In July 1959, the CCP Central Committee held a work conference in Lushan, where Mao acknowledged some shortcomings in the Great Leap Forward and agreed to cut production targets. At the same time he outmaneuvered his opponents, denounced them as “rightists” and had them

¹⁵⁰Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, XXI.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 17.

¹⁵²Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 49; Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 117.

removed from power. It was imperative, he argued that the failures of the Great Leap Forward not be made public, declaring “There are about 700,000 production brigades; if each brigade makes one error, and you wanted to publish all 700,000 errors within a year, how could it be done? ... What would the result be? Our state would collapse and even if the imperialists didn’t come, the people would rise up and overthrow us. If the paper you publish prints bad news every day, people will have no heart for their work. It wouldn’t take as long as a year; we would perish within a week.” Directly confronting Peng Dehuai, Mao threatened to mobilize the Red Army against its own commander. “In that case, I will go to the countryside to lead the peasants to overthrow the government. If those of you in the Liberation Army won’t follow me, then I will go and find a Red Army, and organize another Liberation Army. But I think the Liberation Army would follow me.” Peng Dehuai caved before Mao Zedong, and in September he wrote a letter of self-criticism. Mao delivered a speech on September 11 before the Military Affairs Committee Meeting regarding Peng’s letter in which he strongly insinuated that Peng’s opposition to the Great Leap Forward had been instigated by Moscow – “It is absolutely impermissible to go behind the back of our fatherland to collude with a foreign country. ... We cannot allow one group to sabotage another. ... we cannot allow people to entertain foreign provocation behind the back of the Centre.” Peng was replaced as head of the PLA by Lin Biao, a man fiercely loyal to Mao.

In the wake of the Lushan conference, Mao called for a new Leap Forward. This continuation of the Great Leap Forward would result in the starvation of an estimated 13.5 million people in the first half of 1960 alone.¹⁵³

Khrushchev’s geopolitical maneuvers from 1959 to 1960 were all made with an eye to securing improved relations with Washington. Sharp tensions emerged between Beijing and New Delhi in 1959, after the failed uprising in Tibet in March and the flight of the Dalai Lama to India where Nehru granted him asylum. Both sides militarized the Sino-Indian border and by August limited armed skirmishes had broken out. Khrushchev took a position of neutrality regarding the Sino-Indian dispute, simultaneously currying favor with the United States and preserving Moscow’s ties with Nehru which were the closest of any of its relations outside the Socialist bloc. On June 20, Khrushchev reneged on the USSR’s prior commitment to supply China with nuclear weapons. In September, he traveled to Washington where he received a red carpet welcome from Eisenhower. Washington and Moscow prepared for a summit to be held in Paris in May 1960.

It was in this context of Moscow actively pursuing rapprochement with Washington, in part by deliberately distancing itself from Beijing, that Mao launched his Lenin Polemics in April 1960. This was the opening salvo in a series of increasingly sharp exchanges between Moscow and Beijing, in which

¹⁵³Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 117, 135.

each attacked the other by proxy – Beijing attacked Yugoslavia and Moscow, Albania. *Hongqi* published the opening attack, entitled “In Commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of the Birth of Lenin,” which denounced Tito for “modern revisionism.” The polemic accused Tito of creating illusions in Eisenhower, of promoting the notion of a peaceful transition to socialism, and of peddling the idea that imperialist war was no longer inevitable. In opposition to these ideas, the polemic put forward Mao’s conception that if nuclear war did break out it would lead to socialism and “certainly not the so-called annihilation of mankind.”

The ruse that the polemic was not targeting Moscow deceived no one. On May 1, two weeks before the Paris Summit was scheduled to commence, a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) U2 spy plane was shot down over Russia, forcing Khrushchev to call off the meet. Khrushchev responded to the Lenin Polemic in June, declaring that Lenin’s ideas about imperialism were now largely out of date, and the existence of the Soviet Union meant that despite the continued global domination of monopoly capitalism, war was no longer inevitable. “The thesis that war is not inevitable in our time has a direct bearing on the policy of peaceful coexistence. . . . Lenin’s propositions about imperialism remain in force, and are still a lodestar for us in our theory and practice. But it should not be forgotten that Lenin’s propositions on imperialism were advanced and developed decades ago.” From July to August, the CCP Central Committee convened a working conference to discuss “Sino-Soviet relations and domestic economic issues.”¹⁵⁴ While the Paris Summit had failed, Khrushchev was still seeking friendly relations with Washington. On July 16, during the midst of the CCP meetings and as the famine strangling China grew, the USSR abruptly announced that it was withdrawing its experts and technical aid from China.

This unilateral decision, which aroused greater resentment in China than any other action of the Soviet government, with the possible exception of the repudiation of the agreement on nuclear weapons, struck a crushing blow at China’s economy . . . according to later Chinese statements, 1,390 experts were withdrawn, 343 contracts concerning technical aid canceled, and 257 projects of scientific and technical co-operation ended, with the result that many projects in progress had to be suspended and some factories and mines which were conducting trial production could not go into production according to schedule.¹⁵⁵

The famine continued to intensify. “The number of starvation deaths in the Great Famine reached its peak in spring during the gap in food supply between the planting and harvest seasons. Known cases of disaster include the ‘Zunyi Incident’ (in Guizhou Province), involving massive deaths and cannibalism,

¹⁵⁴Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 21.

¹⁵⁵Keesing’s Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 29.

and the ‘Luoding Incident’ (in Guandong Province) during which more than seventeen thousand people died within a few months.” In March, in an effort to focus labor on the production of export crops, Mao banned all peasant household plots which were used to provide subsistence consumption. Mao continued to ship massive quantities of grain to the Soviet Union, determined to repay China’s debt obligation ahead of schedule. “China exported more than 2.72 million tons of grain in the course of the year, along with large quantities of oil products, fresh eggs, meat, and fruit.”¹⁵⁶ At the famine’s peak, “Tens of thousands of people were dying every day in the countryside and in the cities.”¹⁵⁷ As Khrushchev became aware of the catastrophe later in 1960, he offered Soviet grain aid but Mao refused, denying the existence of a famine.¹⁵⁸ While continuing the export of grain, Mao began the introduction of “food substitutes” to feed the population, including bark and algae, which led to massive outbreaks of food poisoning. In August he began sending hundreds of thousands of city-dwellers to the countryside to work, hoping to increase agricultural production. By October he reported that in Shansi Province alone, 1.1 million workers had been sent to the countryside, and issued instructions to other provinces to follow this example, telling them to “squeeze out all of the labor force that can be squeezed out.”

Estimating the total number of those who starved to death during the Great Famine is a complex task and a recent scholarly anthology on the subject stated that “between 1959 and 1961 some 15 million to 43 million peasants starved to death.”¹⁵⁹ Even the lowest estimates, however, reveal that Mao and the CCP were responsible for producing the worst famine in the history of the twentieth century. Yang accurately states, “It is a tragedy unprecedented in world history for tens of millions of people to starve to death and to resort to cannibalism during a period of normal climate patterns with no wars or epidemics.”¹⁶⁰

In November 1960, eighty-one Communist and Workers parties assembled in Moscow for one of the most significant gatherings of global Stalinism in years. By this point the evidence of the scale of the catastrophe that was the Great Leap Forward was utterly irrefutable, and the Chinese bureaucracy knew that a drastic curtailing of economic projections had to be carried out. The CCP, whose delegation to the summit was headed by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, were thus negotiating from a position of extreme weakness.¹⁶¹ The Chinese party was isolated, and the only fraternal support which it could secure came from the Albanian delegation. Mao instructed the delegation therefore to adopt a policy of supporting a unified document, which largely articulated the perspective of

¹⁵⁶Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 19-20.

¹⁵⁷Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 470.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., 474.

¹⁵⁹Kimberley Ens Manning and Felix Wemheuer, eds., *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China’s Great Leap Forward and Famine* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 1.

¹⁶⁰Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 40.

¹⁶¹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 188.

Moscow, while working to win over “left” and “middle-roaders” within each party to their perspective. In other words the CCP began actively and surreptitiously planning to carry out splits within the various assembled parties.¹⁶² They regarded the Moscow Manifesto as merely a necessary, temporary truce.

The Manifesto asserted that “It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society.” It was not the revolutionary working class, but rather the Stalinist states, which were decisive in this conception, a point on which Moscow and Beijing were in complete agreement. It elaborated, “Today it is the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society.” By this rationale, all political struggles were subordinate to the defense and expansion of the interests of the existing socialist bloc. This bloc, however, was – in keeping with the program of Socialism in One Country – irreconcilably divided into individual nation-states, with divergent and increasingly rival economic and geopolitical interests.

In the face of these mounting tensions, which it never specifically addressed, the Manifesto asserted, “Today the restoration of capitalism has been made socially and economically impossible not only in the Soviet Union, but in the other socialist countries as well. The combined forces of the socialist camp reliably safeguard every socialist country against encroachments by imperialist reaction. Thus the rallying of the socialist states in one camp and the growing unity and steadily increasing strength of this camp ensure complete victory for socialism within the entire system. ... All the socialist countries cherish the unity of the socialist camp like the apple of their eye.” This unity would be maintained through a balancing act, carried out by each member of the Socialist bloc, between national interests and international ties. “The common interests of the peoples of the socialist countries and the interests of peace and socialism demand the proper combination of the principles of socialist internationalism and socialist patriotism in politics. Every Communist Party which has become the ruling party in the state, bears historical responsibility for the destinies of both its country and the entire socialist camp.” “Patriotism” is the shibboleth of national chauvinism and it is intrinsically opposed to internationalism. The inevitability of the Sino-Soviet split under the program of Stalinism was contained in embryo within this formulation

This unity of the Socialist bloc, mobilized behind the banner of “peaceful coexistence,” would be sufficient the Manifesto claimed to prevent imperialist war. “The time has come when the attempts of the imperialist aggressors to start a world war can be curbed.” Communist parties around the globe would be instructed to build “the broadest possible united front of peace supporters,” which would include an alliance with a “definite section of the bourgeoisie of

¹⁶²Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 190.

the developed capitalist countries, which takes a sober view of the relationship of forces and of the dire consequences of a modern war.” This policy was fundamentally antithetical to the independence of the working class and the struggle for socialism, which Marxism holds to be the only possible grounds for genuine peace. Peaceful coexistence meant the subordination of any such struggle to the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow and sections of the capitalist class around the globe.

The Manifesto expressed the urgency of this campaign. “The struggle against the threat of a new war must be waged now and not when atom and hydrogen bombs begin to fall.” This appeal expressed the interests of Moscow that Beijing set aside its objections to the united campaign for peaceful coexistence. “No political, religious or other differences should be an obstacle to all the forces of the working class uniting against the war danger. The hour has struck to counter the forces of war by the mighty will and joint action of all the contingents and organizations of the world proletariat.” Unity would prevent war, it claimed, and this would allow socialist construction. In “the near future . . . the USSR will become the leading industrial power of the world. China will become a mighty industrial state. The socialist system will be turning out more than half the world industrial product. . . . The superiority of the forces of socialism and peace will be absolute. In these conditions a real possibility will have arisen to exclude world war from the life of society even before socialism achieves complete victory on earth, with capitalism still existing in a part of the world.”

On this basis the Manifesto called for the unity of the working class, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, and “urban middle bourgeoisie” around the globe – even in the advanced capitalist countries, which could carry out a fight for “dramatic reforms” against “monopolies.” In no country in the world – not one – did they call for the working class to wage an independent fight of socialism; in every country, from the United States to the Philippines, the working class needed to ally with capitalists. To make clear this point to the capitalist powers around the globe with whom Moscow sought ties, the Manifesto declared that “Socialist revolution is not an item of import and cannot be imposed from without. . . . The Communist Parties, which guide themselves by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, have always been against the export of revolution.”

Like the CPSU, the CCP supported an alliance between the working class and the capitalist class around the globe in defense of the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy, expressed in the program of Socialism in One Country. The uneven economic development of China and the Soviet Union, and their starkly different geopolitical circumstances, meant, however, that the national interests of these bureaucracies expressed themselves in opposed forms. While both promoted a program of nationalism and class collaboration around the globe, Beijing in 1960 sought to use this united front to escalate opposition to Washington, and Moscow sought to use the political weight of this alliance to negotiate terms of peaceful coexistence. The Moscow Manifesto articulated the latter perspective

and thus the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

The Manifesto concluded by declaring that “The Communist Parties have unanimously condemned the Yugoslav variety of international opportunism,” and insisting that the unity of global Stalinism required the leadership of Moscow. “The Communist and Workers’ Parties unanimously declare that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been, and remains, the universally recognized vanguard of the world Communist movement, being the most experienced and steeled contingent of the international Communist movement.” While the denunciation of Yugoslavia was a point which the CCP would cite against the CPSU two years later, the final note of the Manifesto – Moscow as vanguard – was a decidedly sour one for Beijing.

His perspective defeated both domestically and abroad, Mao was compelled to assume a secondary position in party leadership in early 1961. Speaking in January at the Ninth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee, Mao stressed that in the coming year the CCP would be emphasizing quality over quantity in industrial production, an expression – although he did not acknowledge it – of the total failure of small scale steel manufacturing during the Great Leap Forward. Power in the party shifted from Mao to Liu, Deng, and Zhou, who set about trying to rectify the catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward. They still confronted a situation of mass starvation, which they sought to remedy by importing grain. In 1961, the PRC imported nearly 5.81 million tons, and grain exports dropped to 1.355 million tons. As grain exports were cut, “trade [between the USSR and the PRC] fell 50 percent, with further decreases in the following years.”¹⁶³ The imported grain, meanwhile, came from western countries, Australia, Canada and Argentina in particular. However, “Beijing lacked the hard currency reserves to pay for sufficient grain imports. At least another 4.68 million people died of hunger in 1961.”¹⁶⁴ Mao’s fall from power was perhaps best expressed in the staging of a play by Wu Han in early 1961, *Hai Rui Dismissed From Office*. The play depicted the main character’s defense of the peasantry against the landlords and his removal from power, a not too subtle depiction of the Great Leap Forward and the role of Peng Dehuai.¹⁶⁵

By the end of 1961 China was still in the grip of a profound economic crisis and in the beginning of 1962, Liu and the CCP leadership compelled from Mao a stronger admission of guilt for the catastrophe. During the 7,000 cadre conference which was held from late December 1961 to early February 1962, Liu declared that the Great Famine was “three parts natural disaster and seven parts man-made disaster.”¹⁶⁶ Of those assembled only Lin Biao defended Mao, declaring that the famine was an “exceptionally serious and long-running natural calamity.”¹⁶⁷ Mao

¹⁶³Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 201.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 195.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., 194.

¹⁶⁶Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone*, 24.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 603.

engaged in self-criticism and withdrew to Wuhan. Even in his speech of self-criticism, however, Mao was already preparing the grounds for the next purge which he would use to regain control over the party, declaring, “There are some bad people, bad elements and degenerate people who have infiltrated into our ranks, and degenerate elements who sit on the heads of the people and piss and shit on them, behaving in a vicious and unrestrained way, seriously disobeying laws and discipline. Those people are petty Chiang Kai-sheks.”

The period from 1961 to 1966 was marked by an aggressive and accelerating drive by Mao to retake power in China, a move which was inescapably bound up with the escalation of conflict with the USSR and which culminated in the Cultural Revolution of 1966-68. Throughout this period Lin Biao served as Mao’s most loyal supporter. He had “since the late 1950s ... been turning the army into a ‘School of Mao Zedong Thought,’” and the PLA would play a central role in Mao’s return to the pinnacle of Chinese political leadership.¹⁶⁸ While Mao had been removed from the core of domestic leadership, “moderate Chinese leaders like Liu and Deng allowed Mao a certain degree of freedom in foreign relations.”¹⁶⁹ Mao used this leeway throughout 1961 and 1962 to continue his attack on Soviet revisionism, but in every polemic at least one eye was always fixed on his political rivals within China. He brought together a writing unit to draft polemics – the “central anti-revisionist drafting group” – headed by Kang Sheng and Chen Boda. Mao “personally reviewed and finalized every single one.”¹⁷⁰

Liu, Deng and Zhou set about to implement a program of economic liberalization, moving to effectively return the country to the perspective of the first, Soviet-sanctioned FYP. Liu and Deng supported the restoration of the contract system, returning control of the communes to peasant family householders and at the same time rehabilitating the rightists. A conference in May 1962 presided over by Liu Shaoqi, called for the emergency restructuring of the economy. Mao used a border dispute with the Soviet Union in Xinjiang to rally support at Beidaihe in July 1962 and furiously oppose the liberalization measures, and Deng and Liu capitulated. Mao singled out for attack Wang Jiaxiang, who had argued for closer ties with the USSR, USA, and India. At a party plenum in September Mao launched the Socialist Education Movement, designed to carry out the “four clean-ups”, purging his opponents in the fields of politics, ideology, organization and economy.

In late 1962, the Soviet Union re-established friendly ties with Yugoslavia, the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear war, and the Sino-Indian war broke out. The Soviet Union began to supply India with military aid in early 1962, prior to fighting breaking out between Beijing and New

¹⁶⁸Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 488.

¹⁶⁹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 194.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 237.

Delhi. The launching of Sputnik and fears of Soviet use of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) led Washington to position Interregional Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs) in Turkey, and Moscow's decision to deploy weapons to Cuba was a response. The US removed its missiles from Turkey and agreed to no further incursions in Cuba, but the agreement was secret, and Khrushchev appeared to have backed down before Kennedy. China publicly denounced Moscow for both its adventurism and withdrawal. By 1963 trade between China and the Soviet Union had been cut by sixty-seven percent since 1960 and "deliveries of industrial plant have dropped to one-fortieth."¹⁷¹ In December, Khrushchev delivered a speech to the Supreme Soviet, which the *New York Times* termed "a call for [a] Soviet-American alliance against China."¹⁷²

In December at congresses held by Communist Parties throughout Europe the polemics between Moscow and Beijing found open and vicious expression. The CCP in January 1963 issued an international appeal: a meeting of the Communist parties needed to be convened; polemics needed to stop – except those against Yugoslavia; and bilateral and multilateral meetings should be held to prepare for the joint summit. The polemics did not stop; in the first quarter of 1963 they were flying back and forth between Moscow and Beijing on a nearly weekly basis, and each was more vicious than the last. Beijing began to denounce Khrushchev and the CPSU for "modern revisionism" and "Trotskyism." On February 21 1963, the Central Committee of the CPSU wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the CCP appealing for unity. "In conditions of the new balance of forces in the world, the imperialist aggressors are not in a position to overpower the closely welded socialist community militarily. Therefore, they put their main stake on subverting our cohesion." The tone of the letter was far more calm than China's polemics, and far less specific. No concrete differences were mentioned, just a call to get along. On March 9, the Central Committee of the CCP responded. The letter stated that they welcomed the call for unity, and insisted that they had always fought to safeguard unity. They agreed to the need for a summit. To assist in unity they called for an end to polemics.

On March 23, the CPSU responded. They declined the invitation for Khrushchev to visit China and instead invited Mao to Moscow. If that did not work they proposed a top-level meeting of leaders in May. The letter then proceeded to lay out all of the fundamental points of the Moscow Statement which so patently conflicted with Beijing's interests, and asserted the need to further the unity and economic growth of the Socialist bloc. In a brazen contradiction of reality – and this touched on the heart of the entire crisis of Stalinism – the CPSU asserted "National interests and the interests of the socialist system as a whole combine harmoniously."

The CCP responded on June 14 that "When only one socialist country existed

¹⁷¹Keesing's Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 52.

¹⁷²Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 232.

... the touchstone of proletarian internationalism for every Communist Party was whether or not it resolutely defended the only socialist country. Now there is a socialist camp consisting of thirteen countries ... Under these circumstances, the touchstone of proletarian internationalism for every Communist Party is whether or not it resolutely defends the whole of the socialist camp ... whether or not it defends the Marxist-Leninist line and policies which the socialist countries ought to pursue.” The touchstone of proletarian internationalism, and this was a point of agreement for both parties, was not the revolutionary struggle of the working class for socialism, but the defense of the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy. When there was only one Socialist country, this task, the CCP asserted, was clear; but now it required adjudicating what policy served the interests of the entire socialist bloc. Both parties stated that the paramount task was the defense of existing socialist construction; both, however, asserted that their political line, an expression of their own nationalist interests was the correct line for the socialist bloc and that it was the task of Communist Parties around the globe to endorse this line.

Building on this assertion, the CCP declared that

Every socialist country must rely mainly on itself for its construction.

...

This is the only way for each socialist country to strengthen the might of the entire socialist camp and enhance its capacity to assist the revolutionary cause of the international proletariat. Therefore, to observe the principle of mainly relying on oneself in construction is to apply proletarian internationalism concretely.¹⁷³

The CCP ridiculed the idea of integrating the economies of the Socialist bloc as a capitalist conception. “In relations among socialist countries it would be preposterous to follow the practice of gaining profit for oneself at the expense of others, a practice characteristic of relations among capitalist countries, or go so far as to take the ‘economic integration’ and the ‘common market,’ which monopoly capitalist groups have instituted for the purpose of seizing markets and grabbing profits, as examples which socialist countries ought to follow in their economic co-operation and mutual assistance.”

The dispute was now splitting Stalinism worldwide. In countries where its supporters were unable to secure leadership within their Communist Party, Beijing instructed them to split and form their own parties. In July the CPSU wrote,

The CCP leadership organizes and supports various anti-party break-away groups, which oppose the Communist parties of the United States, Brazil, Italy, Belgium, Australia and India. ... Comrades from

¹⁷³ *Polemic on the General Line*, 41.

the CCP are making particular efforts to conduct subversive activities in the Communist and Workers' parties of the Asian, African, and Latin-American countries.

Lauding the renegades and defectors from the ranks of the communist movement, the Chinese leaders reprint in their newspapers and magazines slanderous articles from the publications of these renegade groups directed against the policy of the CPSU, against the course of the entire world communist movement.

In September Mao launched a series of nine public polemics against the Soviet Union which were published in the pages of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi* in latter half of 1963 and the first half of 1964. Each was increasingly unhinged in tone. Yugoslavia was state capitalist, he claimed, and the bureaucracy had emerged as a new class. The Soviet Union was moving in this direction. The use of the term "state capitalist" by Mao here and in subsequent polemics with the CPSU was sharply different than his use of the term in the early stages of the PRC. Where earlier he had seen this as a transitional form of state ownership, here he used the term in keeping with its use by Tony Cliff and other similar thinkers. Capitalism had been restored and the bureaucracy was a new class exploiting the workers.

Mao's analysis of "state capitalism" and claims that capitalism had been restored and that the state was functioning as an exploitative new class, flowed from the concept of socialism in one country. Trotsky's analysis demonstrated that none of these countries were socialist – not even the USSR – nor could they be. Socialism could only be built on a world scale. They were workers states, with a new form of property relations, a transitional form of economy which could either be resolved in the restoration of capitalism or in the successful carrying out of a world socialist revolution. Yugoslavia was a workers state deformed from its outset by the Stalinist bureaucracy, and it was degenerating yet further under the weight of Tito's rule. Capitalism had not yet been restored, however; nor was the bureaucracy functioning as a new capitalist class. This argument by the Chinese bureaucracy would soon be extended to the Soviet Union with devastating implications.

The CCP concluded that Yugoslavia had "degenerated from the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." And not just any bourgeois dictatorship, but "While the dictatorship of the proletariat is indeed no more, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie not only exists, but is a brutal fascist dictatorship at that."¹⁷⁴ This was an extraordinary claim, the workers state had been transformed into a fascist state, according to the CCP, by means of "peaceful evolution."¹⁷⁵ Despite the fact the CCP claimed that a socialist state had been peacefully transformed into a fascist dictatorship, they also asserted, "The

¹⁷⁴ *Polemic on the General Line*, 173.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

deceived people will gradually wake up in the end. The people and Communists of Yugoslavia who have a glorious history will not submit to the renegade Tito clique for ever. The future of the Yugoslav people is bright.”¹⁷⁶

In November 29, the Central Committee of the CPSU issued a letter to the CCP, appealing for the temporary setting aside of differences and working on areas where cooperation was possible. Rather than polemics the CPSU appealed for a renewed exchange of goods. They added, “We do not propose a general cessation of the exchange of views on questions of principle concerning world developments,” they simply requested that it not be done in public view.

The CCP responded in February 1964 with a marked escalation of its rhetoric entitled, “The Leaders of the CPSU are the Greatest Splitters of Our Time.” The CPSU responded, denouncing the Mao and the CCP as ‘Trotskyites,’ and the CCP in turn wrote on March 31 “It is most absurd for the leadership of the CPSU to pin the label of ‘Trotskyism’ on the Chinese Communist Party. In fact, it is Khrushchev himself who has succeeded to the mantle of Trotskyism and who stands with the Trotskyites of today.”

During a state planning commission meeting on May 11, Mao indicated the direction his thought was heading regarding the Soviet Union, when he declared “The Soviet Union today is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the grand bourgeoisie, a fascist German dictatorship, and a Hitlerite dictatorship. They are a bunch of rascals worse than De Gaulle.” As he had with Yugoslavia, Mao was preparing to label publicly the Soviet Union a fascist dictatorship.

In the middle of 1964, Mao used the threat of imminent war with the United States to launch what became the Cultural Revolution and to reorient preparations for the third FYP. On June 16, he delivered a speech which expressed the near inevitability of global war. “When the atom bomb is dropped, there is nothing else but to see Marx;¹⁷⁷ since the days of old there has always been death. Without a belief, one cannot establish oneself. Those who are doomed to die shall die, and those who do not die shall go on. To kill all the Chinese people, I cannot see that, the imperialists will not do that, for who will they have to exploit!” Mao’s repeated line about half the world dying was not mere international speech-making bravado, it was a key component of his planning. “In general, we must be ready to fight, we must not become flustered when the fighting starts, we also must not be flustered in fighting the atom bomb. Do not be afraid. It is nothing but a big disorder throughout the world. It is nothing but people dying. ... Those who do not die will go on with their work, if one-half meets with death, there is still another half.”

In this context, Mao delivered a speech in June regarding the Third FYP. He reasserted as party policy his opposition to the Soviet method of planning, which was predicated on the growth of industry. In its stead, he declared, “Our

¹⁷⁶ *Polemic on the General Line*, 175.

¹⁷⁷ In an absurd appeal to superstition, Mao routinely referred to dying as “Going to see Marx.”

policy is to take agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor. Pursuant to this policy, when we map out a plan we first see what quantity of foodgrains can be produced, then estimate how much fertilizer, pesticides, machinery, iron and steel, and so on are needed.” On this basis, he laid out an economic plan, which he termed “two fists and one rear end,” designed above all to deal with world war. “Agriculture is one fist, and national defence is another fist. To make the fist strong, the rear end must be seated securely. The rear end is basic industry.” He proposed to move significant portions of this rear end away from the coast. In the same speech he spoke of the need to send artists and intellectuals – currently lazy and based in the city – to engage in manual labor in the countryside. There were too many schools, he asserted, and people were reading “too many books.” The launching of the Cultural Revolution and the war-footing of the economy were part of a coherent strategy on the part of Mao for dealing with the geopolitical isolation of China, the backwards character of the economy, and threats to his own leadership.

The war-footing of the economy allowed Mao to subordinate all work to that of the PLA which was under the firm control of Lin Biao, who was promoting Mao Zedong Thought and had begun publishing an collection of quotations from the Chairman for the edification of the soldiers which would become known as the Red Book. In a conversation with his nephew in July 1964, Mao stated that “The cinema and the theatre are entirely in their [the bourgeoisie] service, and not in the service of the majority of the people.” Likewise in the factories – “Everywhere there is counter-revolution, how could it be absent from the factories?” The defense of Marxism-Leninism thus rested with the PLA. “The whole country is engaged in learning from the People’s Liberation Army on a vast scale.” “On July 2, the Chairman claimed that unless the CCP Politburo worked to rectify China’s cultural organizations, ‘they will certainly change into organizations like the Hungarian Petöfi clubs.’”¹⁷⁸ Workers and intellectuals were the danger; the PLA and manual labor in the countryside were the solution.

The threat of war with Washington continued to mount for Beijing. The Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964 brought the massive armed might of the US military to China’s backdoor. Mao immediately stepped up the economic preparations for war. The three-line plan was adopted by Mao on August 12, days after the Tonkin incident.¹⁷⁹ This included moves to “to relocate people as well as industrial and strategic military assets . . . to the rear, that is, China’s mountainous interior.”¹⁸⁰ They “ordered the resurrection of provincial anti-aircraft defense militias, which had fallen in disorder after the Great Leap Forward.”¹⁸¹

On October 13 1964 during a meeting of the Presidium, Khrushchev was

¹⁷⁸Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 283.

¹⁷⁹Nicholas Khoo, *Collateral Damage: Sino-Soviet Rivalry and the Termination of the Sino-Vietnamese Alliance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 19.

¹⁸⁰Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 307.

¹⁸¹*Ibid.*, 322.

removed from power. The primary causes of Khrushchev's removal seem to have been his failed agricultural policy and the fiasco of the Cuban missile crisis, and not the Sino-Soviet split. It rapidly emerged that First Secretary Brezhnev and Prime Minister Kosygin would not alter Moscow's line toward Beijing. Among the most important changes which the new leadership implemented was a revised Soviet policy toward Vietnam. Where Khrushchev had cut aid to Vietnam as a result of the Sino-Soviet split and the refusal of Hanoi to pick sides, the new Soviet leadership saw in providing aid to the DRV an opportunity to win the loyalty of Hanoi away from Beijing, and to pre-empt Hanoi to the bargaining table with Washington.¹⁸²

Three days after Khrushchev's removal from power, China successfully tested a nuclear weapon. Mao's position was immensely strengthened by these developments – Washington was pursuing a policy of war, not peaceful coexistence, Khrushchev was no longer in power, and China had nuclear weapons. On November 21, the CCP issued a statement on Khrushchev's removal entitled, "Why Khrushchev Fell," which gloated over his downfall and took credit for it as well. "Khrushchev has fallen. This arch-schemer who usurped the leadership of the Soviet Party and state, this number one representative of modern revisionism, has finally been driven off the stage of history. This is a very good thing and is advantageous to the revolutionary cause of the people of the world. ... Khrushchev's downfall is the inevitable result of the anti-revisionist struggle waged staunchly by the people of the Soviet Union and revolutionary people throughout the world." The danger that Khrushchev represented had not ended, however. "Although Khrushchev has fallen, his supporters – the U.S. imperialists, the reactionaries and the modern revisionists – will not resign themselves to this failure. These ogres are continuing to pray for Khrushchev and are trying to 'resurrect' him with their incantations, ... so that 'Khrushchevism without Khrushchev' may prevail."

The CCP waited to see if any alteration in the political line of Moscow would be forthcoming, but the new heads of the Moscow bureaucracy made no substantive changes toward peaceful coexistence, or any of the other "crimes" of Khrushchev. In January 1965 Mao told Edgar Snow that "The chief difference was that the disappearance of Khrushchev had deprived them of a good target for polemical articles."

The dramatic escalation of Washington's war in Vietnam under the Johnson administration in March 1965 provoked the next significant development in Sino-Soviet tensions. Operation Rolling Thunder, the campaign of US bombing north of the 17th parallel, was launched March 2 and a major contingent of US forces were deployed to South Vietnam at Danang on March 8.

China and the Soviet Union pursued rival strategies in Vietnam. Under the new leadership of Brezhnev, Moscow was looking to supply Hanoi with heavy

¹⁸²Khoo terms this the "aid as wedge" strategy. (Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 23).

weaponry for use in conventional warfare, in order to win back the wavering international support of the Vietnam Workers' Party (VWP), to win international prestige in opposition to the claims of the CCP that the CPSU had abandoned struggles for national liberation, and to provide adequate weight to the DRV so that they could bring Washington to the negotiating table. This last point was the fundamental aim of Moscow in relations with Vietnam beginning in late 1964. By February 1965, before the escalation of March, the Soviets were proposing a negotiated settlement with the Americans. They pressured the DRV to stop arming the Vietcong. Moscow was pursuing peaceful coexistence, however convoluted the means, by supplying heavy weaponry to Hanoi. Beijing meanwhile was strongly advising the DRV to pursue a policy of people's war, using light armament and guerrilla warfare tactics. These tactics and armaments, largely supplied by China, were being used by the Vietcong whose primary international allegiance was thus to China. The goal for Beijing was not peaceful coexistence, but the expansion of people's war, compelling US imperialism to gradually spread its forces paper thin. Ho and the DRV were looking, in keeping with the strategy of Moscow, to pursue heavy armed combat against US bombings and not the light armament based people's war. Hanoi felt strongly, however, that a major victory was needed first so that negotiations could be carried out from a position of strength.

Any arms supplied by the USSR, however, needed to transit China and this presented a challenge for all parties. China sought to get Vietnam to reject Soviet aid claiming that Moscow would use this to pressure Hanoi to negotiate with the Americans. The DRV responded by trying to hold to a middle course and not taking a side in the Sino-Soviet dispute. "While the Vietnamese resisted Soviet pressure to publicly refute anti-Soviet rhetoric on the part of the Chinese, a line had been crossed: no longer did China have a free hand in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. They would now have to compete with the Soviets."¹⁸³ Influenced by Soviet aid, the Vietnamese were looking to carry out peace talks with the US in the middle of 1965. At the same time, China began signaling to Washington that it wanted to keep the conflict within Vietnam. Attempted to relay messages through Pakistan, Burma and Britain, conveying the fact that "China would 'not take the initiative to provoke a war against the United States,' but was 'prepared' if the United States attacked."¹⁸⁴

In addition to tensions over Vietnam, tensions in Indonesia were likewise mounting in 1965. The Soviet Union, in tandem with its peaceful coexistence with Washington, had heavily funded the Indonesian military, which was the wing of the Sukarno administration opposed to the Beijing-allied PKI. "In 1961 and 1962 over a billion dollars worth of Russian arms, including modern aircraft and warships, were delivered to Indonesia. Indonesia thereby became the strongest

¹⁸³Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 28.

¹⁸⁴Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 323.

indigenous military power in Southeast Asia at that time.”¹⁸⁵ “Between 1963 and 1965, a developing convergence of Chinese and Indonesian foreign-policy aims and interests led to a tacit power alliance ... During this period Beijing acquired pre-eminent influence in Indonesia, not only by forging common interests with Sukarno, but also by finally winning the support of the PKI.”¹⁸⁶ Mao made a strong effort to win Indonesia’s officer corps and a steady exchange of military delegations was established after January 1965. “It was later learned that ‘friendly contacts in the military field’ included a Chinese promise to deliver small arms to Indonesia.”¹⁸⁷

Mao had planned to use control over the Second Afro-Asian Conference in Algeria to push the Non-Aligned Movement toward the stance of the Newly Emerging Forces which Sukarno in close alliance with Beijing was promoting. The Newly Emerging Forces placed the Soviet Union and the United States on one side and China and Asia, Africa and Latin America, as the newly emerging forces, on the other. The June 1965 coup in Algeria ousted Ben Bella, who had ties to both Moscow and Beijing, and installed Boumedienne who immediately established a pro-Soviet orientation for Algeria. The Conference was effectively postponed. The India-Pakistan war over Kashmir was at the same time turning into a proxy conflict between Moscow and Beijing. Nehru had intimate and long standing ties to Moscow, and Karachi thus relied heavily upon Beijing, but the conflict was developing poorly for Pakistan by September 1965.

Thus, while 1964 had closed with events seemingly heavily in China’s favor, by the middle of 1965, things looked starkly worse for Beijing. It was in response to these setbacks that Mao launched a dramatic radicalization of policy both domestically and internationally in August and September of 1965.

In August 1965 the General Political Department of the PLA published *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* and *Selected Readings from Chairman Mao* on instructions from Lin Biao. This was a mass produced version of the 1964 edition and would be brandished by the Red Army of youth in August 1966 as the Cultural Revolution exploded across the country. The introduction declared, “the most fundamental task in our army’s political and ideological work is at all times to hold high the great red banner of Mao Zedong’s thought ... All the comrades in our army should really master Mao Zedong’s thought; they should all study Chairman Mao’s writings, follow his teachings, act according to his instructions and be his good fighters.”¹⁸⁸ The preface concluded, “In conformity with Comrade Lin Biao’s instructions, we must issue *Selected Readings from Chairman Mao* and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung* to every soldier in the whole army, just

¹⁸⁵David Mozingo, *Chinese Policy toward Indonesia, 1949-1967* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), 186.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., 192.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., 212.

¹⁸⁸QCMZ, xxvii.

as we issue weapons.”¹⁸⁹

China stood poised on the brink of the Cultural Revolution. At the same time, and again through Lin Biao, Mao launched a dramatic radicalization of international politics. In September 1965, Lin published a statement, “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War!,” which seized on Mao’s guerrilla tactics and universalized them, applying them to entire “countryside of the world.” “The capitalist redoubts in North America and Western Europe, he said, are cities of the world, with rural areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America.”¹⁹⁰ The strategy outlined by Lin involved using people’s war “to deny those intermediate zones to the United States by fomenting people’s wars and by holding down the US foot soldiers sent in for pacification.”

The success of People’s War, Lin stated was rooted in Mao Zedong thought. Mao had correctly analyzed, he claimed, the principal and non-principal contradictions in China and based the People’s War on this assessment. “There had long been two basic contradictions in China –the contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation, and the contradiction between feudalism and the masses of the people.” He continued, “As a result of its invasion Japanese imperialism sharpened its contradiction with the Chinese nation to an extreme degree and brought about changes in class relations within China. To end the civil war and to unite against Japanese aggression became the pressing nationwide demand of the people. Changes of varying degrees also occurred in the political attitude of the national bourgeoisie and the various factions within the Kuomintang. And the Xi’an Incident of 1936 was the best case in point.”¹⁹¹ In opposition to the “left opportunism” of Wang Ming, Mao insisted that class contradictions in China were now secondary to the primary contradiction between China and Japan. He added, that “Similarly, as the contradiction between China and Japan ascended and became the principal one, the contradiction between China and imperialist countries such as Britain and the United States descended to a secondary or subordinate position. The rift between Japan and the other imperialist countries had widened as a result of Japanese imperialism’s attempt to turn China into its own exclusive colony. This rendered it possible for China to make use of these contradictions to isolate and oppose Japanese imperialism.”

Lin drew a strong parallel to the present. The task was to foment people’s war throughout the countryside of the world, forcing US imperialism to spread its forces thin. The US invasion of Vietnam mirrored that of Japan in China, and had produced the conditions for people’s war throughout the region. This welded the forces of each nation together, giving the national bourgeoisie in country

¹⁸⁹In December 1966, Lin Biao wrote a foreword to the second edition of QCMZ, in which he stated “Mao Zedong’s thought is the guiding principle for all the work of the Party, the army and the country.” It was “a spiritual atom bomb of infinite power.” (QCMZ, xxix).

¹⁹⁰John Yin, *Sino-Soviet Dialogue on the Problem of War* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 153.

¹⁹¹Lin Biao, *Long Live the Victory of People’s War!* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 5-6.

common cause with the workers and peasants and lining up their interests behind the national Communist Party. A Xi'an Incident was needed to precipitate this union. With the direct and explicit sanction of Mao, the PKI staged such an incident on September 30, kidnapping leading Indonesian generals in a manner that directly paralleled the kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek in 1936. The attempt backfired spectacularly and it provided the pretext for Suharto's slaughter of the Indonesian Communist Party, which he carried out with a list of Communist Party members supplied by the CIA and with weaponry supplied in part by the Soviet Union.

Having summed up briefly the history of the People's War against Japan, Lin Biao turned to drawing lessons for the present from the experience. The first was "In order to win a people's war, it is imperative to build the broadest possible united front and formulate a series of policies which will ensure the fullest mobilization of the basic masses as well as the unity of all the forces that can be united." Lin concluded in this section that "History shows that when confronted by ruthless imperialist aggression, a Communist Party must hold aloft the national banner and, using the weapon of the united front, rally around itself the masses and the patriotic and anti-imperialist people who form more than 90 per cent of a country's population, so as to mobilize all positive factors, unite with all the forces that can be united and isolate to the maximum the common enemy of the whole nation." People's War and the guerrilla tactics of Maoism were to be used not in opposition to, but in the furtherance of, a national united front with the bourgeoisie and sections of the landlords.

This alliance had to be based on struggle not simply acquiescence. In other words, the party needed some power to push the bourgeoisie to help it achieve its ends. This power to pressure the bourgeoisie was secured through the alliance of the working class and the peasantry. "History shows that during the national-democratic revolution there must be two kinds of alliance within this united front, first, the worker-peasant alliance and, second, the alliance of the working people with the bourgeoisie and other non-working people. The worker-peasant alliance is an alliance of the working class with the peasants and all other working people in town and country. It is the foundation of the united front. Whether the working class can gain leadership of the national-democratic revolution depends on whether it can lead the broad masses of the peasants in struggle and rally them around itself. Only when the working class gains leadership of the peasants, and only on the basis of worker-peasant alliance, is it possible to establish the second alliance, form a broad united front and wage a people's war victoriously." By securing the support of the peasantry for its "people's war" the party could use this as a means of not only allying with the bourgeoisie, but of pressuring the bourgeoisie to carry out the desired measures. The people's war – based on the alliance of the working class and peasantry – was the political capital of the party in its united front with the bourgeoisie.

Lin developed Mao's ideas in a new and vital direction. The encirclement

of the cities from the countryside was not merely a national strategy, but an international one. He declared, "Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called 'the cities of the world,' then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute 'the rural areas of the world.' ... In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by the rural areas. In the final analysis, the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples who make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population."¹⁹² In this conception the PRC served as a great revolutionary base area for the people's of the world – a Yan'an of world revolution.

The catastrophe in Indonesia, launched within weeks of Lin Biao's publication, destroyed China's greatest international ally, the PKI. In the wake of the devastation of the PKI, Mao sought to secure his political position by unleashing the full destructive force of the Cultural Revolution.

In March 1966, Mao announced that the CCP would not be attending the 23rd Congress of the CPSU, breaking all relations with the fraternal party. This decision was intimately bound up with the power struggle within China. In the same meeting he stated, "in reality, the academic and educational circles are in the hands of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie." To ensure the party against bourgeois elements in academic positions, he called for a situation where "those who were younger and had less education overthrew those who were older and had more education. ... What is needed are determined people who are young, have little education, a firm attitude, and the political experience to take over the work."

The Cultural Revolution was an orgy of violence and chaotic destruction that Mao used to suppress both his political opponents and the Chinese working class. Its language and practice inspired Beijing oriented parties around the globe, including the CPP under Joma Sison. During the anarchy of the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1969, Beijing's diplomatic and international influence was negligible. When the dust had settled, Mao firmly controlled the CCP, his enemies were dead, and China was in the midst of a shooting war with the Soviet Union. Mao reversed course and appealed to Washington for aid.

In the first week of August, Mao officially launched the Cultural Revolution with his big character poster, "bombard the headquarters." A group of delegates from sympathetic Communist Party groups or factions from around the world had just arrived in Beijing and they issued a declaration in support of Mao. The declaration was signed by a single representative from the Philippines, Joma Sison, and read, "The undersigned sixteen overseas delegations express their firm determination to further the establishment of a broad, genuine international united front against US imperialism and its lackeys, particularly in solidarity with the valiant and unwavering fight of the Vietnamese people. We are fully

¹⁹²Biao, *Long Live the Victory of People's War!*, 48-49.

convinced that such a front can only be formed of honest anti-imperialist strugglers and cannot contain agents of imperialism, namely, collaborators controlled by the present rulers in Moscow.”¹⁹³ As Mao launched a campaign of destruction across the country, Sison gathered with the other delegates in the Great Hall of the People and sang *The East is Red*.¹⁹⁴ Pantsov writes,

A wave of violence swiftly inundated the country. In this bloody drama the main role was not played by university students, but by juveniles, middle school and even primary school kids who were delirious from the atmosphere of total permissiveness. These were children who had not yet grown up, wolf cubs who scented the smell of blood, ignorant fanatics who fancied themselves titans rebelling against the “Four Olds” behavioral norms – old ideas, culture, customs, and habits – and the capitalist roaders. There were some thirteen million of them throughout the country. It was on them that Mao placed his immoral wager in fanning the wild conflagration of the Cultural Revolution. . . .

In Beijing in just two months (August – September) the crazed youngsters killed 1,773 persons suspected of being capitalist roaders. In Shanghai during the same period 1,238 people perished, of whom 704 took their own lives unable to bear the insults of the juvenile Red Guards.¹⁹⁵

A sense for the worship of Mao that accompanied this crusade can be gained by reading through the 1966 issues of the *Peking Review*. When Mao addressed the crowd on August 10, the *Peking Review* wrote, “Amidst cheers and ovations, Chairman Mao mounted the rostrum in the reception centre. His face beaming with smiles, our great leader looked at the messages of greetings, and written pledges on display and cordially waved to the crowds gathered in and around the centre. At that moment there was no telling how many hearts throbbed with excitement, how many eyes shone with tears of joy and how many hands reached out towards him. . . . Many who had shaken hands with Chairman Mao told everyone they met, ‘Come and shake hands with me! My hands have just touched those of Chairman Mao!’ Many who came too late to see Chairman Mao said that it was also the greatest happiness to be able to walk where Chairman Mao had just met the revolutionary masses. They sang over and over again *The East is Red*, *A Ship Cannot Sail Without A Helmsman*, and *I Love Chairman Mao’s Works Best*.”¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³PekRev, 9, no. 33 (1966): 28.

¹⁹⁴PekRev, 9, no. 33 (1966): 4, 24, 25.

¹⁹⁵Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 510-11.

¹⁹⁶PekRev, 9, no. 34 (1966): 9.

In the August 12 issue of *Peking Review*, the CCP wrote that the publication of Mao's works attested to "the infinite esteem and love which the people throughout the land have for their great leader Chairman Mao, the boundless love for, belief in and veneration for Mao Zedong's thought . . . Every word in Chairman Mao's works is gold and every sentence is truth. Mao Zedong's thought is the red sun in the hearts of the whole Chinese people and of the revolutionary people the world over. It is our source of life and our treasure."¹⁹⁷

On August 18, Mao appeared beside Lin Biao at another rally at Tiananmen. The *Peking Review* introduced the Red Guard in their August 26 issue documenting the event, writing "Tens of thousands of 'Red Guards,' wearing red arm bands and brimming over with high spirit and vigour, caught the eye of all present. The 'Red Guards' are revolutionary mass organizations set up in the great proletarian cultural revolution by the capital's college and middle school students. Members pledge that they will remain red vanguards defending Chairman Mao, the Chinese Communist Party and their motherland all their lives."¹⁹⁸

The crowd leapt with joy. A great many hands, holding Extracts From Chairman Mao's Works covered with red plastic jackets, stretched towards Tiananmen Gate. A million warm hearts flew out to Chairman Mao and a million pairs of eyes sparkling with revolutionary fervour were turned on him. The crowd became even more excited when they noticed that their respected and beloved leader was clad in a plain cotton uniform. They said: "We feel Chairman Mao is still closer to us in military uniform."¹⁹⁹

Students denounced their instructors for being members of the "black bourgeois gang" of reactionaries. They traveled across the country, carrying out "long marches," and staged didactic performances as they went. They destroyed monuments and burned books.²⁰⁰ The language and tactics of the Red Guard were formative for Communist Parties around the world, including the CPP. The roaming bands of teenagers and pre-teens carried out the public and repeated torture and abuse of Liu Shaoqi, Peng Dehuai, He Long, and other leaders. Many of the founding leaders of the CCP were killed, or committed suicide in the face

¹⁹⁷PekRev, 9. no. 33 (1966): 15.

¹⁹⁸PekRev, 9, no. 35 (1966): 3.

¹⁹⁹The level of Mao worship in the English language publications of the CCP was off-putting even for the supporters of Mao, and by June 1967, Mao remarked that "Some foreigners have offered suggestions on the external propaganda conducted by Peking Review and Hsin-hua News Agency." They had complained that the praise of Mao sounded a touch excessive. Mao responded "We must be modest, especially toward outsiders. In being a little modest toward outsiders, naturally we must not lose our principles. In yesterday's communiqué on the hydrogen bomb, I deleted Great Leader, Great Teacher, Great Commander-in-Chief, and Great Helmsman."

²⁰⁰Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 511.

of the Cultural Revolution. Liu Shaoqi, beaten and tortured, died in isolation and neglect in 1969.

It was not merely the domestic opponents of Mao who were attacked. The Red Guards laid siege to the the Soviet embassy in Beijing, renaming the road which led to the embassy the “Struggle Against Revisionism Street.” In keeping with the Cultural Revolution itself, the language of Mao and his cohort denouncing the Soviet Union had become utterly unhinged. On January 25 1967, the *People’s Daily* issued a denunciation of Moscow headlined, “Hit back hard at the Rabid Provocations of the Filthy Soviet Revisionist Swine!”

Listen, you handful of filthy Soviet revisionist swine! The Chinese people, who are armed with Mao Zedong’s thought, are not to be bullied! The debt of blood you owe must be paid! ... How closely your atrocious, bloody repression against the Chinese students resemble the atrocities committed by the Tsar, by Hitler, and by the Ku Klux Klan! This clearly shows that what you are practising in the Soviet Union is in fact the most reactionary and most savage Fascist dictatorship.²⁰¹

Recognizing the peril posed by these bands of youth and lumpen elements, the Chinese working class began to organize itself against the Cultural Revolution. On September 7, Mao wrote to Lin Biao, Zhou Enlai and others, decrying the opposition of workers to the students at a number of locations. “The incidents in Tsingtao, Changsha, and Xi’an are similar. They are caused by the opposition of organized workers and peasants against students and are all wrong. They must not be allowed to continue. Try to issue a directive from the Centre to stop them and then publish editorials to tell the workers and peasants to cease interfering with student movements.”

In December 1966 the Shanghai working class organized itself into a unified opposition to the Cultural Revolution, launching a strike wave throughout the city and Mao mobilized the Red Guard to shut it down. On January 9 he hailed this shut down of the working class, writing that the “leftists have now seized power.” He added, “We must speak of grasping revolution and promoting production. We must not make revolution in isolation from production. The conservative faction do not grasp production.” The conservative faction was in fact the uprising workers, and Mao’s point was that they needed to be constrained, compelled to work – to engage in production.

The Red Guard issued a statement on January 5, “We, workers of the revolutionary rebel groups, follow Chairman Mao’s teachings most closely and resolutely carry out the policy of ‘taking firm hold of the revolution and promoting production’ advanced by Chairman Mao himself. ... Any idea of counterposing

²⁰¹Keesing’s Research Report, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 98.

the great cultural revolution to the development of production is erroneous.” They pointed to strikes and a move “to cut off water and electricity supplies and bring public transport to a standstill. We must drag out these reactionary elements and exercise proletarian dictatorship over them, punish them severely and never allow them to succeed in their criminal schemes. . . . lately, in many factories and plants, it has occurred that some or even the majority of the members of the Workers’ Red Militia Detachments have suspended production and deserted their posts in production. This runs directly counter to the stipulation by the Party Central Committee on taking firm hold of the revolution and promoting production and directly affects the people’s livelihood and the development of national economic construction.” The students and youth proved inadequate to the task of crushing the Chinese working class and in January Mao mobilized the PLA as the primary force for continuing the Cultural Revolution.

Civil war raged throughout China for two bloody years. Mao “was the chief culprit of the senseless and merciless mass terror. More than a million persons were tortured, shot, or driven to suicide during these years of ‘complete chaos under Heaven,’ and a hundred million suffered to one degree or another. Only a small fraction of them were party members or cadres. Mao knew everything and understood everything.”²⁰²

The Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in August 1968, sending nearly half a million troops into the country to crush the Prague Spring uprising. Brezhnev justified the invasion, declaring “When external and internal forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a given socialist country in the direction of the restoration of the capitalist system, when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country . . . this is no longer merely a problem for that country’s people, but a common problem, the concern of all socialist countries.”²⁰³ This became known as the Brezhnev doctrine and was a cause for alarm in Beijing. Khoo argues “the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia represented a fundamental turning point in Sino-Soviet relations and, by extension, the Cold War. This act instantly transformed the Soviet Union into Beijing’s principal enemy.”²⁰⁴ Mao recognized that the Cultural Revolution could serve as a pretext for a similar Soviet invasion of China. Zhou Enlai, that grey eminence who survived every change of guard in Chinese history, denounced the Soviet Union as social-fascists and social-imperialists, the number one enemies of socialism in the world. Moscow responded in *Pravda* that China was no longer socialist but Mao exercised a “demonarchy,” brutally suppressing the people.²⁰⁵

Thus, in August 1968, having fully consolidated domestic power, and now increasingly jeopardized internationally, Mao reined in the Cultural Revolution, mobilizing the PLA against the students.

²⁰²Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 520.

²⁰³Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 47.

²⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 45.

²⁰⁵Yin, *Sino-Soviet Dialogue on the Problem of War*, 176.

Of course, there were now new victims. Sensing the Chairman's inclinations, the military began to suppress the Red Guards in the cruelest manner. The clashes that took place in August 1968 between the army and young people in Nanning, the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, were particularly bloody. The streets of the city literally ran in blood; the urban districts controlled by the young people's organizations were wiped from the face of the earth. The number of victims was 2,324; about 10,000 were imprisoned and more than 50,000 people left homeless. Hearing of this, Mao placed all the responsibility on the extremists among the Red Guards and Rebels, asserting that their uprising against the army was "a kind of death throes of the class enemies."

Beginning in the second half of 1968, some twelve million disillusioned youth were deported to the countryside over the next seven years, most of them to education-through-labor camps where the overwhelming majority remained until the death of the Great Helmsman in 1976. Theirs was a bitter education.²⁰⁶

When the Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee convened in October 1968, seventy percent of the members and alternate members had been removed, "labeled 'anti-party elements,' 'traitors,' and 'spies' who were 'maintaining secret ties abroad.'" Mao replaced them with high-ranking military officers.²⁰⁷ The composition of the leadership of the CCP was now almost entirely loyal member of the PLA. Macfarquhar notes that "Mao had been particularly concerned to ensure that the party commanded the gun; but after the cultural revolution, soldiers dominated the new party machine."²⁰⁸

In April 1969, the CCP held a Congress and Mao Zedong Thought was again enshrined in constitution as theoretical foundation of the party. Soviet revisionism was the central theme of the gathering, which was focused above all on the militarized border disputes between the Soviet Union and China. During first plenum, Mao devoted "a significant portion of his speech to the question of preparing for war with the USSR. He really thought a Soviet armed attack against China was likely. After the plenum he even issued secret instructions for preparing to evacuate the majority of party leaders from Beijing."²⁰⁹

By 1968 six Soviet divisions were stationed in Outer Mongolia, "and another sixteen were stationed at the Sino-Soviet border. They faced forty-seven lightly armed Chinese divisions."²¹⁰ Border clashes became common, and by August 1969 a Soviet diplomat in Washington approached the US State Department, asking

²⁰⁶Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 533.

²⁰⁷Ibid., 534.

²⁰⁸Macfarquhar, *Origins* 1, 2.

²⁰⁹Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 538.

²¹⁰Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 340.

“point blank what the US would do if the Soviet Union attacked and destroyed China’s nuclear installations.”²¹¹ At the same time, Moscow was approaching its Warsaw pact allies about this matter. Beijing responded with a full mobilization of the PLA and made “massive civilian and military preparations against a Soviet attack.”

“In 1969, a series of bloody border clashes . . . pushed both countries close to the brink of war. A massive Soviet counterattack employing the latest Katiusha rockets that killed some 3,000 Chinese by Soviet accounts followed the initial conflict on Damanskii Island, which was clearly provoked by the Chinese and in which thirty to forty people were killed. Further bloody conflicts followed in other border areas.”²¹² By the middle of 1969, the two nuclear-armed Stalinist powers were engaged in a shooting war, bullets and rockets were flying from both sides and the body count was mounting into the thousands. Both sides were actively discussing the possibility of a nuclear launch.

Washington recognized the opportunity. Kissinger wrote in his memoirs, “The new [Nixon] administration had a notion, not yet a strategy, to move toward China. Policy emerges when concept encounters opportunity. Such an occasion arose when Soviet and Chinese troops clashed in the frozen Siberian tundra along a river of which none of us had ever heard. From then on ambiguity vanished, and we moved without further hesitation toward a momentous change in global policy.”²¹³

Before Washington could reach out to Mao, Mao was already attempting to signal to Washington. Moscow was the greatest danger to the interests of Beijing he had declared, and Washington could thus serve as a useful ally. A united front between US imperialism and the People’s Republic of China could help to secure socialism against the great menace of Soviet Social Imperialism. He did not know it, but Brezhnev was thinking along the same lines and signaling to Washington as well. Nixon negotiated with both.

In order to strike a deal with Washington Mao needed to eliminate an impediment to ties with US imperialism: Lin Biao and his theory of the “countryside of the world.” Having used Lin Biao and the PLA to rein in the cultural revolution and to suppress the working class as well as his political rivals, Mao now needed to rein in the Lin Biao and the PLA.

At a plenum held in Lushan in August 1970 Mao launched an attack on Lin Biao denouncing him for attempting to secure his succession after Mao to the head of the party and head of state. Lin went into political isolation. On October 1, Mao invited Edgar Snow – whom he incorrectly believed was a CIA agent – to stand beside him on the rostrum at Tiananmen during the anniversary celebration of the PRC, as a means of signaling to Washington his openness to

²¹¹Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 342.

²¹²Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China*, 430.

²¹³Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 65.

ties. This proved too subtle and it took the visit of the US table tennis team in April 1971 to open negotiations.²¹⁴ On July 9 Kissinger traveled to Beijing by way of Pakistan and met with Zhou for three days. On July 15 Kissinger's visit was made public.

The diplomacy with the United States gave Beijing immediate tactical gains in their conflict with the Soviet Union. Khoo writes "Kissinger also informed the Chinese that he had directed the Department of Defense to develop options for an American nuclear response to a Soviet strike. The Americans also provided valuable security intelligence to China on the Soviet Union. Robert MacFarlane, the CIA intelligence chief in Beijing, observed that the intelligence provided to the Chinese: 'Involved not only [information on Soviet] strategic nuclear forces, but also conventional army, navy and air forces positioned on the Chinese border and in ocean seas. In addition, the U.S. would brief the Chinese on extensive Soviet military aid program to dozens of countries and guerilla movements around the world, including Vietnam.'"²¹⁵

In September Mao moved to eliminate Lin Biao entirely, and accused Lin and his wife of plotting Mao's assassination. A plane bearing Lin Biao and his family crashed over Outer Mongolia on September 13; Mao claimed they were attempting to defect to the Soviet Union. With Lin Biao gone, Mao moved to control the PLA, delivering a speech to military leaders in the same month. "You should be prudent. First of all the army must be prudent and secondly the regions must be prudent. You must not be arrogant, if you are arrogant you will commit errors. The army must be unified; it must be rectified. I just don't believe that our army could rebel. ... Under [each] army are divisions and regiments and the judicial, political and support units. If you try to mobilize the army to do bad things, do you think they will obey you?"

On October 25 Washington lifted its objection to China's membership in the United Nations, and on February 21 1972, Nixon traveled to Beijing. Nixon and Mao issued a joint communique on February 28. That summer Nixon flew to Moscow and staged similar meetings with Brezhnev. Both Stalinist governments were allying with US imperialism against each other.

Communist Parties around the globe had been split by this conflict, they followed its every alteration and repeated uncritically the lines disseminated by Moscow or Beijing. In the Philippines, the CPP employed the exact language of Beijing including its most unwieldy turns of phrase. In 1970 for example, the CPP wrote

The Soviet revisionist renegade rulers have made all kinds of counter-revolutionary agreements with US imperialism, against the people, revolution, communism, and the People's Republic of China. ...

The Soviet economy has been transformed into a capitalist economy.

²¹⁴Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 556.

²¹⁵Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 83.

Centralized planning has been discarded ... Bourgeois managers have gained the power to make profits for themselves ... In agriculture, private plots have been expanded at the expense of collective farms ...

Under the revisionist renegade leadership of the Brezhnev gang, the Soviet Union has become notorious for its social fascism and social imperialism. The Brezhnev gang loudly preaches “peace” but it employs fascist violence on the Soviet people and other peoples within its sphere of influence.²¹⁶

In opposition to this they posited,

Soviet social-imperialism is nothing but a passing phase of imperialism on its downward course, having experienced the great revolutionary leadership of Lenin and having seen the continued ascendance of proletarian dictatorship in China under the leadership of Chairman Mao, the true Communists and the oppressed people of the Soviet Union will in due time rise up to overthrow their revisionist oppressors. It is not possible for the betrayers of Leninism to suppress the Soviet proletariat without incurring revolutionary resistance.²¹⁷

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the eruption of a major crisis of world capitalism and the precipitous decline US economic hegemony. Social explosions, protests, revolutionary struggles shook the world and the ruling class from Jakarta to Manila and Santiago to Athens moved toward dictatorial forms of rule. Looking to secure alliances with these newly formed dictatorships both Moscow and Beijing put forward theoretical justifications for endorsing the autocratic regimes as progressive.

Moscow promoted the notion of a non-capitalist road of development.²¹⁸ Not all dictatorships were to be opposed, they claimed. Dictatorial methods could, after all, be used to accelerate the national democratic revolution. The determining factor in assessing a dictatorship was its geopolitical orientation. Dictators tied firmly to Washington were reactionary; dictators who established ties with Moscow, progressive and the local Communist Party should thus support them. The Moscow aligned P.K.P. would use precisely this logic to endorse martial law regime of Ferdinand Marcos.

²¹⁶ AB, 1 Jun 1970, 2-3

²¹⁷ AB, 1 Jun 1970, 4 When Sison reprinted this statement in 2013, he altered this sentence to read “It is not impossible ...” (Jose Ma. Sison, *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution: Selected Writings, 1969 to 1972*, ed. Julieta de Lima, vol. 1, Continuing the Philippine Revolution [Quezon City: Aklat ng Bayan, 2013], 224).

²¹⁸ V Solodovnikov and V. Bogoslovsky, *Non Capitalist Development: An Historical Outline*, Moscow, 1975.

Mao, meanwhile, scrapped Lin Biao's notion of the "countryside of the world" and in February 1974 he announced his Three Worlds Theory.²¹⁹ "[A]ll of humanity was divided into three worlds ... Mao assigned the two superpowers, the United States and the USSR, to the First World; Japan, Europe, Australia and Canada to the Second World; and all the other countries to the Third World. Calling upon the peoples of the Third World to unite, Mao asserted that China also belonged to the Third World. At Mao's behest, Deng Xiaoping elaborated this concept in some detail at a session of the UN General Assembly on April 10, 1974."²²⁰ The political imperative was thus the unity of the "third world" against the United States and Soviet Union. This unity would not be carried out by means of guerrilla struggles, but through diplomatic ties between Beijing and the various dictatorial regimes throughout the third world. On these grounds Mao established friendly ties with Pinochet, the Shah and Ferdinand Marcos.

The road of capitalist restoration in China was thus cut and largely paved by Mao Zedong. Deng Xiaoping pursued this path, but it was Mao himself who had suppressed the Chinese working class, opened friendly relations with dictatorial regimes and established the necessary ties with US imperialism.

Those who would read in this account that the failure of Stalinism to maintain unity was an immense tragedy which should have been avoided, miss the point entirely. Stalinism could not maintain unity precisely because of what it was – a nationalist program. Unity was from the outset maintained by force, coercion and machinations. Their rupture and the restoration of capitalism that followed, was – without a political revolution of the Chinese and Soviet working class – inevitable.

²¹⁹Khoo, *Collateral Damage*, 82.

²²⁰Pantsov and Levine, *Mao: The Real Story*, 311.

Origins



— 3 —

Setting the Stage

Science, too, reckons backward as well as forward, divides his unit into billions, and with his clock-finger at Nought really sets off in medias res. No retrospect will take us to the true beginning; and whether our prologue be in heaven or on earth, it is but a fraction of that all-presupposing fact with which our story sets out.

— George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*

By the late 1950s, political and economic life in the Philippines had achieved a certain equilibrium. Rival families, controlling a vast range of powerful economic interests, had established a mutually agreeable mode of political existence, which was organized into two parties – the Liberal Party and the Nacionalista Party. The spectacle of elections; the horse trading of the primaries; and the party alliances constantly forming and breaking apart – all these combined to provide stability and continuity to the oligarchic politics of the country. The spume of alternating dynastic alliances washed over the archipelago with the regularity of the tides.

Manila had been devastated by the Second World War. Quiapo, Tondo, Binondo, Sampaloc – the entire northern bank of the Pasig – had burned to the ground, and Intramuros, the thickly-walled harbor city of the Spaniards at its southern mouth, was largely reduced to rubble. Profit can be minted from catastrophe and in the haphazard rebuilding of the once magnificent city, fortunes were to be made. At the end of the war, Washington had millions of tons of war matériel deployed in the Philippines, much was too expensive to ship back to the United States and it was auctioned off, sold in bulk or disposed of as scrap. An ex-G.I., Harry Stonehill, trucked in the detritus of war, selling individual American chocolate bars taken from surplus C-rations, while Spanish-Filipino businessman, Andres Soriano, bought up C-47s to build Philippine Air Lines (PAL).¹

¹Raul Rodrigo, *Phoenix: The Saga of the Lopez Family, Volume 1: 1800-1972* (Manila: The Eugenio López Foundation, Inc., 2000), 182.

For others the end of the war was an opportunity to build a political career. Association with the American allied guerrilla resistance movement during the Japanese occupation was turned into political capital, and where such ties did not exist, they were often invented. In the course of his political career, Ferdinand Marcos built an entire mythology, with fake medals, biographies, and blockbuster movies, on his invented guerrilla past. Yet others worked to remove the stain of collaboration, a cleansing which Washington gladly facilitated. Leading figures in the Japanese occupation, Jose P. Laurel and Claro M. Recto, “assessing the situation shrewdly, saw the opportunity to lay to rest their Japanese collaborator ghosts by joining forces with Ed Lansdale’s American team.”²

What most dramatically transformed the post-war Philippines was a massive influx of American capital as US citizens were granted parity rights with Filipinos in the ownership of property in the formally independent country. During the Japanese occupation the old landed families, who fashioned themselves as Dons and Doñas – the barons of sugar in Negros and Tarlac, of coffee in Batangas, or tobacco in Ilocos – resettled in Manila or left the country entirely. At the end of the war, many did not return to their *haciendas*. The next generation of *hacenderos*, most educated in Western universities, ruled their landed holdings through administrators. Capitalist forms of exploitation were implemented throughout the countryside, the traditional patron-client ties of landlord and peasant largely ended and were increasingly supplanted by the cold cash nexus of wage labor and ground rent. This new generation of elite turned its focus to the fashioning of business empires on a national scale, particularly the sugar dynasties, who organized themselves into the powerful political ‘sugar bloc.’ “In the 1940s, quite a number of provincial sugar barons made the move to Manila, including the Yulos, the Aranetas and the Cojuangcos.”³

It was not just the rich who were moving to the capital, however. A vast migration of peasant families over the space of the next two decades populated Manila and its surrounding region, where, from their disembarkation at Tutuban to their settling in the spreading outskirts of the city, they formed the ranks of the rapidly growing working class. As they came, the graceless growth of Greater Manila covered large portions of Bulacan, Cavite, and Rizal.⁴ “By the time President Macapagal took office in 1962, Manila had grown far beyond its prewar boundaries to engulf thirteen adjacent towns and its population increased fourfold to 2.4 million.”⁵

²Joseph B. Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1976), 98.

³Rodrigo, *Phoenix*, 180. On the significance of sugar holdings in the development of the Philippine ruling class, see John A. Larkin, *Sugar and the Origins of Modern Philippine Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁴For an overview of internal migration patterns in the post-war period, see Wilhelm Flieger, “Internal Migration in the Philippines During the 1960s,” *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 5, no. 4 (1977): 199–231.

⁵McCoy, *Policing America’s Empire*, 384.

The swelling metropolis saw a dramatic growth in the number of youth attending university, most of whom were from working class and peasant backgrounds. The preponderance of universities in Manila were privately owned, for-profit institutions, clustered around the university belt on Azcarraga and within the walls of Intramuros. Old landed money flooded into the education market as it did everything else; the coffee money of the Laurels founded Lyceum and the sugar of the Araneta's FEATI.

As with universities, so too newspapers. The wealthy families each bought up or founded a daily paper or a weekly magazine and in the 1950s and 60s the Philippines had a flourishing free press. Scores of daily papers, ranging from Tagalog scandal sheets to staid English language newsprint, were hawked on the Manila streets. Chino Roces operated the *Manila Times*, and Eugenio Lopez the *Manila Chronicle*. Teddy Locsin, at the helm of the Dick McCulloch's *Philippines Free Press*, produced a remarkably well-written weekly news magazine.

The dense yet sprawling city of Manila was the center of political life. From the end of the Second World War to the declaration of martial law, it was largely in Manila that the country's political battles were waged. The city was marked by the combined and uneven development of global capitalism. Northern Motors, the largest General Motors (GM) assembly plant outside the United States, was based in Manila. The vast factories of US Tobacco produced cigarettes and cigars made from a mixture of Ilocano and Virginia tobacco. Imported commodities of all sorts were peddled in the glossy pages of the weekly magazines, and their logos filled the massive billboards over Carriedo street. This frenetic world of global trade and production sat cheek by jowl with the mud and narrow stalls of the wet market and the shanty lined *esteros* and *eskinitas* that laced the city. Tens of thousands, but a few years removed from a life dictated by the rhythms of the rice paddy, now took up inventive forms of informal employment and became barkers for jeepney routes, carried goods in the market, pushed makeshift *kariton* through the streets, collecting and re-selling scrap.

Over this bustling, disjointed society, political rule was exercised from the Spanish colonial palace of Malacañang, its *azotea* lapped by the waters of the Pasig. Directives arrived routinely from the US embassy, which sat perched on the shore of Manila Bay, pointedly poised between the capital and the rest of the world.

— 4 —

Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP)

The name of the slough was Despond.

— John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*

The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) greeted the 1960s a fragmented and demoralized shell of a party, the majority of its leaders serving life sentences in prison on charges of ‘rebellion complex with murder,’ among them William and Celia Pomeroy.¹ A single family – the Lavas – had long dominated its leadership and the Lava brothers – Jose, Jesus, and Vicente – alternated at its head at different stages in its history. At the beginning of the 1950s, as the frost of the Cold War settled over the globe, Washington began testing anti-Communist tactics on its former colony. The Lavas responded to the escalating repression by dissolving the structure of the party; by the end of the decade, the PKP was geopolitically isolated and its organization in shambles.

The Anti-Communist drive of Washington

Nineteen fifty-three was a crucial year for US intelligence. Under the leadership of Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers, Washington launched the operations which would overthrow Arbenz in Guatemala, topple Mosaddegh in Iran, and

¹For an introduction to the history of the PKP from its founding through the Huk Rebellion, the following works are particularly useful: Jim Richardson, *Komunista: The Genesis of the Philippine Communist Party, 1902-1935* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2011); Ken Fuller, *Forcing the Pace: The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas: From Foundation to Armed Struggle* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2007); Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977). Pomeroy wrote a famous account his participation in the Huk rebellion. (William J. Pomeroy, *The Forest: a personal record of the Huk guerrilla struggle in the Philippines* [New York: International Publishers, 1963]). Much later, he wrote an account of his time in prison. (William J. Pomeroy, *Bilanggo: Life as a Political Prisoner in the Philippines, 1952-1962* [Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2009]).



Figure 4.1: William and Celia Pomeroy, 1952.
CTRB 29/22.

install Magsaysay in the Philippines.² Edward Lansdale, former San Francisco advertising executive turned intelligence operative, had handpicked Magsaysay and cultivated him for office, and when he assumed the presidency, an entire apparatus of men loyal to the CIA was installed along with him. Their names recur in the historical record of the 1960s: Nap Valeriano went on to train the Bay of Pigs invasion force; Frisco San Juan became a congressman and received the endorsement of the front organizations of the Communist Party; Antonio Villegas became mayor of Manila. Lansdale's intimate associations extended far beyond his network of CIA assets, however. He was close personal friends, for example, with Lorenzo Tañada, whom he called Tanny, and Tañada, who in the 1960s was the darling of the front organizations of the Communist party, was in regular correspondence with Lansdale even after Lansdale's departure for

²In examining the regional role of the CIA and of Washington's covert activities more generally I have relied on a range of published and unpublished sources, including material gained through the filing of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests with the CIA and the State Department. A great deal of useful material is contained in the papers of Edward Lansdale and Charles Bohannon in the Hoover Institute Archives. For the late 1950s and early 1960s, the material in the CUSDPR has proven extremely useful. Among the published works which I have used are Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison, *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999), and the relevant volumes of *Foreign Relations of the United States*.

Vietnam.

Intimately bound up with Washington's anti-Communist campaign were the Jesuits.³ They played an integral role in the banning of the Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO) on charges that it was a Communist front, and then worked to establish the avowedly anti-Communist Federation of Free Workers (FFW) under Johnny Tan and Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) under Jeremias Montemayor. Franco writes, "the FFF had been established in 1953 by a group of Jesuit-trained laymen as an alternative to the Huks. Inspired by European social democracy, the organization's self-appointed national leader was staunchly anti-communist and built the FFF in conjunction with the government's effort to undermine communist influence in the countryside ... Backed by the then CIA-funded Asia Foundation, as well as the Catholic Church and American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), the FFF national leadership endorsed Magsaysay's candidacy for the presidency soon after its founding."⁴ By the early 1960s the FFW had become a significant source of unionized scab labor, ready to be deployed to break up strikes.

Washington spread McCarthyism to the Philippines, and the House Committee on Un-Filipino Activities (CUFA) was formed in parallel to McCarthy's own committee in the United States by certain key figures trained by US intelligence, among them Carlos Albert and Leonardo Perez. Hernando Abaya recalled, "Those were the darkest years of rampaging McCarthyism in the United States. The Philippines became its second richest playground."⁵ To be a Communist was to be Un-Filipino as well as Un-American. In 1954 the CUFA was renamed the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA), as a means of strengthening its claim – to be a Communist was not merely Un-Filipino it was fundamentally antithetical to the national identity. Despite the strength of McCarthyism and anti-Communism generally, both CUFA in the First Congress, 1946-49, and CAFA in the second, 1950-53, opposed a complete ban on Communism. Communism was something to be scapegoated and persecuted, not banned. It was with the third congress, 1954-57, that CAFA recommended the outlawing of the party entirely, and the result of this recommendation was the Anti-Subversion Act (Republic Act (RA) 1700). Passed in 1957, the Anti-Subversion Act had been drafted by an American Jesuit priest, Fr. Arthur Weiss, and the US embassy's political officer lobbied for its passage. The law declared the party illegal and

³The Catholic church was at the center of anti-communism during this period. The Taiwanese bishopric, for example, was responsible for arranging the bombing of Sulawesi. (Conboy and Morrison, *Feet to the Fire*, 42).

⁴Jennifer Conroy Franco, *Elections and Democratization in the Philippines*, ed. Andrew Appleton, Comparative Studies in Democratization (New York: Routledge, 2001), 81. For background on the FFF and Montemayor, see Masataka Kimura, "The Federation of Free Farmers and Its Significance in the History of the Philippine Peasant Movement," *Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 1 (2006): 3–30.

⁵Hernando J. Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive: A Memoir* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1984), 2.

made being a ranking member a capital offense.⁶

The anti-Huk campaign and the passage of RA1700 were part of Washington's broader anti-communist drive throughout the region. Lansdale's team, trained in the Philippines, were deployed to Vietnam and Laos under the auspices of the Freedom Company and Operation Brotherhood. For our purposes, the CIA operation in the Outer Islands Conflict is most important. Responding to the perceived threat to US interests posed by Sukarno after the 1955 Bandung Conference, Washington sought to overthrow his administration through covert military support for rebellions being staged by portions of the military hierarchy. The economic interests of the military leaders in Northern Sumatra and Sulawesi, which Jakarta sought to subordinate and control through the rotation and retirement of the top brass, found expression in open rebellion against Sukarno in late 1956 to early 1957. The CIA latched on to the parallel but as yet uncoordinated emergence of rebellions in both Northern Sumatra and Sulawesi, attempting to destabilize Sukarno by launching bombing runs from northern Sulawesi, with the Taiwanese government carrying out parallel sorties. On direct instructions from Eisenhower, the Dulles brothers coordinated the campaign through Frank Wisner, the head of the CIA's covert action operations. Motivated by anti-communism and alarmed at the incorporation of the PKI into Sukarno's administration, Washington sought to fracture the Indonesian nation, breaking the outer islands away from Java. When forces loyal to Sukarno shot down and captured CIA pilot Allen Pope, Washington faced an international public relations disaster, and hastily ended the campaign.

Under the leadership of Aidit, the PKI responded to the Outer Islands Campaign by deepening their support for Sukarno. Aidit published the influential *Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution* in July 1957, re-writing the history of the party to exculpate Sukarno for the slaughter of the party at Madiun in 1948 and place the blame for this event exclusively on Vice President Muhammad Hatta and the Americans.⁷ Many members of the PKI fought in the Indonesian armed forces in defense of Sukarno during the conflict, among them Bakri Ilyas who served as Sergeant Major and received the Guerrilla Star in 1958. Bakri would play an instrumental role in the split in the Communist Party of the Philippines and the founding of the Maoist CPP.⁸ Bakri Ilyas, because of his distinguished military service in the Outer Islands Campaign, was the first person who had

⁶Vigilance Committee of Catholic Action of the Philippines, *Philippine Anthology on Communism I* (1962), 93; Jose Ma. Sison and Julieta de Lima Sison, "Foundation for sustained development of the National Democratic Movement in the University of the Philippines," in *Serve the People: Ang Kasaysayan ng Radikal na Kilusan sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas*, ed. Bienvenido Lumbea et al. (Quezon City: Ibon Books, 2008), 45; Alfredo B. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines, enlarged edition* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990), 1.

⁷D.N. Aidit, *Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution* (Jakarta: Jajasan "Pembaruan", 1958).

⁸His name is alternately spelled in various sources, Iljas Bakri, Ilias Bakrie or some variation thereof.

been imprisoned after the events of 1965 to be subsequently rehabilitated by the Indonesian government and buried in Kalibata heroes cemetery.⁹ Joma Sison wrote a letter on the death of Bakri in 2003.

There is not enough space here for me to state everything that I know about Bakri as an outstanding Indonesian patriot, revolutionary and internationalist. But I pledge to make sure that his writings within my access and his deeds within the range of my knowledge will go into historical record.

To the extent that his friends have assessed Bakri's life, we can all agree that he did the best that he could in the service of the Indonesian people, especially the toiling masses, and that he lived a full and meaningful life.¹⁰

Unfortunately, Sison has not yet carried out his pledge; he has published none of Bakri's writings and related none of his deeds.

The Response of the PKP

In the Philippines, the PKP responded to the passage of RA1700 and the defeat of the Huk Rebellion with a series of liquidationist measures, that is, measures designed to dissolve the party. In June 1957, Jesus Lava "urged all party members who were not facing criminal charges in government courts to 'return to civilian life.'"¹¹ The few remaining armed bands of Huks responded to Lava's directive by ending all ties with the Communist Party and taking up gangster activity in Central Luzon under the leadership of Commander Sumulong. In 1958, Lava issued what he termed the "single file policy" which he implemented without any consultation with the other leaders of the party.¹² He described the single file policy as "a temporary form of organizational structure ... A comrade was tasked to recruit new members who would have contact only with him on the one side, and with their respective recruits on the other. Instructions were thus relayed along the same line. As a result, only two at most would be participants in any discussion of the political and organizational analysis and tasks."¹³ This policy was not officially lifted until 1964.

Francisco Nemenzo, who regards the generation gap between the Lava era leadership and the new Sison generation as the underlying cause of the split in the party, depicted the single file policy as the cause of this generation gap.

⁹Vedi R. Hadiz and Daniel Dhakidae, eds., *Social Science and Power in Indonesia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005), 268.

¹⁰Jose Ma. Sison and Julieta de Lima Sison, "Letter to the Family of Bung Drs. Bakri Iljas," November 2003, accessed 13 April 2015, <http://www.josemariasison.org/inps/iljas301.htm>.

¹¹Nemenzo Jr., "Rectification process," 74.

¹²Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 9-10.

¹³Jesus Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2002), 239.

During the years of the single file policy there were few recruits and when the policy was abandoned a gap had emerged in age between the leadership and the new members.¹⁴ Nemenzo's argument is flimsy. The single file policy was only in place for six years and during this gap the party recruited both Sison and Nemenzo himself. Nemenzo remained with the P K P, a man of the same youth as Sison.

The P K P would later claim that Sison manipulated the single-file policy to his own ends.¹⁵ This claim is highly suspect as the policy was only in place until 1964 and the conflict within the P K P did not take shape until late 1965. Whether or not the P K P allegation against Sison is true, the single-file policy certainly opened the party to infiltration and manipulation. Any agent or malicious person could have manipulated the policy. Recruitment to the party was no longer subject to the control of an elected leadership, it was carried out by individual party members. No one was privy to who was a member or not. In the event that a member was revealed to be an agent only a handful of party members would know of it and the agent could easily re-infiltrate the party with no one the wiser. What is more, as political instructions were passed down the single file, they could easily be altered and fake instructions could be issued; there was no possible means of vetting instructions. Finally, the single file policy necessarily meant the end of any party democracy as there was no longer any means for internal discussion and deliberation, for either the education of the membership or the correction of the leadership. Lava's policy was thoroughly liquidationist. In writing his critique of the Lava leadership of the party, Sison placed the single-file policy high on the list of the 'Lavaite' sins. Despite these criticisms, in the immediate aftermath of the declaration of martial law in 1972, the front organizations of Sison's CPP implemented an identical policy under the name of "revolutionary committees," as we will examine in detail in chapter 42.

Not only was it dissolving its own ranks, the P K P was also becoming increasingly isolated internationally. In 1957 Ramon Magsaysay died in a plane crash and his vice president Carlos P. Garcia succeeded him. Members of the P K P gave full support to Garcia's nationalist "Filipino First" policy which was almost entirely composed of economic measures targeting the local Chinese population. Chinese party members in the Overseas Committee in the Philippines responded by proposing to cut off "the existing relationship of the Chinese Communists in the Philippines to the Communist Party of the Philippines as one of the latter's bureaus."¹⁶ Lava stated that

We assented to the proposal as long as they would no longer concern themselves with Philippine matters. We were firmly convinced that anything that smacked of their interference in the affairs of this

¹⁴Nemenzo Jr., "Rectification process."

¹⁵Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 64 fn 28.

¹⁶Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 242.

country should be opposed, and if they wanted to have a say in Philippine affairs, they must place themselves under the CPP [PKP]. Apparently, the Maoist Party of China did not like our position, as we did not receive further communication from them. Since then, the Chinese Bureau ceased to be a part of the Philippine Party.¹⁷

Luis Taruc asserted that the Lavas had long distrusted the Chinese party in the Philippines who “were attached to the Politburo as advisers and acted as liaison officers between ourselves and their own anti-Japanese resistance movement . . . It seemed to us that this advice was always related to Chinese mainland interests rather than Philippine interests.”¹⁸ Dalisay, whom the Lava family commissioned to serve as their biographer, wrote “Later, one of these ‘Rasputin’-like Chinese would return to China and rise to a position of some responsibility for Philippine affairs – leading the Lavas to wonder if he had anything to do with the cooling of relations between the Chinese Communist Party and the CPP [PKP].”¹⁹ As ties with China were severed, the PKP leadership sought to establish relations with the PKI, hoping for material and political support from the large and influential party to the south, and, on November 12 1958, PKP member Alfredo Saulo sought asylum from the Indonesian Embassy in order to work for the party in Jakarta.²⁰ Saulo’s asylum bid was met by violent student protests, organized by Student Catholic Action (SCA), demanding his release to the Philippine government. To stave off an international incident, Saulo requested to be released to Philippine authorities on November 19.²¹

Thus, by 1958, the leadership of the PKP was either in hiding or in prison. The organizational structure of the PKP had been liquidated and the party had no substantive international ties. Those members of the party who were operating above ground and whose membership in the PKP was highly secret were enthusiastically supporting the Garcia administration, serving in his cabinet and promoting his policies in the trade unions and the press. This was how matters stood for the PKP until the creation of an executive committee in December 1962, which brought together an incipient student movement under the newly recruited Joma Sison and a growing labor party under the newly recruited Ignacio Lacsina. The creation of this committee and the recruitment of Sison to the

¹⁷Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 243.

¹⁸Luis Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger: The Story of an Asian Guerrilla Leader* (New York: Praeger, 1967), 33-34.

¹⁹Jose Y. Dalisay, *The Lavas: A Filipino Family* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 1999), 132-133.

²⁰Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 242 Saulo represented some of the most conservative layers of the party. Prior to seeking asylum he had presented his Bulacan Theses to the party leadership in which he argued that the bourgeoisie should lead the revolution and that the party should be a permanent opposition body within it. (Ibid., 240).

²¹Corazon Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism* (Manila: Rex Bookstore, 1972), 52. On his release, Saulo took up work as a journalist. He wrote an important book on the Philippine Communist party which was published in the late 1960s.

party were instigated by the PKI, which established ties with the PKP through Bakri Ilyas.

Rebirth



Out of the Dead Land

*April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land*

— T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

The PKP was reborn in December 1962 with the creation of the executive committee which brought together elements of the old Lava family leadership and two new leaders who represented the youth and working class.

Jose Maria Sison, scion of a landed Ilocano family, was a graduate student in the English department of the University of the Philippines, his political roots in anti-clerical nationalism and existentialist philosophy. Assisted by Bakri Ilyas, he traveled to Indonesia where he met extensively with the leadership of the PKI. Ignacio Lacsina was a prominent labor union leader, who orchestrated the political campaigns of nationalist Senator Claro M. Recto toward the end of Recto's life, while maintaining extensive secret ties to the US Embassy and the CIA. Bakri arranged the inclusion of Sison and Lacsina in the newly forming executive committee of the PKP, and Lacsina brought the labor movement with him.

The entire contentious, fragmentary labor movement in the Philippines was coalescing in 1962 into an independent political party, the Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers' Party] (LM). Lacsina was poised to become general secretary of the LM, and the PKP was thus thrust into the leadership of the workers' movement at a time of immense unrest.

The presidential elections of November 1961 were marred by scandal and corruption centered around an American businessman, Harry Stonehill. As Washington scrambled to salvage its interests in the country by removing Stonehill from the scene, a sequence of events was set into motion which temporarily soured relations between the United States and the newly elected President Diosdado Macapagal.

The PKP, now at the head of the Lapiang Manggagawa, saw in this turn of events the opportunity to sway Macapagal to support the interests of Jakarta in opposition to US imperialism.

— 5 —

Joma

The kind of philosophy you choose depends upon the type of person you are.

— Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *First Introduction to the Science of Knowledge*.

Jose Maria Sison was born into an affluent landowning family in Cabugao, Ilocos Sur, on February 8, 1939 – forty-nine years to the day after Claro M. Recto. The Serrano family, under Sison’s great-grandfather, Don Leandro Serrano, controlled the largest estate in Northern Luzon during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Sison recounted that his great-grandfather owned “80 percent of my hometown and large chunks of four other municipalities, and under tax declaration most of the shoreline of ten towns from Badoc, Ilocos Norte to Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur. His estate produced rice, tobacco, indigo and maguey.”¹ Don Gorgonio Sison, who married one of Don Leandro’s daughters, was the last *gobernadorcillo* of Cabugao under the Spanish colonial regime. He became the municipal president of the town during the brief Philippine Republic, and managed to retain his position under the Americans, becoming Cabugao’s mayor. His title changed three times under three successive governments, but Don Gorgonio’s political power, unlike his allegiance, remained constant. Don Gorgonio rapidly integrated the family economic interests into US colonial rule, displaying an exhibit of the economic exports of Cabugao at the 1904 World Fair in St. Louis, and winning a gold medal for his efforts. His son, Sison’s father, Salustiano Serrano Sison, was born in 1899 during the height of the Philippine-American war. He married Florentina Canlas, who was herself from a landlord family in Mexico, Pampanga. The Sison family estate included vast tobacco holdings, worked by an army of tenant farmers, as well as “the seaside barrio of Salomague” which was one of twenty-two sites in the country reserved as a possible base for the US military.²

¹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 3.

²Ninotchka Rosca, “Introduction,” in *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World – Portrait of a Revolutionary* (Manila: Ibon Books, 2004), 6.



Figure 5.1: Salustiano Serrano Sison and Florentino Canlas Sison in Cabugao.

Sison’s family embodied feudal privilege, with its peasant clients and sprawling landholdings – adjoined and divided up again by intermarriage – and on this basis the Sison clan extended their political power. Sison was part of a pervasive nexus of familial connections that stretched from the National Legislature to the Manila Cathedral: two of his uncles were congressmen; another was the archbishop of Nueva Segovia, which encompassed all of the province of Ilocos Sur; and his great-uncle was the province’s governor. At numerous points in Sison’s political career, well after he had established himself as a communist, he would continue to maintain and benefit from these ties.³ The front pews in Sunday mass were reserved for Sison’s family. The peasant tenants of their estate came each day to his home to “deliver land rent, ask for seeds, do menial tasks around the house or plead for some special consideration.” Politicians sought their support, and Sison recounted that “[u]ntil he became the new magnate of Ilocos Sur in the 1960s, Floro Crisologo would invoke familial affinity, though

³Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 1; Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 14. Sison not only profited from, but he also cultivated, this feudal network. Asked in an interview in the *Philippine Star* on 19 August 2012 about his distant cousin Chavit Singson, the long-time governor of Ilocos Sur and intimate of Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada, Sison said, “Chavit is a good guy and loyal friend if you are friends with him.”

distant, in order to get the votes.”⁴ Crisologo, Sison’s distant cousin, was a bloody, brutal figure in Ilocano politics until he was succeeded by Chavit Singson, and Sison would mention the name Crisologo during the early days of the New People’s Army (NPA) in order to get past military checkpoints.

In 1952, at the age of thirteen, Joma Sison left Cabugao for Manila to enroll in the elite Jesuit-run Ateneo High School but after two years of course work, he was expelled. In multiple published accounts, Sison claimed that he was kicked out because the administration suspected him of leading a student boycott of classes in protest against a Jesuit instructor. Throughout interviews and autobiographical reminiscences, Sison displayed a persistent tendency to reconstruct his past in the light of subsequent political beliefs. This teleology of Stalinism is almost always demonstrably baseless, and Sison’s expulsion narrative is no exception. In a video interview conducted in 2015, Juliet de Lima, Sison’s wife, stated that he was kicked out of Ateneo in 1954 because he got into a fistfight with a fellow student and then lied about it to the administration.⁵ Sison confirmed this in a letter addressed to an Ateneo class reunion, writing that he was kicked out of Ateneo for “incurring too many absences (more than 30 school days) without any valid reason and for engaging in a mutually agreed fist fight with a student from another section.”⁶ He had spent his second year at Ateneo playing “truant, going to the movies and whiling away my time at the USIS library,” but had maintained relatively good grades by copying his classmates notes.⁷ Such prep school misadventures were not uncommon among the children of the well-to-do and the recourse was straight-forward – Sison transferred to San Juan de Letran, thus moving from an elite all-boys school run by Jesuits to another, run by Dominicans.⁸

At the beginning of the 1956 school year, Joma Sison enrolled at the UP in the Journalism and Creative Writing program of the English Department. He was an ambitious seventeen year old, aspiring to “become a lawyer, go to Harvard, and be a political leader,” with the intention of replacing Floro Crisologo as the congressman from the first district of Ilocos Sur.⁹ In a first year Spanish class, Sison met Juliet de Lima, a Library Science major who was one of eleven siblings from an influential and devoutly religious family in Iriga, Bicol. De Lima’s brother later became the chair of Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and her sister founded a religious order, the Daughters of Saint Augustine. Her parents sponsored one of Iriga’s major annual religious festivals, the Santo Entiero.¹⁰

⁴Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 3.

⁵Steven de Castro, “Jose Maria Sison and Julie De Lima; A Revolutionary Love Story,” YouTube video, 16:39, 25 May 2015, <https://youtu.be/3mCFOkFofol>.

⁶Jose Ma. Sison, “Message to my Beloved Classmates at the Ateneo de Manila High School,” December 2006,

⁷Ibid.

⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 8.

⁹Ibid., 9.

¹⁰Rosca’s characterization of her parents as “very liberal” barrio school teachers seems grossly

Joma and Julie secretly married before a justice of the peace in September 1959. De Lima recalled that she had felt that to marry was a betrayal of their love for the ideas of Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, but, she said “I had to think of my parents, what they think, if I just shackled up with somebody without any ceremony or papers?”¹¹

Sison had intended upon graduation to enroll in law school, but he recounts that “because I now had to earn a living, I had to give up my plan of going to the College of Law.”¹² In October 1959, one month shy of completing his bachelor of arts in English, Sison was appointed as a teaching fellow at the university, where he began teaching freshman courses in English grammar. He embarked on a two-year course of graduate studies, while Juliet De Lima worked as a librarian.¹³ Joma Sison’s graduate studies were funded by the US government through an ICA-NEC teaching fellowship.¹⁴ The International Cooperation Agency (ICA) was the direct predecessor to the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and in 1960 it committed \$285,000 in funds for the University of the Philippines, a small portion of which were allotted to Sison.¹⁵ The ICA funding of UP was secured by Sison’s uncle, Vicente Sinco, then president of the University of the Philippines. In November 1958, Vicente Sinco had toured the United States where he had a personal interview with US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. During this visit he met extensively with Raymond Moyer, Far East director of the ICA, to arrange ICA funding for programs at the University of the Philippines.¹⁶ It was the funding personally negotiated by Sinco with the ICA and the US State Department that provided Sison with his first employment.

When she found out about his marriage, Sison’s mother insisted that they hold a church ceremony and Joma and Juliet were wed on January 3 1960, with Sison’s uncle, Vicente Sinco and his wife Sonia, standing as godparents at the ceremony. The newly married graduate student with funding from the US State Department and starkly pared back personal ambitions seemed an unlikely candidate to play an instrumental role in the political life of the coming decade.

SCAUP

Throughout Sison’s undergraduate and graduate career at UP, the dominant academic question of the day, the topic of debate which occupied both students and faculty members, was the dispute between religious obscurantism and secular

inaccurate. (Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 12).

¹¹Castro, “Jose Maria Sison and Julie De Lima; A Revolutionary Love Story.”

¹²Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 12.

¹³Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, 71.

¹⁴Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 201.

¹⁵Confidential Briefing Papers on the Philippines and Indonesia, CUSDPR, 796.5-MSP/4-359, p. 2.

¹⁶See the confidential memo to Dulles re: Sinco in CUSDPR, 896.432/11-1158.



Figure 5.2: Sison-De Lima Wedding, January 1960. Sison's uncle and UP president, Vicente Sinco is seated to his left.

anti-clericalism. Clerical authorities in academia, most notably at the Ateneo de Manila University, were bent on suppressing the secular curricula of public schools. This campaign waged by the Catholic Church was intimately bound up with the red-baiting McCarthyism of the House Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA).¹⁷ Mario Bolasco describes the academic atmosphere of the time,

Catholic Action's campaign against Agoncillo's *Revolt of the Masses*, charged with towing [*sic*] the communist line of argument; the hate-Recto campaign; the drive against the Noli-Fili bill dubbed by the *Sentinel* as part of the Red pattern of conquest. The rabidity of these attacks against secularizing tendencies in society gives one the impression of a final push to re-establish the role of the Church during the Spanish times.¹⁸

A heated point of the political contention in 1956 was the Noli-Fili bill, which sought to make translations of Jose Rizal's brilliant novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, required reading for students. Rizal's novels are trenchantly anti-clerical and the church fought fiercely to have the bill blocked. Leading the charge on behalf of the church was Catholic Action (CA) along with its student

¹⁷This was the context for the emergence of the journal *Philippine Studies*, published out of Ateneo. Its early issues were given over completely to anti-Communism.

¹⁸Mario Bolasco, "Marxism and Christianity in the Philippines: 1930-1983," in *Marxism in the Philippines: Marx Centennial Lectures* (Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, 1984), 112-113.

wing, SCA whose powerful branch on the UP campus was known as UPSCA.¹⁹ In May a compromise bill passed both Houses of Congress. Unexpurgated versions of Rizal's novels would be taught, but students could be exempted from reading the books on religious grounds.²⁰

In August, 154 professors and four administrators on the UP Diliman campus formed the Society for the Advancement of Academic Freedom (SAAF) to oppose the "recrudescence of religious intolerance" on the UP campus. Their primary opponent was Jesuit Fr. John Delaney, who "acting as parish priest for the UP Diliman community, launched a crusade, with the help of the UPSCA ... to 'cleanse' the campus of 'atheists.'"²¹ Ricardo Pascual, head of the philosophy department, and a self-proclaimed "agnostic positivist" was a particular target of UPSCA and Delaney. Delaney, wrote Eduardo Lachica, the "*eminence gris* behind the University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action," seemed to have "back door access to [University] President Vidal Tan."²² John Delaney died in early 1956 and Vidal Tan stepped down in 1957, lacking support on the board of regents. Not much changed under the one year stint of acting president Enrique Virata, but with the installation in 1958 of Sison's uncle, Vicente Sinco, who had been the Dean of the Law School, the tide turned somewhat against UPSCA.

In an attempt to curtail the power of UPSCA on campus Sinco altered the charter of the Student Council, limiting each student organization to one representative on the council regardless of the organization's total membership or the number of votes which it received in the campus election. UPSCA filed an appeal of Sinco's decision before the Court of Appeals, which issued an injunction against all student elections pending its decision. Sinco responded by abolishing the Student Council and creating a Student Union, which had an identical charter to the Council but it had Sinco's cap on representation written into its founding documents.²³

Luis Teodoro, a close associate of Joma Sison's in the early and mid-1960s, described the atmosphere of UP in 1960,

Faculty members and students discussing the latest Camus novel or Sartre manifesto were common sight (and sound – the discussions were often loud enough to wake the dead) at The Basement, as were

¹⁹Sison and Sison, "Foundation for sustained development," 44.

²⁰Renato Constantino and Letizia R. Constantino, *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* (Manila: The Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1978), 298. Benedict Anderson has examined how the poor English translations of the *Noli* which were taught in university courses removed Rizal's political and secular sting. (Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "Hard to Imagine," chap. 11 in *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* [New York: Verso, 1998], 235–62).

²¹Elmer Ordoñez, "Recrudescence," in *Serve the People: Ang Kasaysayan ng Radikal na Kilusan sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas*, ed. Bienvenido Lumbea et al. (Quezon City: Ibon Books, 2008), 38.

²²Eduardo Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (Quezon City: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1971), 174.

²³E. Voltaire Garcia, "Why the UP Student Union," *PC*, August 1962, 4.

students and professors going into some arcane issue in Philosophy at Little Quiapo, specially at the “Philosopher’s Inn” of Dr. Ricardo Pascua, [sic] who then chaired the Department of Philosophy.²⁴

Many who would later form the ranks of the Maoist youth organizations, Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM) and Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan [Federation of Democratic Youth] (SDK), cut their teeth on Sartre, not Marx; among them were Perfecto Tera, Luis Teodoro, Petronilo Daroy, and Vivencio Jose. They did not outgrow these philosophical roots. When, in 1971, Tera attempted to write a political autopsy of the movement from which he had been expelled, he published his account in Sartre’s *Les Temps Modernes*.²⁵ Francisco Nemenzo, who was an intimate of Sison’s in the early 1960s, claimed that Sison too was “flirting with existentialism.”²⁶ Sison was a member of the three person editorial board of the *Fugitive Review*, a slight literary magazine that briefly published during Sison’s stint as a graduate student. The first issue, published in October 1959, carried an editorial statement of purpose – “Why the Fugitive Review?” The statement clearly revealed the magazine to be representative of the prevailing intellectual ferment, a hybrid of Pascual’s logical positivism and Sartrean existentialism.

It is often the case that fugitives arise out of necessity ... There are a number of valid causes for this; the most common of which generally springs from a certain lack of sympathy of the society wherein these belligerent souls find themselves inextricably in. [sic] The hostility that the majority (whose attitudes and actuations are often motivated by anything but the reasonable and just) feels for them ... places them in a somewhat uncomfortable predicament. Needless to say, a pervasive sense of beleagueredness grows upon them.

... [This] modest publication will be guided by a simple creed – to allow the channels of thought and feeling the freedom from the obstructive elements in campus ... “The students are alive, and the purpose of education is to stimulate and guide their self-development,” preaches Alfred North Whitehead.

... The supreme responsibility of the University is to provide an atmosphere conducive to private initiative and action without thus prejudicing itself. It must sow the seeds of dissent, not with a view

²⁴Luis V. Teodoro, “Decade of the Diliman Republic, UP in the 1960s,” in *Serve the People: Ang Kasaysayan ng Radikal na Kilusan sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas*, ed. Bienvenido Lumbea et al. (Quezon City: Ibon Books, 2008), 75.

²⁵Perfecto Tera Jr. [Rodrigo Rojas, pseud.], “Le Mouvement de libération nationale aux Philippines,” *Les Temps Modernes* 27, no. 297 (1971): 1825–1859.

²⁶Francisco Nemenzo in Jones, *Red Revolution*, 20. See also Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 15.

to disrupt the value framework of society, but to incite the latent genius of the flock. Orthodoxy is the road taken to the grave.²⁷

The *Fugitive Review* displayed a healthy humanist impulse combined with a sizable dollop of elitism, a fixation on the individual, and a voluntarist conception of political change. The *Fugitive Review* reveals that Sison's philosophical roots were in Sartrean idealism, with its existential preoccupation with the freedom and choice of the individual. Sison's early writings displayed a strident moral surety that rests on the self-confidence of the far-sighted individual who has risen above the great unwashed masses. Sison was not alone in his political trajectory from Sartre to Mao, it was a common path for a generation of young radicals. Sartre held a deep-seated distaste for the materialism and determinism of Marxism, sensing that Marx's scientific appraisal of the revolutionary role of the working class impinged upon the individual moral freedom of the intellectual. Sartre's concerns found apt consonance with the voluntarism of Maoism, particularly as it was manifested in the anarchism of the Cultural Revolution.²⁸ These were the philosophical roots of the nationalism of Joma Sison and many other of the intellectual leaders of the youth movement that eventually would become part of the CPP.

Under Sison's leadership, the secular, anti-clerical existentialism prevalent on the Diliman campus took on organizational form. It was from its inception inflected by nationalism. Sison wrote, "In my intellectual maturation as a progressive liberal, I was inspired by the anti-imperialist speeches of Recto; the 'Filipino-first' campaign of patriotic businessmen; the writings of Professors Teodoro Agoncillo and Cesar Adib Majul reviving the glories of the old democratic revolution; and the colloquia on nationalism that thrived under the university presidency of Dr. Vicente Sinco during the late 1950s and early 1960s."²⁹ In October 1960, a discussion group that had formed over the preceding year took organizational shape, founding itself as the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP).³⁰ Sison recounted that "[i]t was with some humor that we adopted the acronym SCAUP to stress the fact that we

²⁷ *Fugitive Review*, 1959, no. 1, 1-2. Sison wrote a brief article in the same issue in which he cites the literary influences of Sartre and Andre Malraux. (Jose Ma. Sison, "Three on Franz," *Fugitive Review* 1, no. 1 [1959]: 12-13).

²⁸ Sartrean idealism was but one manifestation of this preoccupation in the 1960s, which was the underpinning of the entire "New Left." Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Theodor Adorno – all, in various and often conflicting ways, evinced this same privileging of the alienation of the individual over the exploitation of the working class. For an extended analysis on this point, see David North, *The Frankfurt School, Postmodernism and the Politics of the Pseudo-Left: A Marxist Critique* (Oak Park: Mehring Books, 2015).

²⁹ Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 11.

³⁰ The fact that the discussion group formed almost a year prior to the founding of SCAUP has led to some confusion with dates in published accounts, including Sison's own. Weekley claims the group was founded in 1959. (Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 20). The timeline in Sison's own book states that SCAUP was organized in October 1959. (Sison and

were diametrically opposed to the UPSCA as it was then.”³¹ SCAUP initially had around thirty members and Sison was chair of the organization.³²

When Sison claimed that “SCAUP propagated the general line of national democratic revolution; provided cover for discreet Marxist study; attracted students capable of leading other student organizations and/or taking the editorship of student publications,”³³ this was only true of the organization in the late 1960s, when it had come to serve the purpose of recruiting students to the national democratic movement who were frightened by the more strident politics of the KM. In 1960-61, however, the organization served no such covert purpose. It was an incipient nationalist organization emerging out of the anti-clerical sentiment that had become prevalent in the academic milieu of UP under Vicente Sinco. As Eduardo Lachica correctly noted, SCAUP “played a key role in the transition in campus politics from anti-clericalism to nationalism.”³⁴

The dominant intellectual influence on SCAUP were the nationalist political ideas of Claro M. Recto, and his sudden death in Rome in October 1960 seems to have been the impulse behind the organization’s founding.³⁵ The new organization made preparations for an event to be held on February 8, Recto’s birthday, in his honor.³⁶ The event was delayed and SCAUP wound up holding a two day seminar on February 13-14 which was organized around the theme of Cultural Nationalism and to which they invited Mrs. Recto.³⁷ SCAUP founding member Petronilo Daroy delivered a pretentious speech, indicative of the elitist thinking of the organization as a whole. Daroy stated that “Recto is culturally significant in refusing to be identified with the national mediocrity ... [T]he late Senator does not correlate phenomena objectifying our culture, but he is simply a phenomena of culture. His relevance is as an opposing self of our culture.”³⁸ At the beginning of 1961, the members of SCAUP, under the influence of existentialism,

Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 202.). Contemporary newspaper accounts clearly reveal that it was founded in October 1960.

³¹Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 47. Sison wrote “as it was then,” because, in just over a decade’s time, the front organizations of the CPP would enter into a close alliance with UPSCA.

³²Among the founding members were Satur Ocampo, Perfecto Tera, Luis Teodoro, Vivencio Jose, Ferdinand Tinio, Jaime C. Laya, Petronilo Daroy, and Reynato Puno. (Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 20; Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, 71). Puno’s legal career would take him from the Court of Appeals under Marcos to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court under Arroyo. Laya would become Marcos’ Budget Minister and then Governor of the Central Bank. Joel Rocamora was made treasurer of SCAUP.

³³Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 11-12.

³⁴Lachica, *The Huks*, 177.

³⁵Sison and his colleagues would later suggest that Recto’s death was the result of an American assassination plot. See, for example, SND, 127.

³⁶PC, 1 February 1961, 1-2.

³⁷Professors OD Corpuz (Political Science) and Leopoldo Yabes (English) both spoke at the event.

³⁸“Recto’s prophetic vision extolled by six speakers in SCAUP seminar,” PC, February 1961.

saw nationalism as the cause of the enlightened individual who stood above the mediocrity of the mass as an “opposing self.” In his opening remarks to the gathering, Sison announced that SCAUP would hold a Recto seminar every year in February. In the following years, the February Recto seminar would become the defining tradition of the organization.

The fledgling student group would be thrust briefly into the public limelight by a controversy that erupted before the CAFA in March.

CAFA and “The Peasant War”

Beyond Sison’s own highly suspect claim that he was drawn to its ideas as early as his third year of high school, we have thus far in his intellectual development no evidence of any encounter with Marxism. Sison described how he “came across a Marxist study of the peasant war in the Philippines, published in the faculty journal” which was influential in the development of his ideas.³⁹ There is no doubt that Sison did “come across” this work, as it was the subject of national controversy in March 1961 when the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities, under Leonardo Perez, denounced the article in question as Communist and hauled faculty members before the committee to question them regarding its publication.

The article in question, “The Peasant War in the Philippines,” had been written in 1946 and was reprinted in 1958 in the *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* at the University of the Philippines. No author was listed.⁴⁰ While “Peasant War” was clearly influential in the development of Sison’s thinking, this was not because its analysis was Marxist. On the contrary, the paper expressed a reformist and anti-Marxist perspective. In opposition to Lenin’s conception that imperialism was the inevitable highest stage of capitalism, the “Peasant War” saw imperialism as an unfortunate policy choice which could be prevented by the expansion of the New Deal in the United States, an analysis which was in keeping with John Hobson’s 1902 work, *Imperialism*, which had rooted the drive toward imperialism in the perils of under-consumption.⁴¹ The author of the “Peasant War” wrote

The trend of American foreign policy – world economic supremacy

³⁹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 11.

⁴⁰“The Peasant War in the Philippines,” *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* 23, nos. 2-4 (1958): 373-436.

⁴¹J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965). Lenin rooted the analysis of his 1916 work on many of the findings of Hobson, but combined this with evidence supplied by Rudolf Hilferding and others, correcting Hobson’s focus on the under-consumption of goods as the driving force behind imperialism, and revealing instead that imperialism was rooted in monopoly capitalism, particularly finance capital, and its drive to export capital globally in pursuit of exploitable labor. (LCW, Volume 22, pp. 182-304). On the intellectual and political roots of Lenin’s *Imperialism* see Richard B. Day and Daniel Gaido, eds., *Discovering Imperialism: Social Democracy to World War I* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012).

and political hegemony – is not inevitable. It has been only after the death of the late President Roosevelt that a sweeping change in America’s foreign policy occurred. ...

Capitalism rests upon the sale of goods at profit. But goods cannot be sold unless the masses have the money to buy. Therefore merely from the standpoint of enlightened selfishness, if nothing else, capitalism should provide employment, high wages and salaries, ample leisure for the masses to consume goods and services, and decent income for the farming population. ...

President Roosevelt did just this: controlled expansion of production to provide for more employment, controlled prices to bring the goods within the reach of the masses, and increased wages to provide adequate purchasing power. This economy would not depend upon conquest for survival.

Hence, Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms. ...

But things took a different course on the assumption of office of President Truman.⁴²

The “Peasant War” saw the solution to Hobson’s dilemma not in Marxism, but in a warmed-over Keynesianism. From this premise flowed the most reformist of conclusions for politics in the Philippines. According to the author the paramount political issue in the Philippines was the struggle for “Civil Liberties.” US imperialism destroyed the Philippine Revolution of the nineteenth century, set up a puppet Constituent Assembly and then drafted the 1935 Philippine Constitution in keeping with its own interests. From the perspective of the “Peasant War,” however, “the introduction of the American political system constituted a great revolutionary stride.”⁴³ Under the American political system, “where civil liberties, free elections and constitutional rights are said to be guaranteed to the people ... if we examine the position of the masses in relation with legal means, nothing on earth could stop them – the people – from taking control of the reins of government legally. But these legal means insure the victory of the masses over the reactionary class and the end of the class dictatorship of the elite.”⁴⁴ The feudal elite, therefore, sought to crush democratic rights. The paper concluded, “The peasants may be suppressed, but when they raise their heads again, there shall emerge a new, stronger and more powerful movement which shall all the more strive to conquer, under the regime of true freedom, the political field in which their demands may be realized on a more enduring basis.”⁴⁵ The political field celebrated in the article was bourgeois democracy, in which the goal of the future peasant rebellion was the establishment of civil liberties in opposition

⁴²“The Peasant War in the Philippines,” 401-402.

⁴³Ibid., 431.

⁴⁴Ibid., 425.

⁴⁵Ibid., 432-433.

to the landlords, which would insure a functioning bourgeois democratic state in which, the author claimed, the interests of the masses would be carried out. There was not a smattering of genuine Marxism to this. Sison, however, would find it in consonance with the Stalinist conceptions which he would soon be developing under the influence of the PKI.

Leonardo Perez at the head of CAFA claimed the “Peasant War” was guilty of “leftism,” but this was nothing but a pretext for the harassment of anti-clericalism and academic freedom on the UP campus. The journal in which the article was republished was edited by Leopoldo Yabes and Ricardo Pascual, among others, and Yabes and Pascual were both high profile targets in the clerical drive against secular education. Using information supplied to him by former US intelligence operative, and now Quezon City Councilor, Carlos Albert, Perez conducted ‘Loyalty Investigations,’ alleging that the UP campus had been “infiltrated by communists.” Star witness Josefina Constantino, the secretary of former UP president Vidal Tan, accused Ricardo Pascual of organizing communist cell groups.⁴⁶ Influential *Chronicle* columnist I.P. Soliongco wrote on March 11, “The thing to do is to expose the investigators as well as their informers as nothing but a gang of self-serving obscurantists whose staple now and in the future, is a pack of lies – lies which are enshrined in long, malicious and ungrammatical dossiers.”⁴⁷

On March 14, three thousand students marched to Congress to protest against CAFA conducting “loyalty checks” on faculty members. In a foreshadowing of events of the next decade, “jeepneys outfitted with loudspeakers roamed the campus announcing the rally.” A resolution was drawn up and circulated as a leaflet recognizing CAFA’s right to conduct the investigation, but denouncing the manner in which it was being conducted and calling for the speedy conclusion to the probe.⁴⁸ Sison recounted that “SCAUP rose to the challenge of combating the witch hunt. It initiated an alliance of fraternities, sororities, and other campus organizations, which organized the March 14, 1961 anti-CAFA demonstration in defense of academic and intellectual freedom.”⁴⁹ This much is correct; SCAUP did rise to prominence in March 1961 and it did demonstrate in defense of academic

⁴⁶PC, 14 March 1961, 1. On the role of J. Constantino, see Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 120 ff.

⁴⁷Raul Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory: The Story of the Manila Chronicle, 1945-1998* (Pasig: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, 2007), 156.

⁴⁸Heherson Alvarez chaired the protest and Joel Rocamora carried the permit. (PC, 14 March 1961; 21 March 1961.) Joma Sison and Petronilo Daroy arranged a contract with the JD bus company to ferry students to Congress. The organizing students held a press conference in the evening at the National Press Club, where among several others, Joel Rocamora presented the position of the protesting students. (Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 49.) The publication of the UP College of Arts and Sciences, *Sinag*, later claimed that these “buses remained unpaid for months until they threatened to file suit against the student government.” (*Sinag*, Aug 1972, 4; PRP 42/01.05).

⁴⁹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 12.

freedom. Sison continued, however, “Within the alliance, SCAUP provided an anti-imperialist and antifeudal content to the mass action and all related propaganda. The anti-CAFA demonstration drew 4,000 students and young instructors who went up to the halls of Congress and literally scuttled the CAFA hearings.”⁵⁰ We have evidence of only one piece of propaganda that was produced for the demonstration, and that is the hesitant resolution politely asking the CAFA to speedily conclude its investigation, while affirming its authority to carry it out.⁵¹ There was no “anti-imperialist or anti-feudal content.” SCAUP members Heherson Alvarez, who chaired the demonstration, and Reynato Puno told the press that the protest was “not staged against CAFA or the Congress, but against the procedure being followed by the body in conducting the probe.”⁵² Abaya reported that on the day of the demonstration, “Sectarian [i.e., clerical] infiltrators among the crowd distributed poisoned leaflets naming names and calling for the ouster of ‘suspicious’ and ‘controversial’ professors.”⁵³

The highest contemporary estimate for student participation was three thousand in the *Philippine Collegian*, not four thousand, as Sison claimed. When Sison repeated the story in 2004, he declared that five thousand students turned out.⁵⁴ Joma Sison repeated verbatim the claim that the demonstration “literally scuttled” the CAFA investigation in at least four distinct published accounts.⁵⁵ Ninotchka Rosca wrote a similar story, claiming that Sison “led University students in over-running the congressional witchhunt of the UP faculty members, scattering the congressmen and bringing the proceedings to a halt.”⁵⁶ The CAFA investigation was far from scuttled, and Damo-Santiago reported that “committee proceedings in room 440 continued.”⁵⁷ On the day of the protest, Perez announced that “a new hearing would be held on 23 March, with two ‘suspected Reds’ placed on the carpet: Renato Constantino and Agustin Rodolfo.”⁵⁸

After the one day protest, the probe continued and widened, targeting IP Soliongco, Hernando Abaya, and even SCAUP member Reynato Puno. In April, Perez announced that he would be questioning Celia Pomeroy regarding an alleged ‘student politburo.’ In May, Luis Taruc was brought in to testify regarding Zoology professor Agustin Rodolfo’s alleged involvement in the Communist Party. The Society for the Advancement of Academic Freedom (SAAF) published a petition signed by faculty calling for the investigation to stop. The CAFA hearings went on until June 1961 when they ended because Nicanor Jimenez, head of the

⁵⁰Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 12.

⁵¹The resolution was published on the front page of the March 14 1961 edition of the *Collegian*.

⁵²PC, 22 Mar 1961.

⁵³Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 125.

⁵⁴Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 40.

⁵⁵Cf. ia. Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 49.

⁵⁶Ninotchka Rosca, “The Sison Way,” in *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World – Portrait of a Revolutionary* (Manila: Ibon Books, 2004), 249.

⁵⁷Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 53.

⁵⁸Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 126.

National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) “told Perez there was no evidence against Soliongco, Abaya and others. Perez had to end his hearings and the story petered out.”⁵⁹ While the Perez investigation left the public eye it did in fact persist and the US Embassy reported that the investigation was transferred from CAFA to the Office of the Assistant Fiscal in Quezon City at the instigation of Carlos Albert.⁶⁰

SCAUP, however, did not demonstrate again. After their March rally, they turned their attention to a Poetry Reading which they held on April 4, where Sison read a number of his poems.⁶¹ The poetry Sison was writing in the first half of 1961 reflects how little developed his political conceptions were. There was a touch of anti-clericalism and a bit of sexual innuendo, but not much else. Below are two poems published by Sison in early 1961, both of which are representative of the style and content of poetry Sison was publishing at the time. The first was published in February.

Sainted Onanists and Snails

Sainted onanists are saving the snails
 Turreted on land, their dome's God's pate,
 Hairless, suncatching but raindrenched,
 Rusted hardness whose shiny beginning
 In heated end, furious as dug-in windy
 Length of body is greasy and snails
 Cannot climb and slip into windows
 Of goldwalled rooms slimy on marble floor.
 Crawl; crawl on ground, on slippery turret
 Nowhere is everywhere but somewhere
 Where head and touch fall is nowhere
 But everywhere. Be content, for,
 If restless, hymns shall be sung devoutly
 To steal nerves, making them holy.
 If restless still, they shall be shredded
 By the same hymns and quick shrieking blades.⁶²

And the second in April.

A Poem

⁵⁹Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 156.

⁶⁰CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/6-3061, p. 2.

⁶¹PC, 29 March 1961, 5.

⁶²Jose Ma. Sison, “Sainted Onanists and Snails,” *PC*, February 1961, 3.

There is a deep, deep well that continues
 With the high, high tower whose whiteness
 Of air is like the whiteness of water there.

The wisdom of light and the silence of dark
 Make the wisdom of stalks spying
 And swayed together on the sodden crotch.

There is a deep, deep well that continues
 With the high, high tower whose whiteness
 Of air is like the whiteness of water there.⁶³

Sison the poet of 1961 did not have very much to say, and he did not say it particularly well.

The developing idea of Nationalism

Reynato Puno had been called before the CAFA investigation because of an article published in the *Collegian* under his editorship. The article was entitled “Requiem for Lumumba,” and ran on March 1 with the by-line Andres N. Gregorio. It was Sison’s first pseudonym. His style was beginning to bear resemblance to the writings of the man who would later found the CPP; it had a tone of overwrought moral agitation straining to find coherent political expression. Sison denounced Americans – not US imperialism, simply Americans – as “double-faced,” using this adjective four times in the space of four sentences. Sison as yet had no explanation for the role of US imperialism other than a seemingly innate American treacherousness. What is more important is the evidence that the article provides for the influence of Bakri Ilyas on the developing political character of Joma Sison’s thinking. Sison wrote

In Djakarta, the Indonesian students demonstrated against both the American and Belgian embassies . . . Indonesia is neutralist and as-
 sertive of its nationalism in spite of bombers flying from Clark field
 or so-called protocol areas of the SEATO. Not one of the two major
 contending forces in the world has any monopoly over the thinking
 of its citizenry unlike in the Philippines. Besides this, they have a
 good memory of the affair where 35,000 progressive Indonesians
 were massacred by the mercenaries paid from a \$56 million fund
 handed to Hatta in Bangkok by the Americans . . . the shiny Amer-
 icans were trying to get a foothold on Indonesia and its economic
 resources.⁶⁴

⁶³Jose Ma. Sison, “A Poem,” *PC*, April 1961, 24.

⁶⁴Jose Ma. Sison [Andres N. Gregorio, pseud.], “Requiem for Lumumba,” *PC*, March 1961, 3, 7.

This glossing of the 1948 Madiun affair and the massacre of a large portion of the Indonesian communist party was based on Aidit's *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution*. The only plausible source for Sison's analysis in "Requiem" was PKI member and UP graduate student Bakri Ilyas, with whom Sison had begun working in 1961.⁶⁵ Sison made no reference whatsoever to the working class or peasantry as his orientation was entirely to Filipino students whom he decried as having an "unconcerned and apathetic position and attitude" which "continues to sap the sense of humanity in the youth."⁶⁶ Sison would carry this conviction throughout his long political career. It was an expression of his existentialist and voluntarist philosophical roots. The success of a revolution, from this perspective, rested essentially on the degree to which the masses were aroused. Awaken them and they would carry out the revolution. The task of the party was thus pre-eminently to agitate and arouse, not to educate and lead. Sison's perspective was that of the activist and not of the revolutionary.

Nationalism was coming to predominate over liberalism in Sison's thinking. This was evident in an ill-chosen and misogynist metaphor he used in an article in June 1961. Describing the 1919 May Fourth movement in China, Sison wrote, "Coming back to the relationship between nationalism and liberalism, one can clearly see their fruitful copulation in the May 4th demonstration ... Nationalism maintained an element repellent of imperialism and, [sic] liberalism had an element repellent of the traditionalism of the feudal warlords conniving with the imperialists. But, of course, nationalism – more masculine than liberalism – could take care of itself in the open field of action while also independently liberalism – more feminine – retreated coyly into its academic shell."⁶⁷ What is most striking is that while Sison had as yet not a hint of Marxism in his thinking, he had already developed the basic themes that would dominate his political life. He made no reference to the working class, they were not yet part of his vocabulary or his thinking, but the struggle of nationalism against imperialism, and against feudal connivance with imperialism, was already present.

The further development of Sison's political conceptions was manifested in an article published in late August in the *Collegian*, in which he wrote,

The Philippine economic and social dilemma is similar to that of these countries [Laos, Cuba, the Congo, South Vietnam, and Brazil]

⁶⁵D.N. Aidit, head of the PKI, had modeled his work after Mao's writings, and in turn had provided a model which Sison would later emulate in his PSR. A key political component of *Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution* was Aidit's attempt to shift the blame for the Madiun massacre, including the execution of Tan Malaka, away from Sukarno and on to Hatta. It was this political line which Sison was repeating in his article on Lumumba. For an analysis of the significance of Aidit's work, see Ruth T McVey, "The enchantment of the revolution: history and action in an Indonesian communist text," in *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia*, ed. Antony Reid and David G. Marr (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books (Asia), 1979), 340–358.

⁶⁶Sison, "Requiem for Lumumba."

⁶⁷Jose Ma. Sison, "Revolt of the Students," *PC*, June 1961, 3.

recently rocked by revolution...

Before we are swept away by overwhelming, [*sic*] winds generated by unknown factors, we should know and understand them now so that we would not fall into the pits of anarchy – so that we know what to demand as our national rights. It has been to our credit as a people that even if we are driven to more forceful means of change we do not degenerate into wasteful mobs.⁶⁸

This article is the first reference in Sison's writings to the working class, whom he referred to as "laborers." Sison's concern was to stem the possibility of a revolutionary movement of the masses that was not subordinated toward the ends of nationalism, for such a revolutionary struggle would be "anarchy" and a "wasteful mob." He then laid out his basic conception of nationalism and of class relations in Philippine society.

Within the present politico-economic frame, there are three major factors that we have to understand thoroughly: the external or foreign, the semi-external or conniver, and the internal or national... The external factor refers principally to the big bull operations of the United States which include those of West German and Japanese subsidiaries. This factor is responsible for the dumping of surplus consumption products in our country which prevent our native businessmen from developing a national industry.

This external hampering of native businessmen caused the country to "fail to develop industrially" and thus to be able to devise "an equitable social program." Foreign intervention according to Sison was the obstacle to the healthy development of native industrial capitalism which could insure social welfare. Sison then identified the "conniver factor within our shores prancing around with their Federalista complex and with their wasteful luxury," as those "among our fellow nationals ... who collaborate with foreigners in export-import deals." Meanwhile the "internal or national factor remains broken up against itself" and needed to be brought to an "effective national union."

Although it is the tenants, the laborers and the unemployed who are most in need of social sympathy and who should motivate and realize mostly any movement for social change because of their overwhelming number and economic, [*sic*] deprevation [*sic*]. It is necessary that all the other national segments – national businessmen, small landowners, government officials, military men, professionals, teachers and students, small employees and some social outcasts – should be integrated in such a movement.

⁶⁸Jose Ma. Sison, "Social Revolution Through National Determination," *PC*, August 1961, 3.

Sison called for workers and peasants to serve as the motive force for a national revolution, carried out in collaboration with the national bourgeoisie, whose only stated goal was national industrialization which would in turn facilitate unspecified palliative social reforms. Sison concluded, “Only the unity of elements or segments of the internal or national factor will triumph. And it is only through national determination that the whole world can march forward from a condition in which rich countries ride on poor countries just as much as a rich elite rides on the masses within each poor country.” This conclusion directly contradicted Lenin’s *Imperialism*, in which Lenin argued that imperialism was the highest stage of capitalism and the only way to end imperialist domination was international socialism, not national determination toward an autonomous national capitalism. Sison’s conclusions directly mirrored those of the “Peasant War” article.

We see that by late August 1961, under the influence of Bakri Ilyas, Sison had developed the basic themes of his future political career: the enemies of the people were imperialism (the “external”) and feudalism (the “conniver”); and the working class and the peasantry needed to be yoked with the bourgeoisie, otherwise there would be anarchy. The “connivers” were not distinguished by their class position, but were simply the portion of the nation who chose to collaborate with the “external” to the detriment of the nation. Anyone, from a feudal landlord to a wealthy politician to a large capitalist, could be a welcome part of the nationalist movement, provided they chose not to connive with foreigners. This article expressed, with striking clarity, the essence of the politics of Joma Sison. The first time that Sison wrote on the working class he articulated two ideas: first, he conceived of a revolutionary struggle of the working class in the face of economic and social crisis as a potential ‘mob’. And second, he sought the solution to this danger in channeling the working class behind nationalism in an alliance with the bourgeoisie.

During the rainy season of 1961, Sison became involved in a controversy in the English department, where he worked as a lecturer. In his 1989 autobiographical account, Sison stated that

Subsequent to the anti-CAFA demonstration, I became involved again in the debate between progressive forces and the religio-sectarians. I took the lead with an article objecting to the religio-sectarian bias in the selection of study materials by the UP English department for an academic subject on great ideas of the world required for all undergraduate students. The course syllabus had a preponderance of international authors who garbed their medieval thoughts in modern phraseology. I demanded that Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao and other great Communist thinkers with influence over a large part of humanity should be represented in the syllabus.⁶⁹

⁶⁹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 12-13.

In truth Sison wrote two articles on this topic, both of which were published in the *Collegian*. On July 19, Sison wrote, “The medieval menace more often works insidiously, however. A very recent and very classic example can be cited here. Only last academic year, the lady chairman and vice-chairman of a discipline committee succeeded in fixing the content of a new course according to their holy leanings. These ladies are ardent admirers of Cardinal Newman, Gilson, G.K. Chesterton, Maritain, Dawson and the like. Above all, St. Thomas Aquinas.”⁷⁰ The church, Sison declared, “is the most solid facade and static rallying point of native anti-nationalist elements.” To these religious anti-nationalists he opposed “the relentless and fearless stand of the late Senator Claro M. Recto.” In the August 16 edition of the *Collegian*, Dr. Dionisia Rola of the English Department responded to Sison. “I assume that these statements proceed from a given set of facts known to you. Yet you withhold the identity of the Department, of the new course and of the ladies with ‘holy leanings’ ... Should not genuine scholarship ... require that where facts are involved such facts be made known?” In the same edition of the *Collegian*, Sison responded. “To satisfy the demands for the identity of the Department, the new course and the ladies, I give you proper nouns. The Department is that of English; the new course is English IV, which is supposed to deal with ‘Great Thoughts’; as to the ‘ladies,’ I wonder if you don’t consider yourself as one.” Sison then admitted that the curriculum did include “writers like Whitehead, Darwin, Huxley, Russell and H.G. Wells” but was nonetheless skewed toward medieval thinkers. He stated that “this disproportionality is to be bewailed.” He said that it was “saddening” that “more competent thinkers ... like Eddington, Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Oppenheimer, Schweitzer, John Dewey, Marx and other better possibles” were not included.⁷¹ Sison raised no “demands,” and never even mentioned “Engels, Lenin, Mao and other Communist thinkers.”

At the beginning of the 1961-62 school year, SCAUP initiated a move to gain editorial control of the *Collegian*. Retaining this control would be a leading preoccupation of the youth organizations around Joma Sison for the next decade. Hernando Abaya, the secretary to UP President Vicente Sinco, was made faculty editor of the *Collegian*. Abaya was intimately connected with the PKP, and had been a subject of the CAFA inquiries earlier in the year. Under his editorial watch four candidates were selected to edit the *Collegian*, all of them SCAUP members: Joma Sison, Petronilo Daroy, Luis Teodoro, and Ferdinand Tinio. Tinio was selected as editor, Joel Rocamora was made associate editor, Luis Teodoro edited the features page, Joma Sison was research editor, and Daroy and Perfecto Tera edited the literary page. The influential UP school paper was, from top to bottom, run by SCAUP. SCAUP began to hold its meetings in the *Collegian* office.⁷²

⁷⁰Jose Ma. Sison, “Enemies of Intellectual Freedom,” *PC*, July 1961, 3.

⁷¹Jose Ma. Sison, “Too Bold a Line of Sectarian Direction,” *PC*, August 1961, 3, 7.

⁷²*PC*, 22 August 1961, 7.

SCAUP, with Sison at its head, had over the course of 1961 begun developing its ideology – nationalism – into one which was shifting away from the cause of the existentialist “opposing self” against society, and was moving toward the need for a mass movement. A collection of Sison’s poems, entitled *Brothers*, was published in November and Petronilo Daroy penned the introduction, entitled “Causes without Rebels.” His introduction was initially published in the *Collegian* in September. Daroy wrote

To speak of the ideal of national identity is to deal with the getting involved in the issue of problem of [*sic*] autonomy: it means freedom. And when the Filipino writer starts to deal with the issue of freedom, he inevitably situates himself in history, in, as it were, the maincurrents of national traditions. And the moment he starts to be conscious of this role the literature he creates comes in close correspondence with revolutionary politics.⁷³

The cause being articulated was clear – it was nationalism, but nationalism was no longer simply an intellectual activity, it entailed “revolutionary politics.” This cause, however, needed rebels. Sison and company were beginning to look for a nationalist political movement which they could lead.

The development of this emerging quest for a constituency was conditioned by the expiration of Sison’s teaching appointment. In October 1961, Sison’s appointment as an ICA-NEC funded teaching fellow at the University of the Philippines lapsed, a fact which Sison later attributed to political motives on the part of unspecified actors.⁷⁴ Joma and Juliet’s first child, Janah Barbara, had been born by this point. Juliet continued to work as a librarian and the Sisons lived first with Joma’s sister and then with his brother. Without a viable source of income, Sison received a scholarship from the Indonesian Jajasan Siswa Lokantara to “study Indonesian language and literature in Djakarta.” According to the government intelligence file prepared on Sison in 1964, Sison was invited to Indonesia by the Association of Indonesian Students. “In November 1961, a representative from the Association of Indonesian Students, finalized a working agreement with the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP), thru its president Sison, on the exchange of students between the two organizations.”⁷⁵ As he prepared to travel, Sison learned that the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) had blacklisted him as a subversive, and blocked his passport.⁷⁶ Sison appealed to his uncle, Sixto Brillantes, the former governor of Ilocos Sur and now chairman of the COMELEC. This was during the thick of the counting of votes from a controversial and fiercely contested presidential

⁷³PC, 19 September 1961, 4.

⁷⁴Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 15.

⁷⁵PKP’s 5 Year Project, 1964, CTRB 29/20.

⁷⁶Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 15.

election, but Brillantes found the time to request that President Garcia order the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to issue Sison a passport.⁷⁷

In January 1962, Sison departed for Indonesia.⁷⁸ According to Sison, he applied to travel to Indonesia at the instigation of Bakri Ilyas and on Sison's arrival in Jakarta, "[Bakri] introduced me to leaders of the student, youth and other mass organizations."⁷⁹ In other words, Bakri arranged the funding for Sison's travel and then accompanied him to Jakarta where he introduced him to the leadership of the PKI.

⁷⁷Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 40.

⁷⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 202.

⁷⁹Sison and Sison, "Letter to the Family of Bung Drs. Bakri Iljas."

— 6 —

Ignacio Lacsina

Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look

— William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

The other figure associated with the rebirth of the Communist Party in late 1962 was Ignacio Lacsina, a labor lawyer who rapidly climbed the ranks of trade union politics in the 1950s and 1960s to become one of its dominant players. A pugnacious, ambitious, and untrustworthy man, he was working as an informant for the CIA at the time that he was made a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party. By the late 1960s he had become a reliable informant for Marcos, supplying him with names and details regarding the student radicals of the Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM).

An examination of the career of Lacsina leading up to 1962 reveals the rotteness of trade union politics in the Philippines. Each union functioned above all as a vehicle for the personal political ambitions of its leadership, invariably lawyers, who were perpetually engaged in the negotiation of alliances with representatives of the Liberal Party (LP) or Nacionalista Party (NP). The chaos of trade union politics in the Philippines was a direct expression of the fundamental instability of the dynastic alignments of the traditional political elite. As the Senators and congressmen, LP and NP alike, altered their allegiances, jumped ship, changed parties, and played out the mutually agreed upon game of betrayal and duplicity, the union leadership followed suit. Just as the Liberal of today would be the Nacionalista of tomorrow and again the Liberal of two years hence, so too the umbrella organizations of labor allied and broke apart with the frequency and regularity of the national elections.

According to his record at the Philippine Bar Association, Lacsina came from Bacolor, Pampanga and was admitted to the Philippine Bar on February 2, 1952. Even before he had passed the bar, however, Lacsina had immersed himself in labor politics, and from the beginning of his career as a union leader, Lacsina was in regular communication with the US Embassy.¹ Lacsina was the vice president

¹My account of the political career of Ignacio Lacsina is based almost entirely on material in

of Johnny Tan's Federation of Free Workers (FFW) from 1951-1954, and in 1953, he received a grant from the International Cooperation Agency (ICA) to travel to the United States, where he spent nearly a year touring the country. I have found no details regarding these travels other than a passing mention in an Embassy memorandum that Lacsina met and nearly married a young woman in the northeastern United States. On his return, Lacsina led his union of bank and insurance workers to break from the FFW, transforming the union into the independent National Association of Trade Unions (NATU) which in 1955 he allied with José J. Hernandez' Philippine Trade Union Council (PTUC). By 1957 NATU claimed to have over one thousand members. Lacsina received funding from the Campaign for Moral Rearmament to travel to Europe in 1955, and he was elected assistant general secretary of the PTUC in absentia, a position which he held from 1955 to 1957.²

Commission Internationale contre le Régime Concentrationnaire

In February 1956, Irving Brown, head of AFL-CIO international relations and an agent of the CIA responsible for its international labor operations, nominated Lacsina to serve on the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) consultative committee on forced labor practices in China. This campaign was being carried out under the auspices of the International Commission Against Concentration Camp Practices [Commission Internationale contre le Régime Concentrationnaire (CICRC)], which had been established by ex-Trotskyist David Rousset in 1950.³ Rousset, a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps, broke with the Trotskyist movement in 1947, announcing that the forced labor camps in the Soviet Union were identical to the concentration camps of the Nazis. "Focusing in visceral, 'apolitical' language on the common wretchedness of victims, not on any structural or ideological similarities, he propounded a distinctive thesis of totalitarian equivalence between Nazism and Soviet communism."⁴ Rousset served on the executive committee of the CIA-funded Congress of Cultural Freedom (CCF) and received support from both US and British intelligence.

Lacsina served as one of five Asian delegates, alongside six European delegates, investigating "political repression in People's China."⁵ The Committee

the CUSDPR, and in particular the reports submitted by Lacsina to his Embassy handlers.

²Regarding Lacsina's election in absentia see Despatch 252 in CUSDPR, 896.062/8-2455, p. 1.

³Despatch 945 in CUSDPR, 896.062/2-2756. In 1962 Brown along with Jay Lovestone, a former member of the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) and now likewise a CIA agent, founded the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), which served as the international labor arm of the CIA within the AFL-CIO for the latter half of the twentieth century.

⁴Emma Kuby, "In the Shadow of the Concentration Camp: David Rousset and the Limits of Apoliticism in Postwar French Thought," *Modern Intellectual History* 11, no. 01 (2014): 148.

⁵Théo Bernard, "CICRC and the ICFTU Consolidate Their Joint Activity" *Saturn Monthly*

convened in Brussels from April 20 to 30, 1956.⁶ Another ex-Trotskyist, Gérard Rosenthal, headed the prosecution against China, in a staged, theatrical trial of which Lacsina was a participant. The results, condemning Beijing, were published widely in the western media. Lacsina extended an invitation to Rosenthal, David Rousset and Théo Bernard to attend the August PTUC Congress in Manila in order to promote “closer ties of friendship and cooperation aimed at protecting and defending the fundamental human rights which totalitarian forces would seek to violate or destroy.” The ‘totalitarian’ force he singled out was the “concentrationary regime existing in the People’s Republic of China.”^{7,8}

The CICRC appointed Rosenthal to represent it at the congress in Manila. President Magsaysay, Labor Secretary Terry Adevoso, and US Labor Attaché Robert Kinney spoke at the congress, which adopted a resolution declaring its support for the “great work” of the CICRC, of which the PTUC had been “apprised by Assistant General Secretary Ignacio P. Lacsina.”⁹ On August 29 the PTUC Executive Board created an Asian commission against concentration camp practices, whose three man board included Lacsina and Hernandez.¹⁰ In November, this newly created commission drafted a letter denouncing “communist aggression” in Hungary and called on the Philippine government to demand within the United Nations the withdrawal of Russian troops.¹¹ By late 1957, financial and political support from Washington, London and Paris for the CICRC dried up as Rousset insisted on examining concentration camps in Algeria as well as within the Communist bloc. The journal *Saturn* ceased publication in March 1958, and the CICRC investigations stopped.

Aligning with Recto

Throughout this period Lacsina served as an informant on Philippine labor, reporting regularly to Robert Kinney, labor attaché of the US embassy in Manila, and beginning in late 1957 when Kinney moved on to Jakarta, to Jorma Kaukonen, Kinney’s replacement.¹² Despite having broken with the FFW, Lacsina still had access to inside information within the rival union and routinely passed on confidential information about both the FFW and the PTUC.¹³

Review, II, no. 1, 92. *Saturn* was the monthly publication of the CICRC.

⁶ *Saturn Monthly Review*, II, no. 2, 21-22.

⁷ *Saturn Monthly Review*, II, no. 2, 67.

⁸ This invitation was repeated in writing by José J. Hernandez, Secretary General of the PTUC.

⁹ *Saturn Monthly Review*, II, no. 4, 125. Rosenthal then spoke at Ateneo and was received at Malacañang by Vice President Garcia.

¹⁰ *Saturn Monthly Review*, II, no. 4, 124. The third member was Emiliano Severino.

¹¹ *Saturn Monthly Review*, II, no. 5, 18.

¹² Kaukonen’s son, Jorma Kaukonen Jr., spent his teenage years in Manila, before moving back to the United States and eventually becoming the guitarist of Jefferson Airplane.

¹³ See, for example, Confidential Despatch 360 in CUSDPR, 896.06/10-1656, p. 8.

By 1957, Lacsina was caught up in a power struggle between a bloc of labor allied with President Magsaysay and Terry Adevoso on the one hand, and a section allied with the sugar bloc on the other. Lacsina threw his lot in with the sugar bloc and with their leading representative, Claro M. Recto. The struggle broke out in late 1956 when Cipriano Cid, Secretary General of the Philippine Association of Free Labor Unions (PAFLU), offered Lacsina the position of president of PAFLU if he would break his union from the PTUC. PAFLU had been bleeding affiliate organizations to the PTUC throughout the year, and Cid was looking to outmaneuver the rival union. Lacsina promptly informed the US Embassy.¹⁴ Cipriano Cid was a known quantity, forever on the fringes of the Communist Party and intimately associated with its leadership. He had headed the Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO) which had been closely tied to the PKP in its early years. Cid used his relationship with the PKP to expand his political influence over sections of the working class, aggrandizing them, with the assistance of the party, to his PAFLU. Cid then ably deployed PAFLU's political weight in elections and conventions, securing for himself office and appointments. In 1956, Cid was looking to throw PAFLU's support behind the Recto campaign in the 1957 election, and was seeking to add Lacsina's NATU to his ranks. The defectors from PAFLU to the PTUC denounced Cid for his "neutralist" approach to international labor questions, and Cid fired back with an article in the *Daily Mirror* on August 31 denouncing his opponents as "slavic [*sic*], fawning and subservient" and claimed that they had used "the trade union center as a catspaw for the political ends of alien meddlers."¹⁵

Lacsina was introduced to Claro M. Recto on February 12. He later recounted that Recto's nephew, Cesar Recto, an official of the Development Bank of the Philippines, arranged a lunch meeting between Recto and Lacsina at the Casino Español in Ermita.¹⁶ Over lunch, Claro Recto asked Lacsina to head his presidential campaign against Magsaysay, to which Lacsina agreed, immediately pledging his union's support. He met with Claudio Teehankee, a lawyer for the Lopez family, head of the sugar bloc, to arrange the details.¹⁷ With Teehankee's assistance, Lacsina created the Labor for Recto campaign as well as the Youth Organization for Recto (YOR), which he led along with Jake Alameda Lopez, a cousin of sugar baron Eugenio Lopez.¹⁸

¹⁴Despatch 360 in CUSDPR, 896.06/10-1656, p. 2.

¹⁵Despatch 360 in CUSDPR, 896.06/10-1656, p. 2.

¹⁶Ignacio P Lacsina, "The Lapiang Makabansa (Nationalist-Citizens Party): Reminiscences," in *Claro M. Recto: 1890-1990, A Centenary Tribute of the Civil Liberties Union*, ed. Renato Constantino (Quezon City: Karrel, Inc., 1990), 125. Lacsina's NATU was in the midst of collective bargaining negotiations with the Development Bank of the Philippines and Lacsina's close ties to Cesar Recto, who was part of the Bank's bargaining team, were a serious conflict of interest.

¹⁷Teehankee later became Marcos' Secretary of Justice. Marcos appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1968, where he continued to serve throughout the period of martial law. He ended his career as Chief Justice in the first years of the Aquino administration.

¹⁸Lacsina, "The Lapiang Makabansa (Nationalist-Citizens Party): Reminiscences," 128.

Despite his central role in the Recto campaign, Lacsina had not yet agreed to Cid's scheme of breaking NATU from the PTUC, as he aspired to take over the PTUC himself. The political field was fundamentally altered in March 1957 when President Ramon Magsaysay's plane, *Mt. Pinatubo*, crashed in Cebu. America's 'Guy' was dead, and Washington was not pleased with the prospect of Vice President Carlos P. Garcia as president. The section of the PTUC allied with Magsaysay and Adevosos, and opposed to the sugar bloc, suffered a devastating blow in the loss of the president. Lacsina saw an opportunity to take over the PTUC, and in April he made his move. While Secretary General Hernandez was traveling in the United States on a grant from the US government, Lacsina, as acting secretary, suspended the four members of the executive committee who were the heads of the Allied Workers Association (AWA), the dominant labor federation in Negros which represented the majority of unionized sugar workers. Lacsina was attempting to seize control of the PTUC in order to ally it with the sugar bloc, the political agglomeration of elite sugar planters and mill owners, by ousting the union of sugar workers from the ranks of the organization.¹⁹ Cipriano Cid hailed Lacsina's move in an article published on April 16 in the *Evening News*. On April 23, the board reconvened under Hernandez, who had now returned to the country, and reversed Lacsina's suspension of the AWA leadership. Lacsina resigned in protest and took NATU with him.²⁰

Recto made Lacsina the head of his *Lapiang Makabansa* [Nationalist Party]. In August, following the advice of Renato Constantino, Lorenzo Tañada agreed to merge his Citizens' Party with Recto's party, turning the *Lapiang Makabansa* into the Nationalist Citizens Party (NCP), and Lacsina was made secretary of the new organization. Recto was roundly defeated in his presidential bid; Garcia was elected with over two million votes, while Recto received four hundred thousand. The defeated Recto rapidly moved to embrace the newly elected president. Diosdado Macapagal, a rival to Garcia, was elected Vice President.

Becoming a 'socialist'

In the wake of the 1957 election, Blas Ople became the leading political adviser of NATU. Born in 1927, Ople had been in labor department circles under Magsaysay for the past three years and had served as ghost writer in Labor Secretary Adevosos's failed senatorial bid. Ople styled himself as a "semi-Marxist," discussing "Marxist ideas."²¹ After Adevosos's defeat, Ople built up labor's support for Garcia's 'Filipino First' policy. Throughout this period, Ople was operating in close

¹⁹AWA's leadership had allied their union with Magsaysay by supporting his drive against Alfredo Montelibano, a leading figure in the sugar bloc, in a dispute over exchange controls.

²⁰For Hernandez version of events, see José J. Hernandez, "The State of the Union," *Philippine Trade Unions Council (PTUC) 1957 Yearbook*, 1957, 42. When the restored AWA members filed libel charges against Lacsina later in the year, Recto provided legal services in his defense.

²¹Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 119.

connection with the underground PKP leadership and when the party in 1965 backed Marcos for President, Ople was one those rewarded by Marcos, receiving a choice position on the Land Bank board as well as being made commissioner of the Social Security System. He went on to become Marcos' Labor Minister. Using his ties with Ople, Lacsina began to make public statements that he was in favor of 'socialism.'

In February 1959, at an FFW reception, Lacsina announced that he was planning to visit China and the Soviet Union in March and April of that year. He declared himself a "socialist," stating that he would drive across China and the USSR in a Volkswagen Beetle, spending two months in China, two months in Russia and two months in the Middle East and Europe.²² Lacsina then informed the US labor attaché that he would be traveling with Johnny Gatbonton and a man named Lopez of the Recto camp. We know from subsequent revelations that this Lopez, most likely Jake Lopez, was a CIA asset.²³ Recto personally appealed to Garcia's Foreign Minister Felixberto Serrano on behalf of Lacsina to grant him permission to travel. Lacsina, however, did not go ahead with these plans; having established himself as a "socialist" and a supporter of China and the Soviet Union, he busied himself with the creation of the Katipunan ng Manggagawang Pilipino [Union of Filipino Workers] (KMP).

The founding congress of the KMP was held in April 1959. Blas Ople served as the secretary of the preparatory committee. Cipriano Cid and Roberto Oca vied with each other to be head of the new organization. Roberto Oca was president of the powerful dock-workers union, the Philippine Transportation and General Workers Organization (PTGWO). He was a political force to be reckoned with and he saw Cid as his leading rival. Oca would play a crucial role in the labor struggles of the early 1960s, as we will see. Kaukonen wrote

Without in anyway suggesting that the Philippine trade union movement is on the verge of a Communist takeover, there is an element of irony in the fact that, as a result of the unity movement, there has been a re-emergence to positions of national prominence of labor leaders once active in the CLO. Among them are Cipriano Cid, Felixberto Olalia, Pedro Castro, and Vicente Rafael. And in the development of ideas and plans and organizations, the Communist-oriented intellectuals have been increasingly active. Among them are Jose Lansang, Horacio Lava and Blas Ople. And whether the Olalias, Castros, Lacsinas, Rafaels, Claves vote for Cipriano Cid as president of the new organization or Roberto Oca, there can be no doubt that each one of them is dedicated to making the Philippine trade union movement into a labor party, into a political movement.

²²Memo re: Lacsina Plans Visit to Communist China in CUSDPR, 896.062/2-1759.

²³Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, 269-270.

Whether they will succeed, however, is another question. The answer may be found in the birth and development of the Katipunan ng Manggagawang Pilipino, suggestive in its name, as through its prime movers, of the new nationalism.²⁴

Oca was elected president and Lacsina was made secretary general of the KMP. US Ambassador Bohlen in a confidential memo to the US Secretary of State wrote

Lacsina, Olalia, Castro, Clave, Quadra, and Tabalno exemplify the left-wing, anxious to turn the Philippine labor movement into a 'socialist' party, and to channel its energies into nationalist and generally anti-American directions. Oca, an extremely ambitious labor leader, needed the support of this left-wing and, although not a communist or a socialist, made a number of adjustments in the direction of 'socialism' in order to get it. The left-wing chose to support Oca because of his energy and the wealth of his union, confident of their ability to manipulate him along 'socialist' lines and to transform the KMP into a mass base for the development in the near future of a 'socialist' party. Although this left wing still consider themselves the ideological brothers of Cipriano Cid they worked for his defeat because they felt Cid was too cautious and would fail them in decisive moments when action is required.²⁵

This left-wing segment became known in the Embassy as the "Lacsina group": "There is clear indication that the first interest of the Lacsina group is political and that their objectives are generally anti-American, neutralist, and possibly Communist." (3) Looking to accentuate divisions between Oca and Lacsina, the embassy wrote a memo to the "AFL-CIA" [*sic?*] requesting that they invite Oca to the United States after his tour of Europe, and offering to fund Oca's visit. The AFL-CIO telegraphed a refusal to invite Oca, citing "uncertainty regarding orientation KMP and extent Oca's connections with Communist elements."²⁶ In a move calculated to undermine the KMP before it could gather additional strength, the Philippine government abruptly convicted Felixberto Olalia and Pedro Castro – both secretly long-time members of the PKP – on a decade old charge of rebellion in June 1959. The PTUC and a number of other unions seized upon the conviction to demand that Oca and Lacsina expel Olalia and Castro from the leadership of the KMP, and when they refused to do so, many of the member unions pulled out of the newly formed organization. By late July the strength of the KMP had been dramatically reduced.

²⁴CUSDPR, 896.062/4-2059, p. 7.

²⁵CUSDPR, 896.062/5-159, p. 2.

²⁶See the correspondence in CUSDPR, 896.062 ranging from May 13-29, 1959.

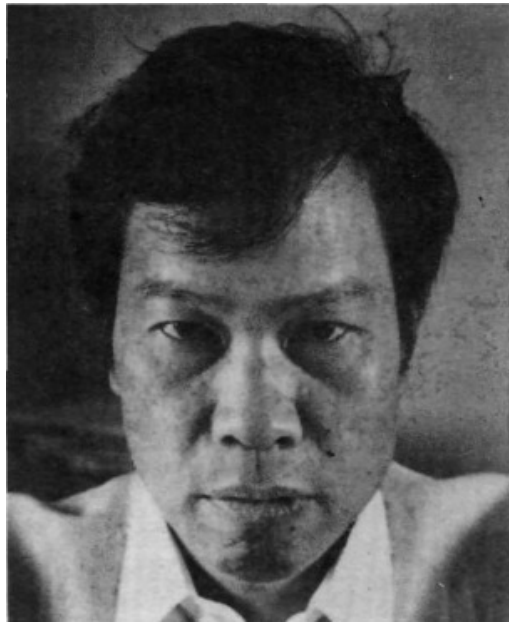


Figure 6.1: Ignacio Lacsina.

Long after having established his credentials as the leading left figure in the Philippine labor movement, Lacsina continued to secretly inform the US Embassy of developments within this movement and within the left generally. He was assigned political handlers at the Embassy; he now rarely met with the labor attaché, but was in routine secret communication with H.L.T. Koren, the Embassy Political Affairs Counselor. In March 1961, for example, Lacsina supplied information to Koren regarding the intended visit to Manila of CPUSA attorney Vincent Hallinan on behalf of William and Celia Pomeroy. Lacsina also provided information to the embassy on the PKP support network, “Friends of the Pomeroy.”²⁷ Koren was a CIA man in the State Department. From Manila he was assigned to head counter-insurgency in the Congo in the mid 1960s, where he led a vicious operation suppressing the population. From 1966-1968, Koren was head of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), part of the US counter-insurgency operations in Vietnam. Kaukonen, the labor attaché, began writing about the danger posed by the ‘socialism’ of Lacsina, while the classified memos of his CIA handler reveal that he was on very friendly terms with the US government.

‘Filipino First’

The centerpiece of the Garcia presidency was a series of economic nationalist initiatives which Garcia termed his “Filipino First Policy.” Recto threw his full

²⁷CUSDPR, 796.00/4-361.

support behind Garcia's initiative and Lacsina and his allied sections of labor followed suit. Lacsina supported the Filipino First policy as the head of the NCP and a leader of the KMP, and was joined in this support by a new organization, calling itself the National Progress Movement (NPM). The NPM was founded at the same time as the KMP, by a group of young, self-styled 'radicals', including Adrian Cristobal, Amado 'Gat' Inciong, and Blas Ople. Each of these men was intimately connected with the leadership of the PKP, and each of them later became ministers in the Marcos' government.²⁸ It was through the National Progress Movement that the above-ground elements of the PKP provided support to Carlos Garcia's Filipino First policy, which at its most basic level consisted of measures scapegoating the Chinese population in the Philippines for existing social ills.

A series of Regional Labor Management Conferences – events which were organized by the NPM, KMP and the Garcia Labor department – reveal the pre-eminently anti-Chinese character of the Filipino First policy. In the Cebu City conference held on July 29-30 1960, for example, the NPM submitted a working paper on the implementation of Filipino First. The paper opened by lamenting that the Philippines had not followed the path of Indonesia where “all alien economic activity had been virtually stamped out by naked force.” It pointed to alien domination over the Philippine economy, citing in particular Chinese lenders to Filipino rice farmers and the domination generally of “the Chinese” over the rice trade. The working paper concluded with resolutions pledging the support of Filipino labor to the struggle of Filipino management to remove alien control over the retail trade, calling on the government to extend credit and to issue incentives for the “Filipinization” of business.²⁹

When Recto died in October 1960 he was universally hailed in the press as a figure of transcendental importance in Philippine politics – the great nationalist. Two papers dared run editorials questioning Recto's greatness, both run by Chinese Filipinos, Kong Li Po and Great China Press; they pointed to the anti-Chinese character of the Filipino First policy. The editors of both papers were immediately brought before the CAFA which announced that it would take punitive action against their papers. IP Soliongco, on the editorial page of the *Chronicle* called for nationalization of the press and denial of press freedom to aliens.³⁰

Joseph Rand, commercial attaché of the US embassy, drafted a memo in which he took stock of the anti-Chinese business climate. He warned American

²⁸Cristobal, as we will see, would ghost-write the ideological justification for martial law which would be published under Marcos' name.

²⁹Regional Labor-Management Conference Cebu City, July 1960. A copy of this document can be found in CUSDPR, 896.06/8-860.

³⁰CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/10-1460, p. 5. Nationalization was a phrase routinely deployed by the Philippine left, which in their usage did not mean state ownership but rather the forcible expropriation of property from 'alien' owners and its sale to 'native' capitalists.

investors about the risks posed in taking on Chinese partners. He wrote “official measures and rulings have been passed which discriminate quite openly against the Chinese. Considering the background of a law passed in 1954 forcing Chinese out of the retail trade within ten years and 1960 legislation closing the rice and corn trades to Chinese within two years, American businessmen should weigh the pros and cons when undertaking a licensing or joint venture arrangement with Chinese partners in the Philippines.”³¹ He issued no warning about the possible nationalization of US owned businesses, because no such threat existed, as the laws passed under Garcia’s Filipino First policy provided explicit exemption for US citizens. All of the legislation targeted the Chinese population.³²

Rand referred to the 1954 Retail Trade Nationalization Act, the law upon whose foundation Garcia’s Filipino First policy was built. In the lead up to the passage of the 1954 law there had been a fierce wave of anti-Chinese nationalism in the Philippines. An article by Teddy Locsin in the *Philippines Free Press* published in 1952 is representative of the logic underpinning this brand of nationalism.

The Chinese are crowding Filipinos out of business. The retail trade is in Chinese hands, and much of the wholesale. The Chinese are in the hardware and the building material trade, in the manufacture of shirts, cigarettes, etc. They control the nation’s supply of rice and flour. They run the groceries, the sari-sari stores. The Filipino finds himself increasingly an economic prisoner of the Chinese. The Chinese are in everything except, as one Filipino put it, the music business. What is worse, the increasing economic control of the country seems the result of a concerted effort. It is not merely a case of individual Chinese driving individual Filipinos out of business, but of the Chinese acting as a community, using group pressure. The individual Filipino retailer hasn’t got a chance against the Chinese combine.³³

Garcia’s Filipino First policy was an expression of this anti-Chinese nationalism, and Lacsina, the KMP and the NPM fully supported it. By January 1961, Lacsina was leading the KMP in a campaign for the ‘nationalization’ of labor. A bill to this end, which had been drafted by the Garcia administration, was before the legislature for approval and the KMP rallied to support it. The bill would

³¹The exact date of the message header of this communiqué has faded beyond legibility, but it is a March 1962 despatch in the 896.2553 section.

³²Washington confidently issued memoranda to the relevant departments of the Philippine government indicating that non-discrimination clauses in the Revised Philippine Trade Agreement meant that US citizens were exempt from the various nationalization laws. See, for example, the discussion in CUSDPR, 896.06/3-361.

³³As cited in Shubert S.C. Liao, ed., *Chinese Participation in Philippine Culture and Economy* (Manila: University of the East, 1964), 264.

have forcibly taken away jobs from non-Filipinos but provided exemption for skilled labor not adequately available in the country. An estimated two hundred thousand jobs were at stake. The jobs in question were not management level positions occupied by Americans and Europeans, but working class jobs employing Chinese immigrant labor. The KMP, under Lacsina's leadership, promoted the racist nationalist scapegoating of immigrant laborers as a core component of its political platform.³⁴ The NPM and its affiliated organizations mobilized support for this scapegoating by staging anti-Chinese demonstrations. The NPM and its youth wing, the National Youth Progress Movement (NYPM), staged a demonstration in Binondo in June 1959, for example, in which they "systematically stoned Chinese stores."³⁵

On April 29-30 1961, the KMP held its biennial conference, which was "characterized by an apparent struggle for power between the General Secretary, Ignacio Lacsina, and the President, Roberto S. Oca. In the end, a somewhat uneasy equilibrium was re-established and the conference ended with retention of the same leadership."³⁶ Ignacio Lacsina, at the head of the resolutions committee, submitted a resolution supporting Indonesia's claim to West Irian and another, according to the US embassy memorandum, "attacking the United States for complicity in the attempt to overthrow the Cuban government." The Cuban resolution was modified to one which urged "Cuba and the United States to submit their conflict to settlement through peaceful negotiations." The Cuban *charge d'affairs* was guest of honor at the KMP conference.³⁷

In October a diplomatic crisis erupted in Manila around the Cuban embassy. Cuban attaché Jorge Freire Gonzales defected, in the process denouncing Ignacio Lacsina as being somehow connected with Communist espionage. Cuban *charge d'affairs* Andres Avino Soler, on the basis of Gonzales' testimony regarding espionage, was deported from the country on October 12. Congressman Fermin Caram, long associated with military intelligence, told Congress in 1966 that Lacsina was revealed by Gonzales to be "one of four Filipinos being used by a staff member of the local Cuban embassy for Communist propaganda dissemination."³⁸ According to Francisco Lava, "the [Cuban] consulate hosted lectures and study groups, and supplied materials such as the works of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, which they [the PKP] in turn distributed outside."³⁹ At the time the *charge d'affairs* scandal broke, Ignacio Lacsina was running for congress in Manila's first district

³⁴CUSDPR, 896.00/1-2761.

³⁵Enrique L Victoriano, "Behind the Nationalist Facade," *Philippine Studies* 7, no. 4 (1959): 488.

³⁶CUSDPR, 896.00/8-3061, p. 12.

³⁷CUSDPR, FW896.06/4-1761. This document is a supplement prepared in August to the April 17 despatch, hence the date.

³⁸Privilege speech in Republic of the Philippines House of Representatives, *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the Sixth Congress – First Regular Session* (Manila, 1966), Vol I, no. 67, pp. 320-322.

³⁹Dalisay, *The Lavas*, 154.

as a candidate of the NCP, a race which he lost to Fidel Santiago of the Liberal Party.⁴⁰ His election chances had been negatively impacted it seems by the scandal.

The transformation of Lacsina from a staunch anti-communist into a 'socialist' bears all the marks of the insertion of a CIA asset into the reemerging Communist Party. While I have not discovered definitive proof that Lacsina functioned as a CIA asset within the party it seems to me to be the most probable explanation for the available evidence.

⁴⁰Masataka Kimura, "Philippine Peasant and Labor Organizations in Electoral Politics: Players in Transitional Politics," *Pilipinas: A Journal of Philippine Studies* 14, no. Spring (1990): 45.

— 7 —

The Executive Committee

Harry S. Stonehill resembles the kind of character that the late Sydney Greenstreet used to play in all the old Warner Bros, beaded-curtain thrillers.

— Time Magazine, 10 August 1962

Harry Stonehill and the 1961 Presidential Election

In November 1961, Joma Sison was preparing to leave for Indonesia and Ignacio Lacsina had just lost his bid for Congress. November also marked the culmination of a fiercely contested presidential election. The machinations that went on behind this electoral struggle would have far-reaching ramifications for later Philippine politics and profoundly shaped the trajectory of the reemerging PNP.

Presidential incumbent Carlos Garcia waged his re-election campaign while saddled with at least three serious liabilities. First, because he had assumed office on the death of Magsaysay, Garcia would reach the end of his constitutionally mandated maximum of eight years in office during his second elected term, and would thus, it was widely argued, be obligated to step down in 1965, prior to the next presidential election. Second, the Nacionalista Party (NP) – his base of political power – had been fragmented by an intense rivalry between long-time NP kingmaker and Rizal-based politico Amang Rodriguez, and the President, Carlos Garcia. Third, by mid-September the country was in the grip of an acute rice crisis and rice prices doubled in a matter of weeks as the extent of the grain deficit became clear. The rice shortage in the country was the result, at least in part, of Garcia's Filipino First policy which had displaced over eighty-two million pesos of Chinese capital from the rice and corn trade.¹

The Liberal Party (LP) ran Vice President Diosdado Macapagal as its candidate for President. Given the serious obstacles facing Garcia, Macapagal would have been the clear front-runner were it not for a third candidate who split the

¹Martin Meadows, "Philippine Political Parties and the 1961 Election," *Pacific Affairs* 35, no. 3 (1962): 271.

opposition vote. Senator Rogelio de la Rosa, the brother-in-law of Macapagal, ran as an independent presidential candidate. One of the most popular movie stars of the late 1940s and early 1950s, de la Rosa would pull in a significant portion of the vote.²

Macapagal was the clear favorite of American interests. Washington had endured the Garcia presidency; their financial and political stakes in the country had never been at risk, but Garcia was not the protégé they sought. In a memorandum to Walt Rostow, Deputy Special Assistant for National Security, Robert H. Johnson of the US National Security Council declared that “Macapagal, candidate of the opposition Liberal Party, is pro-American to the point where it is a source of some embarrassment to us.” While Macapagal, Johnson acknowledged “is not considered an outstanding leader with charismatic qualities of the sort possessed by Magsaysay,” he wrote that the CIA felt that looking for a new Magsaysay was effectively “chasing a rainbow.”³ Macapagal was Washington’s man for the 1961 election. Entering the month of November, however – with the election but a week away – de la Rosa was polling as receiving a million votes. Garcia remained the front-runner, leading Macapagal by an estimated 600,000 votes. Macapagal was about to lose the election because of de la Rosa’s spoiler effect.

Enter Harry Stonehill

Into this mix of electoral politics stepped the figure of Harry Stonehill.⁴ Born Harold Steinberg to Polish Jewish immigrants in Chicago, Stonehill was drafted during the Second World War and served in the Philippines. He stayed on after the war and engaged in a profiteering trade in the surplus war supplies of the US army. With a keen sense of the value of contacts and friends in high places, he established himself as a tycoon at the head of the tobacco industry in Ilocos, and investment in real estate and manufacturing interests in Manila followed. Stonehill helped to establish the Manila Jaycees and served on its executive board. He bought up Chick Parsons’ newspaper, the *Evening News*, and installed the capable Max Soliven to serve as editor, who supplied the paper’s right-wing

²Using his ties in showbusiness, de la Rosa received strong support from Bob Stewart through his show on Channel Seven. Macapagal later paid Stewart back for this support for de la Rosa, arresting “Uncle Bob” in mid-1962 on charges of meddling in the election.

³The memorandum was classified secret. Portions of it were declassified and published in 1994. (Robert H. Johnson, “Memorandum From Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow),” chap. Document 355 in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-63 Volume XXII, Southeast Asia* [Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1994]).

⁴My account of the Stonehill affair is based largely on the narrative of Lewis Gleeck, consul general during Stonehill’s deportation (Lewis E. Gleeck Jr., *The Rise and Fall of Harry Stonehill in the Philippines: An American Tragedy* [Loyal Printing, Inc, 1989]); the relevant papers from the CUSDP; and the 2011 verdict by the US Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *US v. Stonehill*.

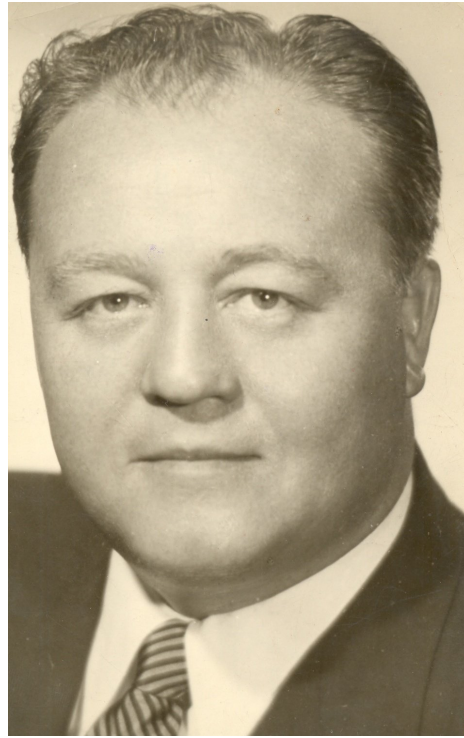


Figure 7.1: Harry Stonehill.

stance on most issues. Stonehill, on numerous occasions, published material fed to him by the CIA in its pages.⁵

More than any American before him, Stonehill established himself as a member of Philippine society. He did not rank among the Elizaldes and the Sorianos, who looked down on the ex-G.I. upstart, and he was just as much frowned upon by the American ex-pat community, who regarded him as a man who, however successful he might have become, had gone native. Stonehill looked to secure a foothold within the upper echelons of the Philippine business community and to do this, he needed political access at the highest levels, just as his business rivals did. At the helm of US Tobacco, Stonehill already controlled the Ilocano bloc of legislators, including LP Senate President Ferdinand Marcos, but he desired to have a direct connection in Malacañang.

In late 1961, Stonehill saw an opportunity: he would convince de la Rosa to drop out of the race on behalf of Macapagal, and in exchange he would have powerful connections in the executive office. In November, Stonehill negotiated the deal via his political bagmen, Amelito Mutuc and Rufino Hechanova. Stonehill later told Lewis Gleeck Jr., Consul General of the US Embassy in mid 1962, “We made an arrangement with Senator Rogelio de la Rosa to swing his

⁵Many of Macapagal’s speeches were drafted by Soliven. See, for example, CUSDP, 796.00/6-1462, p. 2.

votes to Macapagal a week before the election ... there was no way he could win the election in any case.”⁶ Stonehill paid off de la Rosa to the tune of one million pesos and secretly contributed two million to Macapagal’s re-election campaign. In return, Macapagal agreed to appoint Stonehill’s choices to three cabinet positions.⁷ Robert Hawley, a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent stationed as legal attaché in Manila, in a confidential memorandum to J. Edgar Hoover on January 2, 1962, claimed that Stonehill had a “signed agreement from Macapagal permitting Stonehill to name three members of the incoming cabinet and guaranteeing him important business concessions relating to Stonehill’s near-monopoly on the importation of Virginia tobacco into the Philippines.”⁸

De la Rosa dropped out of the race ten days before the election and Macapagal handily won. Garcia’s camp immediately began plotting how to retain the office, first contemplating a military coup. Garcia next concocted a scheme to get Sergio Osmeña Jr. proclaimed vice-president and then by declaring that there was no clear winner in the presidential election, have Osmeña made president. He finally dropped this plan and filed an electoral protest against Macapagal, citing cheating. Macapagal meanwhile contacted top military men loyal to him to prepare to forcibly implement the election results.⁹ In late December Garcia admitted defeat. One of his last official actions was to pardon William and Celia Pomeroy on December 28. Bertha Pomeroy, William’s mother, visited the Philippines just prior to the announcement, and William left the Philippines with her on January 19; Celia, denied a visa to the United States, could not follow him.¹⁰

Jose Diokno and the FBI

The political situation in early December was thus extremely tense, with rumblings of a possible military coup coming from both Garcia and Macapagal. Washington, pushing for a Macapagal victory, did not want to be seen interfering. It was in this context that, on December 9, Menhart Spielman, vice president of US Tobacco, demanded ten percent ownership of the company in return for his silence regarding Stonehill’s crooked deals. Stonehill and his associate Bob Brooks beat Spielman and dangled him by his legs from the tenth floor balcony of the Carmen Apartments on Dewey Boulevard. Having threatened to kill him if he squealed, they let Spielman go. Spielman went directly to the US embassy where he presented Robert Hawley with evidence against Stonehill – details of

⁶Gleek Jr., *The Rise and Fall of Harry Stonehill*, 46.

⁷Stonehill selected Macario Peralta as Secretary of Defense; Fernando E.V. Sison, Secretary of Finance; and Rufino Hechanova as Executive Secretary. Amelito Mutuc was later made ambassador to the US.

⁸William A. Fletcher, *US v. the estates of Harry S. Stonehill and Robert P. Brooks*, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 2011, 18479.

⁹Arturo Tolentino, *Voice of Dissent* (Quezon City: Phoenix Publishing House, 1990), 265; Napoleon Rama, “Did this nearly happen in ’61?,” *PFP*, October 1964, 4–5, 35–6.

¹⁰CUS DPR, 796.00(W)/1-562, p. 4.

bribery and corruption going back over a decade. Both the CIA and the FBI were alarmed that if Spielman's information leaked prior to Macapagal's inauguration, Garcia might declare the election void and they sharply warned Spielman to keep silent. It was clear to the Embassy that it was necessary to remove Harry Stonehill from the Philippines, and that neither Garcia nor Macapagal could be informed of this.

Raymond Ylitalo was Consul General in late 1961. He was a man with a long standing history in intelligence – a former FBI agent, and head of the Security Division of the State Department, where he had been responsible for coordinating with the CIA, the FBI and Grombach's The Pond. It was on Ylitalo's watch that the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) arranged the surveillance, raid and arrest of Harry Stonehill through incoming Justice Secretary Jose Diokno without Macapagal's knowledge. The Embassy secretly met sixteen times with Diokno, making arrangements for a raid on Stonehill's offices to collect incriminating evidence against him. They insisted that this must occur without Macapagal's knowledge lest he intervene on behalf of Stonehill. Diokno wanted to be sure that this proposal had the backing of the US President and he arranged to meet with US Attorney General Robert Kennedy in Hongkong, but wound up meeting with Assistant Attorney General John Siegenthaler who assured Diokno of full US backing.

The CIA meanwhile paid the Philippine National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to wiretap Stonehill's offices.¹¹ Diokno originally scheduled the raid on Stonehill's offices to take place February 24, but called it off at the insistence of Robert Chandler, IRS representative in Manila, who had requested that the raid be delayed until additional US agents could be made available to supervise it. On March 3, the Philippine National Bureau of Investigation launched a series of thirty-four raids involving over two hundred agents, under the direct supervision of American authorities, who monitored and controlled the entire affair. The documents captured during the raid on Stonehill's business holdings were stored at the facilities of Andres Soriano, the owner of San Miguel brewing company and long-time enemy of Stonehill.¹² Stonehill himself was arrested. All of this was carried out without the knowledge of President Macapagal.

On March 22, the Philippine Supreme Court issued a preliminary injunction against the use of the documents acquired in the raids citing a violation of the fourth amendment, but on June 30 lifted the injunction.¹³ The most fiercely contested of the documents gained in the raid was Stonehill's infamous "blue book," a ledger of the names of politicians in both political parties who had received money from Stonehill, including the amount and the date. When the blue book was finally published, sixteen pages had been torn out. The claim that

¹¹Fletcher, *US v. the estates of Harry S. Stonehill and Robert P. Brooks*, 18492.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

a political figure had been listed in the missing pages of Stonehill's blue book became a well-worn theme during election rallies over the course of the 1960s.

Stung by his Justice Secretary's betrayal, Macapagal removed Diokno from his cabinet on May 19, despite a personal petition from US Ambassador Stevenson for Macapagal to retain Diokno as his Justice Secretary.¹⁴ The Stonehill affair brought Jose Diokno into the limelight as a fighter against corruption, and he would become a long-standing and key political ally of the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines. In September 1962, SCAUP sponsored an event at the UP College of Law for Diokno to speak on the implications of the Stonehill case, during which Diokno stated that there was a "moral rot" among Filipinos which was "evident in the Stonehill case where Americans and not Filipinos had the guts to come out in the open to help the Philippine Government topple down the vast Stonehill empire."¹⁵ What was unstated was that Diokno's "anti-corruption" drive was carried out, not with help from, but on the orders of, Washington and the CIA. Diokno's ties to the CIA were never severed. In 1973, shortly after being arrested by Marcos, Diokno instructed his sister, Caridad Santos, to write to Edward Lansdale to appeal for assistance, and he provided Santos with Lansdale's home address.¹⁶

Fearful that the revelations from Stonehill's papers could prove damning to him, Macapagal ordered Stonehill deported to Australia on August 5 1962. Macapagal referred to the deportation as "an act of self-preservation on a national scale."¹⁷

Soured Relations with Washington

The most significant outcome of the Stonehill affair was that it precipitated a marked but temporary souring of relations between Washington and America's 'boy,' Macapagal. A crucial aspect of this deteriorating relationship was the struggle over tobacco imports and war damages remuneration.

In March 1961, the sugar bloc, seeing that Kennedy had ended the sugar quota for Cuba in December 1960, and looking to get a sizable chunk of the re-allocated quota, had sent a delegation to Washington to negotiate an increased allotment. The delegation first met with the US ambassador in Manila and he had informed them of the "necessity of the opening of the Philippine market for American Virginai [*sic*] leaf tobacco, before they can expect to get a sympathetic hearing on an increased quota." The delegation claimed that they had assurances from Garcia's Secretary of Agriculture, César Fortich, "to show representative [Harold] Cooley that the Philippines really intends to open the door to Ameri-

¹⁴Lewis E. Gleecck Jr., *Dissolving the Colonial Bond: American Ambassadors to the Philippines, 1946-1984* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988), 136.

¹⁵PC, 18 September 1962.

¹⁶Caridad Santos, *Letter to Edward Lansdale*, April 1973, EGL.

¹⁷Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 163.

can tobacco.”¹⁸ Garcia had at the same time stated that he was removing price supports for Philippine-grown Virginia Tobacco. This was a direct attack on Stonehill’s business interests. Stonehill was strongly opposed to the importation of US Virginia Tobacco, which would undermine his own locally grown Virginia Tobacco.¹⁹ On July 29 1961, Garcia approved the importation of 4.5 million kilos of US Virginia Tobacco. Local Philippine Virginia Tobacco growers filed a suit before the Manila Court of First Instance (CFI) to block the importation and, on August 5, the court issued a temporary injunction against the importation of tobacco.²⁰ The Philippine Supreme Court ruled on December 23, 1961, that Garcia’s tobacco importation was legal. This meant that on January 17, at the outset of the Macapagal presidency and before the Stonehill scandal broke, massive quantities of imported Virginia Tobacco were sitting at the Manila pier.

Macapagal declared the tobacco importation to be illegal, and instructed Cesar Climaco at the head of the Bureau of Customs to dispose of the tobacco. US Congressman Cooley indicated in comments to the press that he would kill the long overdue War Damages bill in the US legislature if Macapagal did not reverse himself and allow the tobacco importation through.²¹ Macapagal responded by offering to reship the tobacco out of the country. US congressional leaders impounded the War Damages Bill to give Macapagal adequate time to respond to their threat and allow the tobacco to enter. Gleeck wrote

The rejection of the war damage legislation was heavily influenced by US tobacco congressmen indignant at President Macapagal’s refusal to permit the entry into the Philippines of American tobacco authorized, in a questionable transaction, by his predecessor President Garcia. Assistant Secretary of State Harriman had twice brutally demanded of the Philippine ambassador in Washington that the tobacco be admitted, threatening reprisals against the Philippine sugar quota if the tobacco importation were blocked.²²

The threats over the sugar quota and War Damages being made by US tobacco interests were strongly denounced in the pages of Harry Stonehill’s own *Evening News* in the last week of January: “The Philippine government has decreed that the tobacco shipment now at the piers is illegal. In making this decree, the administration has thus laid down a command that none may trifle with, if the processes of the government and sovereignty are to preserve their dignity. The US would sweep this dignity away, and along with it the dignity of the Filipino people.”

¹⁸CUSDPR, 896.00/3-1061, p. 9.

¹⁹Virginia Leaf Tobacco was one of Stonehill’s initial business ventures. He had smuggled seed for the Virginia tobacco into the country and planted it in the Ilocos region.

²⁰CUSDPR, 896.00/8-1161, p. 9.

²¹CUSDPR, 896.00/2-962, p. 3.

²²Gleek Jr., *Dissolving the Colonial Bond*, 396 fn 4.

In March, with the tobacco shipment still in limbo on the docks, Macapagal offered a compromise bill. Stonehill had now been arrested and Macapagal was thus far less obligated to hold to his initial complete opposition to importation. He proposed to allow anyone to import American grown tobacco if for every imported kilo they exported four kilos of locally grown tobacco. Macapagal was thus proposing the mixing of higher quality imports with the lesser quality local product. On April 18 the Supreme Court rendered the compromise proposal moot when it ruled against Macapagal's order to prevent the tobacco importation, and ordered that the tobacco be allowed into the country. Macapagal accepted the ruling; with the arrest of Stonehill, fighting against the tobacco importation had simply become a matter of saving face.

It was too late, however, to recover the War Damages Claims bill as Cooley and the tobacco bloc in the US legislature had successfully buried it, and the news that the US congress had refused to pay seventy-two million dollars in war damage claims was headlined in Manila. A strong sense of animosity ran through the Philippines over this refusal to pay. Recognizing the volatility of this issue, Ambassador Stevenson lobbied unsuccessfully to have Kennedy re-introduce the war damages legislation.²³

In the wake of the Stonehill fiasco, the heated contest over tobacco importations, and Washington's refusal to pay War Damages, Macapagal canceled his scheduled visit to the United States. He announced that he was moving the celebration of Philippine Independence from July 4 – a commemoration of the granting of formal independence to the Philippines by the United States in 1946 – to June 12 – in commemoration of the Declaration of Independence and founding of the Philippine Republic in 1898. The CIA wrote in a classified memo that “Macapagal stated ominously that Philippine-American relations would be re-evaluated.”²⁴ These moves served as the pretext for the PKP to call for the establishment of an anti-imperialist united front with Diosdado Macapagal. They never mentioned that upon canceling his state visit to Washington, Macapagal went on a six day state visit to Spain on the invitation of the fascist General Franco, where Macapagal delivered a speech about the “historic ties” of the Philippines to the “mother country.”²⁵ It was not until 1967 that the Philippine Supreme Court finally issued a ruling that Diokno's warrants for searching and seizing Stonehill's documents had been illegal.²⁶

²³Gleek Jr., *Dissolving the Colonial Bond*, 136.

²⁴Office of Current Intelligence, *The Philippines Under Macapagal* (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), April 1963), OCI No. 0277/63C. Partially declassified, 24 Aug 2006. Among Macapagal's other nationalist measures taken at this time was the prescription of the Barong Tagalog as the formal attire of state during official receptions.

²⁵Diosdado Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice: Memoirs of a President* (Quezon City: Mac Publishing House, 1968), 297, 529.

²⁶Marites Danguilan Vitug and Criselda Yabes, *Our Rights, Our Victories: Landmark Cases in the Supreme Court* (Quezon City: Cleverheads Publishing, 2011), 27-28.

Harry Stonehill became the stock image of US imperialism in the repertoire of the Maoists and Stalinists for well over a decade and when they wanted to denounce imperialism they would mention Stonehill. Stonehill was not the embodiment of US imperialism. He was a carpet-bagger, a larger than life social climber, who made friends easily and enemies just as easily.²⁷ Stonehill did not directly represent the interests of US monopoly capitalism. When Stonehill bought political influence, he was not securing the interests of US corporations, but was playing the same game as all of the leading Filipino capitalists, and in 1962, he managed to out-manuever the majority of his local rivals. In the end, it was Washington that removed Stonehill from the country precisely because he was a barrier to US imperialist interests.

Toward the Lapiang Manggagawa

The majority of labor leaders, among them Ignacio Lacsina, had been deeply invested in the 1961 Garcia campaign and they saw Garcia's defeat as evidence of the need for more effective control over their mass base. The US Embassy wrote that "with but one or two exceptions, all national labor leaders supported former President Garcia."²⁸ In order to wield greater political clout, the heads of nearly all of the leading unions began to negotiate the building of a Labor Party, which would eventually take the name Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers' Party] (LM). The PKP was at the center of the creation of the LM, and Ignacio Lacsina and Joma Sison were brought into the leadership of the PKP as the party moved to secure control over it. By mid 1963, the LM, under the leadership of Lacsina and Sison, would become a decisive factor in national political life.

Foundations of the Lapiang Manggagawa

On January 26 1962 at the Philippine Columbian Club "[m]ore than 20 representatives of rival labor unions ... decided to bury the hatchet ... It was initiated by Felixberto Olalia ... and the late Pedro Castro ... after the last November polls which in their opinion clearly dramatized the workers political disunity."²⁹ Olalia and Castro were both secretly high-ranking members of the Communist Party.³⁰

²⁷Among his friends was Stan Lee – of Marvel Comics – who described Stonehill as "the greatest guy." (Vitug and Yabes, *Our Rights, Our Victories: Landmark Cases in the Supreme Court*, 19).

²⁸CUSDPR, 896.00/2-962, p. 10 The only sizable labor organization in 1961 to back Macapagal was Johnny Tan's FFW.

²⁹MC, 28 Jan 1962. As always, the *Chronicle* carried the exclusive story on labor activities because of Lopez' close ties to a number of the leading figures within the labor movement, including Cid and Oca. Pedro Castro died of a heart attack two weeks before the meeting convened.

³⁰Israel Bocobo and Vicente Rafael were tasked with drawing up a constitution for the organization, Adrian Cristobal was assigned to write the organization's manifesto, and Baltazar

Several days later an organizational committee meeting was held, “which was not publicized in the press,” in which it was decided that the party would be led by an “executive committee consisting of the president, three vice presidents representing major regions of the Philippines, and a secretary-general in whose hands the real party power rests.” The party would be financed by “levying ₱2.00 per annum dues on 150,000 members of unions . . . mainly in the KMP.”³¹ Lacsina urged that the party should be named the “Democratic Socialist Party,” but Olalia “argued against the use of the word ‘socialist’ stating that the political climate in the Philippines at the present time was such that any organization bearing the name ‘socialist’ would be an immediate target for reactionary attack.” By March 23 1962 the organization had formed under the name Lapiang Manggagawa, having agreed with Olalia’s opposition to the inclusion of the word ‘socialist.’ They announced that they would hold a national convention on May 1.³²

A week later the LM leadership drafted the new party’s constitution, which was to be submitted for formal acceptance at a meeting on April 30, and a mass rally was slated to be held the next day at Bonifacio Monument, where Lacsina would present the LM Manifesto to the public. On May 1, however, the LM leadership announced, without any explanation, that they were delaying the mass rally. Lacsina’s NATU joined a labor day rally with the FFW, an event at which Macapagal spoke. Lacsina read a joint manifesto of NATU and the FFW, but skipped the first portion of the document which “denounced communism” and favored “free enterprise over socialism.” Lacsina and an FFW leader brawled on stage over this, exchanging blows in front of hundreds of workers.³³

Macapagal was deeply concerned that the emerging party of workers would ally with his rivals in the sugar bloc, and with Eugenio and Fernando Lopez in particular, and at first sought to thwart the formation of the LM. Secretary of Labor Romualdez privately informed US labor attaché, Norman F. Johnson, that he opposed the formation of a labor party as it made labor more difficult to negotiate with. Thus, in the same manner that the rebellion charges brought against Castro and Olalia in June 1959 had stunted the growth of the KMP, so now the “[e]fforts earlier this year by Cid, Lacsina, Lerum, Oca, and others to organize a labor party were abandoned in mid-June when one of the organizers, Baltazar Cuyugan, was arrested as a leader of the Communist Hukbalahap military organization.”³⁴

Macapagal began to woo the LM leadership, looking to see if the union heads

Cuyugan was assigned to carry out organizational planning. Felixberto Olalia submitted a proposed resolution on the need for unity in the trade union movement. Like Olalia and Castro, Cuyugan was a member of the PKP. I have been unable to locate any of the original documents from this meeting. Ignacio Lacsina met in secret on several occasions with Jorma Kaukonen, labor attaché of the embassy, to provide him inside details on the meetings. My account of the meeting is based on Kaukonen’s memo of Lacsina’s reports. (CUSDPR, 796.00/2-1562).

³¹CUSDPR, 796.00/2-1562, p. 3.

³²CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/3-2362, p. 2.

³³CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/5-462, p. 1.

³⁴CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/8-2062, p. 2.

could be swayed from their allegiance to the sugar bloc. On August 16, Macapagal held a dinner and private discussion with twenty of the “principal union leaders,” which was followed by a meeting of the LM leadership with acting finance secretary Rodrigo Perez on the twenty-second. During this meeting they agreed to establish a labor consultation committee for subsequent meetings with the President.³⁵ On September 11, Secretary of Labor Romualdez announced that he supported the move to form a labor party. Undersecretary of Labor Bernardino Abes, speaking to the press on September 17, warned union leaders against allowing the Lapiang Manggagawa to be used for “ulterior motives by ‘vested’ interests.” In the language being used by the Macapagal administration at this time, “vested interests” referred to the sugar bloc, and the Lopez brothers in particular. Abes added, however, that the Lapiang Manggagawa could enter into an alignment with “another political party” – clearly meaning the Liberal Party – to “improve the workers’ conditions.”³⁶ It was this struggle over the future alignment of the Lapiang Manggagawa that precipitated what would become one of the most explosive labor battles in Philippine history: the 1963 port strike under the leadership of Roberto Oca.

Roberto Oca

The Lopez family and their influential paper, the *Chronicle*, had “backed Garcia to the hilt” in the 1961 election.³⁷ Having taken office, Macapagal found himself thwarted at every turn by the influential sugar bloc. When Macapagal deported Stonehill in August, he delivered what became known as his “Big Drive” speech, in which he presented himself as leading a crusade against corruption. He targeted the Lopez family in particular, referring to the brothers Eugenio and Fernando Lopez as “Filipino Stonehills.”³⁸ Roberto Oca, head of the Philippine Transportation and General Workers Organization (PTGWO), the union of *arrastre* workers, was a key ally of the Lopez brothers. For Macapagal, a successful alliance between his administration and the LM would be predicated on the removal of Roberto Oca.³⁹

Oca was born on June 2 1919, the son of a ship captain. In 1941 he completed a bachelor’s degree in Commerce at Far Eastern University (FEU), and in 1946 he joined the leadership of the Union de Obreros y Estivadores de Filipinas (UOEF), which ran the stevedoring service in Manila’s South Harbor. The UOEF operated

³⁵CUSDPR, 896.00/8-246, pp. 9-10.

³⁶CUSDPR, 896.00/9-2662.

³⁷Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 159.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 164.

³⁹Arrastre workers, the longshoremen who move the goods around the port, are distinct from stevedores, who perform the loading and off-loading of goods on board ship. Among those who noted Oca’s intimate connections with the Lopez family was leading Communist and political prisoner, Angel Baking. (Jesse Galang and Angel Baking, “Dialogue with an Ex-Collegian Editor,” *PC*, September 1963, 4).

a closed shop with Chick Parsons' Luzon Stevedoring Co (Lusteveco), which employed the *cabo* system.⁴⁰ In 1950, Oca broke with the UOEF and joined the Associated Workers Union (AWU) which organized the arrastre workers, and in an election overseen by the US Embassy Labor Attaché, Oca was elected president of the AWU in 1951. He broke the union from its ties to the FFW and established his own labor federation, the Philippine Transport Workers Organization (PTWO).⁴¹ Oca replaced the *cabo* system with a rotational system for the arrastre service at South Harbor in which every *cabo*, *antiguo* and *moderno* were given a number and were hired on a rotational basis. The transformation modernized employment on the waterfront and turned Oca and the PTWO into the port's exclusive labor broker.

An ambitious man, Oca married Juana Magsaysay, who was either the niece or the cousin of Ramon Magsaysay, and actively campaigned for Magsaysay's presidential bid in 1953. Oca built a close and profitable relationship with the Manila Port Service (MPS), the government-run corporation operating the South Harbor arrastre service, and the PTWO began to receive annual dividends from the profits of the MPS. The Manila Port Service funded the construction of the headquarters of the PTWO in 1958, fronting ₱300,000 to the union, to be repaid out of subsequent years' dividends, and by the early 1960s, Roberto Oca's brother, Gregorio Oca, was a manager of the Manila Port Service. Roberto Oca profited handsomely off of this arrangement, becoming quite wealthy. In 1954 he began taking annual trips to the United States, occasionally visiting Europe as well. In 1959 he spent four months traveling through Geneva, Madrid, Lisbon, Paris, Brussels, London, Sweden and finally the United States. At the same time, Oca used his profits as labor broker for the Manila Port Service to purchase the Nautilus nightclub on the border of Manila and Pasay. By the beginning of the 1960s, Oca operated a nightclub, a casino and ran a protection racket on the side.⁴²

His ambitions did not stop there, and in exchange for his support, Oca had



Figure 7.2: Roberto Oca. *Int'l Transport Workers Journal*, XXIII, 11.

⁴⁰This system involved the use of contractual labor, both skilled (*antiguo*) and unskilled (*moderno*), which was supplied by the heads of labor gangs, known as *cabo*. *Cabo* routinely charged fees to workers in order to get them hired, and lowered wages below the contractual rates.

⁴¹In 1959, Oca would rename the federation the PTGWO. The US Embassy noted that "Oca has changed the name of his union to the PTGWO at its last annual convention in token of his determination to transform it into a federation similar in structure to such competitors as the PTUC, the PAFLU, and the FFW."

⁴²CUSDPR, 796.00/10-3161, p. 2.

been promised the position of Labor Secretary under a re-elected Garcia administration. US Labor Attaché Johnson wrote in November 1962 that “President Macapagal made clear from the beginning of his administration that he would seek to displace Robert Oca as head of the dock workers in Manila’s international shipping port, South Harbor.” Johnson cited Oca’s “political opposition to Macapagal’s election and administration” as having “produced a presidential aversion to Oca’s continued labor leadership.”⁴³

Long-time Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson died unexpectedly on April 15, 1962, and his death turned the 1963 midterm election into a deadly struggle for control of the city. The Manila mayoralty was the most fiercely contested prize on the ballot. In Manila, much more than in the countryside, the NP and LP needed to secure the labor vote and LM emerged as the political broker of this vote. In October 1962, Lapiang Manggagawa announced that Oca would be standing as the LM candidate for mayor of Manila in the November 1963 elections.⁴⁴ For Macapagal, in order to enter into an alliance with the Lapiang Manggagawa, it was necessary that he break the power of Oca. To do this he intended to privatize the arrastre service, first transferring control over the MPS contract to the Bureau of Customs, and then selling the operation of the arrastre service to the highest bidder, declaring that the buyer would not be obligated to honor any existing labor contracts. The PTGWO was in the midst of negotiating a contract with the MPS to last through 1966; Macapagal planned to use the privatization of the port to terminate this contract of the PTGWO and thus the political influence of Oca.

First Salvo at South Harbor

Open hostilities commenced on October 1 1962. The PTGWO staged a series of brief strikes at South Harbor as part of its contract negotiations with the MPS. The first strike successfully concluded within three days and the workers won a pay increase ranging from one peso to ₱4.50 per day.⁴⁵ The PTGWO staged a second strike on November 9, this time to ensure that a cost of living adjustment (COLA) was included in the contract. Labor Secretary Romualdez ordered Manila bound cargo ships diverted to other ports to avoid the striking workers, but in a show of solidarity, workers in Cebu refused to handle the diverted cargo. Romualdez threatened to send troops to break up the strike at seven in the evening on November 10. Acting on Macapagal’s orders, Romualdez was seeking to use the November strike as the pretext to break the union and to displace Oca and the PTGWO from the port. Paulino Cases, head of Manila Railroad Co., the parent organization of the Manila Port Services, granted the COLA at the last moment, however, and at nine, as troops were being deployed to the harbor, the PTGWO and the MPS reached a deal which granted a ₱30 monthly COLA to

⁴³CUSDPR, 896.061/11-2162.

⁴⁴CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/10-2662.

⁴⁵CUSDPR, 896.00/10-1962, p. 8.

the workers.⁴⁶ On November 19, the PTGWO again went on strike to secure a guarantee that their contract would be retained during privatization. Oca filed an appeal before the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) demanding that the contract be honored by the new private operator of the arrastre service and the next day the CIR handed down a ruling that the existing labor contract was a component of the port services for which private corporations were bidding.⁴⁷

This was a serious defeat for Macapagal, and in response he changed tactics, announcing that the recently concluded contract was invalid and any strike staged by the PTGWO was illegal, as the union, he claimed, did not have collective bargaining rights at the arrastre service. Only some government employees were legally entitled to collective bargaining rights. According to the Philippine labor code, if the workers were employed in a department with a “strictly governmental function” then they had the right to organize but not to collectively bargain, but if the government enterprise in which they were employed was deemed proprietary, i.e., business operations for which fees were collected, such as sewage and water services, then workers had the right to collectively bargain.⁴⁸ The Macapagal administration claimed that the arrastre service was strictly a governmental and not a proprietary function, and thus the workers’ picketing and collective bargaining was illegal.

The next several days saw a complex flurry of events. Labor Secretary Romualdez refused to allow the PTGWO to return to work and announced that he was terminating the MPS contract with the union. Responding to Romualdez, Oca threatened to launch a general strike of all members of the newly founded Lapiang Manggagawa on November 29 if the contract were terminated, which would have been the first general strike in the country’s history.⁴⁹ In the early morning of November 28, Finance Secretary Perez intervened, signing an agreement for Oca’s men to return to work under the terms of the recently agreed upon contract. Oca, however, disputed that the contract was being honored, and claimed that wages had secretly been cut.⁵⁰ Later that morning, sixty-eight government agents, on orders from Macapagal, raided Oca’s offices, seizing union records and charging Oca with fraud and with violating labor laws. The next day, Macapagal delivered a nationwide radio address denouncing Roberto Oca.⁵¹ Oca again threatened a nationwide strike, but his announced deadline had already past and this second threat came across as mere bluster. In an attempt to get workers back on the job,

⁴⁶CUSDPR, 896.061/11-2162.

⁴⁷CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/11-2362, p. 5.

⁴⁸“Manila’s Port Strike,” *International Transport Workers’ Journal* XXIII, no. 11 (1963): 235.

⁴⁹CUSDPR, 896.062/11-2662.

⁵⁰Complicating matters further, Justice Secretary Juan Liwag issued an announcement that the Perez-Oca agreement, concluded that morning, was not binding on the Bureau of Customs.

⁵¹In the same address, Macapagal appointed Romualdez to the head the Bureau of Customs. Romualdez had been leading the drive against Oca and as head of Customs he would be in direct conflict with the PTGWO at the port.

Finance Secretary Perez and Congressman Vicente Ocampo negotiated a new six-point agreement.

On November 30, while Oca was meeting with Perez and Ocampo, Romualdez ordered boats belonging to the Philippine Navy to bring in five hundred scabs from Cavite to operate the port, effectively circumventing the PTGWO picket line.⁵² The scabs who were to be employed by the government all belonged to the FFW. Johnny Tan routinely employed his union as a scab labor contractor, and he arrived at the South Harbor at their head. The deal with Oca, however, was concluded on the same day, and the scabs never actually set to work. Romualdez offered to pay Tan's men for standing rather than for working but Tan stated that they had been promised long-term employment – replacing the PTGWO – and refused to accept the day's pay. He and his men, with pistols drawn, march out through the picket lines. Violence was narrowly averted.⁵³ Tan then threatened Customs that his five hundred scabs would go on strike and picket the Harbor themselves, because they had not been employed as promised and the PTGWO had been restored to their jobs.

Oca filed two cases before the CIR. The first was an unfair labor practices case, which called on the court to compel private bidders to honor the labor contract concluded with the MPS and the second argued that the functions performed by the arrastre service were proprietary and not governmental. The CIR refused to hear the first case until the second case was resolved. If the court ruled that the arrastre service was a governmental function and that the PTGWO therefore did not have collective bargaining rights, the first case would be moot and the contract invalid. Tensions on the harbor temporarily subsided while everyone waited for the court's decision, but the likelihood of a violent confrontation on the waterfront was in the background of the formal launching of the Lapiang Manggagawa.

Forming the Executive Committee

In December 1962, the PKP formed an Executive Committee to guide the daily activity of the party which was throwing itself back into public political life. The Executive Committee was formed on instructions from, and under the guidance of, the PKI through its representative Bakri Ilyas. The agenda of the PKP was clear. They were to pressure Macapagal to support Sukarno in his dispute with Malaysia. This was seen as a means of pushing Manila out of the camp of US imperialism and into the camp which Sukarno called the Newly Emerging Forces, which was now openly allying itself with Beijing.⁵⁴

⁵²CUSDPR, 796.00(W)/12-762.

⁵³CUSDPR, 896.062/12-462.

⁵⁴I will examine the regional power struggle between Indonesia and Malaysia, known as *Konfrontasi*, in chapter 8.

Sison returns to Manila

Joma Sison returned from Indonesia in June 1962, after a six month stay in the country, during which Sison claimed that he became fluent in Indonesian, read an enormous amount of the “Marxist-Leninist classics” and developed good relations with the PKI. In email correspondence with Joi Barrios dated June 23, 2015, Sison wrote of his time in Indonesia,

I attended study sessions of the higher Party school of the PKI, the Aliarcham Academy of Social Sciences. I had conversations with the highest PKI leaders, especially Aidit and Njoto. I was hosted by the major Indonesian mass organizations and observed mass work among the youth, workers and peasants. From Indonesia, I forwarded Marxist-Leninist books to comrades in SCAUP, the Philippine Collegian and the Lapiang Manggagawa (especially the National Association of Trade Unions.)

I became a member of the Djakarta-based Afro-Asian Writers Bureau and the Afro-Asian Journalists Association. [sic] The latter was my official host everytime I traveled to Indonesia in 1963 and 1964.⁵⁵

Regardless of the actual extent of Sison’s reading and language study, it is clear that his stay in Jakarta represented a turning point in his political development and in the future course of Philippine communism. During his time in Indonesia, Sison sent translations of short poems by Chairil Anwar to the *Collegian* for publication and on April 14 1962, two of Sison’s translations were published, “The Two of Us” and “Your Head as Large as Your Face,” neither of which were longer than six lines.⁵⁶ According to Ninotchka Rosca, on his return to the Philippines, Sison’s papers and books were seized “by Intelligence” at the airport in the Philippines, including his master’s thesis on Nick Joaquin. Sison never completed his masters degree.⁵⁷ Sison claimed that in 1962, he and Bakri founded the Philippine-Indonesian Friendship and Cultural Association (PIFCA).⁵⁸ In truth, while Sison played an instrumental role, the initiative for the founding of PIFCA came from the Sukarno and Macapagal governments. It was established with joint government funding and its leading members had ties to the state. Sison

⁵⁵Jose Ma. Sison, Email to Joi Barrios, June 2015.

⁵⁶PC, 14 April 1962, 7. Sison’s translations can be compared with Chairil Anwar, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Chairil Anwar*, ed. and trans. Burton Raffel (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970).

⁵⁷Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 13. In addition to his political work, and an incomplete masters degree, Sison also spent a portion of 1961 and 1962 writing a novel. Petronilo Daroy claimed to have read the manuscript. (Petronilo Bn. Daroy, “From Literature to Revolution,” in *Prison and Beyond: Selected Poems 1958-1983*, ed. Edilberto Alegre et al. [Free Jose Ma. Sison Committee, 1984], 35; Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 18).

⁵⁸Sison and Sison, “Letter to the Family of Bung Drs. Bakri Iljas.”

was made General Secretary of the organization.⁵⁹ A considerable amount of funding went with the organization, and in 1963, for example, Sison arranged for PIFCA to sponsor a group of seventy-five dancers and musicians from Indonesia to visit Manila and stage performances there.⁶⁰

Ignacio Lacsina provided Sison with a job with NATU, where he was given the title of officer-in-charge of research and education, and received a stipend from the union for his work. Juliet de Lima had been pregnant prior to Sison's departure for Indonesia and was now about to give birth to their second child, Janos, and in addition to his work with NATU, Joma Sison found employment as the Public Relations Officer of FEATI University. Far Eastern Transport Inc. (FEATI) University had been founded as a school of aviation by the Lopez family in conjunction with their bid to control the airline industry in the late 1940s, but having lost out in this field to Andres Soriano of Philippine Air Lines (PAL), the Lopez family opted to expand FEATI to become a more broadly educational institution. They placed FEATI under the direct control of Salvador Araneta, a leading member of the sugar bloc, a prominent public intellectual and businessman, and intimate relation of the Lopez family. Araneta's wife, Victoria Lopez Araneta, was made president of FEATI.⁶¹ Salvador Araneta's holdings were extensive. He controlled Araneta University, FEATI university, Republic Flour Mills, AIA Feed Mills, Republic Soya, and Premier Paper. He held substantial shares in FEATI bank, and "a network of interests in sugar mills, plantations (sugar, rice, and coconut), a jute bag factory, inter-island shipping, insurance, banking, real estate, educational institutions, mass media (a national daily, four TV stations, and twenty-three radio stations all over the Islands), a lime factory, and a cement factory."⁶² In his 1989 autobiographical account, Sison

⁵⁹Leading linguistic scholar, Cecilio Lopez, was chair; and FX Mulwanto, an Indonesian expert on education, vice chair. Col. Simeon Medalla, head of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines, was finance chair. Rolando Garcia, Chief of the Cultural Affairs Division of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs was a leading PIFCA member. (MC, 4 Nov 1963, 7; PR, vol. 1, 2, p. 71; Jose Ma. Sison, "Committee Hearings and Albert's Charges," PC, January 1967, 5). Garcia went on to become Marcos' Ambassador to Switzerland.

⁶⁰MC, 4 Nov 1963, 7.

⁶¹Araneta was known for his advocacy of national economic protectionism and Keynesian deficit spending to increase domestic consumption. Taking up the ideas put forward by Louis Kelso in his 1957 *The Capitalist Manifesto*, Araneta advocated Central Bank funded zero interest loans to create Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs). This, Araneta argued, would simultaneously bring a massive infusion of cash into Philippine industry and help to diminish class antagonisms by creating the illusion that workers were joint owners of production. Monetary policy in the Philippines in the 1950s was determined by the rival conceptions of Araneta and Central Bank Governor Miguel Cuaderno as they vied for influence over the Magsaysay and Garcia administrations. (Yusuke Takagi, "Politics of the Great Debate in the 1950s: Revisiting Economic Decolonization in the Philippines," *Journal of Third World Studies* 23, no. 1 [2008]: 91-114).

⁶²Dante C. Simbulan, *The Modern Principalia: The Historical Evolution of the Philippine Ruling Oligarchy* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2005), 69.

claimed that Araneta made Sison his executive secretary with responsibility over all Araneta's business enterprises.⁶³ Sison's employment put him at the heart of the sugar bloc.

Breaking with the Sugar Bloc

As Joma Sison took up work for Salvador Araneta in 1962, NATU was still in an intimate alliance with the sugar bloc. Philippine politics were split along a fault-line between Macapagal and his cronies on the one hand, who had just had a falling out with the United States over the resolution of the Stonehill debacle, and the Lopez family and the sugar bloc on the other, and Araneta was thus in the leadership of the bourgeois opposition to Diosdado Macapagal. Macapagal, in order to consolidate political power, needed to gain control over the legislature in the 1963 election and to do this meant working to break up the sugar bloc. Macapagal set about wooing and purchasing the loyalty of the NP governors throughout the country and his most significant conquest was the young Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino. When Aquino was confronted in early 1963 with the question of his political loyalty to the Nacionalista Party, the dynastic base of his economic power was splintering. The Cojuangco family, into which he had married, had fragmented between his wife's brother, José 'Peping' Cojuangco, and her cousin, Eduardo 'Danding' Cojuangco. Peping and Danding were at each others throats, in a vicious rivalry that would last for the rest of their lives, and which led Peping Cojuangco to shift from the NP to the LP in February 1963. Four months later, Ninoy Aquino switched his allegiance to the Liberal Party as well. Aquino was running for re-election as Tarlac governor, and later told Lachica in an interview, "I was promised the LP leadership in Tarlac and five million pesos for the province. That was a bargain nobody could resist. I flipped."⁶⁴ Among those who broke with the sugar bloc was the PKP.

The PKI, tightening around Sukarno in keeping with instructions from Beijing, saw in the confluence of two factors – the rift between Malacañang and Washington, and the mounting tensions over the formation of Malaysia – the opportunity for the Communist Party of the Philippines to reemerge, insinuating itself into the upper layers of Philippine politics. Sukarno visited Manila in November 1962 and met with Macapagal; the CIA wrote that during this meeting "opposition to Malaysia brought the Philippines into a close working relationship with Indonesia."⁶⁵

In December 1962 at the instigation of Bakri Ilyas, the PKP gathered forces. Bakri brought together Vicente Lava, an executive for the US multinational Colgate-Palmolive, and Joma Sison. Vicente brought with him Francisco Lava Jr., a deputy clerk in the Court of Appeals, while along with Sison was Ignacio

⁶³Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 16.

⁶⁴Lachica, *The Huks*, 215; PFP, 6 Jul 1963, 10.

⁶⁵Office of Current Intelligence, *The Philippines Under Macapagal*.

Lacsina. They were later joined by a fifth member, when Francisco Lava brought in a close friend, the circulation manager of major daily newspaper, the “son of a man who had been active in the Democratic Alliance.” This would have been Ching Maramag, circulation manager of the *Manila Times* and later a member of the Central Committee of the PKP.⁶⁶ Jesus Lava, in hiding, authorized the five of them to form an executive committee to lead the PKP, and thus while Jesus Lava retained his title of general secretary, the day to day decisions of the party were entirely out of his hands. The executive committee began to meet every Sunday. They seemed an unlikely lot to be rebuilding a Communist party – the executive secretary of Salvador Araneta, an executive for Colgate Palmolive and the secretary general of Lorenzo Tañada’s Nationalist Citizens Party. There were intense internal rivalries; Ignacio Lacsina hated Francisco Lava Jr. and at one point challenged him to a gun duel.⁶⁷

The Executive Committee had the task of pressuring Macapagal to support Sukarno against Malaysia, and to carry this out, they had to break with the sugar bloc. In early January, Cipriano Cid’s PAFLU, which was now closely allied with Lacsina in the LM, launched a drive to organize the faculty at FEATI, which culminated in a strike in mid-February. On March 20, the striking FEATI workers appealed to Macapagal for assistance and Macapagal certified their case before the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) the next day.⁶⁸ By June 1963 Salvador Araneta had fired Joma Sison, an action which he took according to Sison because he had become convinced by an intelligence dossier that Sison was behind the strikes at FEATI and at “a flour milling company.”⁶⁹ If this is true, the dossier was correct. Sison was deeply involved in this series of strikes, which the Executive Committee of the PKP used to signal to Macapagal that the newly formed Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers’ Party] (LM) was interested in an alliance. The political focus of this alliance would be the creation of Maphilindo, which the PKP saw as a vehicle to further the unity between Sukarno and Macapagal in opposition to Malaysia. Within six months, the PKP leadership had merged the newly formed Lapiang Manggagawa with Macapagal’s Liberal Party, as he successfully concluded the Manila summit with Sukarno and Tunku Abdul Rahman.

⁶⁶Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 12-13; Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 44; Jose Ma. Sison, *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism: Selected Writings, 1969 to 1974*, ed. Julieta de Lima, vol. 2, *Continuing the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City: Aklat ng Bayan, 2013), 173.

⁶⁷Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 46.

⁶⁸Cid also waged an organizing drive among sugar workers in 1963, and staged a strike at Republic Flour Mills – directly attacking the interests of the sugar bloc and of Araneta in particular.

⁶⁹Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 40.

Alliance with Macapagal



The Small Change of Objective Interests

... the fundamental forces of the historic process are classes; political parties rest upon them; ideas and slogans emerge as the small change of objective interests.

— Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*

For starkly different reasons, Sukarno and Macapagal both opposed the formation of Malaysia in 1963. This temporary geopolitical alignment between Manila and Jakarta, and the President's sour public relations with Washington, gave purpose to the party reborn. They would pressure Macapagal to use the Manila Summit and the formation of Maphilindo to secure the interests of Jakarta, and by derivation, Beijing.

In the persons of Joma Sison and Ignacio Lacsina the party effectively controlled the newly founded Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers' Party] (LM), and using its immense working class membership as political capital, they secretly negotiated a deal with the President. Wielding the promise of support from the LM membership in the heated 1963 midterm election to secure Macapagal's commitment to their ends, they struck a bargain with the ruling Liberal Party. By the middle of the year they merged the LM with the LP, and thus but months after its founding the Stalinist leadership ended the independence of the Workers' Party. The deal with Macapagal involved the betrayal of the most explosive strike in Philippine history. The Manila port workers, members of the LM, were engaged in a pitched and bloody battle against the Macapagal government. As Sison and Lacsina embraced the Liberal Party and hailed the President for carrying out the 'unfinished revolution,' they abandoned the port workers to the violence of the government-hired scabs and the military troops who assisted them.

Having fulfilled their duties to their new ally in the election, the LM leadership were given choice salaried offices by the administration. Sison spent the remainder of 1963 and the majority of 1964 enthusiastically promoting Macapagal's land reform program, which had been drawn up by the Ford Foundation. With government funding and on the basis of peddling the conversion of share-croppers into cash-rent tenants as a revolutionary solution to the agrarian problem, Sison

created what would become the peasant wing of the PKP: Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka [Free Federation of Peasants] (MASAKA). Jesus Lava, long in hiding, saw in the alliance with Macapagal an opportunity to bring the party increasingly into mainstream politics. He appointed a number of party secretaries to head the PKP, among them Sison and Lacsina, and surrendered to the Macapagal government, publicly proclaiming his support for the 'revolutionary' policies of the President.

In the wake of the 1963 election, however, as Macapagal rapidly moved to improve public relations with Washington, his ties to Sukarno necessarily weakened and by the election year of 1965, explosive – even murderous – tensions between Manila and Jakarta had emerged. Thus, by the end of 1964, having subordinated the LM to the Liberal Party and promoted Macapagal as a revolutionary for the space of a year, the PKP looked to scrap their alliance with the President and strike a deal with his leading rival for Malacañang – Ferdinand Marcos.

— 8 —

Merger

But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.

— John Dryden, *Absalom and Achithophel*

Konfrontasi

Britain's proposal to create the Federation of Malaysia sparked regional tensions in 1962-63. Beijing opposed the creation of the Federation which would be dominated by the British and, to an extent, the Americans, and desired for North Borneo in particular to be under an independent government in an alliance with Sukarno. The PKI thus supported moves to undermine the formation of Malaysia, including the arming of rebel forces in North Borneo. Macapagal was likewise opposed to the creation of Malaysia, although for starkly different reasons, viewing the Federation as bringing the Chinese population of Singapore, and with it the threat of Communism, to the borders of the Philippines. He sought to use a territorial dispute over Sabah in North Borneo as a means of creating a buffer state against this perceived Chinese Communist influence. George Kahin wrote that, in private meetings in August 1963, Foreign Affairs Secretary Salvador Lopez "emphasized that Macapagal's concept of Maphilindo had been inspired 'precisely by this problem of the Chinese,' and the desire to control them within Malaya, Singapore and the Borneo territories." Lopez cautioned that

Singapore is exploding and the power relationship between the Chinese and Malays in the projected area of Malaysia is changing. With the very narrow margin they have now – even with the addition of predominantly non-Chinese Borneo populations – how can the Malays long maintain political superiority, given the political sophistication and wealth, not to mention the increasing numbers, of the Chinese?¹

¹George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 168.

Both Macapagal and Lopez envisioned “using Maphilindo to control the Chinese.”² This was for them the point of the dispute over Sabah, it served as a buffer against Singapore, the Chinese and Communism. Sukarno, meanwhile, saw a campaign against Malaysia as a means of shoring up support from both the PKI and the army. The PKI, in keeping with the interests of Beijing, opposed the creation of Malaysia, while the Indonesian top brass, like Macapagal, saw the Federation bringing Chinese Communist influence closer to the borders of Indonesia. Sukarno on this basis rallied both the army and the PKI behind the slogan “Crush Malaysia.” There was thus a temporary alignment between Sukarno’s opposition to Malaysia and that of Macapagal, albeit for wildly divergent reasons.

On February 2, 1962, shortly after assuming office, Macapagal announced that he was looking into the question of the Sultan of Sulu’s territorial claim to Sabah and Vice President Pelaez ordered the Department of Foreign Affairs to prepare a report on the topic. Sensing the changing political climate, the family of the Sultan of Sulu petitioned congress at the opening of its session in 1962 to recognize its claim, so that it could directly negotiate with the British. Seeking not to secure the territory but rather to get a cash settlement from the British before the creation of Malaysia, they gave Nicasio Osmeña power of attorney to pursue their claim.³ In October 1962, Nic Osmeña sponsored a visit to Manila by A.M. Azahari, head of the Brunei-based People’s Party [Partai Ra’ayat]. While in Manila, with the support of sections of Manila’s elite, Azahari launched a revolt in Brunei and issued a declaration on December 8 that North Borneo had established itself as completely independent under the rule of Sultan Saifuddin.⁴ On December 17, Ignacio Lacsina announced in the *Evening News* that the Katipunan ng Manggagawang Pilipino [Union of Filipino Workers] (KMP) was supporting Azahari’s rebellion and that he was making arrangements for Azahari to meet with the executive board of the KMP, adding that the KMP would be able to “contribute a little to the rebel cause.”⁵ He offered to send men to fight in Brunei, and repeated the offer in January. On December 21, the *Manila Chronicle* reported that Azahari had accepted the offer of labor support for his rebellion: “Filipino volunteers would be shipped to revolt-torn Brunei as soon as possible and trained at a secret military base, it was gathered.” Before such plans could be set in motion, however, Azahari’s rebellion was suppressed by British forces in Brunei and by the end of January Azahari had left Manila for Jakarta.⁶

Initially enthusiastically supportive of the Brunei revolt, the Macapagal administration cooled its support as Azahari’s forces suffered losses and as Azahari

²Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament*, 168.

³CUS DPR, 796.00(W)/4-1862, p. 2.

⁴Arnold C. Brackman, *Southeast Asia’s Second Front: The Power Struggle in the Malay Archipelago* (London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), 142, 145.

⁵CUS DPR, (746H.00/12-1862).

⁶J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi: The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute, 1963-1966* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974), 118.

announced a claim to all of North Borneo. Macapagal put forward an alternative which became the central thrust of the Manila Summit: rather than the Malaysian Federation, Azahari's rebellion, or Manila's claim to North Borneo, there should be a plebiscite of the population of North Borneo in favor of either the Federation or Independence. Macapagal saw this both as a means of securing a buffer against Singapore and Indonesia and of saving face internationally while backing down from Manila's claim to Sabah. Aidit and the PKI, who had opposed the idea of Maphilindo in 1961, now hailed it, seeing in the Manila Summit the possibility of joint opposition to Malaysia.⁷ Part of the threat feared by Macapagal was removed when Lee Kuan Yew and George Douglas-Hamilton, Earl of Selkirk, staged Operation Coldstore in February 1963, arresting 133 left leaders in Singapore, including members of the Malayan Communist Party and Barisan Sosialis.

A US special national intelligence estimate, prepared by the CIA, NSA, and Departments of State and Defense, summed up the state of affairs on February 20 1963.

The proposed Federation of Malaysia was promoted by the UK and the Government of Malaya primarily as a means of: (a) checking the Communist threat in Singapore, whose population is overwhelmingly Chinese, and maintaining the Singapore base; and, (b) providing the UK with an acceptable alternative to its present colonial position in northern Borneo...

The Philippines is an added though lesser threat to the establishment of the Federation. The Philippine Government allowed Azahari to operate from a base in Manila and gave him at least nominal aid in connection with his revolt in Brunei. Manila's motives are not completely clear, but it is obvious that a genuine desire has arisen to secure North Borneo. The territory is seen as a buffer against both Chinese and Indonesian expansion into the southern Philippines. There is little confidence in the Tunku's ability to restrain Chinese Communist subversives from moving into the territory and little confidence in the UK ability to defend it against Indonesian aggression. With concern over Indonesian expansionism, there is also a desire to act in concert with Indonesia, which many Filipinos see as the future dominant power in Southeast Asia. Indeed, it may be that there has already been an understanding between the two countries whereby, for tactical purposes, Indonesia has implied its respect for the Philippine claim to North Borneo to encourage Philippine opposition to Malaysia. The Philippine leadership is also motivated

⁷Brackman, *Southeast Asia's Second Front*, 188-89.

by a desire to appear anti-colonialist and fully independent of the West.⁸

It was in this momentary confluence of contending interests that the PKP, following the PKI, promoted Maphilindo and the Manila Summit, using their political influence in the Lapiang Manggagawa to secure from Macapagal support for Jakarta's campaign against Malaysia.

The Founding of Lapiang Manggagawa

Workers in the Philippines had been hit hard by soaring inflation in the wake of Macapagal's decontrol of the peso in early 1962. The rising price of basic necessities, combined with stagnant wages, compelled the working class toward more open forms of struggle and the Lapiang Manggagawa was formed at a crucial juncture in the development of the class struggle within the country. In 1960, out of an estimated total labor force of nine million, half a million were unemployed and 1.5 million were underemployed. Sixty-five percent of this labor force was employed in agricultural labor. By 1962, eight hundred thousand were unemployed and two million underemployed.⁹ There were a total of fifty-six strikes in the first eight months of 1963, involving 32,011 workers. This was a growth in the number of workers on strike of thirty-two percent over the previous year.¹⁰

The task for a Marxist leadership of the working class was to intervene in this growing struggle, assisting workers to draw socialist conclusions from the mounting assault on their living standards. The PKP, however, in its leadership of the Lapiang Manggagawa, called for protectionist measures on behalf of native capitalists and promoted a form of trickle-down economics. The goal of the PKP in the newly formed Lapiang Manggagawa was not the defense of the interests of workers, but rather the promotion of the foreign policy interests of Beijing as they were refracted at the time through Jakarta.

On February 3 1963 the Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers' Party] (LM) was formally launched, bringing together a significant majority of the trade union federations in the country in one political party. The most notable absence from its membership was Johnny Tan's FFW. One thousand sixty delegates attended the founding convention, and elected Cipriano Cid president of the LM and Ignacio Lacsina general secretary, the most powerful position within the party.¹¹ Roberto Oca and Jose Hernandez were elected as vice-presidents;

⁸Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "Prospects for Malaysia," chap. Document 330 in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-63 Volume XXIII, Southeast Asia* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1994).

⁹CUS DPR, 896.00/5-1561, 16; 896.00/9-1362, 11.

¹⁰MC, 14 Sep 1963.

¹¹MC, 3 Aug 1963.



Figure 8.1: LM logo. Handbook on Land Reform Code, 1963.

and Joma Sison was elected to the office of Vice President for Propaganda.¹² Sison's office meant that the political issuances and statements of the LM came from his pen, and he later described this job as "organizing the research and education department, conducting seminars and coming out with news and press releases."¹³ With Lacsina at its head and Sison responsible for its public statements and printed material, the executive committee of the PKP exercised effective control over the new labor party.

The perspective of the Lapiang Manggagawa was expressed in its five page political program, which opened with the declaration that "This alienation [of the Filipino worker] from the center of [political] power lies at the root of their present predicament – a predicament which is, by and large, still characterized by widespread want, squalor, disease, ignorance, and exploitation."¹⁴ It then reassured the working class that "the abolition of this sub-human condition is the paramount concern of government," and in order to assist the government in this matter, the Lapiang Manggagawa "seeks to provide an effective instrument for reform political action for every Filipino worker who desires to participate in the dialogue of power." (58) The program stated

We believe in the inviolability of the national will and in the primacy of the Filipino in his own country . . .

We shall, therefore, work for the adoption and enforcement of policies and measures designed to decolonize the economy by shifting control and direction of our economic life from alien to Filipino

¹²Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 16; Alfredo N. Jr. Salanga, "The Politics of Labor," *APL*, June 1972, 66.

¹³Jose Ma. Sison, *Ka Felixberto 'Bert' Olalia: Hero and Martyr of the Working Class and the Filipino People*, August 2003.

¹⁴Lapiang Manggagawa (LM), "Lapiang Manggagawa Platform," *PR*, 1963, no. 1, 58.

hands.

Filipino businessmen and industrialists shall be guaranteed protection against foreign domination. (60)

The program continued, “Major emphasis ... shall be placed upon basic industrialization. Industrialization is the key to the economy of plenty.” This industrialization in the hands of Filipino capitalists should be funded by “native resources,” but “[f]oreign aid, in the form of long term loans on reasonable terms, and without strings attached shall be sought for.” (61) The program blandly claimed that these policies would make “the benefits of nationalism permeate down to the masses,” something which would be effected by combining “a predominantly native private enterprise with the necessary measures to correct existing economic disparities.” (60) The program went on to refer to the “gap between the few who are rich and the many who are poor” as “perilous.” (61) From the vantage point of the working class, the gap between the rich and the poor could correctly be termed ‘exploitative’ as well as ‘indicative of the irrational character of capitalism,’ but this was not how the LM saw the state of affairs. The description of the gap between the rich and the poor as “perilous” indicates the class perspective of the authors of the document. Stark social inequality raises the specter of revolution; it is perilous precisely from the vantage point of the ruling class, for it is their interests which are imperiled.

Succinctly, the Lapiang Manggagawa called for a program of capitalist industrialization under private Filipino ownership, funded and protected by the state, with additional support secured through foreign loans. This program, they claimed, would secure “the fullest measure of social justice and nationalist protection to all Filipinos.” (61) In addition the program stated that “Land for the landless shall be transformed from a slogan to seduce votes into a concrete program of land reform,” (59) but not another word was written about this “concrete” program. It is striking that the founding document of the LM, a workers’ party, made no mention of a minimum wage, of job safety, reduced hours, benefits, or retirement. The only plank of the program that directly targeted workers was the chauvinist demand for the Filipinization of labor, i.e., for jobs to be taken away from Chinese immigrants. The program of the Lapiang Manggagawa sought to bring the trade unions into mainstream politics, which it termed the “dialogue of power.” It was entirely oriented to the interests of the capitalist class and it attempted to palm off this orientation by assuring workers that the benefits of national capitalism would trickle down to them.

The key political prize which the LM targeted during its founding congress was the mayoralty of Manila, one of the most politically powerful positions in the country. For the industrial working class, who were concentrated in the Manila area, the mayor, who had direct control over the Manila Police Department (MPD), was the most immediate expression of the hostile power of the state. The MPD, with its rattan riot shields and batons, routinely suppressed strikes and

broke up picket lines. The ruling Liberal Party was torn between nominating Antonio Villegas, the vice mayor who had replaced the recently deceased mayor, Arsenio Lacson, and Ramon Bagatsing, and the Nacionalistas had not yet selected a candidate. The LM congress nominated Roberto Oca to stand as the party's mayoral candidate, and selected José J. Hernandez to run for vice-mayor.

The entirety of the leadership of the LM was bent on using their newly established party to curry favor with the ruling political parties. They had rival orientations, however. Oca was fiercely opposed by Macapagal because of his intimate ties with the Lopez family, and he actively sought support from the Nacionalista Party leadership for his mayoral bid. Hernandez and Vicente Rafael would throw in their lot with the highest bidder and eventually went along with a merger with the Liberal Party, and were given choice positions within Macapagal's administration. Sison and Lacsina had determined, prior to the formal launch of the LM, that they would use the newly formed organization to secure support for Indonesia from the Macapagal administration, and Cipriano Cid largely followed their lead. For every one of these leaders, the tens of thousands of workers represented by the LM were just so much political capital.

The Progressive Review

As Vice President of Propaganda, Joma Sison was responsible for the production of the political line of the Lapiang Manggagawa. He was also responsible for the broader dissemination of the conceptions of the PKP in the pages of a political journal, the *Progressive Review*, established in March 1963, which declared on its masthead that it was "A Bi-Monthly of Ideas and Opinions." The editorial board was composed almost entirely of former SCAUP members whom Sison had recruited for the project. There were three editors, Joma Sison, Luis Teodoro, and Francisco Nemenzo.¹⁵ Francisco Nemenzo wrote the editorial for the first issue of the journal which was published in May-June 1963, and Joma Sison wrote an opening Commentary.¹⁶ Nemenzo's piece was insubstantial and concluded by calling upon "radicals" to evaluate the "reformist programmes" of the "cunning mythmakers." Sison's commentary immediately followed Nemenzo's editorial and examined the program of the Macapagal administration.¹⁷ The commentary, which Sison wrote between March and April, opened with Macapagal's proposed Land Reform program, which would become the centerpiece of Macapagal's so-called Unfinished Revolution campaign two months later. Sison argued that

¹⁵The Editorial Board was composed of Petronilo Daroy, Reynato Puno, Satur Ocampo, Joel Rocamora, Vivencio Jose, and Ferdinand Tinio. Perfecto Tera and Ace Guillermo were contributing editors, and Fidel Agcaoili was listed as Business Manager. The average issue printed one thousand copies, half of which were sold by subscription. Subscriptions cost six pesos per year in Manila and a full page advertisement cost fifty. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 28).

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁷PR, 1963, no. 1, p. 6.

the landlords could exploit the program to their advantage, declaring, “from end to end, the whole Filipino peasantry is actually left to its own devices. The Macapagal land reform may afford some tenants small parcels of lands but it may also drive away so many more to displacement and unemployment.”¹⁸ He left open the possibility, however, that Macapagal’s land reform program could successfully carry out an equitable redistribution of land, provided the peasantry was organized “into a solid political movement,” but this would require the peasantry to have “fully awakened and realized its own mass strength.” (8) Sison thus argued that Diosdado Macapagal would carry out land reform to the advantage of the Philippine peasantry provided they adequately pressured him to do so. This pressure would necessarily take the initial form of support for Macapagal and his program.

Sison stated that Macapagal was allowing foreign investment into strategic sectors of the economy and this meant “further foreign control of our whole national life.” (11) Despite this, Sison focused on how both Indonesia and the Philippines “are determinedly opposed to the proposed Federation of Malaysia, cooked up by the British and supported by the US,” and thus “[f]or the first time, a dynamic line of political differentiation has been clearly and significantly drawn up between the Indonesian and Philippine governments on the one hand and the Western powers on the other.” (13) He argued that “both [the Philippines and Indonesia] need to cooperate and consolidate their efforts in the face of formidable adversity.” The need for opposition to Malaysia – “an imperialist-colonialist scheme” – was the concluding argument of Sison’s editorial.¹⁹ Sison would repeat verbatim much of his editorial in an article which he published in June in the Hongkong based *Eastern World*. In this article, he added that should Azahari gain mass support then the Philippines should cede its territorial claim in Borneo to him, and concluded that “the trend towards closer and stronger relations between the Philippines and Indonesia is swift, steady and, it appears, irreversible.”²⁰

Toward Coalition

Immediately after the founding of Lapiang Manggagawa, Cid, Lacsina and Sison entered into secret negotiations with Macapagal to merge the newly established workers’ party with the ruling Liberal Party, hiding these negotiations from both the membership of the organization and from Roberto Oca. To gain Macapagal’s

¹⁸Jose Ma. Sison, “Commentary,” *PR*, 1963, no. 1, 9.

¹⁹This conclusion set the tone for the first issue of *Progressive Review*. The issue included an article by Senator Salipada Pendatun who denounced US support for the Federation of Malaysia while the Philippines laid claim to North Borneo as “Betrayal in Southeast Asia;” another article called for the lifting of the trade embargo on the Sino-Soviet bloc; and Abdul Rahim bin Karim wrote an article entitled, “Kalimantan Utara Revolt: A War Against Imperialism.”

²⁰Jose Ma. Sison, “The Philippines and Malaysia,” *Eastern World* XVII, no. 6 (1963): 11, 12.

support, the LM negotiating team backed strikes against Macapagal's political rivals and defused and undermined strikes that would have jeopardized the President's interests. The focus of the LM's pressure upon Macapagal was the Manila Summit and the creation of Maphilindo, which they sought to shift to the interests of Jakarta. Joma Sison was at the center of this effort.

Jesus Lava wrote that Sison was selected to "represent our Party in talks with the Indonesian Party, then under the leadership of Comrade Aidit who wrote me a letter, noting the common struggle of our two parties and people against imperialism, for national liberation. He also gave me a copy of his book. Fraternal relations with the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party) was [*sic*] thus established."²¹ In early 1963, Sison traveled again to Indonesia, almost certainly with funding from PIFCA making this a government-funded trip, where he received instructions regarding the negotiations for the Manila Summit and for the LM-LP merger.²²

Macapagal, for his part, adopted the language of the 'left.' He began to use the phrase, 'unfinished revolution,' then much bandied about by Sukarno, who had himself adopted it as part of his alliance with the PKI. Macapagal spoke of the need for the "common man" to carry out the "unfinished revolution" against "imperialism," and denounced those who opposed this revolution as "reactionaries." Sison trumpeted these speeches, publishing widely in the name of LM in support of Macapagal's policies and with each publication displaying growing enthusiasm for the administration.

The View from Washington

Thus, publicly, Macapagal's relations with the United States remained sour. On April 26 1963, the CIA produced a memorandum classified Secret, which highlighted a number of surface divergences between the policies of Macapagal and Washington, particularly on the subject of North Borneo, the Malaysian Federation and relations with Indonesia. It concluded, however, "Macapagal's personal commitment to cooperation with Washington is unquestioned. He strongly supported the US during the Cuban crisis last fall." The report, however, correctly prognosticated that "Before initiating negotiations with the US on any significant issue, Macapagal will probably wait until he feels he clearly controls the domestic political situation – most likely after the November 1963 elections."²³

In the midst of the Manila Summit in the first week of August, ostensibly the height of Macapagal's political independence from the United States, Washington's perspective on Macapagal can be clearly seen in the confidential correspondence between Undersecretary of State Alexis Johnson and Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric. Gilpatric had forwarded to Johnson an

²¹Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 321.

²²Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 44.

²³Office of Current Intelligence, *The Philippines Under Macapagal*.

urgent request from CIA operative Gen. Edward Lansdale dated July 16. Lansdale had received a personal invitation from Defense Secretary Macario Peralta to immediately visit the Philippines to advise the Philippine government regarding political developments, including the emergence of “Communist attractions” among college graduates. Johnson responded to Gilpatric on August 2.

I would like to be able to give an unqualified “yes” to it [Lansdale’s proposed visit] for, as you know, I have high regard for him and am very familiar with the great constructive job he did there. It is truly one of the great stories of American “political action.”

However, it is this very success and Ed Lansdale’s close political identification with it throughout much of the Philippines that, regretfully, makes me skeptical about the wisdom of such a visit, even under the auspices of Peralta. As you know, we . . . have been *trying to pursue a policy of permitting the Philippines, and particularly Macapagal, to increase Philippine prestige in Southeast Asia by a posture of increased independence from the United States*. He is successfully doing so and, although this also presents its problems, we feel that in the long run it will be beneficial to all of us.²⁴

Johnson denied Lansdale’s proposed visit, but his letter makes clear that the strategy being pursued by Washington was to “permit” Macapagal to “posture” as being independent of the US in order to serve US interests in the region.

The threat of a nationwide strike

The tensions at South Harbor were still simmering; Macapagal continued to claim that the incoming private operator of the port would not be obligated to honor the PTGWO contract and Oca’s appeals before the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) were still pending. Lacsina called for a national strike of all member unions in the LM to begin on May 16 in support of the PTGWO, and then, along with Sison and Cid, formed a secret delegation to negotiate with Macapagal the details of the political merger of the LM and LP, including the securing of appointments within the Macapagal government. The political stakes must be clear: an extended strike on Manila’s South Harbor would shut down international imports and exports throughout the majority of the country including the capital. Port workers in the southern islands had demonstrated in 1962 that they were prepared to strike in sympathy with their fellow workers from Manila. What is more, this was a strike not against a private employer but against the government itself and a port strike would thus bring workers into direct conflict with the state. A nationwide strike in support of such a struggle under the guidance of Marxist leadership would have immediately raised revolutionary political implications. Macapagal

²⁴Alexis Johnson, Alexis Johnson to Roswell Gilpatric, August 1963, EGL, emphasis added.

appointed Lacsina to be head of a conciliation committee which included the Customs commissioner – the man responsible for taking away the port jobs – and Justice Secretary Juan Liwag, who had drafted the argument that the PTGW did not have collective bargaining rights. The threat of a nationwide strike of over thirty thousand workers that would have shut down the ports, the banks, and a broad range of industries, was not being mobilized to secure the interests of the port workers or any section of the working class. It was being deployed in order to end the political independence of the newly formed workers' party, to secure sinecures for the LM leadership, and to promote the foreign policy interests of Beijing and Jakarta.

When Oca got wind of the negotiations he was furious and publicly disauthorized the LM negotiating team. Lacsina, Cid, Felixberto Olalia, Delia Medina, and several other LM leaders signed a secret resolution with Macapagal committing to the merger of the LM with the Liberal Party.²⁵ Lacsina called off the nationwide strike just as the port workers began picketing the South Harbor on May 7, for he and Sison had just struck a deal to merge the workers' party with the government that the workers were striking against. They had deliberately isolated and betrayed the port workers.

By early July the secret deal to coalesce the LM with the Liberal Party was brought to public attention in an article in the *Chronicle*, which on July 2 reported that the “recently achieved ‘solidarity’ [of Oca’s union with the other members of the LM] appeared headed for total disintegration as the reported ‘secret’ coalition being forged by some of the leaders of the ‘Lapiang Manggagawa’ (Workers Party) with the Liberal Party came to light.”²⁶ “Recently,” the article continued, “a number of LM officials reportedly signed a resolution formally coalescing the political organization with the LP. According to reports, six have already affixed their signatures to the document.” Oca denounced the proposed merger as a “gross betrayal of the aims and objectives of the LM founding convention on Feb. 3.”

The eleven member LM Directorate met at the D&E Restaurant on July 23 to resolve the dispute with Oca, and Lacsina pushed for a vote to go ahead with the merger. Oca responded that the “coalition was too big a matter to be decided by the directorate, the question should be put to a convention,” but Lacsina responded that “there was no time to call a convention.” When the directorate chose to go ahead with the vote, Oca stormed out of the meeting and the remaining ten members voted. Nine voted in favor; Hernandez abstained, “with the understanding that he would go with the majority.”²⁷ In 2003, Sison dishonestly claimed that Oca was expelled from the LM “because of his arbitrary use of the name of the KMP for pushing his personal interest.”²⁸ In truth, Oca

²⁵MC, 18 Sep 1963.

²⁶“Poll merger threatens labor unity,” *MC*, July 1963, 14.

²⁷Quijano de Manila, “Labor Enters Politics,” *PPF*, September 1963, 40-41.

²⁸Sison, *Ka Felixberto ‘Bert’ Olalia*.

was edged out of the LM in order to facilitate the planned merger with the LP and Felixberto Olalia was installed as Vice President to replace him.

An aspect of the merger negotiations was securing the right for Celia Mariano Pomeroy to leave the country to join her husband in England. Since Bill's departure from the Philippines in January 1962, Celia had been attempting to secure a passport to join him. An international campaign was mounted on Celia's behalf, supported by Bertrand Russell and Graham Greene. As part of this campaign, Joma Sison arranged the publication of William Pomeroy's love poems to Celia in early 1963, entitled *Beyond Barriers: Sonnets to Celia*.²⁹ Phil Ochs released a single entitled "Celia" in the same year and the song was included on his first album *All the News That's Fit to Sing* in 1964.³⁰ The timing of Macapagal's granting Celia Pomeroy her passport, however, suggests that the decisive factor in his decision was negotiations between the LP and LM, as she was granted her passport in the weeks immediately prior to the formal merger. She wrote an open letter to Macapagal: "Upon my departure to join my husband, William J. Pomeroy, I wish to express my sincere thanks to President Macapagal and Vice President Pelaez for granting me a passport. Let me assure the President and the Vice President that I'll do my best to give them no cause to regret their action."³¹

The Manila Summit

The Second Issue of the *Progressive Review*

The second issue of the *Progressive Review*, dedicated to Maphilindo and the interests more generally of Sukarno, was published in the third week of July in the immediate lead up to the Summit.³² Bakri Ilyas and Abdul Rahim Bin Karim were added to the editorial board of the paper as contributing editors, and Sison, at the head of the editorial board of the paper, promoted Sukarno and his so-called "guided democracy." The frontispiece of the issue was a full page picture of Sukarno, the obverse featured Subandrio, his foreign minister, and the 116 page publication headlined itself as a "Special Indonesian Issue."³³ The editorial statement, almost certainly authored by Sison, described it as a "special

²⁹William J. Pomeroy, *Beyond Barriers: Sonnets to Celia* (Pedro B. Ayuda & Company, 1963). The 1963 edition included an acknowledgment of Sison for having "interested the publishers and made them aware of William J. Pomeroy's work." (vi) When the volume was republished in 1983, this inscription had become a source of embarrassment to all parties concerned. It was removed. (William J. Pomeroy, *Beyond Barriers: Sonnets to Celia* [New York: International Publishers, 1983]).

³⁰It was a simple, affecting song. "The guns have stopped their firing, you may wander through the hills / They kept my Celia through the war, they keep her from me still / She waits upon the island now, a prisoner of the sea / Oh, when will Celia come to me?"

³¹MC, 14 September 1963, 15.

³²PC, 31 Jul 1963, 7.

³³Ken Fuller, the only scholar to even mention this issue of the *Progressive Review*, termed it a "major diversion," dismissing without explanation its political significance. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 24).

issue on Indonesia which includes the most basic and most comprehensive policy declarations by President Soekarno, such as the Political Manifesto, the Economic Declaration and the Belgrade Speech on the policy of non-alignment.”³⁴ It continued,

Both Filipino and Indonesian peoples are faced admittedly with the same problems that obtain in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial situation ...

We may be able to learn from the revolutionary struggle of the Indonesian people and their active stand against political, economic and cultural imperialism.

The Indonesian Revolution, national and democratic in character at its first stage and socialist at its second stage ... inspires a national unity that is the integration of all progressive and patriotic forces and which can sweep away the old iniquities, the *exploitation de l'homme par l'homme*. (1)

Sison, using the Stalinist program of a two-stage revolution, depicted Sukarno as leading the Indonesian people against imperialism. He repeated, without any clarification, Sukarno's favorite quote from Henri de Saint-Simon on ending the exploitation of man by man. Saint-Simon's formulation was a deliberate elision of class even in the early nineteenth century – who is exploiting whom? Its rhetorical invocation in the mid-twentieth did nothing but provide window dressing for class collaboration. Sison turned to Macapagal, arguing that “[a]lthough he has not yet clearly stated whether he is seeking new directions of national action, President Diosdado Macapagal has, at least, provoked attention to the need for completing what he calls so aptly as the ‘Unfinished Revolution’ ... With his bold conception of ‘Unfinished Revolution,’ *he has convinced us that we are at the cross-roads*.” (2, emphasis added.) The editorial concluded with the hope that not only would Macapagal follow the course of Sukarno in carrying forward the Unfinished Revolution, but that he would also create “an active and more effective Philippine-Indonesian cooperation that may still accelerate the retreat of imperialism from this part of the world.”

Coming out at the end of July, in the last stages of negotiations for the merger of the LM with the LP, this issue of *Progressive Review* signaled clearly to the Macapagal administration that support for Jakarta's policies vis-a-vis Malaysia were decisive for concluding the merger. At the same time, Sison's editorial laid the groundwork for calling for all-out support for Macapagal. Interspersed between Sukarno's speeches and Philippine-Indonesian trade deals were three poems by Chairil Anwar, translated by Joma Sison. The largest text in the issue was Sukarno's 1959 Independence Day speech, known as the Political Manifesto and often referred to as Manipol, which provided an articulate formulation of

³⁴“Editorial: The Philippines and Indonesia,” *PR* 2 (1963), 1.

the pretexts for ‘guided democracy.’ Like the PKI, Sison and Lacsina had no qualms defending Sukarno’s anti-democratic measures and his dissolution of constitutional democracy. In November 1963, Lacsina gave a speech in which he stated that

After Indonesia won her political independence through a long and bitter revolutionary struggle, she undertook to set up a democratic government on the multi-party political basis. It was quite logical that under such a system, the larger part of the energies of both the government, the politicians and the people had to be drawn to interminable and useless political wrangling.

When it appeared certain to the Indonesian people that this situation was not responsive to their needs ... [they] agreed to set aside petty politics and other minor differences and to embark upon the collective effort to build a new society free from the evils of the old. They decided ... to have a government where representatives of the nationalist, religious and Communist parties work side by side with one common objective in mind: build a free, just and prosperous society.

Of course such measures taken by the Indonesian people do not conform to what Americans or British or Dutch consider as “democratic” in accordance with their own peculiar situations. But I submit that what is not good for Indonesia should not be a matter of resolution by any other than the Indonesians themselves. Under the universal principle of people’s right to self-determination as guaranteed by the UN charter, the Indonesians have chosen what they believe is a system of government suitable to their own needs, and their wish should be respected.³⁵

A decade later, the PKP would mobilize identical arguments in support of Marcos’ martial law ‘New Society’ and ‘Revolution from Above.’ At the core of the argument was the lie that the Indonesian and Filipino people had somehow chosen this form of governance.

A mad scramble

The weeks leading up to the Manila Summit saw an intense rush of political developments: the port strike turned violent; Macapagal struggled to get his signature bill – the Land Reform act – through the legislature; the mid-term election season officially opened and rapidly turned into a brutal campaign of corruption allegations, closed-door deals and political back-stabbing, which led to the angry resignation of Macapagal’s Secretary of Foreign Affairs; and, on the

³⁵MC, 4 Nov 1963, 5.

day that Sukarno and Abdul Rahman arrived in Manila, a United Arab Airlines flight crashed near Bombay killing all sixty passengers including twenty-three Filipino Boy Scouts en route to the World Jamboree. Macapagal scrambled to successfully pull off the Summit and avoid political scandal.

July 6 marked the official opening of the election season and Macapagal announced the LP senatorial slate at Plaza Miranda. The NP followed with its election launch at Miranda the next day, and among their senatorial candidates was Macapagal's ex-Justice Minister Jose Diokno. The senate was evenly divided between NP and LP members and both parties waged a fierce fight for the eight slots up for grabs in the November election. Writing in late October, *Manila Chronicle* columnist Ernesto Granada described the 1963 election as the "most intense senatorial election ever seen."³⁶

On July 13, Diokno released a political bomb, revealing that Stonehill had purchased de la Rosa's withdrawal in 1961, and that Macapagal had been receiving money from Stonehill. Diokno had been sitting on this information since early 1962, waiting for the politically expedient moment to reveal it to the public. The accusation could have been devastating. In an act both of self-preservation and political cunning, Macapagal chose to deflect the blame on to Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez and Senate President Ferdinand Marcos, his two rivals within the Liberal Party for the nomination to run for President in 1965. Macapagal instructed his Justice Secretary Salvador Mariño to publicly accuse Pelaez and Marcos of taking money from Stonehill. Mariño also accused Tolentino, Amang Rodriguez, the deceased Arsenio Lacson, and others – practically everyone of political significance was charged. The charges were viable precisely because Macapagal, Pelaez, Marcos, Rodriguez – the lot of them – all had in fact taken money from Stonehill.

Marcos quietly defended himself and weathered the accusation as he was not running for office in 1963. He did not, however, forget Macapagal's betrayal and by 1965, Marcos left the LP and ran against Macapagal on the NP ticket. The accusation against Pelaez, on the other hand, featured far more prominently in the press. In August, Pelaez told the press that Macapagal's maneuver regarding Stonehill was "the greatest crisis of my political career."³⁷ Emmanuel Pelaez was not only Macapagal's vice president, he was Secretary of Foreign Affairs and had played a central role in the preparations for the Manila Summit and the creation of Maphilindo. With less than a week before the summit opened, Pelaez resigned as Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Macapagal appointed Salvador Lopez as acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who rapidly worked to ensure the success of the Summit.

³⁶MC, 24 Oct 1963, 4.

³⁷MC, 8 August 1963, 9.

The Summit

The Indonesian and Malaysian delegations arrived on July 29. Abdul Rahman and his entourage stayed at the Manila Hotel, as did all of Sukarno's staff. Sukarno himself, however, stayed in the Villa Pacencia Mansion on Shaw Boulevard of House Speaker, Jose B. Laurel, son of Jose P. Laurel, president of the Philippines during the Japanese Occupation.³⁸ Throughout the Maphilindo conference, Sison was a regular guest in the Laurel home, and was seated next to Sukarno during brunch.³⁹ During his stay at the Laurel home Sukarno was introduced by Nic Osmeña to Amelia de la Rama, a Filipino actress, with whom he had a relationship and later married.⁴⁰ Sukarno would purchase a mansion in Forbes Park for de la Rama and Sison was accused in the press of being the front-man for Sukarno's purchase, although he denied this accusation saying he did not know de la Rama "from Eve."⁴¹ What can be usefully derived from this piece of historical gossip is that Sukarno met in a private capacity with Nicasio Osmeña, who was the leading instigator of the Philippine claim to Sabah.

Throughout the Manila Summit the inside version of events was passed to the US embassy by Cornell scholar George Kahin, who served as an official Indonesian delegate to the Summit in Sukarno's entourage and was billeted at the Manila Hotel along with the rest of Sukarno's staff. Kahin kept the United States embassy informed on a daily basis, either by traveling to the home of US ambassador Stevenson, or by secretly meeting US Ambassador to Indonesia Howard Jones at the "rear of the USO."⁴²

The Summit commenced on July 30. Macapagal opened with a speech in which he rhetorically posed the question, "Will this conference be a success?" Kahin writes that "No sooner had he completed that first sentence than the power failed, the lights went out and the air-conditioning went off."⁴³ Over the course of several days, the participants reached a common agreement that they would accept the establishment of Malaysia provided "the support of the people of the Borneo territories" was ascertained by "an independent and impartial authority,"⁴⁴ an ascertainment which was to be overseen by the United Nations. On the day the summit began, the LM publicly announced its willingness to form

³⁸MC, 6 August 1963, 1. In 1965 a historical marker was installed at the entrance of Villa Pacencia, written in both Tagalog and Indonesian, which describes Sukarno as Jose P. Laurel's "intimate and life-long friend" [matalik at habang-buhay na kaibigan.] The friendship of the Laurel family with Sukarno dated back to the Japanese Occupation.

³⁹Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 44.

⁴⁰Jafar Suryomenggolo, "Rahasia Bung Karno dan Perempuan Filipinanya," accessed 4 December 2015, <http://historia.id/persona/rahasia-bung-karno-dan-perempuan-filipinanya>. This relationship was fictionalized in F. Sionil José, *Ermita: A Filipino Novel* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1988).

⁴¹Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 44.

⁴²Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament*, 168.

⁴³Ibid., 166.

⁴⁴Ibid., 171.

a coalition with the LP and the *Chronicle* stated that “[n]egotiators are now going on to thresh out the remaining obstacles to the formalization of the coalition.”⁴⁵

On the evening of August 3, while the Manila Summit was still in progress, a showdown was taking place in the Manila LP convention as Ramon Bagatsing, ex-Manila Police officer and congressman from Sampaloc, attempted to win the nomination for Manila’s mayoral race from Antonio Villegas.⁴⁶ Whichever candidate received the LP nomination would necessarily be endorsed by the LM upon completion of the merger, but both Bagatsing, the head of the Philippine Anti-Communist Movement, and Villegas, a close personal friend of Edward Lansdale, were fiercely right-wing figures. Macapagal ordered Bagatsing to stand down and give Villegas the nomination, but Bagatsing refused. During the convention, Bagatsing denounced Villegas, accusing him of using the Manila Police Department (MPD) to pressure and rig the nomination vote, and stormed out of the convention, which then nominated Villegas. CIA asset Manuel Manahan was made the lead campaign manager for Villegas.

On August 4 the Manila Summit was extended, working to secure a commitment from U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, to oversee a referendum within the month. The initial plan had been to conduct a popular referendum on the issue, but the British Foreign Office would not consent to such an idea, and Sukarno, Macapagal and Rahman finally agreed to hold a UN survey of local leaders elected in the past year, a plan the British Foreign Office would tolerate. Kahin writes, “Since . . . mostly only leaders who had supported their British mentors’ plan for Malaysia won, the outcome of the UN survey that gave major weight to their opinions could be easily foreseen. But the process was such that Sukarno and Macapagal would be able to tell their people that not only had they been consulted in the process of Malaysia’s establishment, but that – and this was the essential ingredient – the establishment of Malaysia came only *after* it had been ascertained that the peoples of North Borneo and Sarawak had been consulted and had agreed to this.”⁴⁷ While the British Foreign Office agreed to the Manila Accord, British Minister of Commonwealth Affairs Duncan Sandys was intransigent – no one should instruct the British how best to dispose of their colony.

The summit concluded the next day with the publication of the Manila Declaration, Accord and Statement. The Accord “represented the agreement of the Foreign Ministers ratified by the three heads of state. Its key point was that Indonesia and the Philippines would welcome the formation of Malaysia if the UN Secretary-General ascertained that the peoples of Sabah and Sarawak desired to be incorporated into Malaysia.”⁴⁸ The Statement established Maphilindo. The

⁴⁵MC, 31 Jul 1963, 12.

⁴⁶Miguel Deala Paruñgao, *The Manila Police Story* (Manila: Regal Printing Co, 1976), 32.

⁴⁷Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament*, 171, emphasis in original.

⁴⁸Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: The Possible Dream* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), 283.

Declaration was the rhetorical flourish to the affair, which Macapagal hailed as an “Asian Declaration of Independence,” declaring Maphilindo’s opposition to “colonialism and imperialism in all its forms.” US Ambassador to Indonesia Howard Jones wrote that “much of it was pure Sukarno.”⁴⁹ Rahman departed that day, Sukarno the next. The *Chronicle* published the Summit’s documents, describing them as having “historical and transcendental significance.”⁵⁰

Merger

On August 6, Macapagal rode in his limousine to pick up Sukarno at Laurel’s residence personally and escort him to the airport for his flight home to Jakarta. Macapagal rode from the airport to the presidential yacht, named *The Chief*, and on board, he oversaw the signing of the LM-LP merger.⁵¹ It was his first official act in the wake of the Summit.

The meeting lasted for three hours. At its conclusion, a brief document, which had been drafted by Lacsina, entitled “Agreement to Coalesce the Liberal Party and the Lapiang Manggagawa (Labor Party)” was signed by Marcos, then President of the Liberal Party, and Cipriano Cid, President of the Lapiang Manggagawa.⁵² The merger agreement stated that

Aware of the epochal social and national reforms now being energetically carried out under the leadership of President Diosdado Macapagal;

Believing that nothing short of the unity of all forces for democratic change can assure the success of these reforms ...

Realizing that the forces opposed to reform programmes have banded together under the banner of the Nacionalista Party;

Determined that forces aimed at subverting Philippine democracy, whether from the Left or from the Right, must be vigorously resisted; and

Determined that the Parties must give utmost support to the current Five-Year Socio-Economic Program of President Macapagal to hasten a life of abundance for our people in dignity and freedom;

AGREE TO COALESCE THE PARTIES effective immediately upon the following terms and conditions: ...⁵³

⁴⁹Jones, *Indonesia: The Possible Dream*, 283.

⁵⁰MC, 6 August 1963, 5.

⁵¹MC, 7 Aug 1963, 4.

⁵²Liberal Party (LP) and Lapiang Manggagawa (LM), “Liberal Party-Labor Party Coalition Agreement,” chap. Appendix N in *A Stone for the Edifice: Memoirs of a President* (Quezon City: Mac Publishing House, 1968), 466-467. Simbulan, who wrote the majority of his work as his dissertation in 1963, incorrectly interpreted the merger as the break up of the LM. (Simbulan, *The Modern Principalia: The Historical Evolution of the Philippine Ruling Oligarchy*, 170).

⁵³LP and LM, “A Stone for the Edifice,” 466-467.

Several points stand out in this summation of reasons for the merger: Macapagal was hailed as “energetically” carrying out “epochal” reforms, opposition to which had “banded together” in the NP; both the LM and the LP were opposed to subversion from “the Left;” and the LM announced that it was giving its “utmost support” to President Macapagal. These were the terms of that support.

1. *“The LP and the LM shall collaborate closely to secure electoral and public support to mutually agreed reform programs.”*

The Lapiang Manggagawa, as we will see, performed yeoman’s work in promoting and securing support for Macapagal’s Land Reform program.

2. *“The LM shall be consulted on appointments to government bodies where labor representation is expressly recognized by law.”*

In other words, the LM leadership would get to appoint its members to choice bureaucratic offices and jobs. Vicente Rafael, Cipriano Cid and a number of others received government appointments under Macapagal.

3. *“The LM shall support and actively campaign for LP official candidates.”*

The LM did just this, as Lacsina and others spoke at numerous rallies in support of Villegas and other LP candidates.

4. *“The LP shall assist LM in its organizational efforts for political action.”*

As we will see, the Liberal Party funded LM’s campaign on behalf of Macapagal’s land reform. It also continued to fund the LM’s trips to Indonesia.

5. *“The LP shall be represented in the Executive Committee of the LM, and the LM shall have representation in the LP National Directorate.”*

This was a lopsided arrangement. The LP National Directorate was a large body, unlike the Executive Committee of the LM. These terms would give the LP the ability to significantly sway the vote in the Executive Committee of the LM.

6. *“There shall be incorporated a labor plank in the LP platform.”*

Nothing was specified as to what this labor plank would say. Not a single concrete detail of the “labor plank” was spelled out.

7. *“Out of 20 LP candidates for the municipal board of Manila, two (2) shall be nominated by the LM – one in the second district and another in the fourth. These terms and conditions are without prejudice to larger and more complete collaboration between the Parties in pursuit of their common ends.”*

Four Manila city councilors were present during the meeting and Macapagal sought commitments from the councilors in the second and fourth districts that they would not run for re-election, making their slots available for LM candidates. He secured these commitments by offering one of them part time governorship of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the other managership of the Social Security System (SSS).⁵⁴

⁵⁴MC, 10 Aug, 14; 11 Aug, 4; 1 Oct 1963, 20.

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The 1963 Election and the Port Strike

*O rain of stars in the darkness
constellation of dead brothers!*

— Victor Serge, *Constellation of Dead Brothers*

In the wake of the Manila Summit, the Nacionalista Party stepped up its campaign against Macapagal and the Liberal Party. NP candidates denounced Macapagal’s “dictatorship,” both Pelaez and Tolentino publicly compared him to Hitler, and the *Manila Times* and the *Chronicle* decried Macapagal’s “fascism” on their editorial pages. The vitriol continued throughout the election campaign.¹ In the face of this onslaught from the NP, the task of defending Macapagal and campaigning on his behalf fell in large part to the LM.

Cesar de Leon, Executive Vice President of NATU, issued a public letter, stating that the labor organizations “composing Lapiang Manggagawa are unreservedly lending their support to the Macapagal Administration in the forthcoming elections.”² On August 22, Macapagal met for an extended lunch with the leadership of the Lapiang Manggagawa to discuss election work prior to his campaign foray into the Visayas.³ In keeping with their agreement with Macapagal, the LM had been given two city councilor slots on the LP ticket in Manila and the LM leadership nominated Lacsina to run in the second district and Delia Medina, Vice President of NATU, in the fourth. On September 4, however, Villegas announced that Lacsina was withdrawing his candidacy “due to pressures of organizational work for the LM,”⁴ and appointed Hermogenes

¹On August 5, for example, the NP’s Puyat and Tolentino both denounced Macapagal as a “fascist.” (MC, 5 August 1963, 16). It is noteworthy that the political denunciation of opponents for ‘fascism’, the routine comparison of rivals to Adolf Hitler, and the summoning of the specter of ‘martial law’ did not originate with the CPP. Joma Sison and his co-thinkers, beginning in the latter part of the decade, parroted this hysterical sloganeering, but they did not invent it.

²V. Cesar de Leon, *Why Philippine Labor is Supporting the Liberal Administration*, [1963], CTRB 29/18.

³MC, 23 Aug 1963.

⁴MC, 5 Sep 1963.

Pablo to run in Lacsina's place. The exact reason for Lacsina's withdrawal is unclear. The LM was under immense pressure from Oca's ongoing strike, the need to recruit support for the land reform program, and the task of organizing protests of British machinations in Malaysia. Lacsina would travel to Indonesia in October and November. On September 25, the LM formally announced its electoral slate, running twenty-four candidates for office with the backing of the LP. The candidates ran for office in Manila; San Pablo, Laguna; Cavite; Mountain Province; Negros Occidental; Negros Oriental; Iloilo; and Samar. With the exception of Delia Medina in Manila, every candidate on the LM slate was a member of Cipriano Cid's PAFLU.⁵ On September 30 the Liberal Party staged a major political rally at the San Lazaro Hippodrome for Villegas mayoral candidacy. Macapagal and Ferdinand Marcos both spoke and Ignacio Lacsina stood beside them presenting the workers' support for Villegas.⁶

The Malaysia Question

On August 15, a diplomatic team representing Macapagal traveled to Jakarta for the August 17 Indonesian independence day celebration, kicking off negotiations for a trade deal between Jakarta and Manila, and preparing to set up a Maphilindo Secretariat which would be based in Manila. Duncan Sandys, British Minister of Commonwealth Relations, immediately set about sabotaging the UN assessment. He prevented members of the Indonesian delegation from participating on the

⁵ This was their slate:

Manila. Delia Medina, VP of NATU and president of the DRP Employees Association, ran for the 4th district City Councilor seat on the LP-LM ticket under Villegas. Lacsina had been initially slated to run in the 2nd district.

San Pablo. Max Gutierrez, retired trade unionist; Nicasio Sadsad, president of SPC Furniture workers union; and Fidencio Pullon, president of El Varadero de Manila Workers Union (PAFLU) all ran for councilor positions on the LP-LM ticket under LP Mayor Jose Dones.

Mountain Province. The LM ran a full slate including mayoral candidates in Itogon, Mangkayan and Tinlayan. These were based on the PAFLU mining unions.

LM also ran a candidate for provincial board member, Antonio Llopis.

Negros Occidental. LM ran candidates in La Carlota, Bago and Sipalay.

Jose Liansing, president of the PAFLU local at La Carlota Sugar central, ran for counselor in La Carlota.

LM ran Eufemio Lanado, president of Maa Sugar Central Workers Amalgamated (PAFLU), for mayor in Bago. Rodrigo Villanueva, union VP, ran for councilor.

In Sipalay, Santiago Yap, president of Sipalay Copper Mines Union (PAFLU), ran for councilor.

Iloilo. Jose Matutino, of the Plantation Workers Union (PAFLU), ran for mayor of Anilao, at the head of a complete labor slate down to the last councilor.

Samar. Alejandro Gaspay, president of NAWASA Workers Union-PAFLU, ran for office in Hinabangan. (MC, 26 Sep 1963).

⁶MC, 1 Oct 1963.

grounds that they were “Indonesian intelligence”; he claimed that facilities were limited and made junior members of the delegations sleep in tents. As a result of Sandys’ actions, Indonesian and Philippine observers to the UN ascertainment were only present for three of the six days it was conducted.⁷ Under intense pressure from Sandys, Rahman declared, prior to the completion of the ascertainment, that Malaysia would form on September 16, telling the press that “the position that Malaya has all along taken is that the ascertainment of the Secretary-General [U Thant] is not a condition which will determine whether Malaysia should be formed or not.” Sandys issued a similar declaration.⁸ This was a political provocation. The ascertainment was a *pro forma* ritual to allow Macapagal and Sukarno to justify to the public their acquiescence to the formation of the Federation. By thwarting the ascertainment and then deliberately thumbing their nose at the Manila Accord, Sandys and Rahman ensured an escalation of tensions. US Undersecretary of State Roger Hilsman wrote, “For my part, I did not see how such a blatant insult could be ignored by the Indonesians and Filipinos.”⁹ Foreign Affairs Secretary Salvador Lopez, was quoted in the *Philippines Free Press* describing Malaysia as carrying out

“unreasonable obstructions to the complete witnessing of the ascertainment operation,” ... [with] “crowning disregard for the Manila Agreement” in “the announcement, in the very midst of the ascertainment operation, that the new Federation of Malaysia would be proclaimed on September 16, irrespective of the outcome of the ascertainment.”

This, Secretary Lopez went on, “was plainly contrary to the Manila Accord which provided that the wishes of the people of Sarawak and Sabah [North Borneo] should be ascertained prior to the establishment of the new federation. The secretary-general [of the United Nations] was so disturbed by the announcement that he described it as ‘a slap on the face of the United Nations.’ Is anybody who deliberately obstructed the task of ascertainment, including the participation of our observers, and who has shown such contempt for the United Nations, entitled to accuse somebody else of ignoring the United Nations?”¹⁰

On September 16, as Kuala Lumpur declared Malaysia a nation, there were simultaneous protests against Malaysia in both Indonesia and the Philippines, which were coordinated by the PKI and the leadership of the PKP. Lacsina and

⁷Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament*, 172-73.

⁸Ibid., 173.

⁹Roger Hilsman, *To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1967), 404.

¹⁰PFPP, 12 October 1963, 1.

Sison led an LM protest outside the Malayan and British embassies. The banners of the protesters read “Maphilindo Si!” and “Crush Malaysia (NATU).” The Lapiang Manggagawa issued a statement signed by the LM Secretariat, which stated that Malaysia had been formed “in violation of the Maphilindo principle of ‘deliberation aimed at unanimity’ (mushawara), without due regard to the inhabitants’ right to self-determination as guaranteed by the UN Charter.”¹¹ They used the protests not merely to denounce Malaysia but to whip up support for Macapagal, stating

The Lapiang Manggagawa deplors the fact that some local elements, particularly the Nacionalista Party, and their collaborators, have allowed themselves to be used to undermine and subvert the Philippine position on the Malaysia question. . . .

The Lapiang Manggagawa, therefore, calls upon the Filipino people to rally behind the government’s courageous effort to insure the national freedom of all peoples, particularly our neighbors in Southeast Asia.

The *Collegian* wrote “Some 150 placard bearing demonstrators were reported to have hurled rocks into the British Embassy compound, breaking a few windows at the servants quarters.” Protesters came from Lyceum, Manuel L. Quezon University (MLQU), Conference Delegates Association (CONDA), and NATU.¹² Sison wrote a letter to the editor of the *Collegian* defending the protest against the “old-spinster attitudes” of “some of our official representatives” and claimed the protest was peaceful and “highly intelligent, patriotic and honorable.”¹³ The *Chronicle* wrote that

The Lapiang Manggagawa (Workers’ Party) last night endorsed the “cautious and circumspect action” of the Philippine government in deferring recognition of the newly formed Federation of Malaysia. Speaking through its president, Cipriano Cid, the Lapiang [Manggagawa] charged that the peoples of Sarawak and British North Borneo had been denied their elementary right to decide their own destiny. “The central issue about Malaysia is whether the principle of self-determination has prevailed,” the statement said.

The Lapiang also deplored the “belligerent tone” of the United Kingdom in warnings directed to the Philippines.

“Such warnings are uncalled for,” the statement added.¹⁴

¹¹Lapiang Manggagawa (LM), *Rally against Foreign Pressures! Rally to the Defense of our National Honor and Dignity!*, [1963], PRP 09/33.01.

¹²PC, 18 Sep 1963, 2.

¹³Jose Ma. Sison, “Peaceful, I say,” PC, September 1963, 8.

¹⁴MC, 17 Sep 1963, 7.

On September 17, Malaysia severed diplomatic ties with the Philippines, its ambassador departed the country and was seen off at the airport by US ambassador Stevenson and British ambassador Addis. The LM issued a statement, in which Cipriano Cid urged Asians to join in “unmasking” British “imperialism and colonialism.” Lacsina threatened that the LM would “renew demonstrations before the local British and Malayan embassies if both governments continued to treat Philippine protests against Malaysia ‘with disdain.’”¹⁵ On September 18, Macapagal met at great length with Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio who had just arrived in Manila. The next day US ambassador Stevenson was reported to have written an *aide-memoire* to Macapagal threatening to cut US aid in response to Manila’s position on Malaysia. The *Manila Times* ran the headline “US tells RP: ‘Recognize Malaysia or lose dollar aid,’” but Stevenson issued a statement that the story had “absolutely no foundation in fact.”

On September 20, Rodolfo del Rosario, Vice President for Organization of NATU, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Chronicle*, praising the Macapagal government for its “refusing to be bamboozled into recognizing this so-called new state [i.e., Malaysia].” Del Rosario defended the protests outside the embassies, writing “such mild displays like stonings of embassies are indeed very little punishment for the grievous sins committed against us Asians by the colonialists.”¹⁶ A week later, the Lapiang Manggagawa released a manifesto, which according to the *Chronicle* called upon “the people ... to rally against foreign pressures allegedly exerted by Western colonial powers to destroy the independent foreign policy of the Philippine government towards the Federation of Malaysia.” The article continued,

The LM secretariat condemned the “campaign of hate and slander to discredit our government and people before the world and even within our shores by foreign-dominated press agencies, newspapers, radio and other mass media.”

Urging the people to rally to the defense of “our national honor and dignity,” the manifesto said that the Filipino people cannot “in dignity and honor” submit to foreign pressures and anti-Filipino propaganda, “no matter how powerful these are.”

According to the LM, Malaysia was formed in violation of the Maphilindo principle of deliberation aimed at unanimity. ...

The manifesto said that the LM “is determined to oppose these pressures and propaganda that continue to flaunt our national honor and dignity, and to subvert our patriotic will to help a new and better world free from exploitation and injustice.”¹⁷

¹⁵MC, 18 Sep 1963, 8.

¹⁶MC, 20 Sep 1963, 4.

¹⁷MC, 29 Sep 1963, 10.

In mid-October the *Philippines Free Press* succinctly summed up the state of the dispute. “Kuala Lumpur’s position is that Indonesia and the Philippines violated the Manila Agreement in disputing the UN ascertainment operation and in withholding recognition of Malaysia. Indonesia and the Philippines charge that the conduct of the UN survey and the formation of Malaysia were breaches of the Manila Agreement.”¹⁸ Foreign Affairs Secretary Lopez issued a statement in which he denounced Britain’s obstructing the UN poll, its reducing of the duration of the survey from six weeks to ten days, and its announcement, midway through the poll, that the Federation of Malaysia would be founded on September 16.¹⁹ On October 17, two hundred UP students protested at the US embassy demanding the publication of Ambassador Stevenson’s alleged *aide-memoire*. Four student leaders of the protest were invited to speak with Stevenson.²⁰ Congressman Clement Zablocki, chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, visited the Philippines at the head of a US congressional delegation in mid-October, holding a meeting with Macapagal who assured him that he would vote for the Malaysia Federation as long as it would not prejudice the Philippine claim to North Borneo.²¹ At the beginning of November, Ignacio Lacsina traveled to Jakarta as the head of the Philippine delegation to the Asian-African workers preliminary conference. Soviet influence – through the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) – was pointedly excluded from this gathering, and Lacsina stated that “the supposed Red herring, the World Federation of Trade Unions, which desperately wanted to get in as a participant and co-sponsor was not admitted by the democratic decision of the participating Asian and African trade union delegations on the ground that the WFTU was a world labor organization not an Asian or African trade union.”²²

While Sison, Lacsina, and the LM were engaged in a political struggle against the formation of Malaysia, they were at the same time actively engaged in promoting Macapagal’s land reform program, whipping up support for the Liberal Party among the peasantry.

Land Reform

In the frenetic days of July 1963, Macapagal’s signature legislation, the land reform bill, sponsored on the Senate floor by Raul Manglapus under the leadership of Senate President Marcos, was held up in the Senate and seemed unlikely to pass. Debate in the Senate stretched well past the scheduled end of session and sections of the lower house, opposed to Macapagal, pressed for the unilateral adjournment of the legislature. The Land Reform bill eventually passed, its success resting

¹⁸ PFP, 12 Oct 1963, 74.

¹⁹ “Lopez indicts Great Britain,” *PC*, October 1963.

²⁰ Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 65.

²¹ PFP, 19 October 1963, 19.

²² MC, 4 Nov 1963, 5.

largely on the effective political maneuvering carried out by Manglapus. Lorenzo Tañada opposed the bill, denouncing it as “an impractical, over-hasty, over-ambitious and unconstitutional land reform plan.”²³ The final Senate bill received twenty-one supporting votes, none against, and one abstention – Tañada.²⁴ Macapagal extended the legislative session multiple times in order to get the House and Senate bills reconciled.

The public spin on Macapagal’s land reform was summed up in the *Chronicle*, “Essentially, the highest objective of the measure is the evolution of a new middle-class society within the next 10 years or so out of the present group of share-croppers who will be granted economy family-sized farms.”²⁵ The truth behind the Land Reform bill was that it was an anti-Communist measure drawn up in Washington, with the intent of converting share-croppers into agricultural lessees, paying a cash rent to landlords. The author of the Macapagal’s land-reform law was Wolf Ladejinsky, a Ukrainian Jew who had left the *shtetl* in 1921 during the Russian civil war, migrated to the United States and studied at Columbia University in 1926.²⁶ In the 1930s he was hired by the US Department of Agriculture. His lifelong concern was the implementation of land reform in Asia, which he saw as the key component of a successful anti-Communist policy.²⁷ Ladejinsky was the “chief architect” of the land reform implemented in Japan under Douglas MacArthur, and from 1949-1954, he was instrumental in drawing up and implementing agrarian reform in Taiwan.²⁸ In 1956, Ladejinsky moved to Saigon where Lansdale “made sure to introduce him personally, on arrival to President Diem and strongly advised the president to keep his door open to the man at all times,” and as a result Ladejinsky was employed from 1956-61 as the “personal advisor” of Diem.²⁹

In 1961, Ladejinsky took up employment with the Ford Foundation, traveling throughout Asia to assist with the implementation of land reform. It was under these auspices that in December 1962 he traveled to the Philippines. A detailed letter describing his visit is available in his Selected Papers, in which Ladejinsky wrote of the Ford Foundation’s “growing preoccupation” with the

²³Edward Kiunisola, “Fighter for Land Reform,” *PPF*, July 1963, 3.

²⁴MC, 10 July 1963, 2. After the passage of the bill, Tañada issued a convoluted, pained, and lengthy apologia for his opposition and abstention, which was published in serial form in the *Chronicle* beginning on July 11.

²⁵MC, 13 July 1963, 8.

²⁶James Putzel, *A Captive Land: The Politics of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1992), 68 ff.

²⁷Louis J. Walinsky, “Introduction,” in *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business: The Selected Papers of Wolf Ladejinsky*, ed. Louis J. Walinsky (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 3–22.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 5–6.

²⁹Wolf Ladejinsky, *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business: The Selected Papers of Wolf Ladejinsky*, ed. Louis J. Walinsky (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 215; Walinsky, “Introduction,” 7.

country.³⁰ He met with key leaders of Macapagal's cabinet, including Vice President Pelaez; Sixto Roxas, who would head Macapagal's Land Reform Council; and Finance Secretary Rodrigo Perez. Ladejinsky outlined the necessary features of the Land Reform package, and brought together the team who would serve as Macapagal's council for its implementation.³¹ Washington, through Ladejinsky, was responsible for the conception, basic features, and initial orchestration of Macapagal's land reform. Ladejinsky insisted on the necessity of transitioning sharecroppers to leaseholders. This, he argued, would both defuse mounting social tensions, of which he wrote "the mute peasant becomes a raging 'beast,' and the Jacquerie is not far to seek;" and it would divert capital into industry. Ladejinsky insisted that focus on agrarian reform was the proper means of insuring industrial development, rather than an "overemphasis on industrialization in relation to agriculture."³²

On August 8, two days after the conclusion of the Manila Summit and the LM-LP merger, Macapagal publicly signed the Land Reform act in Agrifina circle in front of an audience of one hundred thousand workers. He delivered a pompous speech: "There have been times in human history when a short signature by a mortal hand could build or demolish empires, or send nations at war with one another. Today, a signature by a humble hand obedient to a million silent aspirations will give the toiling Filipino farmer his liberation from poverty and social degradation."³³ In the speech, Macapagal spoke repeatedly of the 'unfinished revolution,' denouncing his opponents as "reactionaries," and referring to the colonial period as the "American occupation" of the Philippines. Taking his cue from Sukarno, Macapagal was adopting some of the superficial rhetoric of his allies in the Communist Party.

The selling of Macapagal's Land Reform, the peddling of illusions that it would liberate the peasantry, was the task of the Lapiang Manggagawa, and in particular of Joma Sison. Sison drew up all of the documents promoting the land reform code which were then printed by the Philippine government for distribution to the peasantry. On behalf of the Lapiang Manggagawa, Sison wrote the official handbook on the Land Reform Code.³⁴ An initial draft of Sison's

³⁰Ladejinsky, *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business*, 325-331.

³¹Ladejinsky also met repeatedly with Dean Dioscoro Umali of UP Los Baños to insure the university's close integration with Cornell University under the Ford Foundation for the development of a trained team of technocrats engaged in the practical work of agrarian development. It was under the auspices of this program that Fred Magdoff traveled to the Philippines. See page 268.

³²Ladejinsky, *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business*, 328; Walinsky, "Introduction," 10; Jeffrey M. Riedinger, *Agrarian Reform in the Philippines: Democratic Transitions and Redistributive Reform* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); Putzel, *A Captive Land*.

³³MC, 9 August 1963, 17.

³⁴Sison claims authorship of the entire document in the bibliography on his website, jose-mariasison.org. He also claims to have written the entire primer in a 2003 speech on the 100th birth anniversary of Felixberto Olalia. (Sison, *Ka Felixberto 'Bert' Olalia*).

Land Reform manual was sent by someone in the Macapagal administration to Manila-based CIA agent Charles Bohannon for approval prior to publication and the draft manuscripts can be found in his papers.³⁵ A portion of Sison's primer on the Land Reform code was published as part of a commemoration for the President in a ten page "Special Supplement on the 53rd Birthday of President Macapagal" in the *Chronicle*, alongside an article headlined "The First Lady: Guiding Light behind the Success of DM."³⁶

Sison's primer was then published under the name of the Lapiang Manggagawa, funded by the Macapagal government, with a foreword by the President. The result was a slim green volume of fifty-seven pages entitled *Handbook on the Land Reform Code, prepared by the Secretariat, Lapiang Manggagawa*.³⁷ On the frontispiece was a photo of Macapagal, with the dedication "To President Macapagal, For his relentless struggle to emancipate the Filipino peasant." In his foreword Macapagal wrote "I am happy to note that the Lapiang Manggagawa has taken it upon itself to issue this handbook which not only is informative but also seeks to correct any impression that the land reform is for the benefit of the poor at the expense of the rich," (i) and the Lapiang Manggagawa published this statement without any attempt to gainsay it.

Macapagal's foreword was followed by an introduction signed by the Secretariat of the Lapiang Manggagawa; this introduction was likewise written by Sison. Sison depicted Macapagal's administration as the continuation of the struggles of peasants' and workers' organizations of the past, and his ten page historical account presented these struggles flowing from the Katipunan to the Communist Party to Macapagal in unbroken continuity. Sison opened with the "socialistic" aspirations of the Katipunan, which had been suppressed by American imperialism, interrupting the revolution. The Americans "failed to initiate any program of land reform. Decisively, feudalism became the mistress of US imperialism in our country." (vii) Sison then traced this history through the Communist Party which "encouraged" President Manuel Quezon "to announce and pursue a program of social justice," (viii) but Quezon's program of social justice was interrupted by the Japanese occupation. The Communists founded the Hukbalahap to continue Quezon's fight, raising the "patriotic battlecry of 'Anti-Japanese Above All.'" Sison glossed over the Hukbo Mapagpalaya ng Bayan [People's Liberation Army] (HMB) rebellion of the 1950s with the phrase "Whether the Huks were right or not, they gained plenty of adherents among the peasantry." Sison described Ramon Magsaysay's 'land reform' program as "good in its intentions, but it suffered from a basic defect – it attacked the tenancy system on the surface, not at the roots." But now, Sison stated, Macapagal's land reform program is the "resumption of the unfinished revolution." Sison

³⁵Lapiang Manggagawa (LM), *The Land Problem*, [1963], CTRB 29/18.

³⁶MC, 27 Sep 1963, 3-A.

³⁷Lapiang Manggagawa (LM), *Handbook on the Land Reform Code* (Manila: M. Colcol, 1963).

continued

Diosdado Macapagal believes that the land problem cannot be solved by merely regulating share tenancy ... In the Agricultural Land Reform Code, the basic solution to the basic problem is provided. Share tenancy is to be totally abolished and owner-cultivatorship is instituted in its place. To accomplish this principle objective the Code offers a full panoply of implementing land reform agencies whose functions and operations are all revealed in this primer.

These agencies are well-knit and well-integrated. But it is almost certain that state instruments are ineffective if there is no adequate and commensurate popular response ...

The Lapiang Manggagawa looks forward to stimulating and giving support to the establishment of peasant associations ... The organization of the peasantry in order to make them a more effective and dynamic force is essential to the resumption of the Unfinished Revolution. (x)

The remaining forty-six pages of the handbook, also written by Sison, were dedicated to explaining and promoting the land reform code. The finished pamphlet served as the official government handbook which it distributed to the Philippine peasantry. Sison and Felixberto Olalia used the campaign promoting Macapagal's land reform code to rebuild a peasant movement under the PKP. The end result, as we will see in chapter 10, was the birth of MASAKA, a peasant movement that in its majority would remain within the pro-Moscow PKP during the split of 1967.

The Land Reform Act (RA3844) was in truth a very limited measure: it only applied to land planted with rice or corn; crops which were given over to plantation agriculture, such as sugar, tobacco, coconut, or coffee were exempt; any exported crop was also exempt. Borjal writes, "In essence, the code sought to abolish agricultural share-tenancy and establish, in its place, agricultural leasehold relationship between tenants and landowners. This was intended to convert the tenants into agricultural lessees under a leasehold system."³⁸ This in turn was intended to "divert landlord capital in agriculture to industrial development."³⁹ The law implemented reform in two phases. The first phase transitioned tenant farmers from giving a portion of the harvest to the landlord in exchange for use of the land, to paying landlords a fixed cash rent. The second phase would ostensibly transition the renting tenants into owners, but the law focused almost entirely on the first phase. "From 1963 to 1972, the government was pre-occupied with the conversion of share-croppers into lessees. ... From 1963 to 1972, 133,420 share crop tenants were converted into lessees or an average of 14,825 tenants

³⁸ Arturo A. Borjal, *The Philippines: Struggle for Tenant Emancipation* ([Phil.]: n.p., [1983]), 51.

³⁹Ibid., 52.

converted per year.”⁴⁰ But, “as late as 1966 *no* agricultural land had yet been purchased under the terms of the Code!”⁴¹

In keeping with its agreement with Macapagal, the Lapiang Manggagawa recommended a number of its members to paid positions within the government to implement and promote the Land Reform Program. Macapagal’s administration thus funded the creation of what became the peasant wing of the Communist Party and the Communist Party in turn created its peasant wing by peddling the lie that Macapagal’s land reform was an immensely progressive measure. An entire bureaucratic apparatus was created around the law, and provided employment to a great many LM bureaucrats. The law was to be implemented by the National Land Reform Council (NLRC), which was composed of the Governor of the Land Authority, who served as chair of the NLRC; Administrator of the Agricultural Credit Association; Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Land Bank; Commissioner of the Agricultural Production Commission; and a representative of the minority party. The NLRC was responsible for creating regional land reform committees. Under Macapagal’s Land Reform “all government agencies whose functions relate to agrarian reform were re-organized. The Land Tenure Administration and National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Administration, for instance, were abolished and merged into a single agency – the Land Authority.”⁴² A number of other shuffles occurred, centralizing agricultural administration. The Land Reform led to the organization of the Land Bank of the Philippines “to provide financing requirements of the program.”⁴³ Among the higher ranking members of the PKP employed under the land reform act were Domingo Castro and Felicisimo Macapagal, both of whom would play leading roles in the Moscow-oriented PKP later in the decade, with Felicisimo Macapagal becoming Secretary General of the Party. They were given salaried positions in the Land Authority office, working under Land Authority Governor Conrado Estrella. In 1971, Sison would denounce them for “helping implement the US-inspired Land Reform Code,” but never mentioned that they were implementing it under the program which he wrote.⁴⁴

With its backing for Macapagal’s land reform, Sison and Lacsina led the LM to campaign eagerly for the election of the LP candidates. The most significant political issue of 1963, however, was not land reform, but the explosive struggle of striking workers on Manila’s South Harbor.

⁴⁰Jose C. Medina, Jr., “The Philippine Experience with Land Reform since 1972: An Overview” (Baguio City, 1975), 3.

⁴¹David Wurfel, “The Development of Post-War Philippine Land Reform: Political and Sociological Explanations,” in *Second View from the Paddy: More Empirical Studies on Philippine Rice Farming and Tenancy*, ed. Antonio J. Ledesma, Perla Q. Makpil, and Virginia A. Miralao (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1983), 5. Emphasis in original.

⁴²Borjal, *The Philippines: Struggle for Tenant Emancipation*, 85.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴*Deception and Murder is the Meaning of the Lavaite ‘Theory of Physical Affinity’ and ‘Armed Struggle as Secondary Form’*, 1971, PRP 12/13.01, 3.

Roberto Oca and the Port Strike

The arrastre workers of Manila's South Harbor, organized in Roberto Oca's PTGWO, launched their strike on May 7, having been promised the support of the LM by Ignacio Lacsina. Lacsina and Sison had used the threat of a nationwide strike on behalf of the PTGWO workers to secretly negotiate a deal with Macapagal and the Liberal Party, and having struck a bargain, Lacsina had called off the LM's support just as the dock workers went on strike.

The port strike of 1963 was the largest, costliest and most politically charged labor strike in the nation's history, and Joma Sison, Ignacio Lacsina and the leadership of the Communist Party were on the opposite side of the barricades. They gave their full support to the government as it violently suppressed the workers at the pier. The port strike involved three thousand workers and lasted for 169 days. It was a bloody struggle that saw workers murdered on the picket line by both government troops and scabs, and yet other strikers die of starvation because they received no strike pay. By mid-August official estimates placed the business losses which had been incurred from the port strike at over a billion pesos, making it already the most expensive strike in the country's history.⁴⁵

Roberto Oca's aim throughout the strike was the furtherance of his own political bid in his run for mayor of Manila, and he used the strike to secure the nomination of the Nacionalista Party as its mayoral candidate. To win the support of the Nacionalista Party, he used the strike as a thorn in the side of the Macapagal administration, while repeatedly lifting the picket lines to allow goods out of the port, ingratiating himself with the business community. The Associated Port Checkers Union (APCU), a member of Jose Hernandez' PTUC, actively crossed the PTGWO picket line, and the union of this leading member of the LM was thus directly engaged in sabotaging the port strike, as Hernandez gave explicit instructions to the 325 arrastre checkers and 130 ship checkers in the APCU to cross the PTGWO picket.⁴⁶ At the same time scabs, members of Johnny Tan's Federation of Free Workers (FFW), were being ferried into South Harbor on Navy barges, and at the peak of tensions, Tan fielded three thousand scabs on behalf of the Macapagal government. The scabs were not paid by management to work as most of Tan's men were not longshoremen at all. Rather they were paid to menace and attack the strikers. The scabs approached the picket lines armed with pipes, clubs, and pistols. Because they entered the port via military barge, they were not subject to search by the Manila Police Department (MPD), as the MPD claimed that Customs Police was responsible for searching the scabs. The MPD meanwhile frisked striking workers and prevented them from bringing any weapons to the picket line. The striking workers were repeatedly attacked. They fought courageously, but they were betrayed on every side – by Oca, by

⁴⁵MC, 25 Aug 1963.

⁴⁶MC, 31 Jul 1963.



Figure 9.1: Police arrest striking port workers. *Int'l Transport Workers Journal* XXIII 11

Hernandez, and above all, by the Communist Party leadership of Sison and Lacsina.

For a party founded on Marxism the paramount task in the strike was to politically deepen the struggle of the dock workers. This would require fighting to secure their political independence from the rotten union leadership and from every section of the bourgeoisie, an independence which could only be won on the basis of the struggle for socialism, and this would have required the conscious intervention of revolutionary leadership. At a minimum such a leadership would have faced the following basic tasks. Using the Lapiang Manggagawa as its political base, a Marxist leadership would have worked to win over the dock workers by supporting their strike, laboring at every turn to expose Oca's criminal role. Every time Oca lifted the picket on behalf of sections of the bourgeoisie, looking to further his own political ambitions, the dock workers, with increasing anger, expressed their desire to continue picketing. A Marxist leadership would have agitated among the workers against Oca, and having won over a base of support through this campaign, they would have called for Oca's expulsion and the election of a new leadership. They would also have agitated among the other Manila unions, particularly those related to the shipping industry, to support the striking dock workers, and having won such support, they would have called for sympathy strikes. Connections should have been cultivated not only to other sections of the Filipino working class, but internationally. Workers on international shipping lines displayed immense sympathy for the striking South Harbor workers, passing the hat repeatedly to take up donations for them. These ties should have been deepened. Jose J.

Hernandez should at the very least have been censured by the LM leadership for instructing his union members to cross the PTGWO picket lines.

What Sison and Lacsina did however, in a very calculated manner, was enter into a coalition with the ruling party, in the thick of the strike, while the President was actively engaged in the vicious suppression of the workers. They consciously betrayed the strike to form an alliance with Macapagal. As Macapagal sent troops to crack down on the workers, Sison and Lacsina maintained a stony silence. They did not issue even a tepid, pro forma criticism. They were busy elsewhere, whipping up support for Macapagal and the Liberal Party. They hailed his land reform – drafted by Washington – as the “emancipation” of the Filipino peasantry, and promoted Macapagal himself as a “revolutionary.” Their actions were an unmitigated betrayal.

The Strike

On May 18, a Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) judge handed down a ruling that the arrastre service was proprietary and the port workers thus had collective bargaining rights. The Macapagal administration refused to accept the ruling, appealed, and on June 13 a panel of judges reversed the earlier decision and declared the arrastre service a governmental function and any strike therefore illegal. On June 21, Oca appealed this decision to the Supreme Court, and the workers continued their picket.⁴⁷

On July 10, the strike turned bloody. According to the *Chronicle*, scabs threw grenades or makeshift bombs at the picket lines. Three explosive devices were hurled at the striking workers, injuring thirty-seven. Two workers were listed as seriously wounded and the remaining thirty-five needed to be taken to the hospital for their injuries. The police arrested a number of striking workers after the explosions but none of the scabs.⁴⁸ By July 12, there were “almost a thousand soldiers, marines, customs guards, and Manila policemen in battle formation” on the pier.⁴⁹ Macapagal’s Finance Secretary Perez held a press conference in which he stated that the bombings at the pier were not that serious and just “one of those things.”

The next day, Oca met with Perez in the labor department office where he agreed to a moratorium on the strike, and instructed the workers to unconditionally lift the picket line for fifteen days. Oca met with Larry Henares, head of the Philippine Chamber of Industry (PCI), and Domingo Arcega of the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CCP), to assure them of his support for their business interests. Oca told the press that he reached the agreement because he “took cognizance of the adverse effects of the current strike on the national economy, the consumers, the importers, the manufacturers, distribution houses,

⁴⁷“Manila’s Port Strike,” 237.

⁴⁸MC, 11 July 1963, 1, 16.

⁴⁹MC, 13 July 1963, 4.

workers and the cases of violence that have given rise to death and injuries to the parties involved.” He ascribed blame to no one for the violence, stating that he had agreed to the strike moratorium to “stave off an impending economic crisis,” and that he was “subordinating the union’s individual and group interests to the general welfare.” He had “already contacted PCI men to lend equipment like forklifts to the customs arrastre service to clear the pier cargo jam.” Oca then spoke to striking workers, calling on them to “sacrifice a little more for the sake of public interest,” and told the workers, “there is no reason for us not to lift the picket lines upon the request of a responsible segment of our society.”⁵⁰

On July 27 Oca convened the workers to discuss the resumption of the strike. The fifteen day moratorium he had called was about to expire and the backed up goods had been cleared out by scab labor which had been allowed to move them off the port by Oca. Oca presented the workers with a compromise settlement which had been offered by the Macapagal administration. Half of the pier jobs would go to scabs and half of the striking workers would get their jobs back. The workers were furious; they were quoted in the *Chronicle* as saying, “We will have the whole piers or none at all.” On July 28, Oca announced to the press that he was extending the cessation of picketing for another week, and after holding the press conference he informed the workers of this. One week later, on August 3, Oca announced that the PTGWO was resuming picketing. It was clear that he could no longer suppress the striking workers. He told the press of the resumed picketing in a joint announcement held with Finance Secretary Perez, in which both Perez and Oca assured the press that the mediation panel was succeeding, and had nearly reached a compromise agreement. At the same press conference, Oca announced that he was still planning on running for mayor on the LM ticket. He denounced the rest of the LM leadership as traitors for entering a deal with the LP. This was the context in which the LM merged with the LP, and Lacsina and Sison endorsed Macapagal as the champion of the people – seething social anger and an explosive strike on the waterfront.

On August 6, the Supreme Court handed down a ruling that the function of the arrastre service was proprietary and the strike was legal. The Court ordered the CIR to hear Oca’s unfair labor practices case. Oca once again offered to order his workers to return to work, “to maintain industrial peace for the protection of all concerned until the CIR has fully decided all aspects of the labor dispute on the merits.”⁵¹ Oca then led the workers in a thanksgiving mass held at the Manila Cathedral early the next morning. Finance Secretary Perez announced that the government was proceeding with public bidding on the arrastre service though the question of the labor contract was not yet settled. On August 9, Oca again ordered the striking workers to lift the picket lines, in response to an appeal by the Customs Brokers Association who requested to clear goods out of the port.

⁵⁰MC, 14 July 1963, 8.

⁵¹MC, 7 Aug 1963, 8.

By this point, the workers were deeply angered by Oca's repeated sabotage of the strike. Oca announced that picketing would resume on Monday August 12 and told the press the he could "no longer hold his impatient men, and feared what they might do when pickets were resumed on Monday."⁵²

On Monday afternoon, the first day of the resumed picket, Captain Salvador Yenko, acting general manager of the customs arrastre service responsible for supervising all scab labor at the port, together with an armed cohort of Philippine Military Academy (PMA) drop-outs, opened fire on the strikers, killing two – Rodolfo Navarro and Ignacio Villanueva – and critically wounding four. Yenko drove a black Ford into the picket-line, running over one striker, and when he could not get through the picket, he and his companions threw tear gas grenades among the striking workers and opened fire. A group of five hundred scabs armed with clubs and pipes immediately assaulted the picket line. Perez suspended Yenko from his position and the next day murder charges were filed against Yenko and his seven companions. One of the murdered strikers had a twenty-two year old wife and ten month old child. Oca's legal team also had murder charges filed against Manila Police Department (MPD) Brigadier General Eduardo Quintos and two of his officers for assisting Yenko and the scabs in their assault. Macapagal threatened to declare a state of emergency at the South Harbor, and seized on the opportunity presented by the broken picket line to send 120 Army trucks to collect goods from the pier. Oca appealed to the striking workers to exercise "sobriety," telling them to "let the wheels of justice take its [*sic*] course."⁵³

Nacionalista Party backs Oca

The Nacionalista Party (NP) leadership saw in the outpouring of public sympathy for the murdered and assaulted workers a golden opportunity. With the LM-LP merger concluded but a week before, Liberal candidate for Mayor of Manila, Antonio Villegas, had significant union support behind his candidacy. The NP, during its primaries, had already selected Joaquin Roces to stand as their mayoral candidate, but on August 13, the top leadership of the NP met and decided to have Roces withdraw his candidacy and to appoint Oca as the NP candidate for mayor in his stead.

Oca staged a wake for the two murdered workers at union headquarters, with their bodies on display, and the NP concluded a deal with Oca allowing them to use the wake and the funeral of the murdered workers to make political stump speeches against Macapagal. In return they made Oca the NP mayoral candidate, hoping that he would win over a significant portion of the labor vote from Villegas. As late as August 10, four days after the formal merger of the LM and LP, Oca had still been publicly claiming that he was the LM candidate for

⁵²MC, 9 Aug 1963, 18.

⁵³MC, 14 Aug 1963.

mayor. He staged a political rally on the weekend prior to the Monday shooting, telling his audience that

The so-called coalition between the LP and the LM is a political stunt cooked up by some Malacañang stooges and a few administration 'captured' labor leaders in a desperate effort to salvage the floundering LP image in the city of Manila.

The farcical coalition has no sanction of the 1060 delegates of the LM convention and the thousands and thousands of the rank and file of the LM who nominated us to be LM standard bearers for the Manila mayoralty race at a duly constituted convention.⁵⁴

Three days later, with the NP offer in hand, he dropped his claim to be the LM candidate for mayor.

On August 14, forty-eight hours after the murder of two striking workers, a small coterie of NP leadership met in Senator Arturo Tolentino's Bayview Apartment penthouse to hammer out the final details, and at 11:30 pm, Roces officially withdrew his candidacy and Oca took the oath of membership in the NP administered by Tolentino. A reporter for the *Chronicle* was present to headline the last minute news in the August 15 morning paper. Tolentino stated that Oca's candidacy was "a manifestation of our support for the labor movement and protest against the heartless negligence and indifference of President Macapagal towards the pier strike and the deaths and injuries that have been occasioned on the pier zone." NP Vice Mayoral candidate Alfredo Gomez would serve as legal counsel to the families of the two murdered workers, but Oca announced that he was dropping charges against Brig. Gen. Quintos and the two other police officers, stating that he had become convinced of the "impartiality of the MPD officers lately." The next day, Oca issued an appeal to "all workers in Manila to rally behind the NP candidates." Having lost the LP nomination to Villegas, Bagatsing began to campaign for Oca.⁵⁵

On August 16, Rodolfo Navarro, one of the two killed workers was buried. Oca turned the event into a Nacionalista Party rally, an opportunity for photographs and choice quotations for the daily press; the NP Senators delivered their stump speeches over a worker's corpse. The keynote speaker at the funeral was Macapagal's estranged vice president, Emmanuel Pelaez, who was campaigning for the NP. Pelaez announced that "the two bodies that lie in the piers are not the bodies of Navarro and Villanueva but that of democracy and freedom ... they died so that we would understand there is much to fight for ... If we who are living will have the guts and courage to fight this administration, they would not have died in vain." Senator Roseller Lim then spoke, calling on "all labor" to unite behind Oca. He attacked the LM-LP merger, by taking "potshots at some labor leaders

⁵⁴MC, 11 August 1963, 7.

⁵⁵MC, 13 Oct 1963.

whom he charged with having abandoned their companions when such ‘would suit their personal needs.’” Oca meanwhile appealed to his workers to respect the legal process, “[i]f our administration does not know how to respect the law let us show them that we, the small workers, know how. We could achieve our ends and get justice by always going through the legal processes.”

The next day, Oca issued a similar speech, “With the president washing his hands of our struggle for justice, we have to rely on the slow judicial process ... but as long as you are behind me, we will win this fight. You are only on vacation with pay.” The callousness of this statement is staggering. Oca was referring to a pending legal petition of the PTGWO for the workers to receive back wages during the strike. The workers were not receiving strike pay nor were they on vacation. They were courageously manning a picket line at which they were routinely assaulted, and some were in fact starving.

In mid-August, the body of a striker was found floating in a kangkong pond not far from his home in Bacoor. He had collapsed while “gathering edible leaves to feed his starving family.”⁵⁶ Interviews with striking workers in the September 1 issue of the *Chronicle* revealed that many strikers’ children were no longer able to attend school because of poverty; many families were relying on support from friends and extended family, and many, the *Chronicle* wrote, “are on the verge of starvation.” Eleuterio Vergara stated that his one month old son died of hunger during the strike. Martin Mondejar reported that two of his children had dropped out of school and he was eight months behind on rent. “Halos makakain dili kami” [We are almost not eating], he said. This was not because the union did not have funds. The Araneta family gave Oca over ten thousand pesos, ostensibly for the strike. Workers on visiting ships took up collections for the striking workers. On July 12, the crew members of the President Cleveland passed the hat and gave \$600 to Oca for the strike. The International Transport Workers Federation (ITWF) contributed over \$2000 to the strike.⁵⁷ On September 16 Oca was accused in a number of press accounts of spending some of the money on the construction of a private swimming pool.⁵⁸ A large portion of the funds likely went to Oca’s election campaign. What is certain is this: none of the funds made it into the hands of the striking workers.

Ending the Strike

On August 24 the CIR ruled that bidders for the arrastre service were legally obligated to honor the existing labor contract. In response, Oca ordered the picket lifted even though Macapagal was still not allowing the workers to return to work. Macapagal filed a request for clarification with the court, disingenuously inquiring if the decision referred to the “existing labor contract” with the PTGWO

⁵⁶MC, 1 Sep 1963.

⁵⁷MC, 18 Sep 1963.

⁵⁸MC, 16 Sep 1963.

or with the scabs. By August 29 the striking workers were demanding to go back on picket, but Oca appealed to the workers to “give the government ample time to reconsider its position . . . Let’s give the government a chance.”⁵⁹ Picketing resumed and continued throughout September, intermittently lifted by Oca in response to requests from the business community. The strike ended abruptly on September 26.

The Philippines and Indonesia concluded a \$200 million trade pact on September 25, known as the Manila Memorandum.⁶⁰ The communiqué regarding the deal stated, “In view of the recent political events that have led to the severance of economic relations between Indonesia on one hand, and Malaya and Singapore, on the other, the Indonesian government has expressed its willingness to shift its traditional trade from these territories to the Philippines.”⁶¹ The deal envisioned Manila replacing Singapore as an entrepôt for Indonesian exports, but the ongoing strike made the deal impossible. Macapagal replaced his Customs Secretary and the new Secretary signed a deal with Oca within 24 hours.

The deal returned seventy-five percent of the striking workers to their jobs, on three of the four wharves of South Harbor, and gave the jobs on the remaining wharf to the scabs of Johnny Tan’s FFW. Outraged that his men were not given the entire port, Tan and the scab union went on strike the same day, shutting down the port again. The government’s treatment of the scab strike was far kinder than its treatment of the PTGWO. No police were deployed, and no one was violently dispersed. The FFW strike gradually broke up as the numbers on picket dwindled daily. Scabs apparently do not picket well. By the second week of October the numbers had dwindled to less than a hundred. On October 12, the strike died and the PTGWO workers returned to the harbor. Oca addressed the workers before they resumed their jobs, “I want you to work double time for the sake of national interests . . . let us exert all efforts to increase government income in the Bureau of Customs.”⁶²

PAL Strike

In early September, during the midst of the port strike, another explosive strike broke out. Three thousand Philippine Air Lines (PAL) workers, in the Philippine Airlines Employees Association (PALEA) union went on strike on September 2. The US embassy had previously noted that a PAL strike would have “a drastic effect since the airline is absolutely essential for quick communication between the scattered islands of the archipelago.”⁶³ By September 6, Pan Am, Northwest

⁵⁹MC, 30 Aug 1963.

⁶⁰Larry Henares was the chief negotiator for the local panel, and the deal was signed by Undersecretary of Commerce Medina Lacson de Leon and Deputy Trade Minister Soediro, head of the Indonesian trade delegation.

⁶¹PPF, 5 October 1963, 12.

⁶²MC, 13 Oct 1963.

⁶³CUSDPR, 896.00/8-2561, pg. 5.

and two other major international carriers were boycotting Manila because of the disruption to services caused by the PAL picketing. Macapagal issued a compulsory back to work order to the airline employees, threatening to use force if they disobeyed, but the workers defied Macapagal, remaining on the picket line which blocked the roads to the airport. On September 7, Macapagal ordered the Philippine Constabulary (PC) to break up the strike. Armed with automatic rifles with bayonets affixed, and accompanied by doberman pinscher attack dogs, the PC forcibly dispersed the workers, many of whom were injured and hospitalized, and at least one of whom had been stabbed by a bayonet. Defense Secretary Macario Peralta met with union leaders and they called off the strike. Regular service resumed at the airport on September 10.

Throughout this pitched struggle waged by the working class – as international trade and internal communications were shut down throughout the country – the Lapiang Manggagawa gave its enthusiastic support to Diosdado Macapagal and the ruling Liberal Party. As government forces opened fire on workers, bayoneted workers and brutally suppressed the explosive class conflict of 1963, Joma Sison and Ignacio Lacsina played a crucial role in stabilizing bourgeois rule. They defused a nationwide strike, worked mightily to foster illusions in the ruling class, and at every turn fought to prevent any possible emergence of political independence in the working class.

— 10 —

Peddling Macapagal

... to cook from this bone, gnawed away to the last fibres, a thin Rumford beggar's broth ...

— Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*

The 1963 election brought no clear victories: four Liberal senators were elected alongside four Nacionalistas; Villegas defeated Oca; and the LM candidates were all, to a man, defeated. After the election, Macapagal doled out the spoils to his dutiful support base in the LM leadership. He awarded Cipriano Cid a seat on the influential National Economic Council (NEC). Two of the five seats on the Social Security System (SSS) board of directors were given to Eulogio Lerum and Carlos Santiago. Vicente Rafael was made a member of the Court of Industrial Relations. Cipriano Malonzo was given a seat on the board of directors of the National Marketing Corporation (NAMARCO).¹

Sison and the leadership of the Communist Party spent the first part of 1964 actively peddling their ally, Macapagal, to the masses. They used this as an opportunity to build, with government funding and support, a new organization among the Central Luzon peasantry, MASAKA. At the same time, 1964 revealed the weakened state of the youth movement from which Joma Sison had emerged, and it became clear that the PKP needed an organized youth wing. Jesus Lava, the titular head of the party, seized upon the alliance with Macapagal to surrender from hiding, declaring in the process his support for the Macapagal administration. By the latter part of the year, as Macapagal sought to renew happier ties with Washington, the PKP's alliance with the Liberal Party soured. Sison and the PKP began shopping for a better deal, signaling to the Nacionalista Party their availability as a political partner.

¹Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice*, 220; *Republic of the Philippines Official Directory 1965* (Manila: Public Information (Press) Office, Office of the President of the Philippines, 1965), 39, 49, 178.

The Third Issue of the *Progressive Review*

In February 1964 the third issue of *Progressive Review*, January – February, was published. Bakri Ilyas and Rahim bin Karim were still listed as contributing editors. The editorial statement entitled “The Unfinished Revolution: Hard Facts and Some Possibilities” was written by Sison as a justification for continued support for Macapagal. It is worth analyzing carefully, as it is highly characteristic of the logic and program of Stalinism.² Sison opened with the argument that,

Today, the three major obstacles to the resumption and completion of the Unfinished Revolution are monopoly capital from without, and the comprador class and landlord class from within. These are the forces which today hold political power over our people and determine the character of the state and government.

These are the forces which have perpetuated for their self-interest the basic pattern of extractive exploitation and finished product imports. (2)

From the political perspective of Sison and the PKP, this economic state of affairs was the fundamental ill of Philippine society. The problem could be characterized as the lack of autonomous industrial development. This industrial development, along with its political expression, bourgeois democracy, was being thwarted by imperialist capital and its local allies and the task of the unfinished revolution therefore was to resume the autonomous development of Filipino capitalism. Stalinism completely disregarded the combined and uneven nature of global capitalism, and the fact that the character of capitalism in the Philippines was integrally and inextricably bound up with its global development. The idea that there could be an autonomous development of capitalism in a single country was the ideological corollary of socialism in one country. This was petty-bourgeois utopianism; it was a capitalist utopianism admittedly, but it was utopianism nevertheless. Sison continued,

The key to the accomplishment of the tasks of the Unfinished Revolution is the breaking of the link between monopoly capital and the comprador class, together with the landlord class. Unexposed and unminded, this link is the strongest link between the foreign exploiters and the local exploiters. Exposed and minded, it withers into the weakest link that the Filipino people can immediately break. Without this rusty but beflowered link, the local puppets would be easily swept away by the forces of national democracy, embracing the working class, the peasantry, the national entrepreneurial class, the students, all enlightened white-collar elements and small-property owners. (3)

²“The Unfinished Revolution: Hard Facts and Some Possibilities,” *PR* 3 (1964), 1–17.

There is no section of the national bourgeoisie (the “entrepreneurial class”) that is independent of the ties of international capital as the operations of capitalism cannot be confined within the boundaries of the nation-state. Every movement of production and circulation is regulated and, in the final analysis, dictated by the global economy, and this was one of the two fundamental contradictions of capitalism described by Marx: that between the global economy and the nation state. From the vantage point of Stalinism, however, the fundamental issue was the lack of patriotic awareness on the part of the state. It was sufficient, Sison argued, to expose the link between international capital and the compradors for the link to be easily severed by the bloc of four classes. He continued, “In the Philippines today, we have developed a national entrepreneurial class that can offer some significant challenge to foreign monopoly capital. As it has developed into a distinct force during the last decade, through government protection and control of imports and encouragement of the importation of capital goods, it can develop further with government assistance and protection against the irrepressible onslaughts of foreign monopoly capital.” (3) Here, Sison was compelled to admit that “the Macapagal administration is giving all-out support to foreign capitalists,” but he characterized this as “incongruous.”

Sison tied himself into logical and rhetorical knots to explain the policies of the Macapagal administration, writing, “The open abandonment of the Filipino entrepreneur to the mercy of foreign monopolists vexes those who would like to believe that President Macapagal is sincere in projecting the concept of Unfinished Revolution.” (4) He moved on, however, stating that “It is auspicious that President Macapagal has been trying to get from Congress the right to borrow from any foreign government other than the United States the maximum amount of ₱2 billion, a far-cry from the current ceiling of ₱200 million.” (5) He advised the Macapagal administration that “in a period such as the present when the national entrepreneurs have a great share in building up the national-democratic movement, the government should certainly assist them financially and construct the basic and heavy industries that would produce the capital goods and tap the raw materials that are useful for national manufacturing and industrial concerns.” (5)

As Macapagal provided support for “national entrepreneurs,” he needed to be conscious of the fact, Sison argued, that “within the framework of the Unfinished Revolution, it is the bottom of naiveté, if not stupidity or treason, to fail to make an effective distinction between Filipino private enterprises and foreign monopolies which have come to dominate our economic life ... If President Macapagal is genuinely concerned with the resumption of the Unfinished Revolution, it is his manifest responsibility to create new conditions for the development of national forces, which include Filipino entrepreneurs, against foreign monopolies ... The chief concern of the nation today is to turn state power against foreign monopoly capital and consolidate all funds and forces for the goal of national industrialization.” (6) To this paramount goal – the protection and support

of Filipino capitalists – “the most dependable national forces that President Macapagal can mobilize ... are, of course, the working class and the peasantry, comprising the greatest number of our people.” Sison wrote of “the interweaving interests of patriotic businessmen, workers and peasants against one common enemy, the interruptor of the Revolution.” (6)

Workers, Sison wrote, “should be willing to cooperate politically with the national entrepreneurs in confronting those neo-colonial forces that have successfully maneuvered for the recent economic policies that have forced more and more lay-offs and ever rising prices.” He assured Filipino capitalists, and Macapagal in particular, that “the Lapiang Manggagawa can be an effective ally of the national entrepreneurial class. Our national entrepreneurs may be broad-minded enough to seek its cooperation. As long as an anti-imperialist platform is to be mutually propagated, the workers can more effectively put the heat on foreign competition in favor of nationalization.” Whatever reservations Sison may have expressed about Macapagal’s “all-out support for foreign capitalists” he stated that “it is heartening to observe that President Macapagal has made a coalition with the Lapiang Manggagawa ... The cooperation between Lapiang Manggagawa and the Macapagal administration can be more fruitful if it ... stimulates the activation of the working class which is the one class, other than the big property-owners, that can easily be integrated and directed into one massive political factor sustaining a progressive national solidarity.” (8) He assured everyone that Filipino workers “are happy” with the “progressive policies” of the Macapagal administration.

The peasantry, similarly, was “certainly encouraged by the avowed revolutionary objectives of the Agricultural Land Reform Code and consider it in good faith as a weapon against feudalism ... not only in terms of immediate gains on the farm but also in long-run consideration of the fact that [it] expands the domestic market and releases capital for industrialization. The Code, [*sic*] has deserved the all-out support of the working class and the national entrepreneurial class.” The peasantry “is grateful to President Macapagal for its enactment.” (9) It “constitutes a good piece of legislation.” (11) Diosdado Macapagal, Sison wrote, “has all the right to claim as still one among the peasants. With the Agricultural Land Reform Code, and his peasant background, he can call and mobilize the peasantry to be the backbone of his Unfinished Revolution.” Sison then called on Macapagal to “create a system of solidarity between the soldiers and the peasants for the purpose of land reform.”

Sison concluded by addressing the “international context.” He stated, in language typical of Maoism, that “US imperialism *can easily be vanquished* if popular support for national revolution is already generated.” (13, emphasis added.) From the voluntarist perspective of Maoism, US imperialism was a paper tiger, all that was needed was to whip up popular opposition.

We have in this editorial for the first time a statement from Sison of the entire program of Stalinism. The paramount task was national industrialization

under the national bourgeoisie. The working class and the peasantry had no independent interests, but must pressure the ruling administration to carry out reforms on behalf of the national bourgeoisie. The task of assuring the workers that a section of the national bourgeoisie, despite its admitted failures, is worthy of all-out support, fell to the leadership of the Communist Party. All of this was also bound up with pressuring the ruling party to implement an “independent” foreign policy, one in keeping with the interests of the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies.³

MASAKA

Sison spent much of 1964 selling Macapagal’s land reform to the peasantry, and in the process aided in the formation of the organization that became the peasant wing of the PKP, Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka [Free Federation of Peasants] (MASAKA), to facilitate the implementation of the 1963 land reform act. Sison later claimed that he

was tasked as a Party cadre to get involved in MASAKA in 1963. Thus, I became even closer to Ka Bert [Olalia] and other peasant leaders like Domingo Castro, Felicísimo Macapagal, Modesto Reyes and Simplicio Paraiso.

The Party’s executive committee tasked me to talk to the most responsible cadres of MASAKA regarding the entry into MASAKA of a peasant organization based in Bulacan. I was also assigned to give a refresher course on Marxism-Leninism to the veteran cadres in the central leadership of MASAKA.⁴

In early 1964, Sison and “another bright young man of socialist orientation,” visited Luis Taruc in Panopio compound, Camp Crame.⁵ They were attempting to recruit for MASAKA Taruc’s old Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) base, an organization with which the PKP had merged in 1938 but with which it had

³The same issue included a propagandistic little encomium by Jose Lansang on Bonifacio as the harbinger of Macapagal’s common man (Jose A. Lansang, “Andres Bonifacio: The Common Man,” *PR* 3 [1964], 18–23); another piece in support of Macapagal was included by former zoology professor, Agustin Rodolfo, a PKP member who used to write under the pseudonym Gasang. (Agustin Rodolfo, “Pushing the Philippine Revolution to a Higher Level,” *PR* 3 [1964], 24–30; Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, 209); and the issue published a statement by Salvador Lopez on the Philippines refusal to recognize Malaysia.

⁴Sison, *Ka Felixberto ‘Bert’ Olalia*.

⁵Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 82. Sison confirmed this visit in an interview with the *Philippine Star* and identified his companion as Tonypet Araneta. Salvador Araneta’s nephew, Antonio ‘Tonypet’ Araneta, would play a key role in the development of the Communist Party over the course of the 1960s, beginning in 1964. At the age of twenty-six, he returned to the Philippines fresh from Notre Dame and Oxford, where he had written his dissertation on the early history of the PKP. He was engaged to Gemma Cruz, recently crowned Miss International.

largely lost contact under the Single File policy, as well as the Pambansang Kaisahan ng Magbubukid [National Peasant Unity] (PKM), the largest peasant union in Central Luzon at the time of the Huk rebellion, with which the SPP had been closely linked. MASAKA was founded 1964 in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, and “a regrouping of old PKM members formed its core.”⁶ In founding MASAKA, Nemenzo argued that the PKP “carefully stayed within the bounds of legality and stressed that they were acting in conformity with the government’s agrarian reform programme. To avoid suspicion they invited government officials to their meetings and public rallies.”⁷ The founding document of MASAKA was drawn up in close collaboration with the Macapagal administration, and there is no fear of suspicion or reprisals, as Nemenzo claimed, in its formulations. MASAKA emerged out of the coalition with the Liberal Party, the work towards its founding was funded by the Macapagal administration, and it was founded as part of the campaign to win peasant support for the implementation of Macapagal’s policies.

The constitution drawn up for the founding of the organization opened with the statement that MASAKA was “relying on the help of the Great Creator” [Dakilang Maykapal] in carrying out its “legal aims.”⁸ The first aim of the organization was to assist in the success of the agricultural land reform code, which it asserted, had opened a good opportunity for peasants to “claim the land that they farmed.” (1) MASAKA would carry this out by assisting “our government” in expeditiously distributing land to peasants, and pledged to aid “our government” in its pursuit of “national peace, prosperity and bounty for all.” [pambansang katahimikan, kaginhawahan at kasaganaan ng madla] (1) The national office of MASAKA was established in Manila and any peasant, agricultural wage worker, or fisherman over the age of eighteen was eligible to join by swearing allegiance to the organization in the presence of the chapter secretary and two witnesses. Article 2 Section 5 stated that “MASAKA recognizes and builds upon legal methods of struggle and therefore cannot accept as a member anyone who believes in the use of threats and violence in implementing the goals of the organization.”⁹ This founding document of MASAKA was ratified in a meeting held in the headquarters of the National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU) in Quiapo on November 7 1964, and Felixberto Olalia was elected the first president of MASAKA.¹⁰

Manuela Sta Ana Maclang, wife of the imprisoned PKP leader Federico Maclang, was elected to the national council of MASAKA. She later told Kerkvliet

⁶Kimura, “Philippine Peasant and Labor Organizations in Electoral Politics: Players in Transitional Politics,” 37.

⁷Nemenzo Jr., “Rectification process,” 74.

⁸Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka (MASAKA), *Alintuntunin at Saligang-Batas ng Malayang Samahang Magsasaka* (MASAKA), November 1964, 1.

⁹Article 7 established an application fee of one peso and monthly dues of 30 centavos. It cost ₱1.60 more per year to be a member of MASAKA than it did Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM).

¹⁰Gorgonio Narciso was made national secretary. (MASAKA, *Alintuntunin at Saligang-Batas ng Malayang Samahang Magsasaka* (MASAKA), 9; Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 98).

that “MASAKA’s primary purpose was to pressure the government to implement the 1963 land reform law.”¹¹ The primary function of the land reform law was to convert share-croppers to a system of cash-based fixed rent tenancy (buwisan), but MASAKA, using Sison’s *Primer on Land Reform*, promoted the illusion that peasants would eventually gain their own land through the measure. Sison wrote that “[b]y converting the share-tenant into a lessee and farm manager of the land he tills, the Program liberates the share-tenant from share tenancy and takes him a step forward towards owner cultivatorship. The lessee pays a reasonable rental to the landlord. Any further increase in the produce of his farm is entirely his own. He is, therefore, encouraged to produce and earn more.”¹²

Kerkvliet documents that many peasants held that this arrangement was inferior to “a good share tenancy (samahan) arrangement.” He writes “In the former [fixed cash rent], tenants had to pay a specific amount in rent each season regardless of the yield; they also had to pay all production expenses, and the landlord had no obligation to give production loans. In the latter [share-cropping], the tenant’s rent was a percentage of the crop (usually half), tenants and landlords shared production expenses, and landlords were supposed to give low interest loans.”¹³ The conversion of share cropped land to fixed rent occurred by fiat. When the NLRC declared land to be part of a land reform district, “the proclamation automatically replaces share-tenancy with the leasehold relation ... the tenant becomes a lessee of the land automatically.”¹⁴ It fell to the Lapiang Manggagawa and MASAKA to convince the peasantry that the forcible conversion of the land to a system of fixed cash rent was in their interests. Wurfel writes

Despite labels and historical linkages, MASAKA was far from revolutionary; like the FFF, it concentrated on the implementation of agrarian reform, sometimes negotiating with landlords about the terms of the new leasehold tenancy. In addition, however, like its predecessor in the 1940s it endorsed friendly candidates at election time and occasionally demonstrated against American military bases.¹⁵

Wurfel also notes that “In many towns, FFF members, primarily out of old loyalties, switched to MASAKA when it formed a local chapter. ... within four years MASAKA had nearly 70,000 members.”¹⁶

¹¹Benedict J. Kerkvliet, “Manuela Sta Ana vda. de Maclang and Philippine Politics,” in *Lives at the Margin: Biography of Filipinos Obscure, Ordinary, and Heroic*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (Madison: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), 404.

¹²LM, *Handbook on the Land Reform Code*, 12.

¹³Kerkvliet, “Manuela Sta Ana vda. de Maclang and Philippine Politics,” 405.

¹⁴LM, *Handbook on the Land Reform Code*, 12-13.

¹⁵David Wurfel, *Filipino Politics: Development and Decay* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 66.

¹⁶Ibid.

The need for a youth organization

While the PKP now had a substantial hold over the labor movement through the Lapiang Manggagawa, and a growing presence in the peasantry through MASAKA, the weakest point in its organizational structure was among the youth. Despite Sison's political origins in SCAUP, the influence of the PKP among the youth from 1962 until mid-1964 was quite limited. While Sison traveled abroad, formally became a Stalinist, and came to play a leading role in the PKP, SCAUP had carried on with its old mixture of anti-clericalism, nationalism, and the cult of Claro M. Recto. The logical positivist, Ricardo Pascual, retained a significant influence over the organization and on January 15 and 16 1962, SCAUP presented a performance of a play by Pascual, *Isagani*, directed and starring Behn Cervantes.¹⁷ The leadership of SCAUP was turned over to Jose David Lapuz.

In early 1962, SCAUP submitted a petition opposing Diosdado Macapagal's appointment of Carlos P. Romulo as University President to replace Sinco, which treated the Board of Regents as a rubber-stamp for his appointment. With the successful appointment of Romulo, SCAUP suffered a significant setback. Abaya was replaced as faculty adviser of the *Collegian*, and the newly appointed Francisco Arcellana, using the pretext that Luis Teodoro and Ferdinand Tinio had published an issue of the *Collegian* without his approval, had both editors of the paper removed. SCAUP thus lost editorship of the school paper in July 1962. In November 1962, SCAUP launched its own publication, *SCAUP Inquest*. It was edited by Rolando Domingo, a student of Ricardo Pascual in the UP Philosophy department. The issue was dedicated to the republication of a speech by Recto on "Nationalism and our Historic Past." Domingo's editorial restated Recto's perspective that "the issue facing us is not industrialization *per se*, but industrialization *for* and *by* Filipinos."¹⁸

A pretentious and self-important man, with a two-bit idea and a two dollar thesaurus, Lapuz proved incapable of building SCAUP into a viable political organization in the wake of the departure of Sison and the appointment of Romulo. In 1965, for example, Lapuz wrote his own biographical by-line in the *Collegian*, in which he described himself as "one of the few nurtured on the civilization of Europe,"¹⁹ and he was forever attempting to demonstrate his superior level of culture. On February 26, 1964, Lapuz ran this announcement in the *Collegian*: "L'Association Culturelle de Etudiante de L'Universite de Philippines (SCAUP) will tender a reception today . . . Those desiring to attend the reception may do so upon payment of ₱3.00 to Jose David Lapuz." The only interest advanced by Lapuz' reference to SCAUP in poorly formatted French was his own inflated ego. The conclusion to Lapuz' article on Recto, entitled "Claro M. Recto: the

¹⁷PC, 5 January 1962, 5.

¹⁸*The SCAUP Inquest*, 8, emphasis in original.

¹⁹Jose David Lapuz, "The Sovereign Nationalists and the Forthcoming Elections," PC, September 1965.

parfait knight of Filipino Nationalism,” is sadly representative of his writing: “The last time I saw [Recto] ... it was as though his person fumigated with incense whenever he walked by ... He is gone now and I am sure he will have no replacement in this our country, or in this my heart. For he left me, even though defeated, a hope, a promise, a symbol, a fragment from out his heart to serve for one who will come after. And, by God! I promise to preserve, to continue.”²⁰

In May 1964, Lapuz involved SCAUP and Joma Sison in the filing of criminal charges with the police. Sison testified on behalf of Lapuz that Leonardo Quisumbing, then UP Student Council chair, had slapped Lapuz in response to one of Lapuz’ articles. The police charges were the culmination of a lengthy series of petty squabbles between the two. Lapuz had passed to the *Collegian* for publication a resolution which had not been signed by Quisumbing, and Quisumbing compelled Lapuz to formally apologize. Lapuz wrote an article accusing Quisumbing of corrupt leadership, and in response, Lapuz claimed, Quisumbing slapped him. In addition to the filing of criminal charges with the police, Lapuz wrote an open letter to University President Romulo, “Permit me, I implore you, to be concerned with the just glory of our University and to tell you that its good reputation is now threatened with the most abominable, unutterable slur.” Quisumbing was ordered to apologize.²¹

Just how far SCAUP had degenerated by mid-1963 was made clear in a column in the *Collegian* written by SCAUP member, Rene Navarro, in which he decried “progressives” for pursuing “lost causes,” and characterized the editorial statement of the *Progressive Review* as using “communist jargon ... which will no doubt arouse the indignant sensibilities of decent men.”²² SCAUP had over the course of three years degenerated from protesting against the red-baiting of CAFA to seeing one of its leading representatives use the pages of the *Collegian* to denounce the *Progressive Review* for “communist jargon.” On September 5, Navarro published a response from Joma Sison in his column in the *Collegian*, “Rene, let me tell you a secret: the winds of change are fast blowing into our land. Just read the Manila Declaration and you will find out that its terms are even more radical than the policy-declaration of the *Progressive Review*. I, for one, would be willing to interchange the two.”²³

Sison moved to rebuild the youth movement, an effort that ultimately culminated in the founding of the Kabataang Makabayan in November 1964, and his initial efforts were founded on support for the Manila Summit. On September 29 1963, the first College Student Conference on Nationalism was held on the UP campus and the Conference’s final declaration was published by Sison in the third volume of the *Progressive Review*. The declaration in many ways closely

²⁰Jose David Lapuz, “Claro M Recto, The Parfait Knight of Filipino Nationalism (A Reply to O.D. Corpuz),” *PC*, September 1964, 5.

²¹*PC*, 8 April, 3; 2 May 1964, 13.

²²*PC*, 21 Aug 1963, 2.

²³Rene Navarro, “Open letter to an American visitor,” *PC*, September 1963.

paralleled the later founding statement of the *Kabataang Makabayan*. It denounced feudalism and imperialism – but did not include “bureaucrat capitalism” – as the “old iniquities” enslaving the nation. It called for the completion of the “unfinished revolution” of Bonifacio. The primary concrete demand made by the conference was “the development of national capital, support for Filipino-owned industries, and tax protection, and for long-term loans without strings attached if foreign aid be needed to complement our native resources.”²⁴ I suspect that Sison was instrumental in the organizing of this conference, although I have not found direct evidence of this. Whether or not Sison drafted the documents of the Student Conference on Nationalism, they repeated precisely the political line which he put forward for the LM and MASAKA, declaring, “we strongly endorse the Agricultural Land Reform Code as the signal for the final defeat of feudalism in our country.” The resolution concluded that “we [the Filipino Nationalist Student Conference] endorse the terms of the Manila Agreements which state that our security should lie primarily in the hands of our government and people.” (43)

On November 30, SCAUP, under the leadership of Lapuz and Joel Rocamora, sponsored a Congress on Maphilindo and Asian Nationalism on the UP campus. Indonesian Ambassador Pamontjak was invited to appear as guest of honor and to speak on the subject of “guided democracy,” and he arrived for the event at nine in the morning, when the congress was scheduled to begin, but found no one in attendance and left in a huff.²⁵ The congress convened over an hour later. Lapuz sent a representative to request the ambassador return to the event, but Pamontjak refused, sending a delegate in his stead to deliver his speech. Those who attended the congress received a set of documents including Recto’s speech “Asia for the Asians” and Macapagal’s closing address to the Maphilindo Summit. Jose Lansang, Lapuz and Rocamora all spoke at the event, hailing Maphilindo as the opening up of Asian nationalism against western interference. Lapuz spoke of the “true spirit of the Manila declaration ... that the government’s sole allegiance is to the people, and its sole concern is the welfare of that people.”²⁶

Despite SCAUP’s organizational struggles, by the beginning of 1964 it was hewing closely to the political line of Joma Sison and the PKP, it was affiliated with the same circle of people, and gave the same support to Macapagal on the basis of Macapagal’s role during the Manila Summit.²⁷ Lapuz, at the head of SCAUP, promoted Macapagal in the same manner as the LM, although in

²⁴“Filipino Student Nationalist Declaration,” *PR* 3 (1964), 42.

²⁵The schedule of the entire congress was published on the front page of the *Collegian*. The congress was scheduled to commence at nine and Pamontjak to speak at half past nine.

²⁶PC, 30 Nov, 1; 4 Dec 1963, 1, 7; Jose David Lapuz, “Asian Nationalism: an intellectual study,” *PC*, December 1963, 2.

²⁷This close affiliation is seen in the gathering which SCAUP scheduled for February 7 to coincide with the launching of the third issue of the *Progressive Review*. The event was to be staged as always as a celebration of Recto’s birthday. Slated guests included Macario Vicencio, IP Soliongco, Ignacio Lacsina, Blas Ople, Adrian Cristobal, Andres Cristobal Cruz, Leopoldo Yabes

a style that was only his. In a letter to the *Collegian* in response to a speech delivered by Macapagal on January 9 to the Rotary Club, Lapuz wrote “As one who may be likened to a keen-eyed eagle perched on the highest house-top in matters pertaining to international diplomacy and foreign, external politics, I viewed with great and curious interest this latest development in our foreign policy ... President Macapagal in this revolutionary address before the Rotarians broke with the past ... The Filipino – what a beautiful man is the Filipino now! in foreign policy, how express and admirable! in action how like an Asian!”²⁸ SCAUP, based exclusively at UP and under the leadership of Lapuz, ‘full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse,’ was not a viable youth front for the PKP. A new organization needed to be founded.

The Surrender of Jesus Lava

In May 1964, Jesus Lava officially appointed Sison head of the youth section of the PKP. Ignacio Lacsina was appointed Secretary of Labor; Francisco Lava, Jr. was made “Secretary for Professionals;” and, without any reliable contact with him, Lava appointed Pedro Taruc as Secretary for Peasantry.²⁹ Immediately after these arrangements were made, Lava was arrested by government forces. Precisely how this occurred is a point of contention, as Sison claims that Lava surrendered to the Macapagal government, while Lava maintains that he was captured.³⁰ The historical evidence strongly suggests that Lava negotiated his surrender to Macapagal.

According to Sison, Lava wrote to Macapagal to negotiate his surrender, and Lava’s elder brother, Francisco Sr. arranged Lava’s surrender with Macapagal’s executive secretary Rufino Hechanova.³¹ In the biography of Jesus Lava, which Lava personally commissioned, Dalisay claimed that Lava had “written President Macapagal two letters: one commending him for his land reform policies, and another, more critical letter questioning his moves and suggesting an American hand in them ... Jesus says that Macapagal misrepresented the contents of the second letter, turning it into an offer to surrender, when what it actually contained was a challenge to the effect that Jesus would give himself up only if Macapagal released all political prisoners then in custody (who included Peping

and Teodoro Agoncillo; largely the same figures as those clustered around the LM. Publication of the *Progressive Review* was delayed and so the event was held on February 26. (PC, 29 January 1964, 2.) The source errs here, reporting the attendance of “Adrian Cristobal Cruz” and “Andres Cristobal.”

²⁸PC, 29 January 1964, 7.

²⁹Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 21; Jesus Lava, “Setting the Record Straight,” *Courier* 1, no. 1 (1985): 15, PRP 38/05.01.

³⁰Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 45.

³¹Elsewhere Sison claimed that a “medical officer of the Social Security System” was Lava’s intermediary. (Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 71, 100; AB, July 1969, 44).

[Jose Lava]).”³² This is at least partially false, as we know from Lava’s own account in late 1970 that he had written at least four letters to Macapagal.³³ Macapagal himself claimed that Lava wrote to him and offered to surrender and that on March 15, 1964, Lava sent a hand-written letter to the President stating “We men here have a high regard in President Macapagal’s sincerity in realizing his promises to the people and in his sense of fairness and justice. He is the man who could put an end to communism in this country – though only it should be [sic] – by being considerate and generous to their needs. I am speaking in behalf of the whole Communist organization.”³⁴

Regardless of how it was arranged, on May 21 1964, shortly after making the necessary appointments of replacement leadership within the PKP, Lava was arrested by a Philippine Constabulary (PC) intelligence team at 12:35 pm at 925 P Leoncio St, Sampaloc, where Lava had been hiding in a two story wooden house, with Mrs. Nelia Garcia-Piñeda. In the news reports at the time, it was claimed that when the police came to arrest him, Lava identified himself as Francisco Villaroman, complete with false identification documents. Lava claimed that he was identified for police by Luis Taruc at Crame, but in his memoirs written decades later, Lava dropped this story, claiming that he told his captors who he was upon arrest.³⁵ Among Lava’s papers were letters to Presidents Garcia and Macapagal, a Political Transmission (PT) ordering the “communist infiltration of the schools,” four volumes of Lenin, a book by Patrick Henry and *Thinking for Ourselves* by Dr. Jose P Laurel Sr.³⁶ The police claimed that they located the PKP’s “Five Year Plan” among Lava’s papers.³⁷ Lava appeared before the press with Macapagal, who asked Lava if he could “tell his comrades to cooperate with the government. Lava, smiling, admitted that reforms had made the armed struggle unnecessary.”³⁸

With the arrest of Jesus Lava, Pedro Taruc was now widely rumored to be the secretary general of the PKP, and all of the newspapers at the time reported that Taruc was the new head of the party.³⁹ This was far from the truth. Taruc, as we will see in chapter 13, had been reduced to serving as a figurehead for a political gangster in Central Luzon, Commander Sumulong. The actual leadership of the party fell entirely on its Executive Secretariat – Sison, Lacsina, and Vicente and Francisco Lava.

³²Dalisay, *The Lavas*, 142.

³³Jesus Lava, *Paglilinaw sa “Philippine Crisis”*, 1970, PRP 09/36.01 See page 582.

³⁴Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice*, 166.

³⁵Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 67; Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 295.

³⁶Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 67.

³⁷A certified copy of a sixteen page summary of the PKP’s captured five year plan is in the papers of CIA operative Charles Bohannon. (*PKP’s 5 Year Project*).

³⁸Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 68.

³⁹Lachica, *The Huks*, 137.

Toward realignment

In mid 1964, with the nominations for the 1965 presidential election looming in November, Sison and Lacsina began renegotiating the LM's relationship with Macapagal. There was a mounting sense in the PKP that Macapagal's foreign policy was becoming hostile to the interests of Jakarta and that Maphilindo was no longer useful. As early as February, Sison wrote "President Macapagal correctly and heroically withstood for an uncommon period of time all the pressure exerted by the US State Department to have him recognize Malaysia ... Nevertheless, it appears lately that the Philippine government has finally come around to the American position on Malaysia."⁴⁰ Maphilindo, which Sison had hailed but months prior as the vehicle for opposing imperialism, he now depicted as at risk of becoming a tool of US and British imperialism, writing, "If Maphilindo should be revived at the cost of perpetuating Anglo-American imperialism in the region, it had better not be revived because genuine participation in the Asian-African solidarity movement can adequately provide us with the conditions for pursuing the very same terms of the Manila Agreements." (16)

In July, the *Progressive Review* released its fourth issue.⁴¹ Sison wrote the editorial for the issue, entitled "Maphilindo: Afro-Asian or Anglo-American?" in which he stated that the concept of Maphilindo was as yet "unrealized."⁴² Two possible paths lay before it, either an Afro-Asian path or an Anglo-American one. An "honest referendum" of the territories of Borneo, he claimed, would have prevented the formation of Malaysia and this would have led Maphilindo down the Afro-Asian path. (2) An "honest referendum," however, had never been a proposal of the Manila Summit, which had concluded by calling for a ceremonial polling of the currently elected leaders in Borneo. Britain had thwarted this, but had the survey gone forward it would have approved Malaysia and it would not have polled the population. In his article, Sison presented the basic political situation in the dispute over Malaysia, but did not provide any political prognosis or state what should be done next. There is a sense in the article of lingering, waiting to see what Macapagal would do next, and while the *Progressive Review* was beginning to articulate a sense of Macapagal's limited usefulness, it continued to prominently support him. The back cover of the issue

⁴⁰PR, 2, p. 15.

⁴¹Juliet de Lima was made business manager and secretary of the journal, and Bakri Ilyas was no longer listed anywhere in the paper. Several articles from this issue of *PR* were reprinted in 1965 to form an entire issue of Maud Russell's *Far East Reporter*. ("The Impact of Current United States Policy on Philippine 'Independence'," *Far East Reporter*, 1965). *PR* was now being distributed in Jakarta by Lionel Morrison of the Asian-African Journalists' Association. Just after September 30, 1965, as the devastation of the PKI was beginning to unfold, the Journalist Association moved to Beijing, and the Indonesian ambassador to China, Djawoto, refusing to return home, became the secretary general of the organization. (Justus M. Van Der Kroef, "Philippine Communism and the Chinese," *The China Quarterly* 30 [1967]: 147).

⁴²Jose Ma. Sison, "Maphilindo: Afro-Asian or Anglo-American?," *PR* 1, no. 4 (1964), 1-8.

was dedicated to a quote from Macapagal's June 12 1964 speech, about how the Unfinished Revolution required freedom from foreign economic domination.

Sison continued this line of analysis in *Eastern World*, where he wrote, "The establishment of consular relations between the Philippines and Malaysia, the removal of Foreign Secretary Lopez, who sees eye to eye with Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio, and President Macapagal's announcement of Philippine recognition for Malaysia in the offing, have dealt a severe blow to progressive elements hoping for close anti-imperialist collaboration between Indonesia and the Philippines."⁴³ For Sison, the "revolutionary line" involved backing Sukarno's Crush Malaysia campaign by "supporting the freedom fighters of Kalimantan Utara," and he bemoaned that the "promise of labour leaders to send volunteers to Kalimantan Utara has not developed beyond one press conference." Macapagal began referring to Maphilindo as an "Asian Monroe Doctrine," and in August, Sison again wrote for *Eastern World* on this topic. Increasingly disillusioned by the trajectory of Maphilindo, Sison referred to Macapagal's maneuvers as a "militarist re-interpretation of the Macapagal-Sukarno doctrine."⁴⁴

In June 1964, Sison began teaching social sciences at the Lyceum, where he continued to teach until at least 1967.⁴⁵ The university would serve as the base of operations for the creation of the Kabataang Makabayan. Francisco 'Paquito' Lava, Sr. had been "teaching at the Lyceum at the insistence of his old friend Jose P. Laurel, who was retiring as the school's head of graduate studies." Dalisay claims that Paquito was responsible for winning Arthur Garcia and Carlos del Rosario to the party, when they would "come around to Paquito's house in Pasay, along with Jose Ma. Sison."⁴⁶ Both Garcia and del Rosario would later emerge as central figures in the CPP.

In October 1964 Macapagal traveled to the United States on his much-delayed twelve day state visit, and as he prepared to depart for Washington the Lapiang Manggagawa delivered an ultimatum to Macapagal regarding their support. On October 2 the LM staged a protest outside of Malacañang. Sison later claimed that "a combination of 2,000 workers and students went through the gates of the presidential palace and were dispersed by the presidential guards. The issue was mainly US parity rights and the Laurel-Langley agreement."⁴⁷ Contemporary accounts, including the *Philippines Free Press*, estimated that five hundred people demonstrated.⁴⁸ The protesters placards read "CIA Worst [*sic*] Than Communism" and "Mabuhay si [Long live] Salvador Araneta." Cipriano Cid, Ignacio Lacsina and Felixberto Olalia demanded to meet with the President. The papers

⁴³Jose Ma. Sison, "Prospects for Maphilindo," *Eastern World* XVIII, no. 7 (1964): 30.

⁴⁴Jose Ma. Sison, "Macapagal-Sukarno Doctrine Re-interpreted," *Eastern World* XVIII, no. 8 (1964): 17-18.

⁴⁵Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 202.

⁴⁶Dalisay, *The Lavas*, 150.

⁴⁷Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 35.

⁴⁸"Anti-Parity Demonstrators Storm Malacañang," *PPF*, October 1964, 78.

claimed that there was a “riot,” which was violently suppressed and in which two protesters were injured and hospitalized. Macapagal met in his study with four student delegates, Ricardo Valmonte, Hernan Juatas, Alejandro Quintin, and Carlos del Rosario. Del Rosario and Valmonte would both become national committee members of the KM at its founding in November.

The delegates presented two manifestos to the President, one from the students and one from the LM. The student manifesto called on the President to “conserve our national patrimony for the sole benefit of the Philippine citizenry” while the LM called on Macapagal to “keep faith with the Unfinished Revolution by seeking to abrogate the Laurel-Langley Agreement.”⁴⁹ The Student manifesto announced that it was “conscious of our commitment to the Filipino Student Nationalist Declaration of 1963.” The LM Manifesto stated that the Laurel-Langley agreement “represses Filipino ascendancy in . . . the emerging industrial sector,” and thus, “the clear and urgent task of the Unfinished Revolution . . . is to seek the immediate [*sic*] liquidation of the Laurel-Langley agreement.” The LM Manifesto concluded

Therefore, on the eve of his state visit to the United States, we call on President Macapagal to keep faith with the Unfinished Revolution which he himself has set in motion.

Instead of joining the jockeying of presidential aspirants to be the “American boy” in the ensuing election campaign, President Macapagal is called upon, as the duly chosen leader of the nation, to step forward and offer a sustained and resolute leadership to the emerging forces of national freedom and progress.

This is a crucial moment in the history of the nation. For a new awakening, unparalleled since 1898, is dawning upon the Filipino people, moving, urging them all – workers, businessmen, intellectuals, youths and students alike – to rise and demand a decisive departure from the colonial, feudal status quo.

Let President Macapagal sense fully the significance of this moment and act accordingly.⁵⁰

The sole demand made by both manifestos was the ending of parity rights and the protection of the interests of Filipino capitalists, and in keeping with this perspective, the LM distributed along with its manifesto, policy statements from the Philippine Chamber of Industry (PCI) and the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CCP).⁵¹ In what would become a recurring theme over the next year, the director of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Jose G. Lukban, announced that the rally was a plot of Indonesian communists.⁵² On October 6,

⁴⁹ PFP, “Anti-Parity Demonstrators Storm Malacañang.”

⁵⁰ PR, no. 5, p. 12.

⁵¹ Jose Ma. Sison, “Towards a Broad National Front,” PR, no. 5 (1965), 2.

⁵² PFP, “Anti-Parity Demonstrators Storm Malacañang.”

Johnson and Macapagal issued a joint communiqué from the White House, in which they denounced the “aggressive intentions and activities of Communist China,” and further affirmed that the Retail Trade and Nationalization Act did not apply to American-owned businesses in the Philippines.⁵³ The PKP and the LM would soon be angling to break with Macapagal and make ties with the Nacionalista Party. It was in this context that the PKP’s new youth organization, Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM), was founded.

⁵³Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice*, 503-505.

Realignment



From Macapagal to Marcos

*Naligò sa linaw,
sa labò nagbanlâw.*

— Tagalog proverb

In late 1964 Sison and Lacsina began preparing to break with Macapagal in order to negotiate freely whom they would endorse in the 1965 presidential election.

The P K P resolved its need for a youth wing when Sison led the founding of the Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM) in November, an organization which would play a pivotal role in Philippine political life over the next decade. In January, Sison and Lacsina headed what was the largest political rally in years, mobilizing all of the front organizations of the P K P, including the newly founded KM, in coordination with sections of the Nacionalista Party. Over the course of the year they incrementally endorsed a growing number of Nacionalista politicians.

The central political debate of the presidential election was Macapagal's commitment to deploy Filipino troops in support of the US war in Vietnam. This was a widely unpopular move and Marcos very publicly stated his opposition to it. Treating Marcos' declarations as good coin, Sison and Lacsina led the front organizations of the P K P to endorse and support Marcos candidacy, but within two weeks of his election, Marcos announced that he would be sending troops to Vietnam.

The presidential election of 1965 precipitated a violent turf war in Central Luzon between various gangster remnants of the Huk guerrilla movement, and out of this turf war emerged the forces that would later constitute the New People's Army (NPA).

— 11 —

Kabataang Makabayan

We are siding with Filipino capitalists.

— Jose Ma. Sison, addressing a rally in front of the US Embassy,
January 25, 1965

In the wake of Macapagal's tour of the United States, Lapiang Manggagawa began to distance itself completely from his presidency and to lay the groundwork for backing Marcos in the 1965 election. At no point in the process of breaking their alliance with the Liberal Party and establishing ties with the Nacionalista Party did either Sison or Lacsina give any explanation for why Macapagal, whom they had hailed and supported, was now decried as an agent of reaction. On November 6, Ignacio Lacsina delivered an address – jointly sponsored by the UP Political Science Club and the Alpha Sigma fraternity – at Palma Hall theater on the UP Diliman campus. Though the LM was still in a coalition with the Liberal Party, Lacsina denounced both the Liberal Party and the Nacionalista Party equally, telling his audience that both parties' principles and goals were based on the "colonial logic of the status quo." He concluded, "[F]rom all indications, the bold, progressive and revolutionary Liberal administration with which the Lapiang Manggagawa had allied itself has effectively vanished, replaced by a servile, mendicant, retrogressive Liberal administration whose policies and actions are completely repulsive to the platform of the Lapiang Manggagawa."¹

November 1964 opened the election season of the 1965 presidential race and both the Liberal and Nacionalista parties held their nomination conventions, with bitter infighting among the delegates and prospective candidates. The 1965 campaign was a protracted and ugly affair and the entire year was marked by an endless succession of corruption scandals and allegations. The Lapiang Manggagawa helped to launch the first scandal of the election season, when Lacsina in his November 6 speech mentioned Macapagal's recent abortive deal with the United Fruit Company (UFC) to lease out the Davao penal colony as a banana plantation, referring to an exposé which would be published by Lorenzo

¹PC, 11 Nov 1964, 1.

Tañada – who was shortly to become an honorary member of, and keynote speaker for, the Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM) – in the fifth issue of the *Progressive Review* in January 1965. A number of Liberal Party turncoats, among them Marcos and Pelaez, scrambled to secure the backing of the Nacionalista party in their bid for the presidency. Marcos, while politically the most capable, was at the beginning of November an unlikely bid for the slot as he faced serious opposition from key leaders within the NP. Above all, Marcos's candidacy was opposed by Amang Rodriguez, the long-time Nacionalista Party kingmaker. The timely death of Rodriguez on December 9 threw the nominating convention into turmoil and Marcos was able to secure the backing of the NP for the presidency. Macapagal, meanwhile, was nominated to run as the incumbent for the Liberal Party.

In the wake of the LP and NP conventions, the Lapiang Manggagawa fragmented. While Sison and Lacsina were eager to strike a deal with Marcos and the NP, much of the trade union apparatus, now comfortably ensconced in the LP administration, was loath to break ties with Macapagal. Twenty-one labor organizations, “with over 1,200 local chapters in more than 45 provinces” broke away from the LM to establish a separate political party. The breakaway party called itself the Consolidated Labor Party of the Philippines (CLPP) and formed under the leadership of Vicente Rafael, national president of the Philippine Labor Unity Movement (PLUM) and Antonio Policarpio, national vice president of the National Labor Union (NLU). The reason for the CLPP breakaway, which was announced on November 17 1964, was clearly expressed in the language of its founding manifesto, “Unless the common man is truly represented at the helm, any government will fail,” as the “common man” at the helm of government was the election slogan of Macapagal.² The CLPP split from the LM because Lacsina and Sison were moving to back Marcos and the NP and to break the LM from its 1963 coalition with the Liberal Party. The CLPP backed Macapagal and was officially founded on January 17 1965.³ Cipriano Cid, ever the shrewd political operative, carefully played both sides as long as possible before finally backing Marcos. As late as the middle of 1965, Cid was still occasionally attending LP rallies.⁴ Among those who backed Macapagal was Roberto Oca, for after Oca had lost in his bid as NP candidate for Mayor, Macapagal had quietly made peace with his former nemesis.⁵ The impetus for the LM's break with Macapagal and the alliance with the NP came entirely from Ignacio Lacsina and Joma Sison. As

²PFP, 28 Nov 1964, 90.

³MB, 18 Jan 1965.

⁴Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice*, 222.

⁵Macapagal would later write, “In retrospect the struggle with Oca was an unfortunate phase of our Administration. Coming to know Oca more later, whatever may be the truth about the imputations against him, I found him to be a personable and intelligent labor leader. It was gratifying that he too, must have seen at least the good intentions of the Administration for he backed my bid for reelection.” (Macapagal, *A Stone for the Edifice*, 218).

they had orchestrated the merger with the LP just two years prior, so now they threw themselves into the campaign to strike a deal with Marcos and provide support to his party.

Founding Congress of KM

On November 30 1964 – Bonifacio Day – the Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth] (KM) was founded, marking the culmination of two years of struggle by the PKP to create a functioning youth organization. The founding congress was held at the YMCA Youth Forum Hall with thirty-four charter members in attendance, most of whom had participated in the October 2 rally outside Malacañang.⁶ The elected leadership of the new organization was largely drawn from SCAUP and were personally close to Sison. The KM later recorded that “student members came mostly from the University of the Philippines (UP) and the Lyceum of the Philippines. . . . The young worker members came from *Lapiang Manggagawa*, particularly the trade unions affiliated to the National Association of Trade Unions.”⁷ As the KM grew, however, the majority of its formal membership was drawn from “the children of peasants organized under the Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka (MASAKA).”⁸

Joma Sison was election chair of the new organization; Sen. Lorenzo Tañada was made an honorary member and consultant of the KM, and delivered the closing address of the founding congress.⁹ Tañada would be integral to the development of the front organizations of the Communist Party over the next six years. The National Committee established the ambitious goal of expanding the membership of the KM to five thousand within the next six months. The founding congress produced a forty-one page handbook. Reading and agreeing with the content of this handbook was a required step for joining the KM and the basic educational work of the KM was structured around the documents it

⁶The attendance number is taken from the KM’s 1984 review of its own history, in which the KM claimed that there were “only 34 charter members at the founding congress.” (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, November 1984, PRP 08/15.01, 1; Patricio N. Abinales, “Notes on the History of the Student Movement: From crackpot to nationalist, from reformist to revolutionary,” *The Diliman Review* 31, no. 6 [1983]: 53).

⁷KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 1.

⁸Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 19-20.

⁹Elected to the National Committee were: Jose David Lapuz, who was made head of the KM Institute of National Affairs; Ricardo Valmonte, first vice chair; Prospero Palma, General Secretary; Angelo de los Reyes, vice chair for Information; Nilo Tayag, vice chair for Finance; Rodolfo Larracas, vice chair for Organization; Ernesto Macahiya, National Auditor; Carlos del Rosario, National Treasurer; Jorge Arago; Rodolfo del Rosario; Alfonso Fajardo; Norberto Basilio; Josephine Dy; and Eduardo Pescador. De los Reyes, Arago and Macahiya were also made responsible for the production of the KM’s newspaper, *Kalayaan*. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Rally for National Freedom,” *Kal* 1, no. 1 [January 1965]). Almost every one of these individuals would figure prominently in the political struggles of the next few years.

contained.¹⁰

The handbook opened with Joma Sison's speech to the founding congress. Sison began with a quote from Bonifacio and presented Andres Bonifacio as the model and inspiration of Kabataang Makabayan; he depicted the leader of the early stages of the Philippine Revolution against Spain as "the guide of militant nationalism, militant anti-imperialism, among the Filipino youth." Sison called on the youth of KM to be "imbued with the proletarian-revolutionary courage of Andres Bonifacio." (2) Sison proceeded to present a brief history of the Philippines, highlighting Spanish colonialism, American imperialism and the uninterrupted struggles of the "Filipino people" in opposition to conquest and occupation.

Sison's speech was devoid of an international perspective. He traced the roots of the KM to Bonifacio and to Rizal, making no mention of the struggles of workers in other countries or of Marxism. He deployed Marxist phrases in an incoherent fashion, but disguised their origins. He attributed, for example, the discovery of the historical roots of imperialism not to Lenin but to Rizal, who "noticed that it was a necessity of a capitalist system, reaching its final stage of development – monopoly-capital, to seek colonies."¹¹ (4) Sison continued, "There is only one nationalism that we know. It is that which refers to the national-democratic revolution, the Philippine revolution, whose main tasks now are the liquidation of imperialism and feudalism in order to achieve full national freedom and democratic reforms."¹² (6) Sison expanded on this: "The youth today face two basic problems: imperialism and feudalism. These two are the principal causes of poverty, unemployment, inadequate education, ill-health, crime and immorality which afflict the entire nation and the youth." (8) According to Sison, capitalism was not responsible for these social ills, and he claimed rather that an independent national capitalism was their solution.

It is the task of the Filipino youth to study carefully the large confrontation between the forces of imperialism and feudalism on the one side and the forces of national democracy on the other side ...
On the side of imperialism are the compradores and the big landlords.
On the side of national democracy are the national bourgeoisie, composed of Filipino entrepreneurs and traders; the petty bourgeoisie,

¹⁰Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Kabataang Makabayan Handbook: Documents of the First National Congress*, Manila, November 1964, PRP 08/16.01.

¹¹Sison was clearly attempting to use Rizal as a cover for Lenin's ideas, but it is noteworthy that he gets Lenin wrong. Colonialism predated imperialism by centuries. The imperative of monopoly capitalism was not fundamentally to "seek colonies," but for the imperialist powers to divide and re-divide the world into rival spheres of influence and control.

¹²Sison as yet made no reference to the third evil which the national-democratic revolution supposedly must liquidate: bureaucrat capitalism. (Abinales, "Notes on the History of the Student Movement," 54). Abinales correctly notes that it was only after the split with the PKP that Sison began denouncing bureaucrat capitalism.

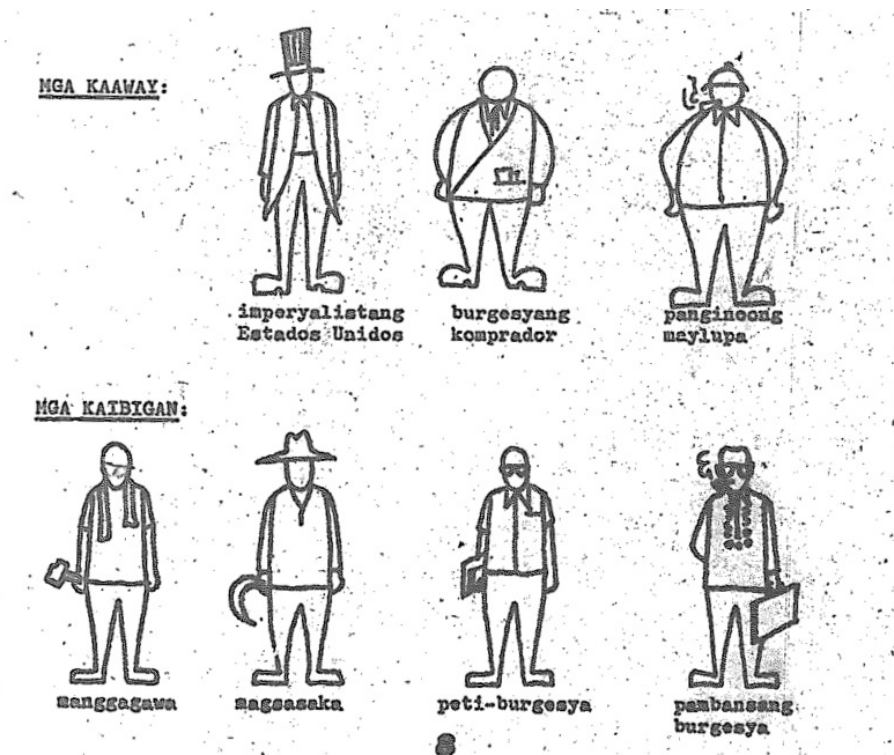


Figure 11.1: Friends and Enemies, depicting the basic Stalinist alignment of forces. US imperialism, the comprador bourgeoisie and the landlords comprise the “enemies,” while workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie make up the “friends.” From a CPP manual on drawing. *Drawing: Tulong sa Pagtuturo* [PRP 06/25.01].

composed of small-property owners, students, intellectuals and professionals; and the broad masses of our people, composed of the working class and the peasantry to which the vast majority of the Filipino youth of today belong. (9)

He called on KM to “assist in the achievement of an invincible unity of all national classes ... against the single main enemy, American imperialism.” What Sison presented in his speech was the undiluted program of Stalinism – a two-stage revolution carried out by a bloc of four classes.

The program of the KM took Sison’s formulation of achieving an invincible unity of all national classes and presented this as the KM’s “chief task.” (14) It then concretely presented how the KM would struggle to fulfill this task in four “fields”: economic, political, cultural and security. In the economic field, the KM called for state planning to protect “Filipino industrialists and traders;” “asked” the state for “genuine land reform;” and called on the state to open diplomatic ties with the socialist bloc with whom it could negotiate trade and loans in support of Filipino capitalists. The single concrete task specified in the political field

was to seek the annulment of the Anti-Subversion Law. In the cultural field, KM called for removing the cultural instruments of American imperialism – the Peace Corps, USIS, USAID, Voice of America (VOA), etc., and also demanded wider use of “Pilipino in our educational and governmental system.” Finally, as a means of counteracting “decadence, delinquency and immorality” KM proposed to direct civic work projects, “such as relief work and community improvement projects, and other self-improvement projects.” (18) In the field of security, the KM called on youth to undergo “ROTC and other forms of military training with the clear intention of developing our own security forces independent of American indoctrination.” (19) This was a bizarre conception; the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) had been designed from the ground up by the US military. The primary role of the “security forces” in the Philippines had always been the suppression of dissent, and ROTC training was crafted towards this end. The program concluded by calling for the abrogation of the basing treaties.

The next document in the handbook was the constitution, which opened membership to any “Filipino citizen between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five.” (24) Every member was required to pay a one peso application fee, and membership dues of two pesos a year. (32) The handbook concluded with the closing speech of Lorenzo Tañada, in which he called on the youth to make their voices heard. “Here is perhaps the most significant task that the youth can undertake towards building the nation. You are not yet decision-makers. The direction of national affairs is not yet in your hands. But you can speak forth as often and as publicly as you can on national issues of the day. When your elders prove stubborn or recalcitrant, dramatize your stand, demonstrate, march and rally in support of a cause.” (39)

In sum, the founding documents of the Kabataang Makabayan made clear the political character of the organization. There was no mention within its program of a single measure in the interests of the working class, as somehow support for national capitalists would cause benefits to trickle down to workers. The KM was founded as a reformist youth organization to carry out pressure politics in the interests of the national bourgeoisie.

January 25, 1965

The January-February issue of the *Progressive Review*, which was published in the middle of January and was dedicated to the question of the Laurel–Langley agreement, was the last to come out before the LM completed its break with Macapagal. The issue included the manifestos which had been circulated by the LM, students and the Philippine Chamber of Industry (PCI) during the October 2 protest at Malacañang prior to Macapagal’s visit to the United States. Sison’s editorial, entitled “Towards a Broad National Front,” stated

The principal objective of the Filipino nation today is the triumph

of Philippine democracy over American imperialism in all its covert and overt forms in every field of endeavor.

All classes and forces in Philippine society – with the clear exception of the compradores and landlords, allies of American imperialism – are now being forced by objective conditions to mobilize themselves into one massive movement determined to accomplish the tasks of the Philippine Revolution.

The task of bringing about genuine national freedom and democratic reforms can be achieved only after the successful anti-imperialist and anti-feudal union of the national bourgeoisie composed of Filipino industrialists and traders; the pretty [*sic!*] bourgeoisie composed of small-property owners, intellectuals, students and professionals; and the broad masses of the people composed of the working class and the peasantry.¹³

One of the key tasks of this national united front, according to Sison, was to build ties with socialist countries. He wrote

It is the strategy of the United States to emphasize an agricultural economy in the Philippines in order to prevent Filipino industrialists from being attracted to or being able to take advantage of industrial aid from Communist countries.

If ever a national united front comes out into the political arena of the nation, it should demand not only liberation from American imperialism but also cooperative relations with all peoples sympathetic to the Philippine Revolution and willing to give industrial aid instead of the neo-colonialist stabilization loans that American financing institutions always force upon client-states. (4)

This call for the formation of a national united front was an advertisement to the political forces in the election of 1965 that the LM and the KM were seeking to form an alliance. Sison claimed that “a more astounding mass demonstration is now called for, preferably on the opening of congress, in order to deliver a more convincing blow against American imperialism and to inspire the nation to fight.” (3)

The eager young political organization, KM, found its first political opportunity in the explosion of mass outrage over the murder of Filipinos on US bases which, along with the Lapiang Manggagawa, it labored to channel behind an anti-Macapagal campaign. In late November a sixteen year old Aeta youth, Rogelio Balagtas, had been shot dead in Crow Valley by Airman First Class Larry Cole on a target range, where Cole had been standing guard. In mid-December, a fisherman named Gonzalo Villedo had been been fired upon by a US Marine and

¹³Sison, “Towards a Broad National Front,” 1-2.

was likewise killed. The two killings were the latest in a series of shootings of Filipinos carried out with impunity by US forces on their bases in the country.¹⁴ On December 27, the KM joined a five thousand person protest rally in Angeles city, which it jointly sponsored with the Nacionalista Party youth movement, denouncing the base murders.¹⁵ Joma Sison, Tonypet Araneta and Norberto Basilio, took the rostrum alongside a member of the Angeles City Council and leaders of the NP youth movement.¹⁶

It was with the January 25 1965 rally in front of the US embassy that the newly founded KM burst onto the national scene. The numbers reported to have attended this rally vary widely depending on the source. Sison claims that 20,000 participated; it was 15,000, according to Fuller; and more than 5,000, according to the *Philippines Free Press*.¹⁷ Most contemporary newspaper accounts placed the number of protesters at five thousand. The January 25 rally was initially organized by the Lapiang Manggagawa, and was joined by KM, the Lyceum Student Society under Ricardo Valmonte, SCAUP under Norberto Basilio, and a new organization, Association of Citizens to Improve Our Nation (ACTION) under Santiago Guerrero.¹⁸ In the first week of the year, these groups had gathered in the headquarters of NATU and elected Tonypet Araneta to serve as the over-all chairman of the rally. In the words of Nick Joaquin, Araneta “brought in, in his single person, both Forbes Park and the Escolta – that is, the rising Filipino entrepreneurial class and the industrialists: the old and new money.”¹⁹ Tonypet also brought with him the Nacionalista Party, of which his father, J. Antonio Araneta, was the General Secretary.²⁰

The committee prepared a manifesto for the rally which stated that “consigned by the colonial order to a minor position in the economy, Filipino businessmen are now pressed farther on to the brink of extinction. Decontrol has not only deprived them of the protection and support of the government but has also brought about the condition in which American monopoly capital can fully exploit its imperialist privileges under parity and the Laurel–Langley agreement.”²¹ The manifesto issued a set of ten demands in the name of the toiling masses, the entrepreneurs, youth and intellectuals, among them the demand for “decisive

¹⁴Napoleon Rama, “Killings at US Military Bases,” *PPF*, December 1964, 2, 72; Napoleon Rama, “The Old Notions Must Go,” *PPF*, January 1965, 7, 72.

¹⁵Rodolfo G. Tupas, “The Thorny Bases Issue,” *Sunday Times Magazine*, January 1965, 10–12.

¹⁶Dr. Carlos Sandico of the Angeles City Council, and Edison Garcia and Norberto Balagtas of the Guagua youth movement, also spoke. Prospero Palma led the leafleting done by KM members.

¹⁷Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 35; Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 19.

¹⁸Also known as Ang Kapatiran sa Ika-Uunlad Natin [The Brotherhood for our Progress] (AKSIUN), this was the PKP front organization of the unemployed.

¹⁹Quijano de Manila, “Man Alive!,” *PPF*, February 1965, 4.

²⁰Teodosio A. Lansang, *In Summing Up: A Personal and Political History* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1999), 51.

²¹Manila, “Man Alive!,” 4.

and universal implementation of the Agricultural Land Reform Code without further ado.”²² This demand reveals that the LM and its affiliates had not yet effected a complete break with the Liberal Party, as later in the year, when the KM and LM had shifted firmly into the NP camp, they denounced Macapagal’s land reform program as intrinsically reactionary. The LM manifesto called for a minimum wage hike of two pesos per day, marking the first time that the LM – the Workers’ Party – had many any demand regarding wages. The manifesto admitted that this hike would not produce a “wage capable of sustaining a decent life ... [it] does not represent what we want, but what appears to be immediately attainable.”²³ The manifesto also demanded “immediate action to relieve Filipino businessmen from a foreign-inspired credit squeeze,” and concluded by calling for “extension of diplomatic and commercial relations with all countries willing to deal with us on the basis of equality and mutual respect,” an appeal for trade with the Communist bloc.²⁴

The KM prepared the first issue of its publication *Kalayaan* for distribution at the rally. It was six pages long, and contained the program of the KM, a list of the recently elected officers and portions of Sison’s and Tañada’s speeches at the founding congress. While the KM was a leading signatory of the LM manifesto, the youth organization also issued a separate manifesto with a set of twelve demands, the first ten of which were a direct parallel of those put forward in the joint LM document, but the KM called for a four peso wage hike and said that the credit crunch on Philippine business should be alleviated with loans from “socialist countries.” In addition to the ten demands of the joint manifesto, the KM added the demands that “Filipino mercenaries” fighting in Vietnam should be investigated as a danger to national security, and that the law mandating compulsory Spanish language education in college be repealed.²⁵ What is striking about the manifestos of both the LM and the KM is that they were not about the killings on the US bases, as the January 25 protest was not initially planned to be about the killings at all.

The rally was scheduled to take place in front of congress during Macapagal’s State of the Nation Address. Beginning in 1965, major protests staged during the annual State of the Nation speech would become an increasingly significant factor in the country’s political life, culminating in the First Quarter Storm of 1970. The basic logic of every one of these protests was to pressure the reconvening government to implement measures on behalf of the people. This intention

²²Lapiang Manggagawa (LM) et al., “The January 25th Manifesto,” *PR 6* (1965), 14.

²³*Ibid.*, 16.

²⁴*ibid.* The manifesto was accompanied by a Final Proclamation of the Jan. 25th Rally issued over the signature of Tonypet Araneta, Chairman of the rally, but the only noticeable addition in this document is that the youth of the Philippines were said to be “imploring the aid of God” in their demand for “an end to colonialism.” (Lapiang Manggagawa (LM) et al., *The January 25th Manifesto*, January 1965).

²⁵Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Twelve Demands of the KM,” *PR 6* (1965), 18–19, 25.

was printed in the first issue of *Kalayaan* distributed at the rally, which stated that “Kabataang Makabayan, in accordance with its Principles and Declaration, has decided to hold a mass demonstration before Congress on January 25th, on the occasion of the opening of Congress, and thereafter to march to the US Embassy in order to express the demands of the entire Filipino youth and the Filipino people for national freedom, for wider democratic liberties and for social upliftment.”²⁶ The January 25 rally was moved to the US Embassy because a simultaneous demonstration of reserve officers in front of congress would have conflicted with the rally and the organizers chose the Embassy as an replacement venue.

Two days before the January 25 protest, the group held a press conference at the National Press Club. Cipriano Cid spoke, decrying rumors in the press that the rally would burn down Ambassador Blair’s residence or that they would be joined by “bolo-men.”²⁷ Peasants from *MASAKA* were brought in by hired provincial buses from Bataan, Zambales, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Quezon, Laguna, and Bulacan, and the rally began at five in the afternoon. The protestors marched from Agrifina Circle to the Embassy, and Tonypet Araneta, Cipriano Cid, and Amado Inciong rode in a jeep at the head of the protest march. Peasants, the unemployed, workers, youth, students and businessmen carried torches, arriving at the embassy after dark. The protestors kicked off the event by burning an effigy of Uncle Sam.²⁸ A placard that read “DM Unfinished Revolution” was attached to the effigy and was consumed by the flames.

Mrs. Iluminada Magtoto – the widow of Justo Magtoto, one of the men killed on the US bases – spoke briefly, followed by Tonypet Araneta and Cipriano Cid. The protest displayed thirty-one coffins meant to represent the number of Filipinos who had been killed on the US bases. Some of the protestors’ placards read “Where is the Unfinished Revolution of DM?” and a great number proclaimed “Recto was Right!”²⁹ Joma Sison addressed the rally, “Our strength lies in our being able to cooperate with other patriotic national organizations and on the conditions obtaining now in the country particularly those propelled by decontrol and attempts of big American corporations to run down Filipino capitalists. We are siding with Filipino capitalists.”³⁰

Perfecto Tera expressed the general conception of the protest when he wrote about the event, “A united front is necessary in order for a movement to be virile and successful, and this united front must be composed of a broad mass base, the

²⁶ KM, “Rally for National Freedom.”

²⁷ Emilio Espinosa, Jr., “The January 25th Demonstration,” *PR*, no. 6 (1965), 3. The *Bulletin* referred to the threat of “bolo-wielding religious fanatics.” (MB, 25 Jan 1965). The fanatic bolo-wielder was a bogey-man of long-standing. When such bolo-wielders did enter Manila, with the Lapiang Malaya in 1967, they were slaughtered by government troops.

²⁸ Perfecto Tera Jr., “The January 25th March,” *PC*, January 1965, 5.

²⁹ “Two Rallies Against Killings in U.S. Bases,” *PPF*, January 1965, 66; Manila, “Man Alive!,” 67.

³⁰ Sison’s speech was quoted in MB, 29 Jan 1965.

peasantry and the laboring class, with the aid of the national bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and the youth. A movement that is led by a class or isolated sectors of society can never be successful".³¹ He continued,

A contradiction has developed between national bourgeoisie and American business, for American business interests here precisely impede the growth of a national industry, and this national industry needs to remove the impediment to its growth in order that it may develop.

Thus the contradictions here have become so acute, that even the national bourgeoisie is forced to go along with the peasants in their struggle for a better society. The national bourgeoisie will only go as far as the removal of the Yankee business here so that it can expand its own interests. This of course would give birth to other contradictions that would finally set them in opposition to the peasants and workers, but this comes much later. The more urgent task of a national liberation movement is the removal of American business from its pedestal and lordly position so that our own industries would survive and a speedy agrarian reform.³²

Imperialism does not undermine class divisions, but rather accentuates them, widening the gap between the national bourgeoisie – who are connected to the world market and imperialist finance capital by a thousand threads – and working class and peasantry. Far from binding them together into a united force, it sharpens the contradiction between them. Tera, however, assured his readers that the class conflict between the workers and capitalists in the Philippines “comes much later,” and concluded by enjoining the presidential candidates to take note of the program of the K.M.

³¹Tera Jr., “The January 25th March.”

³²Tera Jr., “The January 25th March.” The source reads “rational” and not “national” liberation.

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Backing Marcos

With every major historical zig-zag, they are compelled to revamp history all over again.

— Leon Trotsky, *The Stalin School of Falsification*

The central focus of the PKP's support for Macapagal in 1963 had been Maphilindo, Konfrontasi, and the struggle over Malaysia. In 1965, the PKP led all of its front organizations to shift their allegiance to the Nacionalista Party and the presidential candidacy of Ferdinand Marcos. The decisive factor in this decision was the question of Vietnam. In March 1965, US President Lyndon Johnson drastically escalated US military aggression in Vietnam, launching a saturation bombing campaign that lasted for three years. At Washington's request, Macapagal moved to send a contingent of Filipino troops to Vietnam in support of the US war in the country. Marcos postured in the Senate as being opposed to Macapagal's move to send troops.

The PKP seized on the mass outrage at Washington's barbarism to form a new organization, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), which would emerge as a vital component of the later struggles of the Communist Party. On the basis of his alleged opposition to Philippine participation in the US war in Vietnam, the KM, LM, BRPF and MASAKA supported Marcos presidency, but within weeks of his election, Marcos had publicly promised Washington that he would send troops to Vietnam.

Breaking with the Liberal Party

In the same issue of the *Progressive Review* as the Manifestos of the LM and KM, Ignacio Lacsina, general secretary of the Lapiang Manggagawa, wrote an article entitled, "Lapiang Manggagawa and the Liberal Administration."¹ Lacsina opened by informing his readers that "The Lapiang Manggagawa is an attempt to provide

¹Ignacio P Lacsina, "Lapiang Manggagawa and the Liberal Administration," *PR* 6 (1965), 26-31.

the nation a decisive alternative to the existing political parties of the *status quo* – the Liberal and Nacionalista parties. There is no real difference between the LP and the NP.”² In August 1963, Lacsina had written the merger document of the LM and LP, in which he had stated that that the LP was “energetically” carrying out sweeping reforms and that the “forces of reaction” had “banded together” in the NP. Now he claimed that there was no difference between the two. In but a few months time, he and Sison would lead the Lapiang Manggagawa to support the Nacionalista Party as the more progressive organization. Lacsina went on to ask the crucial question: “But if the Liberals are as bad as the Nacionalistas, why has the Lapiang Manggagawa allied itself with the Liberal Party? What was the basis of this alliance? What is the status of the alliance today?” (27)

Lacsina’s answer was that “early in the life of the present Liberal administration, it proclaimed itself as the people’s vehicle for the completion of the Unfinished Revolution . . . In brief, it tended to extend democracy and to create the conditions for economic development and social progress for all.” (28) Likewise, “in the field of foreign policy, it gave the appearance of striking out on an independent path of equality with the West – particularly the United States, and closer friendship and cooperation with fellow Asian nations . . . Indeed, the Liberal administration appeared for a time as a self-willed, creative force in the international scene, militant in the cause of peace, national self-determination, and human brotherhood.” He continued

This was the Liberal administration with which the Lapiang Manggagawa allied itself. Our purpose was to lend mass support and provide encouragement to the progressive trends visible during the early days of the Liberal administration.

Lately, however, it would seem the Liberal administration has made a complete, outrageous turn-about, betraying the great hopes which its earlier pronouncements and actions had awakened in countless Filipino hearts. Instead of pressing onward with the Unfinished Revolution, it has obviously transformed itself into reckless instrument of counter-revolution. (28)

Lacsina gave no accounting for this “outrageous turn-about;” he had no explanation for why the LP moved from revolution to counter-revolution. At the head of the LM he was directly responsible for subordinating the new and independent workers party to the ruling class through an alliance with the LP, and yet he would not account for the LP’s behavior. The truth was that at no point did Macapagal represent a progressive force, someone who embodied the interests of the working class, but rather, like every bourgeois politician, served the interests of the ruling class. The alliance of the LM and LP was based entirely on lies and illusions, which had been painstakingly cultivated by Lacsina

²Lacsina, “Lapiang Manggagawa and the Liberal Administration,” 26.

and Sison. Lacsina concluded his article, “we can assure you that the Lapiang Manggagawa is determined not to play any part in the ignoble role of the Liberal administration as the ‘American boy’ in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia.” (31) With the publication of this article, the relationship between the LM and the LP was effectively severed.

Vietnam

The election campaign of 1965 was an extended, grueling and vitriolic affair as corruption scandal followed corruption scandal on a daily basis for the space of a year. Reading systematically through the press of 1965 is a wearying task. Washington somewhat preferred a Marcos presidency, although not strongly, as Marcos was clearly a more capable politician than Macapagal, however useful Macapagal may have been to US interests. Just before Marcos launched his campaign, the FBI briefly arrested Stonehill in the United States and then released him again, allowing Marcos to kick off his campaign by accusing Macapagal of taking money from Stonehill. Macapagal responded that Marcos had taken money from Stonehill. They were both telling the truth.³

Marcos perfected the art of the presidential campaign as festival. Imelda and he would sing together and his stump speeches were a rousing affair. He commissioned a biography and film of his life to coincide with the election. They were largely a thread of lies – the book a manufactured depiction of his past as a guerrilla in the Second World War, that Washington in particular could have called into question had it seen fit to do so. The film was supposedly based on his youth as a lawyer falsely accused of murder, entitled *Iginuhit ng Tadhana* [Drawn by Fate]. It starred Gloria Romero as Imelda Marcos and was banned by Macapagal as election propaganda in late September. The Supreme Court overturned the ban, a significant defeat for Macapagal, as multitudes flocked to see the banned film.⁴

The decisive political topic throughout the election was Vietnam. On March 2 1965, LBJ launched Operation Rolling Thunder, a saturation bombing campaign of North Vietnam that lasted for three years. The KM staged an initial demonstration at the US embassy on March 12, raising two issues: an end to parity rights and the bombing of Vietnam. Two hundred students and workers attended.⁵ The KM issued a manifesto denouncing “American economic privileges” and the presence of the US military bases. While the manifesto of the KM focused on parity rights, the protestors’ placards were almost entirely about the bombing of Vietnam.

³Napoleon Rama, “NP Salvo in Cebu,” *PPF*, January 1965, 2, 68.

⁴Kerima Polotan, “Ginupit ng Tadhana?,” *PPF*, September 1965, 4, 36–B; “It’s banned again,” *PPF*, September 1965, 97.

⁵Tonypet Araneta, Jose David Lapuz, Carlos del Rosario, Ricardo Valmonte, and Hari Sidhu, an Indian student at UP, all spoke at the rally.

The manifesto concluded, “Filipinos, unite! You have nothing to lose but the Americans.”⁶

On March 26, Lacsina spoke “on the policies and platform” of the LM in the UP theater in an event jointly sponsored by SCAUP and the UP Student Council. Lacsina urged “the Filipino youth to unite with the Labor Party in its fight for the emancipation of the country from the exploitation of the ‘landlord-comprador-American imperialist alliance.’” He depicted the LM as independent of both the LP and the NP and “condemned these parties for working only for the interests of the landlord-comprador sector and for serving as ‘puppets’ of the colonial forces in the country.”⁷

In May, Macapagal committed the Philippines to send a two thousand man contingent of engineers and security forces in support of the US war drive in Vietnam. Macapagal used an appropriations bill of ₱25 million to implement the measure, and thus “violated the constitutional requirement of a two-thirds vote of all members of congress for a declaration of war.”⁸ Teddy Locsin wrote an editorial in *Philippines Free Press*, “Declaration of War,” in which he correctly pointed out that “the targets for bombing in an underdeveloped country like North Vietnam are few. There is no military advantage in bombing a village – unless the United States is prepared to exterminate a whole people. Is genocide the price of US victory in Vietnam?”⁹

Marcos seized upon Macapagal’s move, and denounced the appropriations bill as “tantamount to a declaration of war.” He stated that “There is a palpable attempt to stampede the nation into entering a foreign war without the slightest regard for its future consequences to this country. This attempt in turn requires a favorable atmosphere of hysteria and obfuscation in which the free and open discussion of this issue can be proscribed.”¹⁰ In words that history would render ironic, Marcos warned of the “clear and imminent danger to our liberties” and of the “compulsive, totalitarian spirit of the Macapagal regime.” Macapagal had seized upon the crisis in Vietnam to indulge his “penchant for totalitarian control – and dictatorship.”¹¹ There is danger of retrojecting onto Marcos, the politician of 1965, the dictator of 1972. The tendency toward dictatorship and martial law was already present, waiting to take open political form in the face of social crisis, but this tendency was latent not so much in Ferdinand Marcos as it was within the entire Philippine bourgeoisie. This is why, to a man, they were forever engaged in the almost hysterical denunciation of their rivals for ‘dictatorship’ and ‘fascism.’ Politics was a game of Trip to Jerusalem – musical chairs – and

⁶MB, 13 March 1965.

⁷PC, 24 Mar, 2; 31 Mar 1965. Ruben Torres was responsible for gaining sponsorship for the event.

⁸Teodoro L. Locsin, “‘Declaration of War,’” *PPF*, May 1965, 83.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰“Marcos On Vietnam,” *PPF*, June 1965, 7.

¹¹*PPF*, 79, “Marcos On Vietnam.”

everyone was terrified that the music would stop, martial law be declared, and they would not be sitting in Malacañang. Marcos was simply the last man seated when martial law was finally declared.

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF)

It was in the context of Johnson's escalation of the American war in Vietnam and the threat of Filipino forces being sent in support of US imperialism, that the Philippine chapter of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) held its founding convention on May 19 1965.¹² On May 20, Hernando Abaya, who had traveled to the UK on a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) fellowship, met with Bertrand Russell in his villa in North Wales and secured his support for the formation of the Philippine chapter.¹³ The BRPF, as we will see, would be a central participant in the rivalry of the Maoists and Stalinists in two years time. One of its most useful features was that its sponsorship by Russell provided it with a plausible denial of its deep ties with the Communist Party, as Abaya would later write, "my chairmanship of the Philippine Council of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, whose main aim was 'the preservation of man' through peaceful means, was taken as *prima facie* evidence of my 'communist ties,' because Lord Russell was, in the eyes of the omnipresent CIA and its native stooges, an avowed 'commie.' The same Bertrand Russell, heralded as 'a saint-genius' and eulogized by the world of letters, science and the arts as one of the greatest minds of the 20th Century! Yet military intelligence considered my active involvement with this saintly man subversive!"¹⁴ The hypocrisy of Abaya's feigned incredulity will become clear as we examine the record of the BRPF in the Philippines.

In June, the KM formed the Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam (PCFSV) which began to prepare for a rally to be held on June 18.¹⁵ The PCFSV distributed a leaflet – one side in English, the other Tagalog – which read "we appeal for support in one form or another to all individuals and organizations sympathetic to our cause and desirous of national freedom, constitutional rule and peace."¹⁶ On June 18, the KM led the protest rally which gathered outside Congress, where it was joined by both the PCFSV and BRPF. "The student and labor leaders kept a continuous barrage of abuse against the congressmen for

¹²The constitution of the BRPF called for a nine-member executive committee, elected by a general body to a two year term (IV. 1) and the Executive committee would elect from its members a chairman and a vice-chairman, and the Executive Secretary in turn was appointed by the chair. (Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), *First National Peace Conference on Vietnam*, February [1968], PRP 12/17.01).

¹³Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 151-160.

¹⁴Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 3.

¹⁵Ricardo Malay was made chair of the organization.

¹⁶Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam, *Pledge and Appeal of the Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam*, 1965.

voting for the passage of the aid-to-Vietnam bill. The demonstrators heaped praises on Nacionalista party senators who had opposed the house-approved Vietnam aid bill and urged them ‘not to be tools of American imperialism.’¹⁷ Contemporary press reports state that 1,500 attended the rally and the *Philippines Free Press* quoted a KM member who “confided that about 80% of the estimated 1,500 June 18 demonstrators were actually UP students.”¹⁸ At five in the afternoon the protestors left Agrifina circle and marched to the US Embassy where they continued their protest.¹⁹ A similar rally, drawing two hundred people, was staged in Baguio. Both the Baguio and Manila rallies declared that they were orchestrated to help “our Senate make up its mind wisely.”²⁰ The next day, June 19, the Kabataang Makabayan held its Greater Manila Regional Conference at the Bulwagang Plaridel of the National Press Club (NPC). The organization was growing and it was necessary to elect a Greater Manila Regional Council.²¹

August marked the first attempt by the KM to run in the UP student elections. The KM and SCAUP organized a student political party, which they named Makabansa [Patriotic].²² Ruben Torres ran on the Makabansa slate for chair of the 1965-66 Student Council, having served as chair of the Public and National Affairs Committee in the 1964-65 Student Council.²³ Makabansa described itself as a party of “Militant and Progressive Nationalism,” and its Manifesto stated, “While the entire constituency of the University, including the present University administration, is assumed to be committed to nationalism, it is the singular task of Makabansa to stress and demonstrate the genuine content of a true progressive

¹⁷MB, 19 Jun 1965, 11.

¹⁸In a speech delivered in December 1965, Sison claimed that ten thousand people had attended this rally. (H.C. Veneracion Jr., “The Demonstrating Youth,” *PHP*, July 1965, 20; SND, 161).

¹⁹The Committee published and distributed a statement by Lorenzo Tañada and another by Bertrand Russell. Jose David Lapuz addressed the crowd. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *A Call for Action from Kabataang Makabayan: Oppose Philippine Involvement in American War of Atrocity in South Vietnam*, June 1965; Lorenzo M Tañada and Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam, *Oppose the Vietnam Bill*, 1965; Bertrand Russell and Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam, “Free World” *Barbarism: The War of Atrocity in Vietnam*, 1965; Veneracion Jr., “The Demonstrating Youth,” 74). On June 21, a press release from Beijing hailed the KM rally. (MB, 22 Jun 1965).

²⁰Baguio Student Committee to Oppose the Vietnam Bill, *Manifesto*, June 1965.

²¹Carlos del Rosario chaired the conference, Adelberto Silva read a poem by Rizal, and Joma Sison delivered the main address. Elections were held followed by additional speeches from Jose David Lapuz and Francisco Nemenzo. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Agenda of Kabataang Makabayan 1965 Greater Manila Regional Conference*, Manila, June 1965).

²²The student party brought the Beta Sigma fraternity under Horacio Morales, Bagong Asya [New Asia] under Nur Misuari, and the Plebeians under Ruben Torres into a political union with SCAUP and the KM. (Nick Joaquin, *A Cadre’s Road to Damascus: The Ruben Torres Story* [Quezon City: Milflores Publishing Inc, 2003], 57). Morales would later become a member of the CPP. Misuari was a member of the KM and would later found the Muslim separatist movement, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

²³Nur Misuari coordinated the Makabansa campaign, heading its Information Office. (PC, 25 Aug; 22 Sep 1965, 7).

nationalism in all areas of our national life – in our economy, in our politics, and in our culture.”²⁴ Among other things, the Makabansa platform called for TV sets in the dorms, extending cafeteria hours beyond nine at night, and the installation of more drinking fountains on campus.²⁵ Makabansa did not win the positions of either chair or vice-chair of the council, but did secure three of twelve at-large council member seats. According to Nemenzo, “the curious thing is that Ruben was leading all the way during the campaign, but not quite at the very end. He performed so badly at the *miting de avance* that our analysis concluded that he lost the election because of his disappointing performance there.”²⁶

Endorsing the Nacionalista Party

On August 19, the KM National Council voted to approve an eight page statement, entitled “Stand of the Filipino Youth,” which had been written by Sison and which he read before the general membership on September 5.²⁷ The document announced that it was the program of the KM, and stated that the task of the KM was to take “all measures to promote the proper course of these elections towards the development of Filipino nationalism.” This task was three-fold: first, the KM needed to present the basic national issues and problems; second, it needed to expose the basic weaknesses of all three political parties; and third, it needed to tell “the people who are those candidates who agree completely with our Programme or who approximate it,” and give these candidates “objective and critical support.”

The program continued “While the Liberal Party and the Party for Philippine Progress are clearly reactionary in their platforms as well as in their claimed accomplishments and actual deeds, the Nacionalista Party has manifested the most protestation for nationalism. It is because within its ranks there are those who would rather defend the interests of the national entrepreneurs than sell out to foreign monopolies.” (2) Sison provided not a word of explanation for why the Liberal Party, which he had hailed as “energetically implementing reforms” and “carrying out the Unfinished Revolution,” was now “clearly reactionary.” The platform of the LP had not changed an iota since the 1963 election, when the LM had merged with it and backed it enthusiastically. At the time Sison had denounced the NP as the bastion of reactionary forces, and yet now he hailed it as the more progressive of the two parties.

The truth, of course, is that there was not the slightest substantive difference between the two parties. In 1963, Marcos had been the head of the Liberal Party and had signed the merger document drawn up by Ignacio Lacsina, but now he

²⁴PC, 11 Aug 1965, 7.

²⁵PC, 4 Aug 1965, 7.

²⁶Joaquin, *A Kadre's Road to Damascus*, 63.

²⁷Jose Ma. Sison and Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Stand of the Filipino Youth*, August 1965, PRP 08/13.31.

was the Nacionalista's candidate for President. In order to defend their support for first one section of the bourgeoisie and then another, Sison and the leadership of the Stalinist PKP were compelled to cultivate a sense of collective political amnesia. They rewrote the past routinely, attempting to alter or to erase even the recent history of their own movement. Assisting Sison and his fellow leaders in this endeavor was the rapid turn-over rate among activists. Very few of the rank-and-file KM members of 1965 were still part of the movement in 1971, when the KM enthusiastically endorsed the Liberal Party again.²⁸

Sison continued

In conformity with the dictates of the US State Department, the Macapagal administration has faithfully publicized a sham socio-economic programme, recommended by the American agents in the World Bank ...

The original and actual intent of the Macapagal Land Reform Programme is to accelerate the turn-over of Philippine agriculture to American agro-corporations and institute direct American control of agricultural credit. ...

In foreign policy, the Macapagal administration has assiduously tied itself to the tactics of American imperialism which are directed towards splitting the Afro-Asian anti-imperialist movement and preserving imperialism and neo-colonialism. (4)

As recently as January 25, the KM had stated in their manifesto distributed at the embassy protest rally that the land reform program was "intended to emancipate the peasantry from such exploitative institutions as the landlord, the usurer, and the rural-urban middleman represent."²⁹ Now they claimed that the "original and actual intent" of Macapagal's Land Reform was the service of imperialism. Sison wrote the primer to promote this Land Reform, the LM flogged it to the peasantry, and the PKP built its peasant wing, MASAKA, out of a campaign of support for this Land Reform program. Sison buried all of this, hoping it seems, that no one would ever notice.

Turning to explicit endorsements, Sison wrote that the KM could not "as yet" back a candidate for president. "If, as yet, no presidential candidate is mentioned here, as deserving our support, it only means that he needs to take extraordinary measures to attract the nationalist voters on the grounds of nationalism." (6) This message was directly targeted at Marcos. Given the KM's explicit rejection

²⁸Even much of its central leadership suffered a similar attrition. Jose David Lapuz would go on to study at Glasgow in the late 1960s, returning in 1971 to be awarded as one of The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) by President Marcos, and then later became a presidential consultant for Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Norberto Basilio joined Marcos Foreign Affairs Ministry in 1970, and served as ambassador under both the Ramos and Estrada administrations. Many others simply disappeared from public life.

²⁹Lapiang Manggagawa (LM) et al., "The January 25th Manifesto."

of both the LP and Manglapus' Party for Philippine Progress (PPP), it was logical that the only viable candidate was Marcos, but to secure the endorsement of the KM, Marcos needed to take "extraordinary measures." It is not clear what "extraordinary measures" Marcos took, if any, but, by November, he had secured the support of the KM and the LM, both of which endorsed his candidacy.

Sison led the KM to endorse Fernando Lopez, the sugar baron, for vice-president. The KM endorsed Tañada, Castañeda, Lagumbay, and Jovito Salonga in the Senate. In the House, they endorsed Sotero H. Laurel, Joaquin Rocas, Aguedo Agbayani, Felicísimo Ocampo, Leon Guinto, Jr., Emilio Cortez, Rogaciano Mercado, Ramon Mitra, Jr., Jose B. Laurel Jr., and "several other candidates." That final formulation left open the possibility of additional endorsements prior to the election. The program noted that "a significant percentage of our people are already so disgusted with our present-day dominant politics that they refuse to register and vote in these forthcoming elections." (8) The paramount political task for a Marxist leadership would be to cultivate this disgust and build an independent political party of the working class. Sison, and the KM and LM, on the contrary, attempted to restore faith in, and whip up support for, sections of the existing political establishment.

On September 11, the Lapiang Manggagawa held its second national convention, during which the LM officially ended its coalition with the Liberal Party. A resolution ending the coalition was presented to the delegates by President Cipriano Cid, which claimed that the LP had "abandoned the basic principles and goals on which the coalition was founded." Lacsina "charged the Macapagal administration with insincerity in implementing land reform." The convention passed an additional fourteen resolutions on economic and social questions.³⁰

The KM Institute for National Affairs, under the directorship of Jose David Lapuz, held a series of lectures every Saturday at four in the afternoon from September 11 to October 16.³¹ After the last lecture, participants in the lecture series were awarded certificates of participation, which the KM stated were "regarded as tokens of nationalist enlightenment."³² On September 25, Sison spoke before the Institute of National Affairs of the KM, at Freedom Hall in the Lyceum, delivering a speech entitled "National Freedom and Class Freedom," in which he sharpened his denunciation of the Liberal Party and increased his support for the Nacionalistas. He told his audience,

In this country and at this stage of our development, we should never think that one class or one leader alone can achieve our national liberation. Let us think of and work for the solidarity of all anti-

³⁰"Labor Party breaks with LP," *PPP*, September 1966, 97.

³¹Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Lecture Series on Nationalism*, 1965. This leaflet also reveals that, since the November 1964 founding congress, Ana Maria Nemenzo and Ricardo Diaz had been added to the list of KM National Council members.

³²Kabataang Makabayan (KM) Institute of National Affairs, *Rules of the Institute*, PRP 08/14.01.

imperialist and anti-feudal classes, groups and individuals for the common objective of winning national freedom and democracy from that single power which dictates upon us, which exploits us and which acts as the big brother of the Kuomintang tycoons and the comprador-landlords in our exploited society. Let us endeavor to work for a broad united front in the nationalist movement within which national democratic and progressive forces are assured of civil liberties. Let the patriotic businessmen, the students, the workers, the professionals and the peasants unite into an invincible force against American imperialism and feudalism. And let the vast majority of our people – the peasantry and the working class, be the massive base of our democracy.³³

Having presented the need for workers and peasants to join with “patriotic businessmen” in a broad united front, Sison then turned to an examination of each of the “Neo-colonial Parties.” Regarding the Nacionalista Party he stated

By and large, the Nacionalista Party – because of its comprador-landlord members – can easily be transformed into a willing instrument of American imperialism. But it can be asserted, with plenty of grounds, that it is the only party among the three parties which has so far most associated itself with and enlisted anti-imperialists and anti-imperialist groups at certain times. It is the only party which has so far projected to the nation nationalist leaders like Claro M. Recto and Lorenzo M. Tañada. That this is so can be explained by the fact that since the time that the Nacionalista Party opposed vigorously the Parity Amendment and the Bell Trade Act, patriotic businessmen, especially the entrepreneurial group, have relied heavily on it.³⁴ (51)

Sison reiterated his denunciation of the Liberal Party from his August 19 presentation to the KM and declared that the LP “must be rejected by the nationalist movement” as an agent of US imperialism. His statements were a damning indictment not only of Macapagal and the Liberal Party, but most particularly of the Lapiang Manggagawa’s merger with them. Sison never mentioned that he was the Vice President of the LM, a party which until one week prior had been

³³SND, 48. In the 1972 edition of *SND*, Sison added the sentence – “Let a new type of leadership, that of the proletariat, show us the correct path” – at the end of this paragraph. Sison’s call was still for a united front with the bourgeoisie, but somehow proletarian leadership would show the way forward. (Jose Ma. Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy* [Manila: Amado V. Hernandez Memorial Foundation, 1972], 121).

³⁴When a second edition of *SND* was published in 1972, and the KM had broken with the NP and was again in an alliance with the Liberal Party, Sison cut this paragraph from his speech. (Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*, 124). It is absent from the third edition of *SND* as well. (Jose Ma. Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy* [Quezon City: Lagda Publishing, 1995], 16).

in a formal coalition with the LP, nor did he account for the support that they had given Macapagal and his policies, but glossed over the entire treacherous affair in silence. Sison claimed that Manglapus' third party presidential campaign vehicle, the Party for Philippine Progress (PPP), was "the most reactionary, anti-nationalist and anti-democratic of the three parties running district and national candidates," and stated that the PPP had a "reactionary clerico-fascist and pro-imperialist nature." (53) Sison's conclusion was to reiterate the need to "strive for a national united front of all patriotic and progressive forces and elements in our society and let us open the door of national unity to those nationalist elements and groups who happen to be now in anyone of the three dominant parties." (55)

On the basis of this program, the KM and the LM backed numerous individual candidates, the vast majority from the NP, effectively backing the entire Nacionalista Party slate in the 1965 election. They did select a few LP members to support as well, including Jovito Salonga. They did not, however, enter a formal coalition with either party. By October 19, Israel Bocobo, treasurer of the LM was publicly endorsing Marcos.³⁵ Bocobo was intimately connected with Cid in PAFLU, and his endorsement clearly indicates that Cid was backing Marcos by mid-October. On October 23, PLUM and CLPP, which under Vicente Rafael had broken from the LM, officially endorsed Macapagal, calling him the "Workers Choice" for having "consistently advocated revolutionary reforms and faithfully attended to the workers' needs."³⁶

Securing MASAKA's support for Marcos

Perhaps the trickiest component of switching the support of the PKP's front organizations from the Liberal Party to the Nacionalista Party was MASAKA. The central Luzon peasant organization had been founded with funding from Macapagal to pursue the implementation of Macapagal's Land Reform Act, which Sison had repeatedly told the peasantry was carrying out the "Unfinished Revolution" and "liquidating feudalism." Now, Sison was claiming in his speeches in Manila and in his writings published in *Progressive Review* that "the original and actual intent of the Macapagal Land Reform Programme was to accelerate the turn-over of Philippine agriculture to American agro-corporations and institute direct American control of agricultural credit."

On October 31, two weeks before the presidential election, Sison attempted to resolve this problem, traveling to Angeles, Pampanga and delivering a lengthy speech, "Nationalism and Land Reform," in Tagalog.³⁷ The speech is represen-

³⁵MB, 19 Oct 1965.

³⁶"Unionists for Macapagal," *PPF*, October 1965, 92.

³⁷This is the first evidence I have found of Sison speaking publicly in Tagalog. While the majority of his audience would have been native Pampango speakers, Tagalog would have been their preferred second language and English would not suffice. (SND, 67-105). Sison delivered the speech in Los Baños in March 1966 in English. The speech was almost certainly drafted in

tative of the Stalinist tradition of dishonesty and duplicity to achieve desired political ends.

Sison opened with the claim that “at the present stage of our national history, the single immediate purpose to which the nationalist movement is committed is to achieve national democracy. On this single purpose, all are agreed, irrespective of social class ... Unless one is a landlord or comprador, one aspires to have his nation free from colonial and imperialist exploitation. Every patriotic Filipino wishes to liquidate imperialism and feudalism simultaneously in order to achieve national democracy among the people.” (67) This is the incessant chorus of Stalinism – the need to carry out the first stage of a two-stage revolution, and the need therefore for a broad national unity of all ‘patriotic’ classes. Sison stated that “in fighting for national democracy against American imperialism, we need to unite the peasantry ... on the side of all other patriotic classes.” This was Sison’s central concern in his October 31 speech: the need to move the peasantry behind the united front being formed by the KM and LM with the NP, and away from the previous one with the LP. He added that “the peasantry will join the anti-imperialist movement only if they can see that it brings forth a state capable of carrying out land reform.”

Sison could not tell the peasantry in the same off-hand manner he did the KM that Macapagal’s program was intended to serve US imperialism. He needed to demonstrate that Macapagal’s program, on which MASAKA had been founded, was well intentioned, but he also needed to show that the LP was incapable of carrying-out its intentions. In this way he could shift MASAKA to support the NP in the hope that it would successfully implement the Land Reform act. Sison told his audience,

The Agricultural Land Reform Code seeks to establish owner-cultivatorship and the economic family-size farm as the basis of Philippine agriculture; to achieve a dignified existence for the small farmers free from pernicious institutional restraints and practices; create a truly viable social and economic structure in agriculture conducive to greater productivity and higher farm income; to apply all labor laws equally and without discrimination to both industrial and agricultural wage-earners; to provide a more vigorous and systematic land resettlement program and public land distribution; and to make the small farmers more independent, self-reliant and responsible citizens in our society.

The Code *clearly intended to favor the land-hungry masses*, particularly the landless tenants and the owners of farms of less than what is sufficient for the household. It vows to give them lands of economic family size on which the entire Philippine agriculture would

English and then translated into Tagalog. The English version was published in *SND*.

be based. If this noble intention is to be achieved, the condition of the poor peasantry, the majority of the peasantry and still the majority of our people would be ameliorated. (83, emphasis added)

This code “provides itself as something by which the peasant masses can be rallied at the present moment. While land reform is now to be conducted by a state that still needs to become national and democratic in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country like the Philippines, it is to the interest of a national-democratic strategy to consider such land reform as being of dual character and it is the business of tactics to employ and master it.” (82-83)

Sison performed the work of a political huckster in Angeles, lying through his teeth to the peasantry. In Manila, Sison denounced the Land Reform Code as intended to serve the interests of US imperialism; in Angeles, he hailed it as “clearly intended to serve the land-hungry masses.”³⁸ Sison went on claim that the problem with the Land Reform Code was not its intent or its content, but the weakness of its implementation by the Macapagal administration. (84-86) He concluded this section “let us give face value to the avowed objective of land reform and, at the same time, look for the democratic instruments which the peasant masses can wield to pursue and advance their class interests against the selfishness and greed of landlordism and imperialism.”³⁹ (87) These democratic instruments would be found not in the LP, but the NP.

To secure all of the good intentions of the Land Reform Code, Sison told his audience, “there is now the increased need for the peasant masses to develop and hold their own political power in order to improve the present Code, to oppose all moves to sabotage it, to demand its accelerated implementation.” (88) In this it was the “principal political obligation of the peasantry to ally with the working class.” This meant that MASAKA should work politically with the Lapiang Manggagawa, and the LM was backing the Nacionalista Party. This was the conclusion of Sison’s dishonest logic: the Land Reform Code was intended to benefit the peasantry and MASAKA was correct to have supported it. The LP, however, implemented it weakly. By following the LM in strongly backing the NP, MASAKA could hope to see the Land Reform act properly implemented.⁴⁰

³⁸He then dishonestly attempted to bury his lies. The second edition of *SND* removed paragraphs and rewrote others. Where Sison praised the “liquidation of old-style landlordism” the second edition condemned its “sham liquidation.” (156) The second edition gave no indication that the speech had been edited, and referred to the heavily redacted piece as the “speech delivered ... on October 31.” (142)

³⁹The second edition of *SND* replaced this paragraph with “The Agricultural Land Reform Code will not solve the land problem. As a matter of fact, it will only aggravate the dispossession of the peasantry and intensify unjust relations between the landlord class and the peasantry. The beautiful phrases in the code in favor of the landless are immediately nullified by provisions which in the realm of reality will be taken advantage of by the landlord class.” (165)

⁴⁰The second edition of *SND* contained an entirely different conclusion. It called for activists to go to the countryside to make “concrete social investigations ... [they] should show to the

The Election

The KM and LM continued to expand the number of candidates they were endorsing. On November 2, Cid announced the LM's full support for Frisco San Juan, who was running for congress on the NP ticket in Rizal and the announcement and photo of the endorsement were released to the press by the LM.⁴¹ The Civil Liberties Union (CLU), closely tied to the older members of the PKP, endorsed Marcos candidacy two weeks before the elections.⁴² By the beginning of November, the KM had officially backed Marcos for President, as Rosca recalled, "The KM gave Marcos' candidacy critical support, because of a campaign promise to keep the Philippines out of the Vietnam War, which had become an American War."⁴³

Marcos won the election handily, receiving fifty-one percent of the popular vote, and carrying nearly every Philippine province. Lopez was elected Vice President. Immediately after the election, in an interview with Stanley Karnow for the *Washington Post*, Marcos declared that he was committed to sending two thousand Filipino troops to Vietnam. He covered over his political reversal by stating that "Many of us felt that the United States was preparing to withdraw from Vietnam. But now that the United States has demonstrated its resolute will to slug it out, we have been reassured."⁴⁴

peasants ... the essence of their suffering and arouse them to solve their own problem ... It is senseless to put trust in laws made by the landlords themselves no matter how gaudily they may wear the garments of bourgeois reformism ... the peasant masses themselves will decide to take more effective measures, including armed revolution." (165)

⁴¹MB, 2 Nov 1965. The publication of the *Pentagon Papers* revealed that Frisco San Juan was a CIA agent.

⁴²Hernando J. Abaya, *The CLU Story: 50 Years of Struggle for Civil Liberties* (New Day Publishers, 1987), 90.

⁴³Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 14.

⁴⁴Stanley Karnow, "Marcos Says He Will Send Troops to Vietnam: Sure of US Aims ...," *Washington Post*, November 1965, A15.

— 13 —

Sumulong, Alibasbas, and Dante

*Oh the shark has pretty teeth dear,
And he shows them pearly white
Just a jack-knife has Macheath dear
And he keeps it out of sight.*

— Bertolt Brecht, *Three Penny Opera* (Blitzstein translation)

The 1965 election kicked off a murderous wave of violence in Central Luzon, where the last vestiges of the Huk guerrilla movement had, under the leadership of a man known as Commander Sumulong, transformed themselves into a mafia-like network of crime and social banditry. Macapagal and Marcos turned this gangster network into their political front-men, creating an explosive turf war, the outcome of which created the conditions for the emergence of the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in 1969 – the New People’s Army (NPA).

In an article published in the weeks leading up to the November election, the *Philippines Free Press* noted that “Like the LPS, the NPS and the PPS, the Huks have also been campaigning for the election next week. Not that the dissidents have a ticket of their own, but they have a set of candidates they had hand-picked from the tickets of different political parties.”¹ Lachica, using data from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), claimed that “Huk strength dropped in number from 12,800 in 1950 to 75 die-hards and a few hundred cadres and contact men in 1965. Their area of influence had shrunk from the six ‘regional commands’ (Recos) to the places from where the Huks had originally sprung – the eastern half of Pampanga, with Angeles City as their new base.”² Following the November 1965 elections, however, Central Luzon saw an abrupt increase in Huk activities.

Numerous press accounts in 1966 wrote of this sharp spike in Huk related violence, and confidential military intelligence records provide statistical con-

¹Filemon V. Tutay, “By Huk or By Crook,” *PFPP*, November 1965, 10.

²Lachica, *The Huks*, 137.

firmation for the jump in casualties from 1965 to 1966. A photographed copy of twenty pages of a 1967 Confidential Philippine Military Intelligence report on Huk related violence can be found in the papers of CIA operative Charles Bohannon. The documents record that the number of Huk incidents rose from twelve in 1965, which conformed to the average of preceding years, to sixty-four in 1966. Fourteen people were killed in Huk related violence in 1965 and eighty-three in 1966; two were wounded in '65, twenty-one in '66; one kidnapped in '65, twenty in '66. The document reported a total of seventeen Huk related casualties in 1965, and 124 in 1966.³ These military documents completely ignored the dramatic increase in violence perpetrated by the military in its anti-Huk campaign, but despite their deliberately limited data set, the documents reveal the sharp spike in violence around the HMB brought on by the November 1965 elections. The wave of post-election violence in Central Luzon was hailed by William Pomeroy as a “resurgence of the Huk movement,” stating that it meant that “new popular struggles have arisen in the Philippines.”⁴ On the contrary, the violence that broke out after the election was one part mafia turf war, and two parts military death squad. There was nothing progressive or popular about it.

Sumulong

Since Jesus Lava designated him as PKP Peasant Secretary in mid 1964, Pedro Taruc had had no contact with the party. Taruc was a figurehead, a man whose sole claim to political substance was that he shared a last name with his distant cousin, Luis, the former head of the HMB. Pedro Taruc was closely linked to Faustino del Mundo, known as Commander Sumulong, and his primary role seems to have been to provide the Taruc name to Sumulong’s gangster activities. “In all probability, the Supremo’s primary value to the organization was his family name. ‘Taruc’ was still a by-word throughout all Pampanga and many Pampangos were still of the impression that Pedro was Luis’ brother. A Taruc leading the Pampango organization made it ‘legitimate’ for all practical purposes.”⁵ Taruc and Sumulong had no political program, but they named their group the *Bayung Fuerza Democratica Ding Memalen* [New People’s Democratic Force].⁶ The name is in Pampango as this was a regional organization; it was avowedly anti-Communist, bent on the restoration of an older social order, and above all pursuing the business interests of Sumulong and his allies.

Sumulong and the few other remaining Huk leaders throughout Pampanga and Southern Tarlac were the dregs of the Huk struggle from the 1950s, possessing residual arms from the guerrilla movement of a decade prior, which they now deployed as a form of capital. Sumulong represented social banditry in an

³ *Statistics on Atrocities Perpetrated by HMBS (From 1956 - 7 Feb 1967)*, 1967, CTRB, 1.

⁴ William J. Pomeroy, *Huks on rise again in the Philippines*, September 1966, 5.

⁵ Lachica, *The Huks*, 138-139.

⁶ Van Der Kroef, “Philippine Communism and the Chinese,” 144.

advanced state of decay – there is far more of Mack the Knife to Sumulong than there is of Robin Hood.⁷ He came from a family of sharecroppers, and had been a boxer, with the ring name Rush del Mundo, a gas station attendant and then a jeepney driver. He rose in the ranks of the Huk guerrilla movement toward the end of the World War II.⁸ Sumulong was approximately fifty years old at the time of the 1965 election, and Lachica described him as “a short, stocky man, almost barrel-chested, with a scar over his left eyebrow, a boxer’s ears and dazzling set of gold teeth.” He had completed only a few years of primary school, spoke Pampango and a “smattering of slangy Tagalog.”⁹ The most significant difference between Sumulong and the other Huk leaders was that he was based in Angeles City, and it was there that Sumulong became a political broker and eventually head of the city’s underworld in the 1960s. His rise to prominence was facilitated by Benjamin Serrano, an Angeles city councilor, who functioned as head advisor, contact man and pay-off collector for Sumulong.¹⁰ Sumulong came to control many of the night clubs and gambling establishments in Angeles. For a fee, his armed men would break up strikes and guard granaries on behalf of landlords. Sumulong’s family became quite wealthy; his daughter married a member of “a prominent Central Luzon family,” and his son-in-law controlled the Angeles security guard business.¹¹

Sumulong’s rise expressed the development of Angeles itself. The rural Pampanga town was transformed into a city of nightclubs, prostitution and crime by the presence of Clark Air Base, which was central to the expanded US military operations in Vietnam. Nick Joaquin aptly characterized this development in 1965.

Clark Air Base began as Fort Stotsenberg, and the change in name marks the transition from the age of the horse to the space era. The original fort, established in the 1900s, was a cavalry post, named after an American colonel killed in Bulacan in 1899 in a battle with Aguinaldo’s army. To the cavalry post was added in 1918 an air base called Clark Field. Hangar devoured stable; aircraft supplanted the horse; Stotsenberg yielded to Clark; and what started as a horse soldier’s outpost of empire has become the nerve center of air defense communications in the South Pacific. At the same time, what used to be a little village at the gates of Fort Stotsenberg developed into the biggest honky-tonk in the country.

⁷On the nature of social banditry, see Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1959); Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, Revised Ed (New York: New Press, 2000).

⁸Renato Tayag, *Recollections & Digressions* (Manila: The Philnabank Club, 1985), 213.

⁹Lachica, *The Huks*, 148.

¹⁰*Ang Mandirigma*, 1, no. 3 (May 1972): 13, PRP 36/06.04; Tayag, *Recollections & Digressions*, 154.

¹¹Lachica, *The Huks*, 149, 153.

In the relations between Clark and Angeles, we can see, in epitome, the history of the Philippine-American relationship.¹²

By the mid-1960s Clark Air base housed “17,000 airmen and officers, 800 American civilians, and 17,000 military and civilian dependents. In addition, there were 14,000 Filipino contract workers and 7,500 Filipino ‘domestics.’”¹³

Since Clark’s facilities could not accommodate its population boom, as many as 12,500 American servicemen and dependents ... had to look for housing in Angeles. Real estate developments sprang up in Angeles – Clark View, L and S Subdivision, Trinidad Village, Diamond Subdivision among others.

Many Angeles property owners became rich overnight. In addition to the rapid appreciation of Angeles real estate, the entertainment district prospered from the business brought in by off-duty airmen. Two nightclub districts give Angeles its honkytonk atmosphere – “The Strip” running a kilometer on Balibago road from the Clark main gate and “The Block” located on the road leading to Pampang.¹⁴

Sumulong maintained his hold on power with violence. He was charged with ordering the murder of at least three mayors – Benedicto Dayrit of Magalang, Pampanga on December 28 1963; Eduardo Tiangco of Arayat, on December 23, 1964; and Anastacio Gallardo of Candaba on July 18, 1964.¹⁵ In return for money, arms and favors, the Huk chieftains of Central Luzon gave their backing to various political candidates, mobilizing resources and coercion to secure votes on behalf of their chosen candidate, and threatening and menacing their candidate’s rivals. Prior to 1965 this had only been true of candidates for local political office, but in 1965 this changed, with explosive consequences.

Alibasbas

Cesareo Manarang, known as Commander Alibasbas, controlled the Huk forces around Concepcion Tarlac. Alibasbas was Sumulong’s “foremost rival ... [and] an equally senior Huk veteran.” They had long been at a stand-off, each ensconced in his own territory, but Sumulong’s territory was much more profitable. This stand-off turned into open conflict in late 1965 as Sumulong and Alibasbas backed rival congressional candidates in the second district of Pampanga. On October 13, their forces clashed in San Jose, Santa Ana, Pampanga and one Huk was killed and five wounded. The political dispute went higher than a congressional candidate,

¹²Quijano de Manila, *Judgment at Clark*, March 1965, 3.

¹³Lachica, *The Huks*, 140.

¹⁴Lachica, *The Huks*, 141.

¹⁵Ibid., 153.

however, as Sumulong secured the political patronage of Marcos, who was looking to win a section of Macapagal's home turf in Pampanga. Alibasbas had intimate ties to Ninoy Aquino, whose Hacienda Luisita was based in Concepcion, and when Aquino "flipped" to join the Liberal Party in 1963, he brought Alibasbas' political allegiance with him.

Macapagal responded to the October shoot-out by arming Alibasbas. Secretary of Defense Macario Peralta ordered the 10th Battalion Combat Team (BCT) to implement "Operation Homestretch," which armed and supplied Alibasbas in his turf war with Sumulong. Colonel Buyson admitted "having loaned Alibasbas firearms, transistorized walkie talkies, typewriters and other military equipment."¹⁶ Lachica reported that "For months, Alibasbas operated virtually as an 'auxiliary' of the 10th BCT using arms and supplies 'borrowed' from the Army."¹⁷ Alibasbas campaigned actively for Macapagal and Macapagal's slate and he began speaking at political rallies alongside military officers.¹⁸

When Marcos took office, he made himself Secretary of Defense and launched a bloody campaign, under the command of Col. Rafael Ileta, to liquidate every Huk commander who was not loyal to him, and in particular to eliminate Alibasbas. Ileta assigned Capt. Lorenzo Mateo to carry out the mission. Mateo was made Commanding Officer of the 130th Philippine Constabulary (PC) Company in Concepcion, Tarlac, on January 14, 1966, and he drew up plans to "liquidate" Alibasbas, and his closest circle of "die-hards." The plans were code-named "Project Bingo" and were approved by Ileta on January 15.¹⁹ Mateo immediately launched the program, deploying long-time informant, Ruben Ignacio; former Concepcion Police Chief, Ciriaco Santos; and several others.²⁰ They were tasked with recruiting "discontented" members of Alibasbas' guard. Those who were not susceptible to recruitment were referred to as 'die-hards,' and Project Bingo proposed to execute all of them.

Mateo learned that Alibasbas was holding a celebration of his birthday on the night of February 1 in Barangay Almendras and that a number of big-shot political figures and rich landlords were expected to attend.²¹ He later recounted that "Nestor, one of the discontented members of the group was at that time the one preparing the guard detail for all the group and my instruction was to detail all the targets, the die-hard members of Commander Alibasbas to be on guard detail from 6:00 o'clock in the afternoon up to 12:00 midnight. And my action agents with the discontented group were to be on guard detail from 12:00 o'clock to the

¹⁶Ibid., 211.

¹⁷Ibid., 143.

¹⁸Ibid., 212.

¹⁹Simeon G. Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground Part II, Volume One: The Involvements of Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., with 29 Perpetuated Testimonies Appended* (Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Company, 1977), 1113-5.

²⁰Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 1116-7.

²¹Ibid., 1244.

following morning.”²² Mateo assigned a specific trigger-man to kill Alibasbas and another to target his right-hand man, Commander Amor. At one in the morning, February 2, Capt. Mateo crept to within two hundred yards of Alibasbas’ location, then signaled to his “agents” to open fire on the sleeping bodies of Alibasbas and his companions. The firing lasted for ten minutes. When Mateo’s men ceased firing, Alibasbas; Juan Gatchalian (Commander Amor); Alibasbas’ three sons – Avelino Manarang, Roberto Manarang, Benjamin Manarang; Avelino’s wife, Marita; and four others, had all been killed.²³

On Mateo’s instructions, Ruben Ignacio cut off Alibasbas’ head, tied it up in a jute sack and placed the sack in a *bayong*, a bag of woven buri palm leaves. They needed to present the head in order to collect the ₱20,000 reward.²⁴ Ignacio gave the bayong to Mateo, and along with one of the other assassins followed Mateo back to Headquarters at Camp Olivas. There Mateo presented Alibasbas’ head to Deputy Zone Commander Felizardo Tanabe, who instructed Mateo to present it immediately to the Zone Commander, Rafael Iletto. When Iletto had examined Alibasbas’ head, he ordered his medical team to return to Almendras and sew it back on Alibasbas’ corpse.²⁵ Mateo was promoted, and by 1975 he had become Colonel in the Criminal Investigative Service (GIS) at Camp Crame.²⁶ The press reported simply that Alibasbas had been killed by some of his bodyguards, who had then managed to escape.²⁷

Lachica wrote that “the net result [of the murder of Alibasbas and company] was that Sumulong became the undisputed leader of Huklandia.”²⁸ Over the next five years, Sumulong would go on to campaign “for Tarlac congressional candidates ... for a Pampanga governor and his politician wife, and for at least two presidential candidates.”²⁹ A young man, who had been a runner for Sumulong’s underworld deals in Angeles, was promoted to take over Alibasbas’ turf in Concepcion, Tarlac. He was loyal to Sumulong, but like Alibasbas, he had ties to Ninoy Aquino. His name was Bernabe Buscayno and, as Commander Dante, he would lead the creation of the New People’s Army (NPA).

²²Ibid., 1120.

²³Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 1091, 1121; Lachica, *The Huks*, 142-143; Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 87; Antonio Zumel, *Radical Prose: Selected Writings of Antonio Zumel* (Manila: Friends of Antonio Zumel / the First Quarter Storm Movement (FQSM), 2004), 61.

²⁴Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 1122.

²⁵Ibid., 1125.

²⁶Ibid., 1098.

²⁷An unrecognizably fictionalized film on Alibasbas’ life was released in 1981 starring Joseph Estrada.

²⁸Lachica, *The Huks*, 144.

²⁹Ibid., 151.

Tensions and Split



Each off the other

*Our tale, O our oracle! Let life, waned, ah let life wind
Off her once skeined stained veined variety upon, all on two spools; part, pen, pack
Now her all in two flocks, two folds – black, white; right, wrong; reckon but, reck but, mind
But these two; ware of a world where but these two tell, each off the other*

— G.M. Hopkins, *Spelt from Sybil's Leaves*

Throughout 1965 tensions mounted between Manila and Jakarta. Congressmen and newspapers decried the 'Communist' influence of Indonesia in the Philippines and in the middle of the year Bakri Ilyas was arrested and deported as a subversive representative of the PKI. The tensions suddenly eased when Nasution and Suharto seized upon the pretext of the September 30 coup to launch the slaughter of the Indonesian Communist Party.

For the PKP leadership, the catastrophe in Indonesia posed the need to seek out new ties with international Communism but to do this meant taking a side in the Sino-Soviet split. Sison secretly traveled to China where he established ties with the CCP, and on his return from Beijing, launched a speaking tour in which he articulated the basic political program of Stalinism as it was refracted through Beijing and the Cultural Revolution. The lectures he delivered became the core educational material of the KM.

Newly elected President Ferdinand Marcos rapidly moved to deploy Filipino forces to Vietnam, under the euphemism of the Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAG). A protest movement in opposition to PHILCAG emerged, but the KM was nowhere to be seen. Still holding out hope that Marcos would be a useful political ally, they were loath to denounce him, and it was not until October that the KM emerged in the center of the protest movement. US President Johnson with the assistance of Marcos, staged the Manila Summit to cobble together the appearance of regional support for Washington's war in Vietnam. The KM and LM led a mass protest against Johnson outside the summit which was violently suppressed by state security forces.

Faced with a mass outcry against the brutal suppression of the Manila Summit

protest, Congress launched an investigation into the events of October 24. In the course of the investigation it emerged that a great many students were preparing to spend their semestral break in 'Red China.' Marcos, through his Foreign Minister, denied these students the right to travel claiming that they were not 'mature' enough, while at the same time, he facilitated travel between Manila and Moscow for members of the PKP oriented to the Soviet Union.

The PKP, riven by geopolitical tensions, staged one last joint endeavor, forming the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN) in early 1967, an organization designed to bring the working class, youth and peasantry under the political sway of the national bourgeoisie. Both Sison and the Lavas were actively engaged in subterfuge to seize hold of the party but neither would discuss their disagreements openly. The Lavas won out and expelled Sison and his cohort from the party in April 1967.

By the summer of 1967 travel to China opened and waves of students journeyed to Beijing and returned with the ideas and accouterments of the cultural revolution. The split in the Communist Party fractured its front organizations, culminating in the explosion of the KM in November 1967. A new PKP youth wing formed; Sison kept hold of the remains of the KM; and a host of youth organizations, above all a new group called the SDK, found themselves uncomfortably independent in between.

— 14 —

Catastrophe in Indonesia

*The dead bodies shall be many,
cast out in every place. Be silent!*

— Amos 8:3

Tensions with Jakarta

In 1965 tensions between the Philippines and Indonesia escalated dramatically. The House Defense Committee raised charges that Jakarta was engaged in espionage against the Philippines and that Indonesia was massing troops to invade the country. Leading generals in the Philippine military issued calls for the basing of troops in the southern islands to ward off invasion. Thousands of Indonesian immigrants were rounded up and deported, and among them was Bakri Ilyas, who had been singled out as a Communist spy. Sukarno's failing health provoked a rapid growth in tensions between the military and the PKI within his own administration as the question of succession in the event of his death was a paramount political concern for both Aidit and Nasution. As the strain between these forces grew, so too did Sukarno's own political volatility. The anti-Indonesian campaign in the Philippines in the first half of 1965 was an expression of the regional instability centered in Jakarta.

After the demonstration outside Malacañang on October 2, 1964, at the very beginning of the break between the LM and Macapagal, Jose Lukban, head of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), charged that the demonstration had been instigated by Indonesian Communists, and this charge of connections between the PKI and nationalist demonstrations in the Philippines re-emerged in early 1965 and became a refrain in ruling circles until September 30. The ties were real, as the KM and LM members were regularly traveling to Jakarta to meet with the PKI leadership. On January 24-27, for example, KM General Secretary Prospero Palma and LM representative Alfonso Fajardo along with

five Filipino newsmen attended a youth conference on NASAKOM in Jakarta.¹ The PKI published a statement of support for the January 25 protest outside the US Embassy, declaring that the Philippines and Indonesia faced the same single enemy, imperialism.²

Philippine intelligence agents prepared a report, entitled “On Communist Infiltration of Youths, Students and Intellectuals,” which was completed on February 12 and sent to the CIA. It included brief dossiers on Sison and others, and claimed that Bakri Ilyas was financially sponsored by the Indonesian embassy in Manila.³ Macapagal issued a statement the following day warning of the danger of “Indonesian infiltration.”⁴ A week after the intelligence dossier was completed, the Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs and National Defense received a closed door briefing from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), which alleged that a massive ‘infiltration’ by illegal Indonesian immigrants was taking place in the south. NICA claimed that the military was rounding up thousands of these immigrants, but the fact that the Indonesians had adopted the local language, intermarried and had children made carrying out arrests and detentions difficult. In other words, these immigrants were not new arrivals but long-time residents of the country, with families and lives established there. NICA compared the immigrants to Japanese spies in the Philippines prior to the Second World War.

NICA reported the arrest of a man whom they claimed was a Colonel in the Indonesian Air Force and a spy for Jakarta, and who, upon interrogation, had revealed the existence of “a vast espionage network geared to an alleged Indonesian plan to annex Mindanao by 1970.”⁵ Details gradually emerged regarding this figure, whose name was Anton Diranga. Defense Secretary Macario Peralta reported that he had been arrested in Mindanao and was being held in the PC stockade in Davao. Diranga was said to be a radio operator for the Indonesian Air Force.⁶ The briefing warned that “there were several ominous signs of future conflict” between the Philippines and Indonesia. Indonesia was said to maintain “large armed forces which are clearly in excess of her logical defense needs” while holding “close relations” with China, North Vietnam and North Korea.⁷ Macapagal tried to use this alleged threat to whip up support for his budget in the legislature, claiming that the funds would be used to send additional forces to Mindanao to prevent Indonesian plans to annex the island.⁸ By early March,

¹*On Communist Infiltration of Youths, Students and Intellectuals*, February 1965, CTRB 29/20.

²MB, 4 Feb 1965.

³*On Communist Infiltration of Youths, Students and Intellectuals*.

⁴MB, 13 Feb 1965.

⁵Filemon V. Tutay, “The Indonesian Problem,” *PPP*, February 1965, 78.

⁶MB, 8 Feb; 15 Apr 1965; Bernardino Ronquillo, “Backdoor Entry,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 1965, 11.

⁷Tutay, “The Indonesian Problem.”

⁸MB, 22 Feb 1965.

leading senators were calling for Washington to establish a military base in the southern Philippines to end the “mounting infiltration” of Indonesians into the country.⁹

On March 24 reports appeared in the Philippine press that Jakarta had arrested fourteen Filipino “spies” in Sulawesi.¹⁰ The Indonesian embassy in the Philippines issued a statement on the matter.

Neither the Indonesian government nor the Indonesian press nor this embassy has made any mention of the alleged arrest of ‘14 Filipino spies’ in Indonesia. This embassy does not discount the possibility of the arrest of 14 Filipinos by the Indonesian government, since it is an established fact that Filipinos go to Indonesia and Indonesians go to the Philippines in an illegal way ...

It is worthy of note that in instances where Filipino nationals were apprehended in Indonesia and subsequently repatriated, no publicity whatsoever has ever been made, since the Indonesian government considers the illegal entry of Filipinos into Indonesia, especially in the areas between the Philippines and Indonesia, part of a continuous recurrence that has been going on for centuries.¹¹

Teodoro Locsin, editor of the *Philippines Free Press*, wrote an editorial denouncing the “hysteria” surrounding Indonesia as part of a “systematic campaign ... to push the Philippines into a ‘confrontation’ with Indonesia.” The army, he claimed, was attempting to make Philippine foreign policy.¹²

During a press conference held on March 26 at P. Faura, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Mauro Mendez stated that Bakri Ilyas had been arrested by the NBI on a warrant from the Bureau of Immigration. Bakri, he said, was “undergoing questions,” and had been revealed to be “one of those who participated in several student demonstrations” and a “high official” of PIFCA.¹³ Indonesian ambassador Pamontjak called at the NBI to visit Bakri and “inquire into the charges leveled against him.” Bakri was officially charged with violating his “visa conditions.”¹⁴

At the end of March, Macapagal repeated his public appeal for increased military funding in Mindanao, arguing that the Philippine “defense line” was weak, while the “Indonesian influx” was heavy.¹⁵ The next day, the House Defense Committee held an executive session calling for the immediate deployment of combat troops to Mindanao against the “clear, present and increasing danger”

⁹Felipe Lagon, “Congress Investigates Indonesian Infiltrators,” *PFPP*, March 1965, 77.

¹⁰MB, 25 Mar 1965.

¹¹Teodoro L. Locsin, “A Cool Look at Indonesia,” *PFPP*, April 1965, 8.

¹²Ibid.

¹³MB, 27 Mar 1965. Bakri was thirty-nine years old at the time of his arrest. (Van Der Kroef, “Philippine Communism and the Chinese,” 140, fn 56).

¹⁴MB, 4 Apr 1965.

¹⁵MB, 29 Mar 1965.

from Indonesia. The troops were to protect “national patrimony ... territorial integrity ... and to bring all Indonesian immigrants, *legal and illegal*, within the jurisdiction and authority of government.”¹⁶ On April 3, the *Philippines Free Press* published an article by Senator Rodolfo Ganzon, who claimed that the PKI was maintaining a school for the training of communist converts on Karakelang Island close to Davao. Ganzon concluded his article:

Unless the illegal immigration of Indonesians, many of whom are proven to be active agents of an ideology and way of life contrary to ours, is checked effectively, they will become deeply entrenched in our country and constitute a minority group capable of affecting and inflicting harm on our political, cultural, social, and economic institutions, and ultimately deliver our land as a vassal state of Indonesia Raya.¹⁷

Ugly articles began to appear in the Philippine press denouncing immigrants as “Indonesian wetbacks” and comparing the presence of Indonesians in the Philippines to Germans in the Sudetenland prior to Hitler’s invasion.¹⁸ On April 9, the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA) joined the chauvinist chorus, issuing a report in the House on Indonesian infiltration, in which Bakri Ilyas featured prominently. CAFA claimed that Bakri’s testimony had “incriminated not only influential Filipinos but also officials of his government in the Philippines.” The report requested that the NBI provide the committee with additional information regarding Bakri and his alleged espionage.¹⁹ Rep. Ramon Bagatsing made a speech in the House on April 21 in which he claimed that Bakri, a “junior diplomat of the Indonesian Embassy,” had used Indonesian Embassy money to lobby the elections of the National Press Club (NPC) for the past three years.²⁰ The *Bulletin* elaborated that “Indonesian money, and some which is suspected to come from Peking, has been influencing the election of certain officers of the Philippine National Press Club for the last three years. Only this spring, the National Press Club sent a known communist, who had won acquittal for party membership on a technicality, as its representative to the tenth anniversary of the Bandung Conference in Jakarta.”²¹

¹⁶“House Body urges Troops to South,” *PFPP*, April 1965, 73, emphasis added; MB, 30 Mar 1965.

¹⁷Rodolfo Ganzon, “Indonesia and the Philippines,” *PFPP*, April 1965, 61.

¹⁸This news coverage was discussed in Napoleon Rama, “Indonesian ‘Threat’ – How to Complicate a Problem,” *PFPP*, April 1965, 6. The use of the specifically American ethnic slur against Mexican immigrants – “wetback” – suggests that at least some of the anti-Indonesian propaganda in the Philippine press originated in Washington.

¹⁹MB, 10 Apr 1965.

²⁰MB, 22 Apr, 11; 1 May 1965.

²¹Van Der Kroef, “Philippine Communism and the Chinese,” 139, quoting a *Bulletin* article by Oscar Villadolid in August 1965.

On the last day of April, the Philippine and Indonesian governments reached a deal to swap “spies,” and Manila initiated deportation proceedings against Bakri ostensibly in exchange for the fourteen Filipinos arrested in Sulawesi.²² Rather than be deported, Bakri agreed to voluntarily depart the country and Jakarta made his voluntary departure the condition for the release of the fourteen Filipinos. It emerged that the fourteen had been carrying papers which identified them as members of the Philippine Anti-Communist League, headed by Ramon Bagatsing.²³ On May 4, Ambassador Pamontjak took custody of Bakri from the Department of Foreign Affairs, and Bakri departed the country as “an undesirable alien” on May 10.²⁴ As he boarded his Garuda flight to Jakarta, Bakri issued a prepared statement, denying both that he was a spy and that he was a member of the Communist Party. He added, however, that under Indonesian law “it is not a crime and it is within my democratic rights to be a member of the Indonesian Communist Party.”²⁵ He expressed his hope to return to the Philippines for graduation rites at UP at the end of May. As a result of the Bakri scandal, Ambassador Pamontjak was compelled to resign his post and he returned to Jakarta on the same day as Bakri Ilyas. In late May, the newly appointed Indonesian Ambassador to the Philippines, Abdul Karim Rasjid, presented his credentials at P. Faura. Bagatsing denounced him as a “master spy” from a “communist background.” The press published rumors that he had been expelled from his post in Thailand because he was a “Red,” and the *Bulletin* asserted that the evidence that Rasjid was a spy came from closed door testimony provided by Bakri Ilyas.²⁶

The tensions between Manila and Jakarta did not end with the deportation of Bakri. AFP Chief of Staff Alfredo Santos had issued a statement in mid April that there were twelve thousand illegal Indonesian immigrants in the country, and threatened any Filipino “harboring an illegal Indonesian immigrant” with prosecution. His goal, he stated, was to “flush out” the Indonesians.²⁷ In June, Manila launched the mass deportation of Indonesian immigrants. In the first week, 117 Indonesians were arrested on charges of spying, and 105 were deported on June 12, and act timed by Macapagal to commemorate Philippine independence day.²⁸ The mass arrests continued. On July 20, the press reported that Philippine gunboats attempting to repatriate 1692 Indonesians were being prevented from doing so by the Indonesian Navy. The interned Indonesians suffered an outbreak of respiratory illness, which resulted in three dead, thirty hospitalized and 130 ill.²⁹

²²MB, 1 May 1965.

²³MB, 7 Aug 1965.

²⁴MB, 5 May 1965.

²⁵MB, 11 May 1965, 2.

²⁶MB, 11 May 1965; “Envoy Rasjid Presents Papers,” *PPF*, May 1965, 85–86.

²⁷MB, 16 Apr 1965.

²⁸MB, 10 Jun; 12 Jun 1965.

²⁹MB, 26 Jun; 20 Jul; 30 Jul 1965.

The anti-Indonesian hysteria escalated in the month of August, which saw defense officials claim that Jakarta was spying on coded despatches between P. Faura and the Philippine embassy in Indonesia. CAFA alleged that another Indonesian ‘red’ student had been made an official of the Indonesian embassy. By the middle of the month, the military was claiming that Indonesia had secret bases set up near the Philippines from which it intended to carry out an imminent invasion.³⁰ The mounting tensions between Jakarta and Manila, inflected by Manila’s anti-Communist hysteria, were dispelled by the slaughter of the PKI in the wake of the attempted coup of September 30 1965, and the Manila elite breathed a collective sigh of relief as Suharto crushed the party and took the reins of power.

Slaughter of the PKI

The anti-Indonesian hysteria among the Filipino elite coincided with, and was at least in part a manifestation of, the backroom plottings of the Pentagon, CIA, and the US State Department to eliminate the PKI and remove Sukarno from power. Washington sought a pretext for the seizure of power by the Indonesian military. Such a coup, however, could not be presented as being staged *against* Sukarno, who was immensely popular, but rather needed to be seen as being carried out on his behalf. John Roosa writes that Howard Jones, the US Ambassador to Indonesia, “told a closed-door meeting of State Department officials in the Philippines in March 1965, ‘From our viewpoint, of course an unsuccessful coup attempt by the PKI might be the most effective development to start a reversal of political trends in Indonesia.’ Jones hoped the PKI would give the army a ‘clear-cut kind of challenge which could galvanize effective reaction.’”³¹ Roosa documents that the idea of “encouraging a premature PKI coup” was widespread in intelligence and diplomatic circles, which anticipated that it would “provide a legitimate and welcome opportunity to the army to crush the communists and make Sukarno a prisoner of the army’s good will.”

The details are still not entirely clear, but Aidit and the PKI leadership did provide Washington and the Indonesian military with the pretext which they sought, backing the September 30 Movement which kidnapped and executed six generals and dumped their bodies in a well.³² Aidit and “a clandestine group” within the PKI, which excluded the majority of the politburo, plotted the September 30 Movement, with the intent of removing “senior anti-Communist generals.”³³

³⁰MB, 31 Jul; 5 Aug; 19 Aug 1965.

³¹John Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto’s Coup d’État in Indonesia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 190.

³²For the best recent scholarly examination of the September 30 Movement, see *ibid.* For a political analysis of the role of the PKI, see Terri Cavanagh, *Lessons of the 1965 Indonesian Coup* (Sydney: Socialist Labour League, 1991).

³³Taomo Zhou, “China and the Thirtieth of September Movement,” *Indonesia* 98, no. 1 (2014):

On August 5, Aidit and Jusuf Aditorop the deputy secretary of the PKI held a meeting with Mao Zedong in Beijing. Present for the meeting were Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen, and Chen Yi. They discussed Sukarno's ill-health and the danger, if he died, of power falling to the military. Aidit warned that in the wake of Sukarno's death the PKI would lose the support of the national bourgeoisie – described in Stalinist language as the “the middle forces.”³⁴ He stated that “Without Sukarno, it would be easy for the right wing to win the support of those who are in the middle in order to isolate us.” In Aidit's conception, the safety and strength of the PKI rested on retaining the support of the national bourgeoisie. Aidit then outlined to Mao and the other leaders of the CCP his plan.

[W]e plan to establish a military committee. The majority of that committee would be left wing, but it should also include some middle elements. In this way, we could confuse our enemies. Our enemies would be uncertain about the nature of this committee, and therefore the military commanders who are sympathetic to the right wing will not oppose us immediately. If we show our red flag right away, they will oppose us right away. The head of this military committee would be an underground member of our party, but he would identify himself as [being] neutral. This military committee should not last for too long. Otherwise, good people will turn [into] bad people. After it has been established, we need to arm the workers and peasants in a timely fashion.³⁵

Aidit's plan, which received the sanction of Beijing, provided Washington with the pretext which it sought. The crackdown, in the wake of the events of September 30, resulted in the deaths of nearly one million Indonesians, including the majority of the party and a great many who were suspected of being Communists. It was one of the worst genocides of the twentieth century. The slaughter of the PKI was carried out by both the Indonesian military and by local paramilitary organizations, and recent scholarship has clearly demonstrated that the mass murder waged by local paramilitary groups was not the result of spontaneous anger – as it had long been depicted – but was initiated and directly supervised by the Indonesian military.³⁶

The last remaining strand of direct ties between the PKI and the PKP, before their bond was severed entirely, was the KIAPMA conference held in Jakarta in

32.

³⁴Ibid., 50.

³⁵Zhou, “China and the Thirtieth of September Movement,” 51. Zhou's account is based on documents recently released from the Chinese Communist Party Central Archives.

³⁶John Roosa, “The State of Knowledge about an Open Secret: Indonesia's Mass Disappearances of 1965–66,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 02 (May 2016): 281–297.

mid-October. The initial statement issued over Jakarta radio on October 1 by Lt Col. Untung, head of the PKI-affiliated coup plotters, announced that “there will be no change of policy with regard to the Second Afro-Asian Conference and Conefo as well as the confrontation against Malaysia; and KIPMA along with other international activities which have been scheduled to take place in Indonesia will be held as planned.”³⁷ Thus, from October 17-20, a KM delegation traveled to the conflict torn capital to attend the Konferensi Internasional Anti Pangkalan Militer Asing [International Conference Against Foreign Military Bases] (KIPMA).^{38,39} On October 8, the US Ambassador to Indonesia Jones sent a secret cable to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, stating

Communists are now on the run for the first time in many years in Indonesia. Aidit's whereabouts not RPT not known and rallying call today among non-communist elements is hang Aidit ...

While KIPMA (anti-foreign military bases conference scheduled open Oct) might provide means for Sukarno attempt rally Nekolim spirit and drown internal disagreement in bigger international campaign, conditions in city, including strict 12-hour curfew, are not conducive to entertaining foreign visitors or holding international conference.

Indications are that Sukarno and Subandrio are trying to pin internal affair on Nekolim, and may be expected to come out with specific charges against us and probably CIA. Although KIPMA would provide excellent sounding board for this theme, we think it highly unlikely that successful conference can be held on schedule.⁴⁰

Despite Jones' prognostications, the conference, which was staged at Hotel Indonesia, proceeded as planned. Sukarno – whom Misuari referred to as “the Great Leader of the Newly Emerging Forces”⁴¹ – addressed the gathering.⁴² Ansor, the youth wing of the Muslim organization, Nahdatul Ulama (NU), staged a rally at Taman Suropati in Jakarta on October 20 in support of the KIPMA conference. Four documents were adopted by the gathering: a general declaration on foreign military bases, a general declaration on current issues, a special resolution on

³⁷Benedict R. O'G. Anderson and Ruth McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia*, Interim Reports Series (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971), 122.

³⁸Nur Mizhuari, “Essay on Kiapma,” *PC*, December 1965.

³⁹Nur Misuari was part of the KM delegation. Ralph Schoenman was present as leading international representative of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF).

⁴⁰A photocopy of the partially declassified telegram, originally classified Secret and housed in the LBJ Presidential Papers, can be found in Willem Oltmans, *Bon Voyage, Majesteit!* (Breda: Papieren Tijger, 1995), 43.

⁴¹Mizhuari, “Essay on Kiapma,” 10.

⁴²The conference was chaired by Arudji Kartawinata, who delivered the closing remarks.

the struggle against the “Anglo-American project, Malaysia,” and a special resolution on South Vietnam.⁴³ While Jones was incorrect in his speculation that the conference would not proceed as scheduled, KИAPMA did not succeed in rallying support for the PKI. A massacre had commenced, the immensity of which would only become clear in retrospect.

Roosa documents that Washington supplied communications technologies to the Indonesian army to “better coordinate its drive against the PKI.” The CIA and NSA carefully monitored the army’s communications and “[t]he United States thus had a blow-by-blow account of the army’s assault on the PKI.” Washington went further, and as Suharto’s forces launched a campaign of mass murder, they supplied a list of thousands of names of PKI members.⁴⁴ This slaughter of the membership of the PKI was made possible by the Stalinist leadership’s repeated subordination of the workers and peasants of Indonesia to Sukarno.

In late 1964 and early 1965, as hundreds of thousands of peasants attempted to seize the land of the big landowners, Aidit urged the party to suppress the peasants’ actions. In early 1965, as oil and rubber workers began to seize control of their industries, PKI leaders opposed the take-overs and formally joined Sukarno’s government as ministers. Even as Suharto and the military took control after October 1, the PKI opposed any mobilization of the masses and urged them to place their faith in Sukarno, who was retained purely as a figurehead.⁴⁵

In the Philippines, the extermination of the PKI was openly welcomed in ruling circles and the press. On October 12, Salipada Pendatun – a former ally of the LM, who had been published by Sison in the pages of the *Progressive Review* but a year prior – called for a “purge” in Java, and urged Suharto and Nasution to “crush the PKI before it’s too late.”⁴⁶ A week later, a regular opinion column in the *Bulletin* published a piece entitled “Indonesian Coup: A Blessing” which argued that a key result of the suppression of the Indonesian Communists after the coup would be the severing of ties between Philippine Communists and Beijing. “What has not been fully appreciated here is that during all this period the local communists firmed up their contacts with Red organizations abroad, particularly with Communist China. Since last year the road to the Philippines from Peking was via Jakarta.” On November 17, the *Bulletin* carried a front page picture of Indonesians sitting in what appears to be a mass grave, about to be executed, with the caption “Indon Reds. Getting a taste of their own medicine.”

⁴³Mizhuari, “Essay on Kiapma,” 11.

⁴⁴Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder*, 195.

⁴⁵Peter Symonds, “Fifty years since the Indonesian coup,” *World Socialist Web Site*, October 2015, accessed 2 May 2016, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/10/01/indo-001.html>.

⁴⁶MB, 12 Oct 1965.

As Marcos assumed office in the beginning of 1966, Manila's tensions with Jakarta had vanished, and Marcos initiated ties with Suharto that became quite friendly. Suharto would advise Marcos in 1972 on the best means of declaring martial law. Marcos rapidly extended formal recognition to Malaysia, while secretly he began preparing an invasion force to seize Sabah. For the time being, the simmering issues of the Manila Summit were set aside.

Sison's Post-mortem

By August 1966 the PKI had been crushed, the majority of its members murdered. It was in August that Joma Sison published a political analysis in the *Philippines Free Press* of the devastation of the PKI. Sison opened with the argument that the PKI did not carry out the coup. This was not true, but it is unlikely that Sison knew the truth of the matter.

Coup d'état and assassination are alien to the philosophy and method of work professed by Communists. Serious students of Marxism, Leninism or Mao Zedong will realize this upon a reading of their writings and upon analysis of historical experience. It is highly improbable for a Communist Party like that of Indonesia to place all its eggs in one coup operated by the presidential bodyguard, Colonel Untung.⁴⁷

Sison would later use this same logic as evidence that the CPP did not carry out the Plaza Miranda bombing in 1971. It is significant that in the case of the September 30 coup attempt, the logic was false, as the PKI, with the explicit consent of Mao, had launched the coup. Sison continued, arguing that the forces unleashed in response to the events of September 30 had successfully thwarted what Sison depicted as the 'progressive' administration of Sukarno. "The militant anti-imperialist strand of Indonesia has suddenly evaporated. The Beijing-Jakarta alliance has been broken and Indonesia has lost interest in CONEFO (Conference of New Emerging Forces) and in the Afro-Asian movement." (68) Sison, however, saw the mass murder of the PKI as ultimately *building* the revolutionary struggle, for Suharto had been compelled to make mistakes.

In order to consolidate its power in a very short period, following the incident of September 30, the Nasution-Suharto leadership has had to commit a number of "necessary" mistakes whose far-reaching effects remain to be seen.

Its first necessary mistake was to direct the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Indonesian citizens in retaliation for the death of the six generals ... Through this killing rampage, the Nasution-Suharto

⁴⁷Jose Ma. Sison, "Will Indonesia be Another Vietnam?" *PHP*, August 1966, 67.

leadership has indirectly organized its most persistent enemies into an underground national united front. Those killed left friends and relatives behind them, who in great numbers will fight at least as anti-fascists. (69)

Rather than one of the gravest defeats for the working class in the twentieth century, Sison saw the slaughter in Indonesia as the opening of a revolutionary period. He depicted the murders not as a defeat for the PKI, but a necessary mistake which had been made by Suharto. He was aware of the death toll, writing that the figure of six hundred thousand men, women, and children murdered was “a conservative estimate.” (6) This may have been an understatement, but Sison did have a sense of the scale of the death which had been dealt in Indonesia. Despite this awareness, Sison depicted the worst forms of repression, including the outright murder of Communists, as the most effective means of recruiting people to the revolutionary struggle. Friends and relatives of the murdered were “indirectly organized” by Suharto, he claimed, in the anti-fascist struggle. He continued,

The second necessary mistake by the Nasution-Suharto leadership was the elimination not only of Communists in the Sukarno government but also of middling and left elements within the middle class from positions of responsibility ... As a result of the imprisonment of Ali Sastroamidjojo, his son has gone underground to organize nationalists and lead an armed struggle against the Nasution government. In the light of this development, it is relevant to expect the early development of full scale armed struggle between the Nasution government and a national liberation movement... (69)

Repression, Sison argued, would drive sections of the bourgeoisie into the ranks of the “national liberation movement,” and the revolutionary struggle would grow. Sison concluded,

Ultimately, the Nasution-Suharto leadership must be prepared to face an armed NASAKOM underground; this is indicated by the growing number of nationalists, religious elements, Communists and progressive democrats who have felt their loss of freedom in cities and big towns but who have realized that they could still fight from the countryside.

South of the Philippines, we watch for developments that make Southeast Asia the storm center that it is supposed to be.

The struggle for power in Indonesia is far from over. (69)

The struggle for power in Indonesia *was* over, for a very long time. It did not fully reemerge until the late 1990s, thirty years later, and when it did, the

Communist Party no longer existed. Sison's response to the mass murder of the PKI was criminal. Apparently in Sison's conception, communists are most effective when they are dead. For every murdered and dismembered communist, he imagined great numbers of friends and relatives joining the ranks of a new revolution. No aggrieved relative, even if they choose to take up struggle against the state, can replace a trained and educated cadre. The cadre of a party are its greatest strength but Sison's analysis treated the Indonesian cadre with contempt. Mao articulated a similar conception in a poem he wrote in December 1965 entitled "In Memory of Comrade Aidit."

Sparse branches stood in front of my windows in winter, smiling before hundreds
of flowers
Regretfully those smiles withered when spring came
There is no need to grieve over the withered
To each flower there is a season to wither, as well a season to blossom
There will be more flowers in the coming year.⁴⁸

Sison envisioned state repression driving sections of the bourgeoisie into revolutionary struggle alongside workers. It did not. The capitalist class in Indonesia in 1966 and in the Philippines in 1972 was entirely quiescent. As we will see, there was deafening silence from the bourgeois opposition to Marcos in the wake of his declaration of martial law. Finally, Sison throughout his political career regarded revolution as the spontaneous response of the masses to repression and the greater the repression, the more the injured masses would rise up. This concept is false to its core; it is political poison. Repression does not spontaneously engender mass resistance. What is needed for mass resistance to emerge is a political alternative, and what is needed in order for this alternative to be revolutionary is a correct political program. The hope for revolution in the face of repression rests precisely with the cadre of a party trained in Marxism. As a result of its Stalinist leadership, whose class collaborationist politics disarmed it in the face of the mounting threat of its physical liquidation by the military, the PKI cadre were not prepared for state repression. They were slaughtered.

Sison's policies and strategy over the next six years were a continuation and development of these criminal conceptions. He welcomed state repression as the necessary precursor to revolution. His political program, the embodiment of Stalinism in the Philippines, was based on a flagrant disregard for the cadre of the party and for the working class generally. It was on this basis that Joma Sison and the Communist Party of the Philippines made possible and welcomed the declaration of martial law by Ferdinand Marcos on September 21, 1972.

⁴⁸Quoted in Zhou, "China and the Thirtieth of September Movement," 55.

— 15 —

Troops to Vietnam, Sison to China

*And in his brain,
Which is as dry as the remainder biscuit
After a voyage, he hath strange places crammed
With observation, the which he vents
In mangled forms.*

— William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

Marcos, freshly elected with the support of both the KM and LM, was from the beginning of his term receptive to the opening of diplomatic and economic ties with Moscow. In his first statement to the press outlining the foreign policy perspectives of the incoming administration, Marcos' Foreign Secretary, Narciso Ramos, stated that Manila would give "due consideration" to any "sincere Russian proposal" to establish diplomatic relations. The Marcos government, however, would "remain opposed to any kind of relationship – political or commercial – with the Beijing regime." The incoming administration regarded Moscow as "more acceptable" because its policy of co-existence had "gained acceptance in the West."¹

This policy of the Marcos administration brought immense internal stress to the PKP. Sections of the leadership opposed to Beijing's denunciations of Moscow's "modern revisionism" were strongly inclined to continue the party's support for Marcos, while Sison, on the other hand, was increasingly open about his sympathies for Mao and Beijing and by 1967 no longer favored the alliance with Marcos. These tensions split the party. The tensions, however, had not yet found open expression in early 1966. The burning political question of the day was Marcos' commitment to send Filipino forces to Vietnam. The PKP reserved

¹"Diplomatic ties with Russia?" *PPF*, January 1966, 65. Narciso Ramos had been the Philippines ambassador to Taiwan from 1956 until his appointment as Foreign Affairs secretary in 1966. He was an honorary citizen of the country. Ramos' appointment by Marcos was a clear indication of the anti-Beijing orientation of the administration's foreign policy. (Quijano de Manila, "Slow Boat to China," *PPF*, December 1966, 68).

judgment on the matter, refusing to explicitly denounce Marcos in the hopes of still profiting from the support they had extended him in the 1965 election. As a result, the КМ participated only slightly in the protests against the Vietnam War in the first half of the year – enough to maintain a presence among students and youth, but not enough to alienate Marcos.

Sison managed to travel to China in July, returning with clear directives from Beijing – wrest control of the P K P from the pro-Moscow leadership of the Lavas. He launched a speaking tour to win support for the political line of Mao. In October, the simmering political hostility against the brutal war in Vietnam exploded in protests against the Manila Summit being staged by Lyndon Johnson and Ferdinand Marcos.

Assessing Marcos' Victory

At the beginning of the year, the *Progressive Review* published its eighth issue. Sison wrote the editorial, “The Defeat of Macapagal and Victory of Marcos,” weighing the political significance for “the national democratic forces” – i.e., the P K P and its front organizations – of Marcos’ election victory.² Despite Marcos announcement that he would send troops to Vietnam, Sison reserved judgment on the political character of the Marcos administration, writing, “It is still too soon to assess the significance of the Marcos victory. In fact there is hardly any ground for predicting the policies that he will eventually take.” (1) Given this uncertainty, he argued that “in drawing up their strategy for the next years, the national democratic forces must be able to analyze the forces behind Marcos and identify, even if only in cursory form, the alternative courses of action open to the new president.”

What forces were aligned behind Marcos, according to Sison? He wrote, “Since the early 1950s, the nationalist bourgeoisie or Filipino industrialists have grown in size and strength. They now constitute an important force in Philippine politics,” and what is more, “the Filipino national bourgeoisie turned decisively against the Macapagal government.” (2) Sison stated that half of Marcos cabinet was composed of pro-imperialist figures – he singled out Narciso Ramos and Carlos P. Romulo – but the other half was composed of “strong exponents of economic nationalism,” and in this latter camp he placed Vice President Fernando Lopez. The pro-imperialist section of Marcos cabinet was put in place, Sison admitted, because Marcos “received *greater* American financial support [than Macapagal] and ... this proved to be one of the decisive factors in the outcome of the election.” (2-3, emphasis in original) Sison was admitting that the front organizations of the P K P had endorsed Washington’s preferred candidate, and that it was the support of Washington which had secured his victory. He argued, however, that Marcos was not yet firmly in the camp of imperialism. “Marcos

²Jose Ma. Sison, “The Defeat of Macapagal and Victory of Marcos,” *PR* 8 (1966), 1-4.

himself will be forced to make a choice between his people and his financiers.” (3) The appropriate response, he claimed, was neither to openly support nor to condemn Marcos but to reserve judgment and build the organizations of national democracy. Sison wrote, “[the national democratic forces] must redouble their efforts to amass collective strength at the time when the President is performing his balancing act in domestic affairs. For it is only the strength of the national democratic forces that is capable of drawing the president to their side once the moment of decision is at hand.” (3) Marcos was a representative of the Philippine ruling classes. He did not waver between the interests of imperialism and those of “the people,” but like the classes he represented, was firmly in the camp of US imperialism and hostile to the interests of workers and peasants.

Sison turned to a specific example of what he saw as Marcos’ balancing act: his assumption of the position of Secretary of National Defense. As Marcos wavered at present between the interests of the people and of imperialism, Sison claimed that this position could mean one of two things; either Marcos would use it as a means of “all-out military support for fascistic and pro-Western regimes in Asia,” or, “it is possible that President Marcos will be courageous and patriotic enough, in the contemporary anti-imperialist sense, to wean away the armed forces from American control and influence.” (4) Not only were Sison’s speculations about the possible progressive character of the Marcos administration fundamentally anti-Marxist, they also contradicted the basic facts. Marcos was, as Sison admitted, firmly supported by Washington, he had committed the Philippines to sending troops to Vietnam, and he was engaged in a brutal military campaign in Central Luzon against the peasantry, in the name of fighting the Huks. There were only two features of the Marcos administration that the PKP might be inclined to hail as progressive and they latched on to both. He was talking of opening diplomatic and economic ties with the Soviet Union, and he had appointed key allies of the PKP to cabinet positions in his administration, among them Blas Ople.

Sison concluded, “If ever he will align himself with national democracy, he will need the full-backing of a well-organized and dynamic united front.” (4) On the basis of this analysis – reserving judgment about the character of the Marcos administration, prepared at any moment to leap in and support him – the PKP led its front organizations to avoid protesting too loudly against the Philippine involvement in Vietnam. The KM was silent for much of 1966.

Lessons from the split with Macapagal

Among the lessons which the PKP drew from the experience of the coalition with Macapagal was the peril posed by becoming too closely allied with a particular section of the bourgeoisie; they now saw the need for flexible alliances and alignments. On February 6, Sison spoke at the 64th anniversary conference of the Union de Impresores de Filipinas (UIF), delivering a speech entitled “Nationalism

and the Labor Movement.”³ Sison concluded a brief history of the Philippine labor movement by stating

That the labor movement has consistently advanced despite the difficulties already described is proven no better than by the establishment of the Lapiang Manggagawa (Workers’ Party) in 1963. It was established with the biggest number of labor following at that time. However, at the present moment, it is seriously faced with the danger of disintegration from which it has evidently suffered through four years of existence... (104)

The LM was faced with disintegration precisely because it was the composite of its member trade unions. It bled member organizations when it entered an alliance with Macapagal, and bled yet more when it broke that alliance. Many of the trade union bureaucrats had become comfortably ensconced within choice government positions doled out to them during the heyday of the LM-LP coalition, and when Sison and Lacsina broke the alliance and backed Marcos, these bureaucrats severed their organizational ties with the LM. Sison told his audience that these losses were “apparently because of the deleterious impact of bourgeois politics which wracks the leadership every election time and because of the right-wing opportunism of certain elements and also because of narrow inter-federation *amor proprio*.” (104)

Sison articulated what he saw as the solution to this crisis: “In the field of organization, the workers’ party must require individual membership from members of all patriotic classes.”

The LM comprised three sets of opposed interests. The objective interest of the working class membership of the Lapiang Manggagawa was an independent party fighting against the capitalist class, Filipino and foreign alike. The trade union bureaucrats were interested in a party which would provide them political leverage in their negotiations for government appointments and sweetheart deals, and this entailed establishing a long-term relationship with certain bourgeois political figures and riding their coattails to largesse. This was precisely what a great many of the union heads in the LM did during the party’s coalition with the LP. Finally, the Stalinist leadership at the head of the party, represented by Lacsina and Sison, needed an organization over which they had direct political control and could use to negotiate with the ruling class on a day-to-day basis.

To this end, Sison called for individual membership in the party, rather than membership mediated by a union, and sought to open up the LM not simply to workers, but to “all patriotic classes,” a Stalinist category which included the national bourgeoisie, professionals, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and workers. The LM, Sison argued “must be able to make daily elaborations on the strategy

³SND, 90.

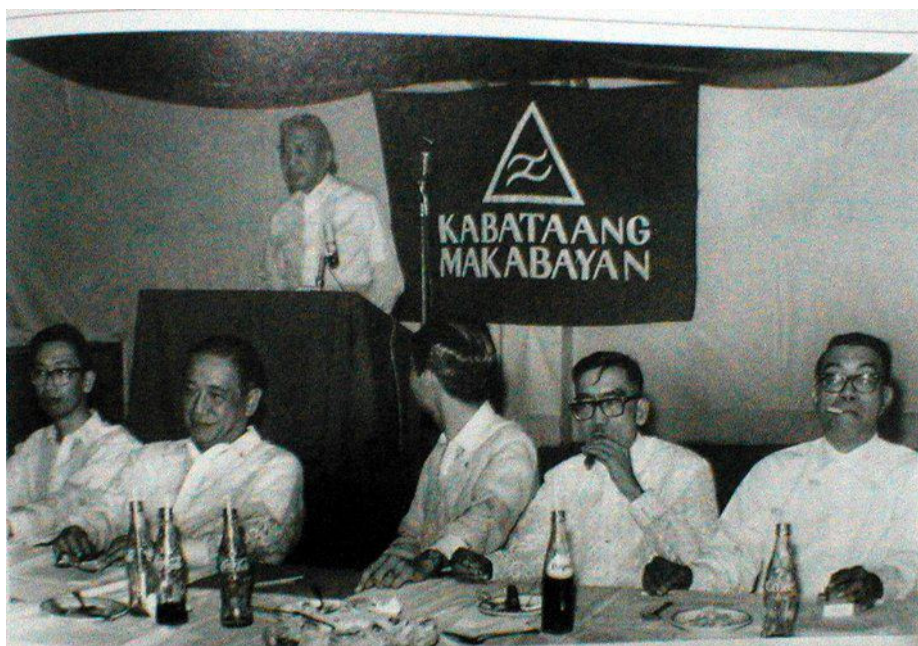


Figure 15.1: KM Meeting [1966]. Sison, Tañada are on the left, Francisco and Horacio Lava are on the right. Supreme Court Justice Jesus Barrera is speaking. Jose David Lapuz is seated in the center.

of the national united front through concrete militant struggle. It must respond promptly to the daily shifting demands of the anti-imperialist and the anti-feudal struggle, independently and in cooperation with all other anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces and organizations.” (105) This flexibility in the daily elaboration of strategy was necessary so that the party would be able to be “alert to valuable alliances and also to be alert on such alliances so long as these are with non-proletarian forces and elements.” In other words, flexibility was required so that the leadership of the party could form alliances at will and break them at will. Sison added that “if by force of circumstances, candidates of bourgeois parties are to be supported for tactical reasons there should be no thought for personal aggrandizement or personal opportunism by the one who suggests it.” To the personal opportunism of the trade union bureaucrat, Sison counterpoised not the principled struggle for the independence of the working class, but rather the programmatic opportunism of Stalinism.

Philcag

The first half of 1966 was marked by the silence of the Kabataang Makabayan and Lapiang Manggagawa regarding Ferdinand Marcos. As Marcos officially announced that he was sending troops to Vietnam, under the euphemism Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAG), the KM and LM did nothing. They staged no

protests denouncing Marcos' moves, and they issued no manifestos. While they protested the visit of US Vice President Hubert Humphrey to the country in late February, and joined the international day of protest on March 25, they never denounced Marcos himself. There were a number of protests against the Philcag staged in the first half of 1966, but the leadership of these protests came from the UP Student Council, and while some individual KM members participated, the organization was almost entirely absent. The KM endorsed Marcos for President on the basis of his promise not to send troops to Vietnam; on election Marcos immediately issued a public promise to Washington that he would send troops; and the KM was suddenly silent. This sequence of developments brought immense confusion to the students and youth who had followed the KM's leadership during the election and as a result, the initial stages of the anti-Vietnam war campaign in 1966 were a confused and incompetent affair.

On February 11, the UP Student Council staged the first protest of the year against the Vietnam war in front of the US embassy.⁴ A police sergeant trained his gun on the protestors, then handcuffed and arrested seven of them, the first time in memory that the police had arrested student protestors.⁵ The students were released shortly after being taken to Precinct Three, and the arresting sergeant was made to publicly apologize to University President Romulo for "manhandling" the students.

A conference on Vietnam was held on the UP campus on February 12. Nemenzo, now an assistant professor of Public Administration at the University, was among the speakers, representing the BRPF. The event, however, was not sponsored by SCAUP, KM or the BRPF, but was jointly sponsored by the National Students League (NSL) under Benjamin Muego and by the *Collegian* under the editorship of E. Voltaire Garcia.⁶ One hundred seventy delegates attended the conference, and voted on resolutions condemning *both* the United States and North Vietnam for violating the Geneva convention and called for the sending of humanitarian workers to Vietnam. The same day, a Student Council delegation went to Malacañang to meet with Executive Secretary Rafael Salas to present him with the conference's Vietnam Manifesto, and he congratulated the delegation on their initiative. On Monday, Marcos met with the UP student council delegation and praised the UP students for having "consistently kept the role as the vanguard of public opinion in the country."⁷ Three days later, Marcos authorized sending two thousand Filipino troops to Vietnam. He used an appropriations bill exactly like the one for which he had denounced Macapagal less than a year earlier, but unlike the ₱25 million bill sought by Macapagal, Marcos upped the

⁴PC, 3 Aug 1966, 7. Student councilor Randy David organized the protest.

⁵PC, 16 Feb 1966. Among the arrested was Perfecto Tera.

⁶PC, 5 Jan 1966.

⁷PC, 3 Aug 1966, 7. The delegation was comprised of Tristan Catindig, Randy David, Violeta Calvo, and Loida Nicolas.

amount to ₱35 million.⁸ Marcos delivered a radio and television address in which he stated the basis of the Philippines support for the deployment of troops to Vietnam: “we regard it as essential that the relentless pressure of Communist aggression in Vietnam be stopped ... we feel that in aiding Vietnam we are insuring our own future safety.”⁹

US Vice President Hubert Humphrey visited Manila on February 21 and 22 to support Marcos in his commitment to send Philippine forces to Vietnam.¹⁰ The KM led a demonstration against Humphrey’s visit. Five thousand students, peasants, workers and unemployed gathered outside of Congress to stage their protest and then marched to the US Embassy, around which sixty policemen stood guard.¹¹ The rally moved from the Embassy to the airport, sitting down on the road to block the the arrive of the US Vice President’s arrival, “snarling traffic.” Humphrey’s entourage avoided the protestors, exiting the airport by driving on the runway.¹²

UP began holding a series of teach-ins, the first of which was held on February 24 at 8:30 pm and was slated “to last all night or until students lose interest.” Nemenzo, as chair of BRPF sponsored the teach-in series which lasted for the entire semester.¹³ The blurb for the event described “the teach in” as a practice which was “current in universities in the United States.”¹⁴ The speakers for these teach-ins were a mixed lot at best and some of the sponsored events featured openly reactionary figures. The BRPF sponsored, and Nemenzo chaired, teach-ins featuring CIA agent and Congressman Frisco San Juan on March 10; *Philippines Free Press* editor Teddy Locsin on March 24; and three US embassy officers – the Cultural Affairs officer, USIA officer and Legal officer – on March 31.¹⁵

On March 25 the BRPF, SCAUP, KM, and LM staged a rally of two thousand workers and students in front of the US Embassy for an hour and half. Lacsina addressed the crowd, saying “We are being pushed by the United States to send Filipinos to Vietnam.” Olalia spoke, declaring that if the Vietnam bill passed congress, the LM would “stage a general strike.” While some of the protestors brought placards which read “Marcos and Mac – No Difference,” none of the speakers denounced Marcos, but focused their ire on the US Embassy and the

⁸Jose F Lacaba, “For Dollars and ‘Democracy’?,” *PPF*, February 1966, 2, 71.

⁹Jose D. Ingles, “The Philippine Position on the Vietnam Question,” *Philippine Studies* 14, no. 4 (1966): 633.

¹⁰Humphrey had been in the Philippines but a month prior for Marcos’ inauguration. (“A Time for Demonstrations,” *PPF*, March 1966, 63–64).

¹¹Among the speakers who addressed the crowd were Ruben Torres, Ernesto Macahiya (KM), Maximo Lim (SCAUP), and Voltaire Garcia.

¹²PC, 23 Feb 1966.

¹³Nemenzo, Benjamin Muego and Voltaire Garcia spoke at the first event and Joma Sison was listed as a future speaker in the teach-in series but it seems that he did not wind up speaking.

¹⁴PC, 23 Feb 1966.

¹⁵PC, 9 Mar; 23 Mar; 30 Mar 1966.

Philippine legislature.¹⁶ The event was coordinated as part of an International Day of Protest, coinciding with similar rallies against the war in Vietnam which were held in the United States and elsewhere.¹⁷

Harry Magdoff

Right-wing legislators Salipada Pendatun, Fermin Caram and several others responded to the protest rally by calling for an investigation of the leadership of KM for its alleged “red ties,” and announced that CAFA would be launching an investigative probe of the event. CAFA focused on the visit of American political economist Harry Magdoff, an editor of the left publication *Monthly Review*, to the Philippines as the outside instigator of unrest, claiming that Magdoff met with KM leaders at the Tres Hermanas restaurant for dinner on March 6 to plot the protest.¹⁸ Bagong Asya, a nationalist organization allied with the KM under the leadership of Nur Misuari, put out a leaflet denouncing the CAFA inquiry as the “resurrection of evil,” meaning a return to the 1961 CAFA witch-hunting of the UP campus.¹⁹ An examination of Harry Magdoff’s papers reveals that there was partial truth to the accusations.

Fred Magdoff, the son of Harry Magdoff, was lecturing at UP Los Baños on a fellowship from the Ford Foundation, under the joint sponsorship of UP and Cornell. In November 1965, Fred met with Nemenzo, a meeting which had been arranged by William Pomeroy.²⁰ Fred and Harry Magdoff were convinced in late 1965 that there was a “poverty of thought” – both political and economical – in the Philippines generally, and in the KM more specifically. Harry Magdoff prepared a set of papers for presentation to the KM to provide political leadership in the struggle against the US war in Vietnam, but these documents were destroyed when his home burned down in December 1965. Fred argued in his correspondence that Harry’s work in the Philippines would make possible the opening up of “second and third fronts ... to the Vietnam struggle.”²¹

Fred, in a letter to his father dated December 3, reported that he had attended a meeting of the KM on Bonifacio Day, November 30. The topic of the meeting was “national industrialization,” and Fred attended on the invitation of Nemenzo – “If I hadn’t shown up with Francisco Nemenzo Jr., I certainly would not have been very welcome.” He described the meeting,

¹⁶“Rallies and the ‘Red Taint’,” *PPF*, April 1966, 65.

¹⁷PC, 23 Mar 1966; Justus M. Van Der Kroef, “Communist Fronts in the Philippines,” *Problems of Communism* 16, no. Mar-Apr (1967): 65–75.

¹⁸*PPF*, “Rallies and the ‘Red Taint’”; PC, 30 Mar; 20 Apr 1966.

¹⁹PC, 20 Apr 1966, 3.

²⁰In a letter to his father, Fred noted that Nemenzo had ties to both the KM and the *Progressive Review*. Fred Magdoff, Letter to Harry Magdoff, 22 Nov 1965 MP, Box 04, Folder Correspondence “Fred”.

²¹Fred Magdoff, Letter to Harry Magdoff, 10 Dec 1965 MP, Box 04, Folder Correspondence “Fred”.

All the speeches stressed the problem of US imperialism's stifling of the economic development. Unfortunately they were mostly rabble rousing speeches with very little educational effect. However, there was a speech by A. Lichauco, a leading Filipino industrialist ... The main point of his speech was that US investment brings in very little capital into the country but relies mostly on Filipino capital to start businesses. This makes credit very tight as far as the Filipino entrepreneur is concerned since he can't match the collateral the Americans can put up. It is not strange, therefore, that some leading industrialists actively support the КМ (though behind the scenes) with money ...²²

Harry Magdoff's thoughts in preparation for his visit to the Philippines were focused on two subjects: opposition to the Vietnam war and the implications of certain passages in volume II of Marx's *Capital* for an understanding of the nature of US imperialism. In the wake of Magdoff's visit, and in particular after the March 25 protest, the press was full of accounts of Magdoff being a 'red agent,' who had organized the rally. Fred wrote a letter to an undisclosed recipient on April 6, 1966, describing the affair.

Quite a stink has come up about my activities here in the country as well as the actions of my father when he and my mother visited me during the early part of March. The newspapers in Manila have given top billing to the accusations against my father — that he came here to help plan the March 25th demonstration against the war in Vietnam. ...

The powers that be ... want me out of the country before the House Committee on Un-Filipino Activities ... starts its investigations. Congress is now adjourned because of Holy Week but will resume on April 11. As things now stand I will be leaving the country on the 12th (probably before this letter reaches you) ...

There is much more to write, but please realize that I only learned this morning that I had five days to clear out.

Reviewing the correspondence in Harry Magdoff's papers, it seems clear that Magdoff did assist in preparing for the March 25 protest. His role, however, does not seem to have been that of an instigator or a central planner. Rather, he gave several lectures on US imperialism that could at best be said to have inspired the

²²Jose David Lapuz had spoken in a similar vein regarding the ties of КМ with business, when he told Justus van der Kroef in 1966 that the КМ had "found sympathy in some circles of Philippine 'big business' and among major entrepreneurs where US economic influence and competition are resented." (Van Der Kroef, "Philippine Communism and the Chinese," 142).

κM and he likely assisted in coordination so that the rally would coincide with similar rallies held on the same day in the United States.²³

In April, Marcos' Vietnam bill finally passed through Congress, by a vote of 81-7. Congress had debated the bill for so long that it was being referred to as the "Vietnam Congress," or simply, Vietcong.²⁴ Of the candidates officially endorsed by the κM in the 1965 election, only one, Ramon Mitra, voted against the bill. On June 18, Marcos signed the bill deploying the PHILCAG to Vietnam. There was no sign of a general strike, despite Olalia's threats; there was not even a mass protest.

On August 10, Nguyen Cao Ky visited Manila and SCAUP and Bagong Asya protested his state dinner in Malacañang. Only fifty people, led by Nilo Tayag and Sixto Carlos Jr., participated in the protest. The police moved the protestors from the gates of Malacañang to the triangular plaza across the street.²⁵ The protestors distributed a leaflet denouncing Cao Ky as "responsible for the imposition of a dictatorship over the hapless people in South Vietnam." His visit "will definitely be responsible for prejudicing President Marcos' peace moves lately to settle the Vietnam War. And the sending of Filipino combat troops intended to be dramatized by his visit will only fan resentment against us by other powers in the region interested in its settlement over the conference table."²⁶ The approving reference to Marcos' unspecified "peace moves" reveals the level of confusion that was still present as a result of the κM's continuing support for Marcos. κM did not formally participate in the protest, although both Carlos and Tayag were κM leaders. Ten days later, the first batch of PHILCAG troops were deployed to Vietnam under the leadership of Major Fidel V. Ramos, the only son of Foreign Affairs secretary Narciso Ramos.²⁷

To China

Beginning in March, there was a flurry of publicized travel to both China and the Soviet Union. Reporters and politicians began to travel to one or the other

²³Magdoff's influence, however, continued to a certain extent. There are copies in the *PRP* of selections from Magdoff's articles in the *Monthly Review* which were being mimeographed and distributed by student groups in the Philippines. See, for example, item 10/18.01. On April 11, Fred Magdoff wrote a letter to the *Collegian*, denouncing the campaign against his father as slander. The US Embassy responded to the scandal by terminating Fred Magdoff's scholarship. After reports of Harry Magdoff's activities reached the Philippine press, Fred was instructed to report to the embassy and notified that his scholarship was terminated. "Sources further said that [Fred] Magdoff was grounded at the College of Agriculture and was not allowed to leave the area without a pass for three days after the reported Communist tie-up of his father was released." (PC, 20 Apr 1966, 10).

²⁴Napoleon Rama, "Vietnam Congress," *PPF*, April 1966, 3, 68.

²⁵PC, 17 Aug 1966; Jose F. Lacaba, "The Coming of Cao Ky," *PPF*, August 1966, 75-77.

²⁶PC, 10 Aug 1966.

²⁷Jose F. Lacaba, "Vanguard to Vietnam," *PPF*, August 1966, 75.

country and bring back reports on life and politics behind the “Iron” or the “Bamboo Curtain.” Senator Maria Kalaw Katigbak traveled to China in March, bringing back a Chinese film on the conflict in Vietnam which was shown on the UP campus.²⁸ Tonypet and Gemma Cruz Araneta traveled to both the USSR and China, and on April 22, they spoke at the last teach-in of the semester at UP on their travels. The *Philippines Free Press* summed up the impact of the opening of travel to Beijing. “It is the success of Communist China that the beneficiaries of the present social order – the rich, the comfortable, the government officials that serve them, the Establishment – must fear. For if Communist China has succeeded in providing the Chinese people with the necessities of life, the question will be raised why the ‘democratic’ Philippines has failed to serve the Filipino people likewise.”²⁹

In late July, Sison traveled to Japan for the 12th Gensuikyo World Conference against A&H Bombs. His conference speech, entitled “US Imperialism and Revolutionary Internationalism,” was included in *SND*, and all three editions of *SND* note that the speech was “prepared for” the conference which lasted from “July 28 to August 29, 1966.” Two points immediately stand out in this formulation. First, unlike every other item in *SND*, this speech was not delivered, but merely prepared, and second, it seems highly unlikely that the conference lasted for over a month. Sison’s prepared speech was a slight thing of little concrete political substance. The one significant aspect of the speech was Sison’s denunciation of “the reactionary character of modern revisionism,” which is the first direct reference to the Sino-Soviet split which I have found in Sison’s writings, as “modern revisionism” was the stock Chinese Communist Party (CCP) epithet for the politics of the CPSU.³⁰

Relations between the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) and the CCP were spiraling toward irrevocable break in 1966 and the 12th Gensuikyo conference, sponsored by the JCP, was a significant moment in the disintegration of the ties between the two parties. Written in December 1966, the CIA Intelligence assessment on the JCP-CCP split summed up the affair, “In less than two years, the Japanese Communist Party has moved from a position of strong support of the Chinese in the Sino-Soviet dispute to a new assertion of its independence from both the Chinese and the Soviets as the result of a bitter quarrel with the Chinese which has reached the point where there is apparently no longer any direct communication between the two parties.”³¹

²⁸The *Bulletin* tried to whip up a sensationalist red scare over the showing of the film. (PC, 20 Apr 1966, 3).

²⁹“Moment of Truth,” *PPF*, June 1966, 1.

³⁰*SND*, 176. In the 1972 edition of *SND*, “reactionary” was redacted to read “counter-revolutionary.” Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*, 272.

³¹DD/I Research Staff, *The Disintegration of Japanese Communist Relations with Peking*, Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), December 1966, Ref ESAU XXXIII, 1. The seventy-seven page Intelligence Report prepared by the CIA Directorate of Intelligence and

The basic development of the rift between the JCP and the CCP originated in early 1965 with Mao's call for a blanket denunciation of all Soviet aid to North Vietnam, when the JCP under Kenji Miyamoto saw the aid as justifying moves toward the restoration of relations between Moscow and Beijing. By mid-1965, the CCP was pushing for the JCP to move from its strategy of a legal mass movement toward making preparations for carrying out an armed struggle. Miyamoto and the central leadership of the JCP identified the strategy of their party most closely with that of the PKI and the alliance of its mass movement with the Sukarno administration. The devastation of the PKI beginning in October shocked the JCP leadership, who blamed Mao for an armed, adventurist policy which precipitated the slaughter of the party, and saw the CCP pressure for armed struggle in Japan tending in the same direction. In February 1966 Miyamoto headed a high level delegation to Beijing, where he appealed with the CCP leadership for an international "unity of action" in North Vietnam, above all, calling on the CCP to end its denunciation of Soviet aid. His delegation was met with stony refusal and there was so little agreement in the meetings that the JCP and CCP failed to produce a joint communiqué. In April, Miyamoto reported back to the fourth plenum of the JCP Central Committee and his report, which denounced the CCP leadership, produced sharp conflict. After protracted internal dispute, Miyamoto was able to secure a vote in favor of his report, winning out over the pro-China wing of the party.

The Chinese delegation to the 12th Gensuikyo conference, under the leadership of high-ranking party member Liu Ningyi, was in Hongkong, en route to Japan, when the Japanese government announced that it would not grant visas to the delegation. The JCP did not protest, they did not even issue a mild pro forma open letter of disagreement. The conference was scheduled to take place from August 5 to 7 in Hiroshima, but preliminary proceedings began on July 30.³² The Japanese Socialist Party (JSP), with support from Moscow, had been sponsoring a rival anti-nuclear weapons conference, Gensuikin, which supported the Soviet Union's signing the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which was fiercely opposed by China. The JCP had ruled at the founding of the Gensuikin that in order for a delegation to be allowed to attend Gensuikyo it could not attend the rival conference. In 1966, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), a Soviet-backed front organization, sent delegates to both conferences. The JCP leadership of the Gensuikyo, moving toward break with the CCP, chose on August 1 to allow the WFDY delegate, a Soviet national, to attend the conference despite the violation of its policy. In protest, sixteen out of the twenty foreign delegations walked out of the conference and only the Danish, French, Romanian and American delegates remained. The CIA wrote, "It was clear that it was the

declassified in May 2007 is a particularly useful source on this affair.

³²Robert A. Scalapino, *The Japanese Communist Movement, 1920-1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 278.

Chinese who ordered the walk-out; the 16 delegations all consisted of radical, pro-Chinese elements in their various countries, some of them resident in Beijing. After leaving the conference, most of the delegates went on to China, where they were honored with banquets and a huge Beijing rally on 12 August.³³ In the wake of Gensuikyo, the JCP precipitously moved toward a permanent split from the CCP and by the end of 1966, ninety-eight pro-China JCP members were reported to have been removed from the party.³⁴

Sison was among the delegates who walked out of the conference. Writing in the *Collegian* in January 1967 in response to red-baiting charges from Carlos Albert, he stated “I walked out from the conference together with two Belgian priests and with the members of 16 foreign delegates [*sic*].”³⁵ Sison secretly traveled from Japan to China and direct ties with the CCP were thus established in the middle of 1966 by a section of the PKP leadership associated in particular with its youth movement. Sison’s arrival in China in the first week of August 1966 coincided with the formal launching of the Cultural Revolution, an event which shaped the politics he brought back to the Philippines. Sison’s walk-out from the conference and travel to China account for why *SND* reported that his speech was “prepared” but not delivered and also explain why Sison reported that the conference lasted for over a month. He used the conference to cover up his travel to China.

In the August UP Diliman campus elections, the KM merged its student party, Makabansa, with another student party, Katipunan, to form the Katipunan-Makabansa party. In the 1965 student elections both parties’ candidates for chair of the student council had lost. Katipunan ran E. Voltaire Garcia for Student Council chair in 1966. Despite his strong support for Manglapus in the 1965 election, whom the KM had termed a ‘clerico-fascist,’ Voltaire Garcia had become a key ally of the KM on a number of political questions. Makabansa chose to merge with Katipunan. The Katipunan-Makabansa alliance’s Declaration of Principles stated “it is upon the mutual recognition of our common purpose of progressive nationalism that we, the Katipunan and Makabansa, have bound ourselves into a militant and invincible alliance.”³⁶ As if matters were not confusing enough already, the Katipunan Makabansa alliance became known as KM. Garcia ran against the Kalayaan party’s Macapanton Abbas, on a platform which opposed the sending of troops to Vietnam but remained silent on the sending of a humanitarian team, something Garcia and the Katipunan supported. The Katipunan-Makabansa announced that it intended to stage a second national student conference on Vietnam in September at UP Los Baños; and that in December it would hold the first national student conference on China at Diliman. Garcia was elected chair of the Student Council, but the Katipunan-Makabansa

³³DD/I Research Staff, *The Disintegration of Japanese Communist Relations with Peking*, 42.

³⁴Ibid., vii.

³⁵Sison, “Committee Hearings and Albert’s Charges,” 5.

³⁶PC, 3 Aug 1966, 10.

candidate for vice-chair lost to Violeta Calvo, who had the strong backing of UPSCA. Garcia was immediately locked in a struggle for control of the Student Council with Calvo and Loida Nicolas.³⁷ Garcia had traveled to China over the summer and one of his first official actions was to request sponsorship from the Chinese government for a group of UP students to travel to China in November.³⁸

Marcos announced at the end of August that he would be traveling in late September to Washington to meet with Johnson to discuss the conflict in Vietnam. In the wake of this announcement, Sison finally intervened in the confusion caused by the KM's support for Marcos, publishing an article in the *Collegian* entitled "Asian Peace Conference Or New Military Alliance?"³⁹ Sison wrote that "President Marcos' call for peace and an Asian peace conference can be interpreted only within the context of American foreign policy." PHILCAG, he argued, "can be called mercenary in the sense that the Marcos administration had it organized with the expectations of aid from the United States in other projects. Nevertheless, it is really the Philippine government and the Filipino people who ultimately shoulder the costs of the enterprise and much more." Sison characterized the "real nature" of the PHILCAG group as "psy-war, intelligence and combat." He wrote that "The trip of Marcos to the US and Japan are [*sic*] inter-related to the plan to set up a new military alliance in Asia," and concluded with a question, "is President Marcos helping in the execution of the Pentagon's 'new design'?" Sison pointedly refrained from answering his own question, but concluded "If he is, then expect the rise of fascism in our country." While Sison did not directly denounce Marcos, he did cast PHILCAG in a hostile light; the KM continued to avoid protesting. Was the KM opposed to Marcos' policies or not? The confusion persisted.

On September 9, UP students staged a rally called by the UP Student Council in front of Malacañang protesting the PHILCAG's deployment to Vietnam.⁴⁰ Twenty buses were rented to take students from Diliman to the protest and additional buses were hired to ferry students from Los Baños. A typhoon had just forced the closure of classes for three days and there was initial concern that it would hamper the protest. The protestors issued a joint manifesto, signed by both SCAUP and BRPF, which stated "We oppose this partisan involvement for the very reason than no less than the President of the Philippines, in contravention of his aggressive policies has already recognized the obvious necessity of ending the Vietnam war." Through this twisted logic they presented their opposition to Marcos' deployment of troops to Vietnam as supporting positions articulated by Marcos himself. At the same time, the Manifesto stated that "we view with much concern and apprehension the possible implications of the proposed state visit"

³⁷PC, 24 Aug, 12; 21 Oct 1966, 8.

³⁸Manila, "Slow Boat to China," 2.

³⁹Jose Ma. Sison, "Asian Peace Conference or New Military Alliance?," PC, September 1966, 2.

⁴⁰PC, 31 Aug 1966.

of Marcos to the United States.⁴¹ The BRPF issued a statement on September 7 that read

The Philippine ruling elite utterly disregarding this popular resistance, particularly from the Filipino people, has committed this nation to the US war of aggression. Rather than sharing the just aspirations of the Vietnamese people, President Marcos under strong US pressure has decided to frustrate the national liberation movement in that country ... the BRPF (Philippine Council) wholeheartedly supports the mass rally to be staged before Malacañang on September 9 – an action initiated and led by the students of the UP. The foundation enjoines [*sic*] all peace-loving people to participate in this just and historic event.⁴²

The KM had no official involvement in the protest. It did not assist in organizing, it did not leaflet nor did it attempt to sway the politics of the rally. The KM did not sign the manifesto, nor did it issue a counter-manifesto. UP KM Chair Ibarra Malonzo, conscious it seems that the absence of the KM was much commented upon, issued a statement on September 21, that while the KM

had nothing to do with the coordination of the demonstration ... our members, who are also University students quietly and modestly helped in certain steps towards the accomplishment of the rally. For the benefits of all University residents I wish to state the University chapter of the KM will always cooperate with any student body of the UP in any good cause.⁴³

A Series of Speeches

On September 30, Sison launched a series of talks at universities throughout the country in which he began elaborating the political conceptions he had received in Beijing.

‘Cultural Revolution’

The first called for a “Cultural Revolution,” a lecture delivered at UP Baguio to an event sponsored by the UP Baguio Student Council.⁴⁴ Sison opened his speech by informing his audience that “to have a scientific view of culture as we should, we need to understand first of all that culture is a superstructure that rests upon

⁴¹PC, 9 Sep 1966.

⁴²Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), *Endorsement of UP Students’ September 9th Rally*, September 1966, PRP 02/24.01.

⁴³PC, 21 Sep 1966, 10.

⁴⁴SND, 120.

a material basis.” (120) He continued, “just as revolution is inevitable in politico-economic relations, revolution is inevitable in culture. A cultural revolution, as a matter of fact, is a necessary aspect of the politico-economic revolution.” Sison did not argue from this conception the need to develop a socialist culture in the working class, but rather claimed that the necessary political task was the construction of a *national* culture. He stated, “in self-criticism, let us accept how much so many of us have become acculturized to American imperialism.”⁴⁵ (124) This national cultural revolution that Sison called for required the “Filipinization of schools, the press, radio, and other media” which were currently “in the hands of foreigners.” Ownership of these means of cultural production and distribution should be transferred from Chinese and American hands into private Filipino ownership.

Sison condemned Filipinos who left the country to work and live abroad. “This type of fellow is a subtle betrayer of his country and, in the most extreme cases, a loud-mouthed vilifier of Filipino character. He goes to a foreign land to serve a foreign people; the pay is good and that is all he is interested in. He does not realize how much social investment has been put into his public schooling from the elementary level and up and he refuses to serve the people whose taxes have paid for his education. We criticize him severely but we must as well criticize the government that allows him to desert and that fails to inspire him to work for the people.” (126) The anti-working class nature of Sison’s nationalist politics were clearly on display here. Workers owed a debt to “the nation,” according to Sison, and the government should have prevented these workers from leaving the country.

Sison concluded with criticisms of “the sweet boys and girls of the Peace Corps,” pointing to the “counter-insurgency rationale” behind the organization, but added, “whereas the Americans are going to our countryside . . . our bright young men and women are abandoning the countryside to crowd each other out in the city or to take flight entirely from their country.” The concluding logic of Sison’s call for a cultural revolution was the need to organize young people and send them to the countryside. This call would take organizational shape in the coming months as the Nationalist Corps, a program sponsored by Voltaire Garcia and the UP Student Council.

‘Tasks of the Second Propaganda Movement’

On October 12 1966, Sison delivered two more lectures in Baguio. He spoke first on the “Tasks of the Second Propaganda Movement” at Saint Louis University. Explicitly adopting the phrase second propaganda movement from Claro M. Recto, Sison used this speech to articulate more clearly the tasks of implementing the “national democratic cultural revolution” in the Philippines. The first

⁴⁵Self-criticism as a form of political behavior was another importation of Sison’s from China, one which would form the basis of cult-like small group meetings in the Party in the near future.

principle that Sison established was the need to “learn from the masses,” stating that “the activists of the Second Propaganda Movement have no alternative but to take the mass line, merge with the masses and learn from the masses.”⁴⁶

The ‘mass line’ was a Maoist distortion of the materialist understanding of history. In Mao’s conception, the truth of a theory or of an idea could be verified by immersion among the masses, for if a theory corresponded to the masses own experiences it was true. Sison wrote that “what the masses experience they can immediately grasp. They can also easily grasp the correct solutions based on the correct analysis of their problems ... Only they themselves can understand their problems most profoundly. The activists of the Second Propaganda Movement can only generalize and formulate solutions from the experience of the masses.” (130) He continued, “reliance on the masses and rejection of bourgeois and egotistic education can be understood only if one has a scientific and democratic world outlook.” (130) The adoption of the mass line revealed, according to Sison, that “the class struggle is objectively going on in the Philippines but it has taken the form of a national struggle with patriotic classes – the working class, peasantry, intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie aligned against the imperialists, compradors and landlords. The working class is the leading class, with the peasantry as its most reliable ally, and it conducts its struggle against the American monopoly-capitalists and the local comprador bourgeoisie.” (131) He continued “the activists of the Second Propaganda Movement should patiently arouse and mobilize the masses, win over the intelligentsia and neutralize or win over the national bourgeoisie, on the basis of their self-interest, under the banner of national democracy.” (132)

The immediate tasks that Sison laid out for the national democratic cultural revolution were the transfer of “ownership, control and influence over the schools” from foreign hands to Filipino hands. He did not put out a call for universal free public education through college, but rather for private universities to be owned exclusively by Filipinos. Sison called for “propagating and making use of a national language that is a cognate to all our local languages and can therefore, unlike English, be easily grasped by the masses everywhere. Vigorous steps must be taken to make Pilipino a language ascendant over English.” (133)

Sison argued that “the masses who constitute our biggest audience can only appreciate our literature and art if our writers and artists make use of the life and struggles of our masses as raw material.” One sees in this formulation the narrow elitism that lurked just beneath the surface of the “mass line.” The masses could appreciate art *only if* it directly dealt with their lives and struggles. Sison treated the masses as if they had not broken free from the solipsism of young children. Art which honestly depicted the lives of others – of a Filipino landlord, or an American autoworker, or a cross-section of Tsarist Russian society – such art would be incomprehensible to the Filipino masses in this conception, and

⁴⁶SND, 127.

therefore, “decadent” and “bourgeois.”

The mass line was a program of re-articulating to the masses what they had already experienced and already knew, in order to win their support for the national democratic revolution. The mass line was nothing but a program for opportunism, of adapting the political line of the party to the spontaneous consciousness of the masses, and in particular the peasantry, in order to line them up behind the capitalist class in the name of nationalism. Over the course of the next six years, Sison’s group would use the mass line to pander to many backwards conceptions prevalent among the Philippine peasantry, and as we will see, the *KM* and its sister organizations parroted the anti-Chinese animosities and religious superstitions prevalent among large sections of the peasantry in order to whip up political support. The upshot of Sison’s mass line was the call, which would swell into a vast political chorus by 1970, for the youth to go to the countryside and learn from the masses.

‘The Correct Concept of National Security’

On the same day that Sison delivered this speech, he also went to the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) in Baguio and addressed the junior and senior class cadets on “The Correct Concept of National Security.”⁴⁷ Sison appealed to the military for the “full adoption of the patriotic tradition of the Katipunan and the Philippine Revolution,” which above all required ending the US basing deal in the country. As a means of ending dependency on Washington, he stated “let us develop our munitions industry locally,” suggesting at the same time that the AFP could look to socialist countries for arms, stating “let us diversify our sources of military supplies.” This would, he claimed, “allow the armed forces to plan and conduct their actions in accordance with the interests of our people.” (153) The Armed Forces, he declared, “should be tolerant towards the efforts of the masses to organize themselves into a powerful political force.” (152)

Sison declared in his speech that “I know for a fact that most of the enlisted men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines come from the peasantry. But why is it that in disputes between the landlords and the peasants, the soldier who is actually a peasant in government uniform, finds himself being used as a tool of the landlord? Why point your guns to the masses and not to the foreign, comprador and feudal interests who exploit the people?” (148) Sison, however, was not issuing a revolutionary appeal to the rank and file members of the military on the basis of class solidarity to turn their guns against their officers and generals and join the ranks of a working class struggle to seize state power.

⁴⁷SND, 139. In 1972, Sison renamed this speech “The Mercenary Tradition in the AFP.” (Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*, 243). Sison’s speaking at the PMA was arranged by Dante Simbulan who was chair of the PMA’s curriculum committee. (Dante C. Simbulan, *Whose Side Are We On?: Memoirs of a PMAer* [Quezon City: Center for People Empowerment in Governance, 2015], 122).

Rather, he was addressing the most elite officer corps in the country, the PMA junior and senior classes. The graduates of the PMA would serve as the future generals, torture masters and coup plotters of the next quarter century. The graduating classes of 1967 and '68, addressed by Sison, included Victor Corpus who would break from the military to join the New People's Army (NPA), before returning to the fold of the AFP and being promoted to the rank of General. Also part of the class of 1967 was Benjamin Libarnes, who as a Major personally oversaw the extended torture of Satur Ocampo and others in Camp Olivas in 1976.⁴⁸

'US Imperialism vs. Economic Nationalism'

On October 18, Sison spoke at the University of the East (UE) on the subject of "US imperialism vs. Economic Nationalism," a speech which made clear the political ends served by the mass line and the appeal to the officers corps.⁴⁹ Sison decried foreign control of the economy, particularly the control exercised by US imperialism, and then stated that

A campaign must be waged now for the immediate nationalization of the whole productive and distributive systems of the economy, including foreign trade. The petroleum industry, banking and insurance, mining, transportation and communications, lumber, cement, glass and other enterprises – if they belong entirely to Filipino hands – will certainly accrue to us huge capital for further economic development instead of being remitted.

It is important to again stress that Sison did not use the word 'nationalization' as a Marxist. He did not call for social control of the means of production and distribution, but rather for their transfer to private Filipino ownership. He continued, "Instead of always wishing for foreign investments, let us adopt the principle of self-reliance. There is more than enough capital to be drawn from the full utilization of our manpower, a great percentage of which is languishing in forced idleness." (65) Sison was openly calling for native capitalists to engage in a more intensive and extensive exploitation of Filipino labor – for this is how capital is "drawn from the utilization of manpower." When he referred to workers as "our manpower," he spoke as a capitalist. Sison declared "The mobilization of agriculture as the foundation of the developmental spearhead

⁴⁸ Alfred W. McCoy, *Closer than Brothers: Manhood at the Philippine Military Academy* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 1999), 213. Two years later, *Ang Bayan* would denounce the visiting Soviet cultural mission for speaking at the PMA, "where the butchers of the people are trained." (AB, July 1969, 13).

⁴⁹SND, 56. In 1972, Sison renamed this speech "The Economic Emancipation Movement against US Imperialism." (Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*, 129).

which is nationalist industrialization can be achieved, however, only with the revolutionary replacement of the landlord system and the adoption of cooperatives among the peasantry. This is the necessary support for a program of nationalist industrialization.” (65) Land reform to break the power of the landlords, and national industrialization to supplant foreign capitalists with native ones – this was Sison’s unchanging political vision.

He concluded his speech with the appeal that “if it is true that socialist countries offer low interest rates on their aid and that there are no strings attached, let us find out and be ready to deal fairly with each other.” (66) This idea would be the centerpiece of his next speech, delivered to the Second Nationalist Congress for the Advancement of Nationalism, on the eve of the explosive protests of October 24.

— 16 —

October 24 and the Scramble for International Ties

*Oras na, magpasiya kung saan ka pupunta
Oras na, oras na, mag-iba ka ng landas.*

— Coritha, *Oras Na*

October 24

During his travel in the United States, and after consultation with Johnson, Marcos announced that he would host a regional summit on Vietnam in Manila in late October. The Manila Summit, staged in the *grand dame* of American colonialism, the Manila Hotel, was meant to provide the appearance of international support for Washington’s war in Vietnam. On October 16, the UP Student Council held a “tumultuous meeting” in which Voltaire Garcia managed to pass a resolution calling for a protest of the Summit to be staged on October 24.¹ Two days later, Garcia received a cable approving his request for Chinese government sponsorship of student travel, formally inviting a group of sixty students and professors for a three week all-expenses paid tour of mainland China in late November.² Garcia contacted the UP Dean of Student Affairs, Arturo Guerrero, who accompanied Garcia to present the proposed travel to University President Carlos P. Romulo on October 20. Romulo endorsed the plans and personally called Narciso Ramos, who likewise approved the travel, with the agreement that a list of the specific travelers would be supplied to the Foreign Affairs office for final authorization. Garcia and Romulo arranged for all traveling students to

¹Garcia and KM member Orly Mercado led nineteen councilors who voted in favor of the resolution; Calvo and Miriam Defensor led the opposition, with sixteen votes against. (Manila, “Slow Boat to China,” 2; PC, 19 Oct 1966).

²The funding was provided by the All-China Student Federation and the All-China Youth Federation. The travel to mainland China was to be followed by a separate group tour of “Nationalist China” – Taiwan – at the invitation of the Philippines-China Friendship Association, also negotiated by Garcia. (Jose F. Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet, Nights of Rage: The First Quarter Storm & Related Events* [Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2003], 12).

receive security clearances from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA).

National Student Congress for the Advancement of Nationalism

On October 22-23, UP hosted the National Student Congress for the Advancement of Nationalism at Vinzons Hall which was attended by approximately five hundred delegates.³ The Congress, sponsored by the UP Student Council, was attended by “leaders, scholars and editors from various universities, colleges and high schools all over the country ... They came from as far as Dumaguete and Ilocos Provinces. Before the start of the congress the delegates agreed that whatever decision the Congress would reach would be binding to all of them.”⁴ The congress focused its discussion on the nationalist writings of Horacio Lava, Jose Laurel and Lorenzo Tañada.⁵

Tañada addressed the congress, delivering a talk entitled “Nationalism and the development of our national economy,” that dealt with what he termed “a problem currently facing the Filipino banks today.”⁶ He stated that “the Monetary Board has just announced that it will conduct public hearings on the proposal to allow foreign capital to invest in domestic banks.” Tañada claimed that “to preach the political gospel of nationalism today may well appear like fighting dragons that are windmills.” Rather, “nationalism in our day has ... perforce become economic nationalism – a people’s watchfulness over its own patrimony against the encroachment of others.”

Following Tañada, Sison addressed the congress, taking up the theme of loans from Socialist countries, in a speech he entitled “Self-determination and Foreign Relations.”⁷ Sison presented an “Outline of World Events” which revealed that the world was divided between two great camps: national liberation movements in alliance with the socialist camp, on the one hand, and US imperialism, on the other. (169) The divide between the working class and the capitalist class was not the fundamental global contradiction, according to Sison; rather, the fundamental contradiction around the globe was between imperialism and national liberation, and all other contradictions were subordinate to this fundamental one. In taking up the struggle against imperialism, Sison claimed, a nation could rely on “socialist aid.”

³The committee organizing the Congress was chaired by Sixto Carlos Jr. and co-chaired by Orly Mercado. Each delegate paid a fee of five pesos to attend. (PC, 12 Oct 1966).

⁴PC, 26 Oct 1966, 11. When Garcia secured the sponsorship of the UP Student Council for this event, his perennial opponents, Calvo and Nicolas, tried to get a no confidence resolution voted against him. It was voted down. (PC, 12 Oct 1966, 8).

⁵PC, 24 Oct 1966.

⁶PC, 26 Oct 1966, 7.

⁷SND, 164. This speech was not printed in the 1972 second edition of *SND*, but was included in the 1995 third edition.

Socialist aid has encouraged fighters for national liberation to ward off the exploitation and enticements of imperialist aid, particularly American “aid.” It has provided the disinterested alternative to the selfish offers of aid by various imperialist countries. Socialist aid agrees on the most disinterested terms as seen in comparison with imperialist aid.

Socialist aid is given at 1 to 2.5 per cent interest, payable in twelve years; sometimes no more interest is required. Usually, the aid means the delivery of capital goods, the development of a self-reliant economy, a diversified agriculture and the construction of basic and heavy industries; it serves to increase the industrialization and independence of the aid recipient. Payment can be made in local currency, thus the aid giver is compelled to purchase local commodities. Socialist aid, therefore, encourages equivalent exchange of exports and imports. Furthermore, it requires no economic and administrative conditions such as imperialist aid requires that loans be spent as dictated by foreign advisers of the aid giver; and it has no political and military requirements such as that the aid recipient should join a military bloc and other bilateral and multilateral entanglements.

...

Because of the wide difference in terms of imperialist and socialist aid, oppressed peoples and anti-imperialist governments always take the latter at first opportunity. (171-2)

The Congress issued a general declaration at its conclusion, which stated that student nationalists were “pursuing a Second Propaganda Movement.”⁸ The Philippine revolution, it claimed, was in “its National Democratic stage” and “American imperialism and feudalism . . . stand out as the basic problems.” Philippine society was “semi-colonial and semi-feudal,” and the revolution therefore needed to be carried out by “the masses of peasants and workers, including the middle class – the conglomeration of national entrepreneurs, professionals, students, and small property owners” – in order to achieve the goals of “national industrialization and genuine land reform.” The declaration called for private Filipino ownership of capital, stating that “the nationalization of the Philippine economy is a necessary step towards national democracy,” and concluded with the demand for “trade relations with all countries” and the “recognition of the People’s Republic of China.” (9)

Historically situated, the congress had a bizarre unreality to it. On the eve of the most explosive protest in memory, the congress issued this two page resolution that was a generic repetition of the Stalinist party line. There was

⁸National Student Congress for the Advancement of Nationalism, “General Declaration,” *PC*, October 1966, 8. In 2008, Sison claimed that he had written this document. (Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 54).

nothing in the resolution that would identify a single burning political issue of the day. Marcos' name was never mentioned, nor was PHILCAG, nor even Vietnam. The keynote speaker – Tañada – focused on protecting Filipino capitalists and dismissed “political nationalism” as jousting at windmills. Sison and Garcia had a clear goal, however, in getting this declaration ratified by the Congress. In August, Garcia had issued a policy declaration at the start of the year's council, in which he announced that he would be creating a student organization he called the Nationalist Corps (NC). According to the *Collegian*, “The members of the Nationalist Corps will be divided into Nationalist Education Teams (NET) to be assigned to every province and cities [sic]. The tasks of the NET will be to conduct a nationalist education campaign and to conduct research on the problems of our people.”⁹ The General Declaration of the Congress would be made the programmatic guide of the Nationalist Corps, and agreement with its principles a prerequisite for joining the Corps. This was the reason for drafting a declaration that was a generic articulation of the basic principles of Stalinism and made no reference to any immediate political question or task. The Declaration would serve as the basis of the Nationalist Corps and the Corps, in turn, would begin the systematic implementation of the mass line. Sison was sending the youth and students to the countryside.

The October 24 Protests

On October 23, Johnson, Nguyen Cao Ky, Australian PM Harold Holt, New Zealand PM Keith Holyoake, Korean President Park Chung-hee, Thai PM Thanom Kittikachorn and Ferdinand Marcos all gathered at the Manila Hotel. Johnson ran the summit, with Marcos supporting him from the sidelines. To Marcos' enduring embarrassment, Johnson referred to Marcos as his “right-hand in Asia.” Ninoy Aquino seized on this formulation, gleefully repeating to audiences in the coming years that “Johnson has been doing unspeakable things with his right-hand.” The Summit issued a joint communiqué depicting the campaign in Vietnam as a collective effort. The *Philippines Free Press* wrote, “the entire firepower of the American delegation during the Summit was concentrated on changing the complexion of the war in Vietnam from an American war to a war of, by and for Asians.”¹⁰

As the Nationalist Student Congress was nearing its conclusion, “a committee passed a resolution to picket at the Manila Hotel condemning the Manila Summit. This was adopted only after a debate between delegates from UP, Lyceum University and University of the East on one hand, and a Silliman delegate on the other.”¹¹ At eight at night, forty students, among them Joma Sison, demonstrated at the Manila Hotel and the police arrested them for having no permit to protest.

⁹PC, 9 Nov 1966

¹⁰Napoleon Rama, “Babes in the Woods,” *FFP*, November 1966, 69.

¹¹PC, 26 Oct 1966.

They were thrown in a police van, taken to Precinct Three, and released four hours later.¹² The main protest would take place the next day.

On the morning of the twenty-fourth, the Student Council opposition under Calvo and Nicolas, issued a call to cancel the rally in favor of a meeting with the foreign ministers of each of the seven governments attending the summit, which they claimed to have been able to arrange through Executive Secretary Rafael Salas, but Garcia refused to call off the rally.¹³ Manila Chief of Police Ricardo Papa refused to grant a permit for the protest, so Ignacio Lacsina appealed to Manila Mayor Villegas and was issued a permit for a protest to be held in front of the US Embassy, several blocks removed from the Manila Hotel.¹⁴

UP Students traveled in eighteen buses from Diliman toward the arranged meeting point of Agrifina Circle where students from UE, Lyceum, and members of LM were already gathered, but police stopped the UP buses at the Quezon City-Manila border in Sta. Mesa and demanded to see the students' protest permit. Violeta Calvo, at the head of the student delegation, explained that the protest permit was with the advance group already at the circle. The police refused to allow the buses to enter Manila and the students walked the remaining five kilometers.¹⁵ Bored with waiting, the protestors at Agrifina circle broke out a guitar and began singing "folk-songs" in a circle and "[t]he spirit of a hootenanny took away some of the boredom."¹⁶ When the UP contingent arrived, the rally marched from Agrifina Circle to the Embassy, where they demonstrated for an hour. Each speaker stood on top of a jeep to address the crowd: Voltaire Garcia and Orly Mercado spoke on behalf of the UP Student Council and Lacsina on behalf of LM, distributing copies of his statement to news crews.¹⁷

At this point accounts conflict. According to Ninotchka Rosca, the idea to move the rally from the Embassy to the Manila Hotel arose spontaneously from the crowd, and added that "an officer suggested that the leader's jeep follow the crowd to pacify them and Carlos del Rosario, secretary of the Kabataang Makabayan, agreed to this." Violeta Calvo testified that it was Ignacio Lacsina who instructed the students to go to the Hotel rather than remain at the Embassy.¹⁸ Contemporary accounts record that there were two thousand protestors present, but in 2004, with her usual sense of inflation, Rosca claimed that five thousand marched to the Manila Hotel, apparently forgetting that in 1966 she had estimated that the protest involved "2,000-odd workers and students."¹⁹ When

¹²PC, 26 Oct 1966, 7; Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 28; Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 15; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 3.

¹³PC, 24 Oct, 6; 26 Oct 1966, 10.

¹⁴PC, 26 Oct 1966; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 11.

¹⁵PC, 26 Oct 1966, 2.

¹⁶PC, 26 Oct 1966, 2.

¹⁷PC, 26 Oct 1966, 2; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 11.

¹⁸Ninotchka Rosca, "Cops vs. Students, The October 24 'Riot' – as Viewed from the Crowd," *PPF*, November 1966, 12; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 11.

¹⁹Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 15; Rosca, "Cops vs. Students," 12; PC, 26

the protestors arrived at the Manila Hotel, Manila Deputy Chief of Police, Major James Barbers, instructed them to disperse because their permit was for the Embassy not the Hotel.²⁰

Tensions mounted as the protestors refused to disperse in the face of the riot-gear clad police. A number of contemporary reports state that Americans in suits were standing behind and circulating among the Manila police; the police attacked the protestors when an American shouted “Go get ’em!”²¹ The protestors fled in the face of the violent dispersal. The police beat students with rattan batons and fired shots in the air. At some point during the dispersal, a police officer aimed and fired at a fleeing student named Prudencio Tan, shooting him in the neck.²² Rosca reported that “doctors had to open a hole at the base of his neck to enable him to breathe: his windpipe had been punctured.”²³ As the police attacked the protestors, members of the foreign press were also injured and reporters and cameramen for UPI, *Washington Post*, CBC and ABC were hurt in the dispersal.²⁴ The police arrested and charged five people.²⁵

Marcos immediately ordered an investigation into the protest – which he called a riot – and also the teach-ins which were being staged on the UP campus. Sison issued a statement on behalf of the KM: “The unfair insinuations already made by Malacañang with regard to intellectual discussions, such as ‘teach-ins’ in the university, do not augur well for those who have exercised their democratic rights by lecturing on the Vietnam policy of the US and the Marcos administration.”²⁶ On October 26, the *Collegian* ran a front page editorial headlined “The rise of fascism.” Fascism, it claimed, had been drawn out of “Hades.” “Never for

Oct 1966, 2.

²⁰Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 5. Satur Ocampo, then a reporter for the *Manila Times*, joined the protestors. (Jones, *Red Revolution*, 23).

²¹Rosca, “Cops vs. Students,” 14. Other accounts state that someone shouted “Disperse them!” (Jose F. Lacaba, “The Subject Was Rallies,” *PPF*, November 1966, 88).

²²Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 6. It is not clear if Tan was a student of UE or FEATI. Lacaba and the *Collegian* claimed he was a UE student. (PC, 26 Oct 1966, 7). Elsewhere Lacaba claimed that Tan was a FEATI student and the *PPF* agreed. (Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 10; Filemon V. Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” *PPF*, November 1966, 10).

²³Rosca, “Cops vs. Students,” 16.

²⁴Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 10. In 1971 the BRPF, who were now viciously opposed to Sison, claimed that “Sison was among the first who frantically disappeared during the first fascist rampage on October 24, 1966. Unfortunately for Sison, a news photographer took a picture of him awkwardly climbing a wall as he was rather sluggish in his movements. So as not to destroy his ‘reputation,’ he immediately asked his loyal cohorts to steal the picture along with its negative from the publication where the photographer was employed.” (*Struggle*, [1971] July, 5). I have seen no corroborating evidence for this; it seems to be simply a slanderous accusation.

²⁵They charged four with breach of peace: Julius Fortuna, 18; Sixto Carlos Jr., 19; David Brucela, 22; and Carlos Sarabia, 17; they charged Charles Mante, 21, with assaulting “an agent of a person in authority.” (Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 10) UP students, Julius Fortuna and Sixto Carlos Jr., were released from Precinct Three when Arturo Guerrero, UP Dean of Student Affairs, arrived.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 66.

an instance did we think that in a freedom loving nation such as ours fascism could take a foothold and make this foothold the stepping-stone from which to pursue the enigmatic aims of an ambivalent governmental structure.”²⁷ The formulations of the editorial reflect a complete lack of comprehension of what fascism in fact is. They described fascism as the actions of “deranged policemen” carrying out “unwarranted and unjustified brutalities,” and then appealed to Marcos to resolve this problem. They called for an independent investigation of the brutalities and called on Marcos to ensure that police agencies “keep their ugly hands out of the investigation,” and to put into “efficacious practice” the “liberal idea which President Marcos advocated . . . early this year.”²⁸ On October 30, Marcos met with a select group of UP student leaders led by Voltaire Garcia and Violeta Calvo, and after the meeting, he ordered all charges dropped against the five accused protestors.²⁹

O24M

It was in the midst of this political firestorm, that on November 2, the UP Student Council petitioned the foreign office with a list of the fifty-eight intended travelers to China, a list which included five professors. The trip was scheduled to last from late November to mid-December.³⁰ Voltaire Garcia and the other leaders of the Manila Hotel protest formed a new organization, which they named the October 24th Movement (O24M).³¹ The O24M demanded the immediate removal of Brig. Gen. Ricardo Papa as chief of the Manila police and of Patrolman A.S. Carlota, whom they accused of shooting Prudencio Tan, and on November 3, the O24M led one thousand students in a rally denouncing police brutality.³²

²⁷PC, 26 Oct 1966.

²⁸PC, 26 Oct 1966, 12.

²⁹Jose F. Lacaba, “Descent from the Summit,” *PPF*, November 1966, 71; Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 66; PC, 9 Nov 1966, 5. The Manila City court, claiming that it was asserting its judicial independence, ignored Marcos and ordered the arrest of thirty-seven additional students for the October 23 evening protest. Justice Undersecretary Teehankee responded, appealing to the court to delay the charges. (Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 67).

³⁰Manila, “Slow Boat to China,” 2. Among those listed were Nemenzo, Vivencio Jose, Petronilo Daroy, Voltaire Garcia, Ruben Santos Cuyugan, and Alejandro Fernandez, the chair of the UP political science department.

³¹Garcia was made chair and Sheilah Ocampo, the editor of the *Lycean*, was made secretary general. (Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 10; Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 15). Diokno and Tañada offered free legal services to the organization. (Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 66).

³²The rally marched from Agrifina Circle to Malacañang, where Jose David Lapuz, Ernesto Macahiya and Voltaire Garcia addressed the crowd. Garcia did not secure the support of the UP Student Council for this rally, as a majority voted against it, citing the ‘successful meeting’ recently held with Marcos. (PC, 9 Nov 1966, 5; Tutay, “Extracurricular Activities,” 68) The National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), under Macapanton Abbas and Violeta Calvo, held a separate rally the next day, in which they denounced both the police *and* the leaders of the October 24 protests, whom they accused of being “professional student agitators” and of staying

A congressional hearing was called to investigate the protest and its suppression, which began ostensibly out of concern about police brutality but turned almost immediately into a red-baiting witchhunt of the protestors. On November 15, as Eduardo Orozco was testifying to having been beaten by the police, Rep. Vicente Peralta shouted at him, “Why don’t you go to Russia and stay there?” Perfecto Tera, who was observing the proceedings, responded audibly, “Abah!” and a congressional security guard hit him twice, in the face and ribcage. The proceedings were temporarily interrupted. When they resumed, Joma Sison was called to testify.³³ Retired Naval Captain and government intelligence operative Carlos Albert charged Sison with having traveled to China, but Sison denied this, declaring that he had never been to the country.³⁴ Albert informed the House Committee that Sison was a Communist, saying “if it looks like a duck, waddles like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it must indeed be a duck.”³⁵ Sison published a response to Albert’s charges in the January 4 *Collegian*, categorically denying that he had ever been to China and accusing Albert of lying.³⁶

The House Committee on National Defense under Congressman Carmelo Barbero summoned students and professors to its hearing, and Voltaire Garcia, Sheilah Ocampo, and Haydee Yorac were among those who testified. When UP Student Council member Jejomar Binay was being questioned, it emerged to the committee that a large contingent of students were preparing to travel to China.³⁷ This revelation was treated as a bombshell and legislators demanded that Narciso Ramos deny visas to the students. From October 24 until November 18, UP President Romulo, who had approved the students’ travel and obtained authorization from Narciso Ramos and Marcos, had been in Paris at a UNESCO conference, but in mid-November he wired Manila reiterating his support for the students’ travel, declaring “I cannot see how we can deprive intelligent students the right to travel and judge for themselves the advantages of our democratic way of life vis-a-vis the rigidity and repression in a totalitarian state.”³⁸ Narciso Ramos, under intense public pressure from both the legislature and from Marcos

in coffee shops while the protest was occurring and throughout its dispersal. (PC, 9 Nov 1966, 5). The accusation of sitting in coffee-shops during the protest was leveled specifically at Voltaire Garcia, who was alleged to have been in the “posh Taza de Oro just across the street” during the final events of the rally. (PC, 8 Mar 1967, 5).

³³PC, 16 Nov 1966.

³⁴Manila, “Slow Boat to China,” 43; Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 45.

³⁵Manila, “Slow Boat to China,” 3.

³⁶Sison, “Committee Hearings and Albert’s Charges.” When Sison reprinted this article in *SND* he redacted “I have never gone to Red China” to “If I have ever gone to Red China, it is perfectly my right to go there.” (*SND*, 229.) Loida Nicolas wrote a brief response to Sison in the January 16 *Collegian*, entitled “The Eggs of Albert’s Ducks,” in which she accused Sison of lying on several points. Oddly, Sison has listed this attack against him as one of his own writings in the bibliography published on his website.

³⁷Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 10, 12.

³⁸PC, 16 Nov 1966.

in the wake of the October 24 protest, reversed his decision to allow the fifty-eight person contingent to travel to China, and informed the press that he had decided that the students were not yet “mature enough” to visit the country.³⁹

Sison on Police Brutality

On December 6, Sison spoke at Kostka Hall at Ateneo de Manila University to an event sponsored by the Ateneo Political Society, addressing the emergence of the October 24th Movement and presenting what he claimed was the solution to the problem of police brutality.⁴⁰ Sison declared that the October 24th Movement adopted the General Declaration of the Nationalist Student Congress as its “ideological foundation,” (20) and that the O24M had three purposes:

1. to wage a nationalist education campaign based on the Nationalist Declaration;
2. to defend civil liberties; and
3. to expose the nature of state violence. (21)

Sison stated his agreement with these principles, which he claimed were “well-formulated,” (21) and continued “There is the need to wage a nationalist education campaign. The events before, during and after the October 24th Incident reveal to us how much our government officials misunderstand the spirit of nationalism. Anti-nationalism has so much poisoned the minds of so many of our police officers and those higher executive officials who give them the orders.” (21) Anti-nationalism was the root cause of the problem of police brutality, according to Sison, but it was the product of a misunderstanding which could be remedied by nationalist education. He stated that “it was an act of anti-nationalism ... to shoot the throats, to break the skulls and step on the breasts of the young men and women who demonstrated.” (21) With nationalist education, he argued, “we hope for the day when the spiritual forebears [*sic*] of Gregorio del Pilar will assert themselves within the ranks of our police and military. I am certain that within the ranks of the police and the military, there are many good elements sympathetic to the cause of nationalism.”⁴¹ (23)

³⁹Writing in *Bandilang Pula* for the SDK in 1971, Popoy Valencia claimed that the events of October 24 and its aftermath led to “the purge of the bourgeois opportunist Lava clique from the mainstream of the nationalist movement.” (*Bandilang Pula*, 1, no. 1 [February 1971]: 3). There is no evidence to support this claim.

⁴⁰In the first edition of *SND* this speech was entitled “Nationalism and Youth,” (*SND*, 19). In subsequent editions it was entitled “The October 24th Movement.” In the audience was the young Edgar Jopson. (Benjamin Pimentel, *Rebolusyon!: A Generation of Struggle in the Philippines* [New York: Monthly Review Press, 1991], 48).

⁴¹Gregorio del Pilar was a young Filipino General who fought courageously against the Americans during the early stages of the Philippine-American war. He was killed in the Battle of Tirad Pass, 2 December 1899.

Having stated that he hoped for the emergence of a sympathetic and heroic police force, Sison wrote, “The growth of fascism in the Philippines is expected with the ever increasing desperation of the US in the Vietnam war and elsewhere. . . . As the Vietnam war rages and both the Philippines and the US become wracked with internal problems, the use of fascist methods to suppress democratic expression will become more and more frequent.” There is an unmistakable light-mindedness to Sison’s facile alternation between the assertion that the police are a generally well-meaning force in society and his anticipation of the imminent growth of fascism, a political concept which he made no attempt to explain. He concluded his speech by proposing that “Nationalist and civil libertarian organizations should be allowed and encouraged to hold seminars on nationalism and civil liberties among members of the police and armed forces so that a bridge of sympathy and understanding could be built for the prevention of fascism.” (24) Sison claimed with a straight face that there was the imminent threat of fascism in the Philippines, but it could be prevented by ‘holding seminars’ among police officers to create a ‘bridge of sympathy.’ Sison knew better than this. Over the past year, more than a million Indonesian communists had been killed by military and para-military death squads, having been politically disarmed by the Stalinist program of Aidit and the PKI leadership. Sison was playing the same criminal role in the Philippines, attempting with twisted nationalist logic to disarm workers and youth in the face of their class enemy.⁴²

Travels

While the Marcos administration was blocking travel to China, it was working behind the scenes to facilitate relations with the USSR including the establishment of ties between the PKP and the CPSU. Two individuals were central to this effort: Teodosio Lansang and Ruben Torres.

Teodosio Lansang

Lansang wrote his memoirs, which read as a disjointed set of vignettes, shortly before his death in 1993. Lansang’s account is frequently internally contradictory and he is at times patently dishonest, but it is nonetheless possible to use his memoirs to reconstruct the essential events surrounding his role in the establishment of ties with Moscow.⁴³ Lansang was a journalist first for the *Manila Tribune* and then for the *Evening News* under the editorship of Cipriano Cid, in the wake of World War II. Along with his older brother Jose, Lansang was a member of the PKP, and on April 28 1949 he traveled to China to represent

⁴²When Sison reprinted this article in 1972, he removed his fatuous reference to police officers as modern del Pilars, as well as his campaign of seminars and sympathy, and simply concluded with the rise of fascism. Martial law was but months away.

⁴³Lansang, *In Summing Up*.



Figure 16.1: Teodosio Lansang. *APL*, 17 Sep 1971.

the party internationally.⁴⁴ Lansang attended the inauguration of the People's Republic of China on October 1, and took up residence in Beijing until 1956. Under the names Lin Ching Shan and Manuel Cruz he represented the PKP at international conferences in Berlin, Vienna, Moscow and Beijing, and held meetings with Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi. Lansang became fluent in Mandarin Chinese, assisted Radio Beijing in setting up Tagalog language broadcasts and wrote news articles for the New China News Agency (NCNA). In 1956, at the very onset of the tensions that led to the Sino-Soviet split, Lansang was requested by the Institute of Oriental Studies to come to Moscow. He moved to the USSR and took up work as a Junior Scientific worker at the Institute under Philippine expert George Levinson. While based in Moscow from 1956-1967, Lansang assisted in the creation of Tagalog-Russian and Russian-Tagalog dictionaries. Working with Alexander Gruber, he took part in the production of new Russian translations of Rizal's *Noli* and *Fili* which were launched in 1961 to honor the centennial of Rizal's birth.⁴⁵ Lansang's scholarly work culminated in his receiving a Ph.D in Philology from the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Soviet Academy of Social Science.

In late 1965, William Pomeroy wrote to Lansang, initiating correspondence between Lansang and Francisco Nemenzo, and requesting that Lansang make arrangements for Celia and William to visit Moscow.⁴⁶ Lansang wrote that "close

⁴⁴PKP members Simeon Rodriguez and Angel Baking saw him off at the airport.

⁴⁵Translations were also made of both novels in Ukrainian. Russian state television staged a three night series of broadcasts honoring Rizal in 1961.

⁴⁶Lansang wrote that he received this letter in "early 1962, I guess." (50) Lansang feigned

on the heels of the letter from the Pomeroy's," Tonypet Araneta and Gemma Cruz Araneta came to visit him in Moscow; this was in early 1966. Tonypet Araneta, Lansang wrote, "had unobstructed access to the Palace, his father being secretary general of President Marcos' political party, the old original Nacionalista Party." (51) When the Aranetas returned to Manila, Tonypet, who was editor of *Graphic Weekly*, published a cover story on Lansang in three installments, entitled "Our Man in Moscow."

At the same time, Araneta negotiated Lansang's return with the President and Marcos informed Lansang via Araneta that "his administration could arrange for my travel papers and then alert our embassies in the cities I was to pass enroute to afford me some kind of safe conduct pass. Tony, in fact, called me long distance to tell me about this arrangement." (51) Teofisto Guingona Jr., Governor of the Development Bank of the Philippines and President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce,⁴⁷ arrived in Moscow to visit Lansang. (108) There was nothing innocent about this visit; business and political interests were being negotiated. Lansang's nephew, Teodoro 'Bani' Lansang, came to stay with him during his last months in Moscow. Bani was a member of the PKP and worked with him in discussions with the Pomeroy's.⁴⁸

In September 1966, Celia and Bill Pomeroy traveled to Moscow to rebuild the links between the PKP and the CPSU, remaining there until March 1967.⁴⁹ Lansang and George Levinson greeted them at the airport and escorted them to their residence at a Moscow guest house reserved for "senior Party leaders visiting the country."⁵⁰ In a letter written in 1998, William Pomeroy stated that "our party in the Philippines gave us the assignment of conducting the international affairs of the party, in particular, relations with the parties in the socialist countries. Our party then and for many years, being underground, had difficulty sending comrades abroad, and we were ideally suited for the task. We did this work from the mid-1960s until 1990. As part of this we were able to have a month or more of rest every year in a socialist country (mainly in the Soviet Union) with top level relations."⁵¹ Lansang claimed that the Pomeroy's attempted to sway him to

ignorance regarding key dates that associate him as an emissary of Moscow to the PKP. At the same time he claimed to remember precise details, such as the meal he ate on a flight from Moscow to New Delhi – down to the "three slices of black bread." (58) Pomeroy could not have possibly have written this letter to Lansang in early 1962. He would have just arrived in New York, and Celia would still be in Manila. My dating of late 1965 fits closely with the rest of Lansang's account. The communication between Pomeroy and Nemenzo began in either 1963 or early 1964. In his 1964 doctoral dissertation, Nemenzo cited an interview he conducted with Pomeroy. (Francisco Nemenzo Jr., "Revolution and Counter-Revolution: A Study of British Colonial Policy as a Factor in the Growth and Disintegration of National-Liberation Movements in Burma and Malaya" [Ph.D, University of Manchester, 1964], 23 fn. 1).

⁴⁷And much later, Vice President of the Philippines.

⁴⁸Lansang referred to Bani as 'Bunny' and called him a comrade.

⁴⁹Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 111.

⁵⁰Lansang, *In Summing Up*, 53.

⁵¹Letter to Tim, 14 Jan 1998, in CPUSA, folder 36.

denounce China, but that he was reluctant to take a side in the dispute, a position which intensely angered William Pomeroy.

In early January, Lansang flew to New Delhi where he met with Leon Ma. Guerrero, Philippine ambassador to India and uncle of Tonypet Araneta, who arranged his travel papers back to the Philippines.⁵² Lansang arrived in Manila on January 13 1967, where he received a VIP reception arranged by Emil Jurado. His luggage was passed through customs without inspection, and a bevy of reporters met him at the airport to interview him about his travels abroad. Emmanuel Yap, a close political associate of Angeles Mayor Rafael del Rosario and head of the Lyceum Economic Research Council, drove Lansang to his home, where Lansang stayed for the next few days until Yap provided Lansang with a furnished apartment of his own. Rafael Del Rosario and “the Evangelista couple of the Evangelista Telephone Company” of Angeles both gave financial support to Lansang.⁵³ (61)

Within a week of arrival Lansang was accompanied by Emmanuel Yap to the office of Foreign Affairs Secretary Narciso Ramos where they held a briefing and Ramos requested that Lansang write a report on the Soviet Union. Ramos held a press conference shortly afterwards and announced that the Marcos administration was looking to establish trade relations with the USSR and Eastern Europe. In February, Lansang was called to speak before the Special Committee to Re-examine Philippine National Policy towards Communist Countries led by Congressman Manuel Enverga, head of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Enverga traveled to the USSR from July 12 to December 22 1967. Enverga’s final report was drawn up by the technical staff of House Speaker Jose B. Laurel, including Emmanuel Yap. Lansang served as the “Confidential technical assistant” to Enverga from 1967-68.⁵⁴ The final report was submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs on February 20 1968 and laid the basis for economic and diplomatic ties between Manila and Moscow. In March 1967, the Marcos administration stepped up its pursuit of trade ties with the Soviet Union, sending a group of representatives to Moscow to establish commercial and cultural ties. Marcos’ advance team to Moscow and Eastern Europe was a ten man delegation, headed by Augusto Cesar Espiritu, president of the Philippine Chamber of Industry (PCI).⁵⁵ Espiritu told the press that “we wish to find out what products we can sell to the East European bloc and what we can possibly buy. We also wish

⁵²The *Philippines Free Press*, however, wrote that he traveled through Hongkong, not New Delhi. (PFP, 21 Jan 1967, 65).

⁵³Yap financially supported PKP leader Jose Lansang as well, providing him with a car and a driver. Teodosio Lansang wrote that Yap “saw to it that Joe was well taken care of.” (66)

⁵⁴Lansang, *In Summing Up*; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 80.

⁵⁵Jose F. Lacaba, “To Trade with the Reds,” *PFP*, March 1967, 75. The delegation also included Aurelio Montinola, former VP of PCI; Benjamin Salvosa, VP of Ludo International Relations; Primitivo Mijares; Manuel Marquez, president of Commercial Bank and Trust Co; George Marcelo, PCI vice-president; Victor Lim, PCI director; Edgardo Kalaw, president of Bank of Asia; Cipriano Lu, general manager of Lu Do and Lu Ym Corp; and Jess Bustamante of the *Philippine Herald*.

to determine the structure of loans and deferred payments in this bloc ... We would like to verify the truth of reports that among the major imports of the East European bloc are textiles, raw sugar, raw tobacco, furniture and leather shoes, and that among its major exports are equipment for industrial plants, crude petroleum, raw cotton, wheat, tractors, agricultural machinery and raw materials for our manufactures.”⁵⁶ The *Philippines Free Press* wrote approvingly that the USSR offered “a no-tariff preferential market for Manila exports,” adding, “which is more than you can say for the world power with which we enjoy ‘special relations.’ (The Russians do not demand parity as the price the Philippines must pay for the preferential market.)”

In the wake of Lansang’s testimony before the Enverga Committee, a set of “well-to-do nationalist friends” provided him with a red Pontiac and a new house. The house was located in PhilAm Life Homes in Quezon City, a gated enclave with a central park, a clubhouse with a swimming pool and centrally located grocery store owned by the Jopson family. Much of the financial support for Lansang came from Emerito Ramos, chair of the Overseas Bank of Manila.⁵⁷ Jose Lansang, who had made the arrangements, remarked that “Teddy deserves and needs a better place for his guests some of which are industrialists, and businessmen.” Lansang wrote that “a few of the so-called bourgeoisie like the Aranetas (Tonypet and Gemma, that is) came quite often to visit.” (67)

Within weeks of arrival, Lansang was also taken to meet with P K P leaders Francisco Lava Sr. and Baltazar Cuyugan, and while he did not recount the substance of their discussion, he did claim that Lava was frustrated by his responses. Lansang was brought back to the Philippines by the Marcos administration and its apparatus, which included a number of P K P members and supporters. Lansang was intended to play two roles – to facilitate the opening of diplomatic, cultural and economic ties with the Soviet Union; and to intervene against the increasingly pro-China wing of the P K P under Joma Sison. Lansang carried out the first role as expected and was rewarded for his efforts. He did not, however, carry out the second to the satisfaction of either the P K P leadership or the CPSU, and both the Pomeroy and the Lavas were frustrated by the waffling politics and personal opportunism of Lansang. Lansang, in the company of Ignacio Lacsina, sought to get the P K P to rise above the dispute and articulate an independent Filipino “socialism,” consciously modeled on the politics of Lee Kuan Yew, which would throw itself into support of Marcos.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Jose F. Lacaba, “Trade Talks with the Russians,” *PPF*, May 1967, 68.

⁵⁷Ramos was an import-export banker with close ties to the Lopez family, Claro M. Recto, and Japan. See Emerito M. Ramos, Sr., “Don Claro: Some Recollections,” in *Claro M. Recto: 1890-1990, A Centenary Tribute of the Civil Liberties Union*, ed. Renato Constantino (Quezon City: Karrel, Inc., 1990), 119–124.

⁵⁸Lansang continued to articulate this conception of “independence” as late as 1971. (Lansang, “One More View from the Left,” 46). The Samahang Molabe, of which Lansang was a founding member, claimed that Lansang had “proudly boasted” that Marcos was intending to offer him a

Ruben Torres

Another means of establishing regular political ties with the CPSU needed to be pursued, and in this, Ruben Torres played a central role.⁵⁹ Torres was the son of the mayor of Botolan, Zambales. His father's first cousin was a judge who married into the Ejercito family; future President Joseph Estrada and Ruben Torres met on many occasions during Torres' childhood.⁶⁰ Torres enrolled at UP in 1958 at the age of seventeen, where he formed a close friendship with Nur Misuari, the head of *Bagong Asya*.⁶¹ Upon completing his bachelor's degree, he took up law at UP, becoming the associate editor of the *Collegian* and serving on the UP Student Council, where he chaired the committee on National Affairs in 1964-65. Torres remained largely apolitical until 1965 when he began leading protests with SCAUP in the beginning of the year, and rose rapidly in the UP activist community, heading the newly formed Makabansa party slate in July 1965.⁶² Shortly after his electoral defeat, Torres joined the PKP, having been recruited by Nemenzo. Torres recounted that

After the campus poll of '65, I was contacted by the party and approached by two officials. I remember we met at the Katipunan Restaurant ... in front of Ateneo and I was propositioned by my recruiter Dodong Nemenzo, accompanied by Merlin Magallona. The two of them revealed their connections with the party and invited me to join it. I said I was not ready but asked them to give me two months to think it over. They seemed comfortable with this answer. So, after two months, they and I met again and this time I said, "Okay, I'll join the party."⁶³

Torres passed the bar in 1966 and was immediately hired by the office of Rafael Salas, Marcos' Executive Secretary, which was now providing employment

position in the "Ministry of Socialist Affairs." (Vicente Wenceslao, "On the KM-Lacsina Feud," *APL*, May 1971, 48).

⁵⁹Joaquin, *A Kadre's Road to Damascus* is an important source for Torres political role. Nick Joaquin wrote this book as part of Torres' campaign for Senate in 1998. Torres was running on Joseph Estrada's slate and part of the campaign of publicity was an action movie entitled *Kadre* starring Cesar Montano and Charlene Gonzales, which purported to be the story of Torres' life. Joaquin's biography of Torres was meant to be published as part of this campaign, but was completed in October 1998 – too late to be published in time for the election. Torres kept the manuscript and later published it in 2003. A great many useful details can be found in the manuscript, but also a good deal of dishonesty and fabrication. The extensive descriptions of the poverty of Torres' childhood, for example, have no connection with reality. Torres grew up in a politically influential and fairly well-to-do family.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 142.

⁶¹Joaquin's claim that he enrolled in 1956 is incorrect. (*ibid.*, 38).

⁶²Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 72; Joaquin, *A Kadre's Road to Damascus*, 47. On the 1965 Student Council election, see page 231.

⁶³Joaquin, *A Kadre's Road to Damascus*, 65.

to several members of the P K P and facilitating their international travel. Torres worked in Salas' office from October 1966 to May 1967, and in the early part of 1967, while still on government payroll, Torres traveled to Moscow to meet with the Pomeroy's.⁶⁴ Over the next year, Torres rose to become the head of the P K P international department, a member of the Central Committee and the third highest ranking official in the party. He traveled to Moscow more than eleven times, including six or seven visits after the declaration of Martial Law, and assisted Haydee Yorac and Merlin Magallona in their travels to the USSR. Joaquin's account reports that he traveled to "East Germany, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union — as long as it was an international gathering in a socialist state, Ruben would be there."⁶⁵

Having the international delegate of the P K P in Salas' office was not an ideal arrangement for the Marcos administration; the Sison section of the party had already begun denouncing Salas' 'boys,' as they termed the political hirelings of the Marcos administration in the office of the Executive Secretary.⁶⁶ Under newly appointed UP President Salvador Lopez, the University office of Legal Counsel became the location through which government stipends were paid to the international delegation of the P K P, and P K P leaders Ruben Torres, Haydee Yorac and Merlin Magallona were all provided salaried positions as permanent researchers in the office of the University Legal Counsel. While working in this government position, Torres carried out political negotiations with Moscow as trade and political ties with Manila were arranged; Yorac and Magallona assisted him in this task. Over the next five years, Torres would be transferred to work in the offices of key Marcos administration figure, Juan Ponce Enrile, and then back again to the UP Legal Counsel offices. Throughout this period, on government stipend, he carried out the international work of the P K P.

Travel to China

At the same time, Sison and a great many of the youth organized in the K M and its sister organizations were working to establish party ties with China. In this they received support from Ninoy Aquino and a section of the Liberal Party known as the Young Turks, particularly Ramon Mitra, along with a few members of the Nacionalista Party, in particular Salvador Laurel.⁶⁷ In November 1966, Foreign Affairs Secretary Narciso Ramos denied permits to the UP contingent intending to travel to China, declaring that the travelers were not "mature and judicious" enough, and adding that "I must warn the country that there's something going

⁶⁴I base this on the fact that Torres traveled to Moscow prior to late April 1967, and that the Pomeroy's had previously met him when next they met in Moscow in mid 1968. (ibid., 83, 84).

⁶⁵Ibid., 80.

⁶⁶October 24th Movement, *Salas and His Boys*, November 1966, PRP 12/29.01, 2.

⁶⁷Mitra had just returned from a visit to China in late October 1966.

on which is not good for our security.”⁶⁸ While the sixty member delegation to China was refused the right to travel, a delegation headed by UP Student Councilors Jejomar Binay and Miriam Defensor was allowed to travel to Taiwan without any restrictions.⁶⁹

A group of five UP student representatives, under the leadership of Benild Pires, who had been selected by the UP Student Council as their official representative, traveled to China despite the ban.⁷⁰ They journeyed to Hongkong and prepared to take a train to the mainland, but the Philippine consul general arrived at the border and attempted to dissuade them from continuing on to China.⁷¹ The group persisted in their travels, however, and an official Chinese delegation welcomed Pires and the four other students at the station in Shenzhen. Pires extended a formal explanation for the inability of the larger UP contingent to travel and brought gifts – copies of Lope K. Santos’ *Banaag at Sikat*, Pomeroy’s *The Forest, The Recto Reader* and Rizal’s *Noli* and *Fili*. The welcoming delegation stated,

We give high regards to the Filipino students who, in spite of all sorts of barriers and obstacles, carry on a consistent struggle to visit our country in the effort of promoting friendship and understanding between the students as well as the people of our two countries.

From this spirit of dare to struggle, dare to win victory, we firmly believe that the Filipino students will eventually overcome all difficulties and realize their aspirations to visit our country.

Victories will belong to the students of our two countries who are fighting side-by-side against our common enemy – American imperialism.⁷²

On December 12, Pires and company met with Vice Premier Chen Yi. They engaged in discussions with members of the Red Guard about various quotations from the Red Book.⁷³ That evening they were shown a film on the Chinese Revolution, *The East is Red*, which would later be brought back to the Philippines and become the subject of intense controversy.⁷⁴ During their trip they were flown from Guangzhou to Beijing to Shanghai and were provided with hotel accommodations in each city.

⁶⁸Manila, “Slow Boat to China,” 2.

⁶⁹Defensor would head the official student delegation to Taiwan in 1968 as well. (PC, 23 Apr 1968).

⁷⁰The group included Ymeldah Sabelino, Danny Nakpil, Ricardo Malay, and an unnamed editor of the *Collegian*.

⁷¹PC, 4 Jan 1967.

⁷²PC, 21 Dec 1966, 10.

⁷³PC, 18 Jan 1967, 7.

⁷⁴PC, 25 Jan 1967, 2.

In the Philippines, the Department of Foreign Affairs announced that it would file perjury charges against Pires' four companions for traveling to China after claiming they were only traveling to Hongkong, and added that Pires was "an Indian" and would be barred from re-entering the country.⁷⁵ Ricardo Malay wrote a brief article for the *Philippines Free Press* on their travels through China, which stated that "seen in the light of China's ideological estrangement from the present Soviet leadership and what she regards as the increasing danger of a United States attack on the mainland, the cultural revolution can be likened to a massive dose of purgative taken to steel the body and soul of the Chinese people against the danger of revisionism and military aggression."⁷⁶ On January 12, UP held a forum on Red China, where the students who had recently traveled to Beijing spoke.⁷⁷ UP students began to speak openly of the need for a Cultural Revolution and some began to imitate the Red Guard, wearing Mao pins and red armbands. This practice grew, as more students traveled to China at the end of the school year.⁷⁸ On February 15, Hari Sidhu, a UP student who had spoken at a number of KM rallies, wrote a commentary on the Cultural Revolution. His article reveals the qualitative development that had occurred in the political conceptions current within student radical circles since travel began to China.⁷⁹ Sidhu wrote that "modern revisionists," whom he identified as "the governments of the Soviet Union and its allies," were opposed to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which he described as "another great leap forward in the process of socialist construction." It was a "struggle between two lines within the Party – the revolutionary and revisionist." (11) He continued, "Cultural Revolution became a necessity because of the experience of the Soviet Union. Even though it was able to transform the socio-economic formation of society, a corresponding revolutionary change in the superstructure or the spiritual life of man did not take place. This failure resulted in the take over of the Soviet Union by the revisionist clique. Mao Zedong does not want this to happen in Socialist China."

⁷⁵PC, 21 Dec 1966.

⁷⁶Ricardo S. Malay, "Before the 'Explosion'," *FFP*, January 1967, 2, 63-64.

⁷⁷PC, 11 Jan 1967, 2.

⁷⁸On February 8, the *Collegian* published "Decisions of the Central Committee on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." This document, which was referred to as the "Sixteen Points," had been adopted by the Central Committee of the CCP on August 8 1966, and likely had been brought back by one of the traveling students. (PC, 8 Feb 1967, 2).

⁷⁹PC, 15 Feb 1966, 4.

— 17 —

Expulsion

Those who demanded that the descendants of Heracles should not wage war by deceit he held up to ridicule, saying that “where the lion’s skin will not reach, it must be patched out with the fox’s.”

— Plutarch, *Lysander*, VII. 4 (Perrin Translation)

MAN

The PKP, now riven by the tensions between Beijing and Moscow, made one last attempt to organize politically prior to the party’s irrevocable split, and in the first part of 1967 endeavored to build a united front organization which would bring all of the ‘sectoral’ groups – workers, peasants, youth – of the PKP into an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, an effort which culminated in the founding of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN). After the split took place, Sison claimed that he had given the original impetus to the building of MAN. He pointed to his “lengthy editorial” in the “fourth issue of the *Progressive Review*” as having “presaged” the creation of the front organization.¹ Lapiang Manggagawa, Sison stated, contacted Lorenzo Tañada about merging the LM with the Nationalist Citizens Party (NCP), a move which would have been carried out by Ignacio Lacsina who was the general secretary of both parties. MAN, he claimed, was the result of this merger. Both the Moscow and Beijing sections of the party were in complete agreement on the need to form an alliance with the bourgeoisie and as geopolitical tensions tore apart the PKP they still managed to unite briefly in the creation of MAN.

Allying with the ‘middle middle’

Sison delivered a speech, “The Nationalist as a Political Activist,” to the third annual conference of the National Students League (NSL) at Iloilo City Colleges on December 26 1966, laying out the programmatic basis for the establishment

¹PR, 10, i. Sison was wrong. The editorial was published in the fifth issue of the journal.

of MAN.² Sison told his audience, “Nationalism means national democracy. It is a necessary stage in the struggle of our people for social justice, whereby the freedom of the entire nation is first secured so that the nation-state that has been secured would allow within its framework the masses of the Filipino people to enjoy the democratic rights to achieve their social emancipation.” (33) This was a restatement of the Stalinist two-stage program of revolution: national democracy was “a necessary stage” that had to be completed before the masses could work to “achieve their social emancipation.” To carry out the national democratic revolution it was necessary to have a “knowledge of the objective forces,” continuing, “Let us, therefore, clarify the forces of national democracy or nationalism. We have the workers and peasants in our society comprising more than 90% of our people. By workers, we mean those Filipino citizens who receive wages to make their living.” (34) Note that Sison excluded immigrant laborers from the working class. This was during a time in which a political campaign was being waged for the deportation of so-called “overstaying Chinese,” and the majority of the endangered were Taiwanese immigrant laborers. The PKP did nothing to prevent their deportation, and gave consistent support to the reactionary nationalist demand for the “Filipinization” of labor.

Sison continued, “By peasants, we mean those who work on land as tenants and those who till their own land.” He divided peasants into three strata: poor peasants who “work as tenants on the land of others;” middle peasants, who “till their own land producing enough or a little more than enough for their household needs;” and rich peasants, who “market their extra produce, who themselves work their land but who hire extra hands or have a few tenants.” “The working class,” he asserted, “is the leading force and the peasantry is the main force of nationalism against imperialism and feudalism.” “However,” he continued, “Filipino businessmen . . . could also be an important force in the nationalist movement so long as they fight for nationalist industrialization and nationalization of the present economy.” He assured his listeners that “The nationalist businessmen and their workers could actually welcome each other in a movement which opposes the impositions of foreign monopolies”. Finally, “the intelligentsia, combined with self-reliant property-owners, comprised the petty bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie is the most progressive stratum of the local bourgeoisie.” (35) All of these elements should be “united in a broad nationalist movement.”

Let us now look into the principal forces of anti-nationalism. There are four basic categories of these.

The chief anti-nationalist force should be the American governmental agencies and the branches or subsidiaries of American monopolies.

...

²SND, 25.

The second anti-nationalist force is ... collectively called the comprador class. ...

In fact, government officials who follow the dictates of the American imperialists and their compradors find themselves performing the role of compradors. ... In this role, they comprise the third anti-nationalist force which may be called the bureaucrat-comprador class.

The landlords ... comprise the fourth force antagonistic to the nationalist movement. (36)

It is noteworthy that in this speech Sison added a third group to the enemies of nationalism, which he here termed "bureaucrat-comprador." This was his first use of this category. Later in the year, he would begin referring to this group as "bureaucrat-capitalists." These were the objective forces, according to Sison, who were either carrying out or opposing the national democratic struggle. In order to correctly wage this struggle, however, it was necessary to also have a "grasp of the balance of forces." (37) Sison divided the political spectrum into three groups, left, middle and right. The middle he claimed, vacillated between left and right.

In terms of class tendencies, material interests and ideology, the left wing would be occupied by the working class and the peasantry. The middle wing embraces three strata of the so-called middle class and these three strata can themselves be described as left, middle, and right within the middle wing, the left middle wing is occupied by the intelligentsia, and self-reliant small property owners whom we may call the petty bourgeoisie; the middle middle, the nationalist entrepreneurs, whom we may call the national or middle bourgeoisie; and the right middle, the merchants who are partially investors in local industry and who are also partially compradors. The right wing is composed of the anti-nationalist forces, such as the compradors, the landlords and their rabid intellectual and political agents.

It was on the middle bourgeoisie in the middle middle of the spectrum that political pressure needed to be exerted. He wrote "the middle forces may be pushed to the left or the right according to the political situation decided by the struggle between the left-wing and the right-wing." Sison continued, "In order for the left wing to triumph politically, it is necessary for it to neutralize or win over the middle wing. The same rule applies to the right wing." The struggle for the national democratic revolution thus was a struggle between the left and right for the allegiance of the national bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie and it was thus to this group that the left needed to address its political program, a point which Sison made explicit.

To tilt the balance for the purpose of isolating the right wing composed of the enemies of progress and democracy, it is necessary therefore for the main and massive forces of the workers and peasants to unite with the intelligentsia, small property owners and independent handicraftsmen, win over the nationalist entrepreneurs and at least, neutralize the right middle forces. The resulting unity is what we call nationalist or anti-imperialist and anti-feudal unity. (38)

In the task of winning over the nationalist entrepreneurs, “The Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism . . . is certain to help to some extent in this interclass unity among all patriotic citizens.” Sison was very optimistic about the future of MAN, writing “we see now a rosy picture of things to come for the nationalist movement”. On the basis of this analysis, Sison presented what he called the “the correct approach” for “nationalist activists,” warning of two “pitfalls in carrying out nationalist unity. These pitfalls are adventurism and opportunism,” both of which had to do with how the nationalist movement related to the national bourgeoisie. Adventurism, he wrote,

is the political disease of over-estimating one’s own forces and resorting to actions which take the form of infantile radicalism. While it is true that the main force of the national-democratic movement is the alliance of the working class and the peasantry on the left, it is still necessary to consider the broad political influence that the middle forces have and adopt policies that would bring them to the movement.

The danger of adventurism, thus, was taking actions which would alienate the national bourgeoisie. The slogans and tactics of the leadership of the working class and peasantry should be formulated so as not to alienate the national bourgeoisie, but rather to win them over. Sison characterized this adaptation of the political line of the party to the capitalist class as “adopting ‘the correct mass line.’” Opportunism, on the other hand, was the result of a “nationalist activist . . . rely[ing] too much on cooperation with the middle forces,” and in doing so failing “to organize and politicize the masses as the main force of the revolution.” (40) In other words, by identifying too closely with the national bourgeoisie, the nationalist leader would lose the support of the masses. This speech expressed the political balancing act of the Stalinists, which can be summed up as subordinating the working class and peasantry to the political interests of the capitalist class. Put forward too “radical” a demand or action and you will lose the alliance with the bourgeoisie; the working class must be reined in. Identify too closely with the bourgeoisie and you will lose control over the masses.

An alliance made with any particular section of the bourgeoisie, however, was a tactical one. Sison concluded his speech,

In the short run, the support of the middle class for the anti-imperialist masses counts much. Of course, the series of short-runs should make the long run. That means that the nationalist activist must be able to observe carefully the vacillations and zig-zags of the middle class, ensuring that its short-run adoption and implementation of the anti-imperialist policy are converted into advantages for the main force of the movement.

Sison depicted the national democratic struggle as a “series of short-runs,” that is a series of shifting alliances with the national bourgeoisie. Sections of the national bourgeoisie constantly vacillated, he argued, from right to left and back again, and the activist’s task was to be alert to this shifting and to negotiate short-term alliances from which the movement could benefit and break these alliances when their capitalist partners shifted back toward the right. The working class and peasantry derived no benefit from this politics, which amounted to class treachery. The Stalinists, however, secured salaried positions in government and, above all, concessions on behalf of the political interests of Moscow or Beijing. This perspective meant that, according to Sison, “if any right-wing group in the middle class should betray the Philippine revolution, it is not surprising, and the nationalist activist must never be caught by surprise because, after all, he has prepared the masses well for a protracted struggle, with its tactical ups and downs.” Between 1963 and 1972, the Stalinists entered a coalition with Macapagal and the LP, then supported Marcos and the NP, and later split into two groups: a pro-Beijing party which supported Aquino and the LP and a pro-Moscow party which continued to support Marcos. None of this was a matter of mistakes, but was rather the necessary logic of the core principles of the Stalinist program.

MAN’s first rally

On January 25, MAN, which had not yet been officially founded, organized a rally in conjunction with the KM, LM, MASAKA, O24M, and SCAUP, and with the endorsement of the UP Student Council. The rally was one of the final occasions on which all of these organizations united together, and it focused on the recently penned Jarencio Decision. On December 16 1966, Manila Court of First Instance (CFI) Judge Hilarion U. Jarencio ruled that the 1954 Retail Trade Nationalization Law (RA1180) applied to businesses which were majority owned by US citizens. Until this ruling US citizens had successfully claimed exemption from economic nationalist measures, citing the parity clause of the Bell Trade Act and the Laurel–Langley agreement. Jarencio also ruled that the ‘retail trade’ regulated by the Act included sale for industrial and commercial consumption, and not merely sale to the general public.³ On the day of the rally, buses were

³For a useful summary of the decision, see “Philippines: Manila Court Decision in Philippine Packing Corp. v. Reyes (application of Retail Trade Nationalization Law),” *International Legal*

rented which picked up students on the Diliman campus in front of the Arts and Sciences building at four in the afternoon, bringing them to Agrifina Circle by half past five, from where they marched to Congress, then to the US embassy, and then on to the corporate headquarters of Caltex, Philam Life and Esso. The final portion of the rally was a deviation from the usual culmination of protests outside of the embassy, and reflected the interests of the constituency behind MAN, who were far more interested in protesting the economic privileges of foreign corporations than the political apparatus of US imperialism.

The rallying organizations released a joint two page leaflet headlined “Fight for Economic Emancipation.” They demanded that the government fully implement the Retail Trade Nationalization Act.⁴ The protest insisted that RA1180 should not be used to discriminate *only* against the Chinese, but that it should be implemented against Americans as well. At no point did anyone propose a business size cut-off, so that small and micro businesses, e.g., Chinese sari-sari store operators, would not be impacted. They lumped Caltex and barbershops together in their protests against foreign ownership. The rally expressed the concern that discriminating against the Chinese while not also implementing the RA1180 against Americans would impact the “international relations of the Philippines.” Sections of MAN were looking to open ties with China, and the intentionally lopsided character of the RA1180 was a hindrance to doing so. The rallying organizations held out the possibility of the Marcos government playing a ‘progressive’ role, and declared that the government, “if it is truly representative of the people and is protective of their national interests, should give all out support for the nationalization of retail trade.” Marcos should “desist from serving as the defender of foreign economic interests;” if he did not, this would be to “engage in a despicable and shameless show of puppetry.” What he should “vigorously do is to break the foreign stranglehold on the Philippine economy, and advance nationalist industrialization, coupled with basic agrarian reform that will certainly further capital accumulation and ensure a wide market for locally produced commodities.” The leaflet concluded by calling on Marcos to “broaden our trade and diplomatic relations.”

The rally reflected the class interests of MAN in particular, which was an organization focused on the economic interests of the national bourgeoisie, but it also expressed the contentious and as yet ambivalent relationship of this host of forces with the Marcos administration. Esso and Shell immediately filed suit against claims made on the basis of the Jarencio decision which subjected them to the Retail Trade Nationalization Law and in August 1967, eight months after the Jarencio decision, Manila CFI Judge Luis B. Reyes ruled that RA1180 applied only to corner grocery *sari-sari* stores, effectively again limiting its purview to

Materials 6, no. 1 (1967): 124–127.

⁴Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN) et al., *Fight for Economic Emancipation*, January 1967, PRP 11/24.02.

small-time Chinese business owners.⁵

Founding Congress

MAN held its founding congress in the National Library on February 7 and 8 1967.⁶ The congress claimed to represent twelve ‘sectors’ of society: business, youth and students, peasants, labor, women, educators, professionals, scientists and technologists, mass media, writers and artists, political leaders, and civic leaders. Each delegate paid ten pesos to attend, a very substantial sum for the peasant and labor delegates. Nemenzo served as emcee for the event and among the speakers were Lorenzo Tañada, Joma Sison, Horacio Lava, Ignacio Lacsina, Renato Constantino and Congressman Rogaciano Mercado.⁷

In his speech to the congress, Sison declared that MAN “as it is now composed, directly represents the highest development of the nationalist movement for the last twenty years. . . . As it is, MAN is a broad alliance of all patriotic and progressive forces and elements in our society. To stress this fact, we say proudly that materially prosperous but patriotic Filipinos are here and now united with the representatives of the toiling masses.”⁸ MAN was in fact where the representatives of the toiling masses, in the persons of Sison and Lacsina, united with the materially prosperous – in order to subordinate the interests of the masses to those of the national bourgeoisie. During the Congress, Lacsina announced that “if labor will have to make a sacrifice for the sake of the national interest, it is willing to bear the hardship.” (135) According to Sison, MAN represented the combined nationalist interests of “such organizations as the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Philippine Chamber of Industries, NEPA, Chamber of Filipino Retailers, The Bankers’ Association of the Philippines, the National Press Club, Lapiang Manggagawa, MASAKA, Nationalist-Citizen’s Party, Kabataang Makabayan, the Student Congress for the Advancement of Nationalism, the October 24th Movement and so many others”. (7) The first goal of MAN, Sison stated, was “to organize the patriotic efforts of the citizenry into a united nationalist movement,” (8) and “our ultimate goal is to muster the support of the masses for the nationalist movement. By their strength, national freedom and democracy shall be achieved.” (9) This was the commitment of the PKP, and in particular of

⁵Rafael E. Evangelista, “Republic Act No. 1180 and Foreign Investments in the Philippines: A Dilemma of Economic Nationalism,” *Journal of Law and Economic Development* 3, no. 1 (1968): 60–88.

⁶PC, 8 Feb 1967, 5.

⁷The key documents adopted by the congress and the major speeches were published in book form shortly after the founding of MAN. (*Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN), Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism: Basic Documents and Speeches of the Founding Congress*, ed. Luis V. Teodoro Jr., Julieta L. Sison, and Rogelio Arcilla [Quezon City: Phoenix Press, Inc., 1967]).

⁸*Ibid.*, 6.

Sison and Lacsina – they would work to mobilize the masses behind the program of MAN.

The General Declaration of MAN laid out the basic problems that the organization aimed to remedy. The primary problem, according to this Declaration, was a set of “self-imposed inhibitions ... weaknesses which have become ingrained in the national character ... the first of these is a widespread colonial mentality.” (21) The document explained, “Many Filipinos lack self-respect and dignity, they are deficient in self-reliance and the impulse to self-help; they are easily cozened by gifts, flattery, well-paid but empty positions ... ” It is hard to imagine a worker or peasant identifying with this list of social ills, which were to be remedied by the specific planks of the program – diversification of agriculture and nationalist industrialization; the ending of parity rights; and exclusive Filipino ownership of savings banks. Filipinos were suffering from “borrowed customs, traditions and social and cultural practices,” MAN claimed, but this xenophobic concern would be remedied by “a campaign to stop or at least diminish the continuous barrage of undesirable fare from mass media and other sources; the most damaging among such influences being the glorification of sex, violence, boorishness, appetites for things beyond the income level of Filipinos ... ” (24) MAN committed itself to a “moral regeneration campaign, with emphasis on self-respect, self-reliance, self-denial, and assertion of Filipino dignity.”

There was not a word in the eighty-three page compilation of founding documents regarding increased wages, work place conditions or even the most elementary of reformist demands for the working class. Rather, MAN proposed to teach workers “self-denial” and to prevent them from viewing media that might encourage an appetite for things beyond their income level. MAN did aim to secure the interests of Filipino capitalists, however, and Sison and Lacsina were charged with mobilizing working class and peasant support behind its program. In return for this support from the PKP, Sison secured a commitment in the program to a specific plank – “The establishment of trade and diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China.” (39) Sison’s influence in the drafting of the documents is revealed in their silence regarding the Soviet Union and their commitment to ties with China.

The class character of MAN was further revealed by who was elected to represent the business sector on the Executive Board – Jose Tambunting. Tambunting was head of a sprawling business operating hundreds of branches of pawnshops. It is difficult to think of a line of business more parasitic and hated by workers than pawnshops. The owner of a chain of pawnshops has no common interest with the working class, regardless of the nationality they may share, and the same was true for every other capitalist lined up behind the program of MAN, which was drawn up on their behalf by Joma Sison.

Rogaciano Mercado was the closing speaker for the congress and his speech embodied the character of the nationalism on display in the founding congress. Mercado spoke with “fiery reiterations of love of country, delivered in the rich

style of Bulacan Tagalog, ending his remarks with an anecdote about the mother who lost three sons in Bataan, shed not a tear for the first, not a tear for a second, allowed one single tear to roll down her cheek when the news of the third son's death arrived but explained she was crying not because she had lost all her sons, but because she had no more sons to give for her country."⁹ Lorenzo Tañada was made chair of MAN and Sison was elected General Secretary. The National Council membership was a mixture of PKP members and leading bourgeois political figures. Ignacio Lacsina, Felicísimo Macapagal, Bert Cuyugan, Francisco Lava Jr., Francisco Nemenzo, Jose David Lapuz, Jose Lansang, Felixberto Olalia, Domingo Castro, Nilo Tayag, Ana Maria Nemenzo, Merlin Magallona, Satur Ocampo, Arthur Garcia – all were members of the PKP and all on the National Council. Of the thirty-seven National Council members at least fifteen were members of the Communist Party. They were side-by-side with such bourgeois political figures as Tonypet Araneta, Lorenzo Tañada, Rogaciano Mercado, Ramon Mitra and Alejandro Lichauco.

Throughout its effective existence, MAN had deep going ties to the Marcos administration and it supported his candidates in the 1967 election and backed his re-election in 1969. In the wake of the founding of MAN, Joma Sison and Lorenzo Tañada arranged to meet with Ferdinand Marcos. Sison recounted that during his meeting with Marcos, "We discussed how a policy of national independence, industrialization and land reform could be pursued. He pledged to pursue the policy and he said that the mass actions should not be directed against him. Senator Tañada told him that the mass actions could be in support of a nationalist policy."¹⁰

Sison on 'Socialism and Nationalism'

MAN was founded on Recto's – and Sison's – birthday. SCAUP held its annual Recto event on the same day and staged a play on February 10 and 14-15.¹¹ SCAUP's events beginning in March took on a new tone as they launched the 1967 Claro M. Recto Memorial Lecture Series on Socialism, in which Sison headed a list of speakers who all spoke on different aspects of the topic.¹² Sison launched the SCAUP series with a lecture entitled "Socialism and Nationalism," which he delivered on March 6 on the Diliman campus. He opened "In the Philippines today, there is a growing number of advocates of socialism of one sort or another," but he dismissed these alleged advocates, arguing that both Raul Manglapus and F. Sionil José were claiming to advocate ideas of socialism in a "wishful attempt to obscure the necessity of first doing away with imperialism and feudalism before

⁹Kerima Polotan, "A MAN For What Season," *PPF*, February 1967, 74.

¹⁰Wilson Lee Flores, "Interview with Joma Sison," *Philippine Star*, 19 Aug 2012.

¹¹PC, 8 Feb 1967.

¹²PC, 8 Mar 1967, 12. The other speakers were Jose Lansang, Dante Simbulan, Merlin Magallona, Ruben Santos Cuyugan and Ramon Sanchez.

objective conditions for socialism have developed; as a matter of fact feudalism and imperialism are shamelessly whitewashed.”¹³ This statement set the tone for Sison’s entire talk which amounted to the endless repetition of one point: the Philippines had not yet reached the stage for the struggle for socialism; what was needed was a national democratic struggle. He dishonestly attributed the two-stage theory of revolution to Marx and Lenin, but also correctly attributed it to Stalin and Mao. Sison asked his audience,

Under the present semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions of the country, is it possible to achieve a socialist transformation immediately? Is it correct to think that if the working class should now be the leading force in the national-democratic revolution its socialist ideology should be immediately achievable without first going through a national-democratic phase of some duration?

It is an error to think that socialism can be achieved without first achieving genuine national liberation.

It is also an error to think that the national-democratic phase is indistinguishable from, or simultaneous with the socialist phase. (115-6)

Sison then approvingly quoted from Mao at great length from his 1945 report, *On Coalition Government*,

Some people fail to understand why, so far from fearing capitalism, Communists should advocate its development in certain given conditions. Our answer is simple. The substitution of a certain degree of capitalist development for the oppression of foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism is not only an advance but an unavoidable process. It benefits the proletariat as well as the bourgeoisie, and the former perhaps more. It is not domestic capitalism but foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism which are superfluous in China today; indeed, we have too little of capitalism. (116)

Sison stated that “This quotation from Mao Zedong tells us that Marxists or scientific socialists take the bourgeois-democratic revolution seriously in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. They are as prepared to die for it as any of the more progressive members of the national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.” (117) Having offered up the cadre of the PKP to die in the service of capitalism, Sison hammered home his point:

It is a basic principle of Marxism that bourgeois-democratic conditions must first exist *before a socialist society can be built up*.

¹³SND, 106, 107.

What we need in the Philippines today is a conscious national unity strong enough to assert our own sovereignty and achieve Filipino democracy *before we are divided on the issue of socialism*. (118, emphasis added)

Sison spent a page establishing that a “national united front of all patriotic classes” was needed to achieve national democracy, explicitly citing the program of MAN as embodying the “common purpose that can bind all these classes into a united front.” This national united front, he argued, should work to build a “national-democratic coalition government” that would reflect “the aspirations of all our people.” (119) Sison, determined not to be misunderstood, ended his talk,

Before we conclude, let us again clarify that as we are still working hard to accomplish the national democratic phase of the Philippine Revolution, socialism remains a perspective, a foresight of current efforts. If national democracy is a minimum and immediate goal, socialism is a maximum and long-range goal. Let us take the first step before taking the second. ...

Ideologically, it would be an error of dogmatism or sheer ignorance of the real conditions of our country if we insist on making socialism our immediate goal. (119)

According to Sison, the perspective of socialism for the Philippines was that it was not yet time to fight for socialism. Despite Sison’s repeated disavowal of a socialist program, the open discussion of socialism indicated that a broad political radicalization was underway. Sison and Lacsina would attempt to channel the growing unrest in the working class behind the program of MAN by founding the Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) on May Day.

Expulsion

In the middle of 1965, Vicente Lava, the Colgate-Palmolive executive, and Francisco Lava Jr. had a falling out, which Sison claimed was a “personal quarrel over trivial matters of an intrafamily character.”¹⁴ Vicente Lava played no discernible role in the subsequent development of the PKP. Partly in response to this, and with an eye to consolidating the interests of a pro-Beijing section within the PKP, Sison called for the creation of a provisional central committee to “include the most outstanding cadres from the worker, peasant, and youth movements.” The majority of the Executive Committee responded by asking Sison to “draft a general report on the party,” with the intention of having it serve as the basis

¹⁴Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 45.

of a party congress.¹⁵ Sison claimed that he submitted the draft document in late 1965, but Jesus Lava claimed that Sison never submitted the draft.¹⁶ Lava was in prison at the time and is not the best witness to the events of the split. Subsequent disputes within the party revealed that Sison did in fact submit his draft document, and Francisco Lava objected to its critical tone which rooted the past failures of the party in the leadership of his family. He downgraded Sison's document from a draft resolution for a party congress to an internal memorandum, and announced that he would draft his own report for the congress, which he never did.

The Provisional Politburo

Rather than hold a congress in which the struggle over the conflicting orientations of the leadership could have been democratically resolved through open political discussion among the membership, the leadership moved to reconstitute the Central Committee by appointment, with each side stacking the committee with their adherents. One of the excuses given for not holding a congress was the continued need to work underground, which prevented organizing such a gathering. Sison's group managed to hold a founding congress in January 1969, and the entire PKP staged a congress in the beginning of 1973 during the early days of martial law. The PKP avoided holding a congress in late 1966 precisely because both sides of the dispute were looking to seize political leadership from their opponent by subterfuge and without an open discussion of the fact that the dispute could be reduced to an orientation to either Moscow or Beijing. Sison nominated Nilo Tayag, Jose Luneta, Arthur Garcia, and Carlos del Rosario to the Central Committee, all of whom the party accepted.¹⁷ Francisco Lava Jr and Nemenzo appointed their own adherents, among them Ruben Torres.

How the split exactly transpired is the subject of numerous conflicting accounts, each equally scant on political substance and replete with accusations of personal treachery. Sison claimed that in April 1967 Francisco Lava Jr. called a meeting of seven people "ostensibly to discuss the forthcoming bourgeois elections," but of those present only Sison and Lava were members of the executive committee. Lava announced that the meeting constituted a "provisional political bureau," and had the group elect him to serve as general secretary. Lava had Sison removed from the youth section and assigned to head the "less powerful education section."¹⁸ Jones claims that during this meeting the PKP leadership voted to expel Sison and "his followers."¹⁹ Sison stood reality on its head when

¹⁵ibid. As events transpired, the PKP did not hold a Congress until 1973, when it voted to support the martial law regime.

¹⁶Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 40.

¹⁷Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 287.

¹⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 46; Abinales, "Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution," 22.

¹⁹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 24.

he claimed that “at this time, I realized that there was no more point in having anything to do with any scion of the Lava dynasty ... We decided to expel the Lava group from the party. We were determined to re-establish the party on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism.”²⁰ While there is no doubt that Sison’s group moved to re-establish the party along Maoist lines, they did not “expel the Lava group.” They were expelled, by the political subterfuge of the pro-Moscow leadership of the party, which had stacked the central committee in its favor. Sison’s account states that

Before the end of April 1967, we formed the Provisional Political Bureau. Contrary to the notion spread by the Lavaites and the reactionary mass media that only young Communists re-established the CPP, the oldest cadres and most tested veterans in the worker, peasant, youth and armed revolutionary movements – Max Gutierrez, Amado V. Hernandez, Felixberto Olalia, Simplicio Paraiso (a Lava relative), Lucio Pilapil, Samuel [*sic*] Rodriguez, and many others who as a matter of prudence cannot as yet be mentioned – supported the struggle to re-establish the party.²¹

Publishing Internationally

No accounts of the split emerged within the Philippines, but internationally, the Sison group and the Lava group denounced each other in papers loyal to either Moscow or Beijing. The publications made absolutely clear that the central issue behind the expulsion of Sison and his cohort from the party was the split between the USSR and China. Sison’s group, now expelled from the PKP, issued a May Day statement which was published on May 10 1967 in the New Zealand Communist paper *People’s World*.²² The New Zealand Communist Party, under the leadership of Victor Wilcox, had become one of the main supporters of the Chinese Communists internationally. The pro-Soviet sections of the party had left the organization and eventually coalesced to form the New Zealand Socialist Unity Party.²³ On June 9 the *Peking Review* published a summary of the statement of Sison’s group, which it already identified as the CPP, “the statement

²⁰Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 45.

²¹*ibid.*, 46. It is somewhat telling that Sison gets the name of one of his alleged supporters wrong. Rodriguez, often called Sammy, was named Simeon, not Samuel. More significantly, Olalia did not initially support the expelled members, but opposed Sison and his organization for several years.

²²Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “Philippine Communist Party Exposes a Spurious Statement in New Zealand Paper,” *Information Bulletin* 5, no. 22 (1967): 34–35.

²³Maud Russell, head of the *Far East Reporter*, maintained extensive correspondence with a number of westerners in China who enthusiastically supported the Cultural Revolution. This correspondence is now housed in the Ira Gollobin Papers. The majority of Russell’s correspondents were from New Zealand precisely because of the orientation of the Communist Party in that country. (Maud Russell, *Correspondence, 1959-1983*, IGP Box 01 Folder 01).

reaffirms the CPP's commitment to fight US imperialism and its reactionary allies; to fight modern revisionism and all forms of opportunism; to unite with all Marxist-Leninist Parties; and to pursue the policy of the international united front."²⁴ By "an international united front" the *Peking Review* meant a unity of nationalist bourgeois governments with socialist governments allied with China in opposition to US imperialism and modern revisionism, i.e. the USSR and its allies. The *Peking Review* continued,

The CPP, the statement says, is committed to an uncompromising struggle against modern revisionism with the Soviet revisionist ruling clique at its centre. There is no middle road between modern revisionism and the proletarian revolutionary line ...

... the CPP is committed to the policy of international united front led by the international proletariat, resolutely directing its spearhead against US imperialism. It rejects the slogan of "united action" raised by the Soviet revisionist ruling clique. This slogan is a clever ruse to trap the working class of the world into a collusion with US imperialism.

The *Peking Review* statement made clear the role the Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing envisioned for the CPP.

... The Philippines has long been a strong base of US imperialism in Asia since its aggression against Filipino sovereignty in 1898. It has long been a stepping stone for US aggression against China and the whole of Southeast Asia and Asia. It is the bounden duty of the Filipino people, under the leadership of the working class and its party, to expel the imperialist power of the United States from the Philippines. In pursuing its anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle, the Party undertakes nationwide Party rebuilding, development of rural bases and armed struggle and a national united front under the leadership of the working class.

The building of the party, the development of rural bases, the armed struggle and the national united front were all subordinate to the "bounden duty of the Filipino people" – expelling US imperialism. The US bases in the Philippines constituted a tremendous threat to the continued existence of the Chinese state and the task of the CPP was to protect the interests of Beijing. Notice that the struggle of the party was not a socialist one, but "anti-imperialist and anti-feudal." The goal of the CPP was to put in power a coalition government, which would somehow be opposed to US imperialism and allied with China in an international

²⁴Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), "Mao Tse-tung's Thought Lights Up the Whole World," *PekRev*, June 1967, 26.

united front. The *Peking Review* stated that “the outlawed situation of the party dictates clearly that there is no path to national and social liberation except through armed struggle,” which needed to be waged, in conjunction with an alliance with a section of the bourgeoisie, to remove the threat of US imperialism from China’s doorstep.

The P K P leadership drafted a response to Sison’s May Day statement which they published in the *Information Bulletin* in Prague in late November 1967, along with a second more general statement from the P K P. The general statement was addressed to the question of the Sino-Soviet split, giving the party’s support to the USSR using the indirect language that Moscow was employing at the time, declaring that “[o]n account of particular conditions of struggle in the Philippines during the past years, the P K P was prevented from actively participating in international communist conferences,” before going on to affirm “the correctness of the general line of the 1957 and 1960 Moscow meetings.” The P K P stated that there was “a need to explore possibilities of restoring world communist unity and to work out a common programme of action on an international scale ... The P K P calls on the major Communist parties to maintain solidarity in action against imperialism, even as they carry on struggles on the ideological level ... For these reasons and from this standpoint, the P K P publicly declares its support for the forthcoming international conference of Communist and revolutionary workers’ parties.”²⁵ In the same issue the P K P responded to the May Day statement from the Sison group which had appeared in the New Zealand *People’s World*. They denounced Sison and his cohort as a “small but reckless anti-party group.”

This statement was not authorized by the P K P and does not reflect its true position...

[T]he so-called statement printed in the New Zealand paper is not only spurious but represents a serious breach of underground rules and therefore constitutes an act of treason against the revolutionary movement.

Contrary to the impression which the spurious statement attempts to impart, the P K P refuses to indulge in sweeping charges couched in abusive language against fraternal parties as a means of conducting ideological struggles. Such practice violates the essence of proletarian brotherhood, serves to widen the present deplorable international rift and plays into the hands of US imperialism. The P K P believes that there is a need to explore possibilities of restoring world Communist unity and to work out a common programme of action on an international scale...

The spurious statement asserts:

“The outlawed situation of the Party dictates clearly that there is

²⁵Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (P K P), “Statement of the Philippines Communist Party,” *Information Bulletin* 5, no. 22 (1967): 33–34.

no path to national and social liberation except armed struggle.” By equating the necessity for armed struggle with the outlawed situation of the Party, such a statement displays a very narrow and constricted view of the national situation in the Philippines, and it grossly ignores the ability of the PKP to lead the revolutionary masses in struggle despite its illegal character. . . In the process of rebuilding itself after a prolonged period of suppression, the PKP wages a resolute struggle against Left adventurism and infantilism, even as it guards against Right opportunism. It likewise opposes dogmatism and the mechanical application of universal laws of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of the Philippines. It condemns splittism, careerism, and intellectual dishonesty.

The PKP regrets that it cannot divulge its entire position to the revolutionary comrades of the world. But the PKP gives the assurance of its firm determination to carry on the struggle for national and class emancipation along the Marxist-Leninist road.²⁶

The statements of both the Sison group and the PKP were rooted in the Sino-Soviet split. Sison repeated the fiery denunciations of “modern revisionism” which were the political koine of Beijing. The PKP responded with the call for international Communist unity on the basis of the 1957 and 1960 Moscow meetings; that is to say, on Moscow’s terms. The split in international Stalinism was the single, determining cause of the split in the PKP.

The Socialist Party of the Philippines

The first significant political event in the wake of the expulsion of Sison and his cohort from the PKP had been prepared months before. On May 1 1967, the Lapiang Manggagawa renamed itself the Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP).²⁷ The series of SCAUP lectures on Socialism had been arranged to prepare for the

²⁶PKP, “Philippine Communist Party Exposes a Spurious Statement in New Zealand Paper.”

²⁷The historical record is particularly muddled regarding this event. Sison himself makes very little reference to the SPP and when he does he gets his basic facts wrong. In at least two separate sources, Sison incorrectly claimed that the SPP was founded on May 1 1965, and he also claimed that he was elected General Secretary; both statements are false. (Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 203; Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 52). Sison’s false assertions are compounded by widespread confusion among scholars on the history of the Philippine labor movement. Dante Simbulan claimed incorrectly that the LM broke up in 1963. Torres-Yu claimed, also quite incorrectly, that the SPP was founded on May 1 1963. (Simbulan, *The Modern Principalia: The Historical Evolution of the Philippine Ruling Oligarchy*, 170; Rosario Torres-Yu, “Philippine Trade Union Movement 1953-72,” *The Diliman Review* 31, no. 1 [1983]: 66). William Pomeroy claimed that Sison asked Luis Taruc to join the SPP, but gave no source for this claim. (William J. Pomeroy, *An American Made Tragedy: Neo-colonialism and dictatorship in the Philippines* [New York: International Publishers, 1974], 131).

founding of this new party, which sought to use radical sounding language to win the support of the working class, who were confronting an immense social crisis, and mobilize them behind the banner of MAN. The split of the PKP in late April has obscured the fundamental and orchestrated continuity between the founding of MAN, as an apparatus for the interests of Filipino capitalists, and that of the SPP, which was meant to provide it with political fuel. The split, however, fragmented this purpose. MAN remained close to the Moscow-oriented PKP, while the SPP under Lacsina was generally closer to the Sison group.

In the wake of the split, however, Lacsina was moving in an increasingly independent direction and working in close coordination with Teodosio Lansang. They shared a perspective, one driven far more by personal interest than political program, and saw the SPP as an opportunity to consolidate their hold over the labor movement. Nemenzo stated, “the SPP would get rid of the rightists and consolidate the Lacsina and Pedro Castro unions.”²⁸ Abinales makes a similar claim, arguing that the SPP was founded in 1967 “after a split with the LM against the more reform-minded trade unionists.”²⁹ The political consolidation of the SPP was thus against the unions of Cipriano Cid, José J. Hernandez and others, and not against either section of the PKP. Lansang and Lacsina both envisioned a party which could serve as a base of political power for integrating with the government of Marcos, and saw Lee Kuan Yew’s People’s Action Party (PAP) as the model which they wished to emulate. Lansang anticipated that he would be made Minister of Socialist Affairs within the Marcos administration, clearly imagining that the SPP would serve as his means of achieving this end.³⁰

Lacsina had led the Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers’ Party] (LM) on an unchanging political course since the break with Macapagal. He continued to insist that the tasks of the workers movement were national and democratic in character, that class interests were subordinate to national ones, and that workers should not yet be fighting for socialism. This is evident in an article Lacsina published in late 1966 in F. Sionil José’s journal *Solidarity*, in which he stressed that the “philosophy of the Katipunan revolution [i.e., nationalism] ... will remain the one and only valid philosophy for the Filipino people as a whole.”³¹ The LM was founded to direct workers participation in the national struggle, Lacsina explained, but the LM’s results had thus far been weak. In accounting for this he did not mention the split in the LM, or the alliance with Macapagal, but rather blamed “the systematic indoctrination of Filipino workers against involvement in politics” which led to “their initially mediocre response to the party.” (55) It was with an eye to using the language of socialism to whip

²⁸Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 43. While Nemenzo’s point about consolidation is accurate, when the SPP was founded, Pedro Castro had been dead for years and the consolidation was entirely under Lacsina.

²⁹Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 20.

³⁰PC, 2 Jul 1971, 6; Wenceslao, “On the KM-Lacsina Feud,” 48.

³¹Ignacio P Lacsina, “A Philosophy for Industrial Labor,” *Solidarity* 1, no. 3 (1966): 52-53.

up support from the working class for nationalism that the SPP was founded.

The Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) held its founding congress on May 1 1967. Lacsina was elected chair and Felixberto Olalia was made general secretary, but he would later be replaced by Teodosio Lansang.³² The founding document of the SPP – entitled “Socialist Manifesto” – was five pages long and opened with the declaration that “the Socialist Party of the Philippines is committed to one objective: the promotion of the Filipino national interest.”³³ Unlike the founding program of the LM, the manifesto of the SPP made an effort to appeal directly to the working class, promising that it would fight for “free education at all levels ... state support for the arts and sciences ... higher wages ... improved conditions of work ... socialization of medicine and medical care ... [and] adequate housing facilities for the population.” (48-49) These goals, however, were immediately mitigated, as each promise was explicitly delayed until after the successful national democratic revolution. Free education, for example, was an item for the future. “At the present stage, massive government scholarships should be extended to students of proven brilliance at the high school, college and graduate levels.” (48) The SPP held out the promise of the “maximum program” – socialism, but then informed workers that if they wanted this they must first unite with and support the capitalist class in carrying out the national democratic revolution. The Manifesto stated that “the Party will always be ready to work in collaboration with all classes, organizations and individuals sharing common principles. At every stage it will strive to win the sympathy and cooperation of all patriotic elements in the nation. Principled coalitions with other political forces be [sic] carried out to the extent of establishing a coalition government if conditions permit.” (47)

In the editorial introduction to the *Progressive Review* published in August, Sison wrote “The Socialist Party of the Philippines recognizes that the national democratic objectives of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism must first be accomplished before the people can pass the threshold into socialism. This principle is quite clear to all members of the Socialist Party of the Philippines.” (ii) The PKP, having expelled Sison, attempted to discredit the SPP on the grounds that it was “socialist” and therefore could not participate in MAN. Sison wrote that a “certain clique of intriguers ... has sought to alienate the militant labor and youth representatives within the Movement.” (iii) Referring to himself in the third person, he continued, “Braving the intrigues that might also fly in

³²Torres-Yu reports, incorrectly, that Olalia was made deputy chair and Sison head of the youth department. (Torres-Yu, “Philippine Trade Union Movement 1953-72,” 66). Basic details regarding the May 1 founding of the SPP can be found in the tenth issue of the *Progressive Review*, which contained an editorial by Sison on the founding of MAN and the SPP, and the founding document of the SPP. Sison’s editorial stated simply “the Lapiang Manggagawa ... has decided to rename itself the Socialist Party of the Philippines.” (PR, 10, ii).

³³PR, 10, p. 46; a draft of the manifesto is in the PRP. (Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP), *Socialist Manifesto*, [1967], PRP 12/13.02).

his direction, the General Secretary of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism has firmly upheld the right of independence and initiative of Lapiang Manggagawa (now called the Socialist Party of the Philippines).” He concluded that “So long as the Socialist Party of the Philippines upholds scientific socialism and, therefore, recognizes the necessity of completing the national-democratic phase of the people’s struggle before there can be any socialist phase, it can remain a solid part of any national-democratic alliance”. (iii)

The eleventh issue of the *Progressive Review* contained a full-page ad for the Institute for Social Studies, the school of the Socialist Party of the Philippines, and readers were invited to enroll at the school for a nine-lecture course.³⁴ In 1971 Lacsina and SPP on the one hand, and Sison and the KM on the other, violently broke apart, and in the wake of that split, Lacsina requested Teodosio Lansang become the regular lecturer for these courses.³⁵ Lansang wrote,

It appeared that originally before I was drafted, the lecturers were mostly Joma and the other officers of the KM with whom Lacsina had organizational and work plan [*sic*]. In time though, so the story had it, the relations between Joma and Lacsina went sour: probably on questions of leadership and strategy. It was evident then that I was some kind of replacement for Joma. In time, I was appointed, or designated rather, general secretary of the SPP, while Lacsina retained the chairmanship of the party. When the *Ang Sosyalista* came out as the theoretical journal of the SPP, I assumed its editorship.³⁶

The renaming of the LM to SPP was in large part a response to mounting social tensions, which it sought to corral with its pie-in-the-sky promise that if workers would support Filipino capitalists now, there would be a rosy future of ‘socialism’ which they could enter through the pearly gates of the ‘maximum program.’ Popular anger at growing social inequality and the brutal American war in Vietnam was palpable and was being discussed in the media and in ruling political circles. By August 1967, Washington was secretly predicting a social explosion in the Philippines. Marshall Wright of the National Security Council wrote to Rostow,

It would be nearly impossible to overestimate the gravity of the problems with which our next ambassador to Manila must deal. It

³⁴PR, 11, p. 97. This was the outline of courses: Basic Philippine Problems; The Role of the Working Class; The Role of the Peasantry; Building National Unity; Building the Socialist Party; Socialism for the Philippines; The International Workers’ Movement and the World Situation; The Development of Imperialism; and The Socialist Outlook and Method of Analysis.

³⁵Lansang, *In Summing Up*, 73.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 74.

has become common-place for people knowledgeable on the Philippines to predict a vast social upheaval in the near future. There is widespread talk that the current president will be the last popularly elected Philippine chief executive. Many high-level American officials consider the Philippines to be the most serious and the most bleak threat that we face in Asia.³⁷

A foreshadowing of this imminent upheaval, and the violent suppression that the state was preparing for it, took place on May 21 1967. Thirty-three people were killed and forty-seven wounded when government forces opened fire on a peasant religious cult armed with bolos who had gathered on Taft Avenue under the leadership of Valentin ‘Tatang’ de los Santos. Claiming to have magical amulets which would protect them from bullets, over a thousand members of de los Santos’ *Lapiang Malaya* [Freedom Party] demanded that Marcos resign. At one in the morning on Sunday May 21, the Philippine Constabulary opened fire as the bolo-carrying peasants pressed toward Malacañang. The survivors were rounded up; some were arrested and others sent back to the provinces. Tatang de los Santos was placed in an insane asylum.³⁸ The KM issued a leaflet the next week denouncing the massacre as a “brutal use of state violence.” The police and state forces, the KM argued, should have used tear gas and fire hoses to dispel the *Lapiang Malaya*, and concluded “Let the state realize that there will be no unrest of this type if there are no conditions to create it. Let it realize further that the use of fascist tactics has never accomplished anything except to convince the people of the gap between them and the government.”³⁹

The *Lapiang Malaya* affair was an expression of mounting unrest not only in the city, but among the peasantry, who were in increasingly dire economic straits. *MASAKA*, the PKP’s peasant wing, meanwhile, was stagnating. Sison claimed that *MASAKA* “could not expand because it was debilitated by incompetent leadership and by constant conflicts between the Bulacan and Nueva Ecija groups and then between pro-Lava and pro-Olalia groups in 1967.”⁴⁰ In truth, the growth of the peasant party in the face of massive deprivation and inequality was

³⁷Marshall Wright, “Memorandum From Marshall Wright of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Special Assistant (Rostow),” chap. Document 353 in *Foreign Relations Of The United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXVI, Indonesia; Malaysia-Singapore; Philippines* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2000).

³⁸This event has been analyzed in Reynaldo C Iletto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines 1840-1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979); David R. Sturtevant, “Rizalistas – Contemporary Revitalization Movements in the Philippines,” in *Agrarian Unrest in the Philippines* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1969), 18–30; and Elizabeth A Pastores, “Religious Leadership in the *Lapiang Malaya*: A Historical Note,” in *Filipino Religious Psychology*, ed. Leonardo N. Mercado (Tacloban: Divine Word University Publications, 1977), 149–165.

³⁹Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Kabataang Makabayan Statement on the Sunday Massacre, 1967*, PRP 08/19.04.

⁴⁰Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 35.

above all limited by the tepid reformist program of the organization which Sison himself had drawn up. *MASAKA* held a national congress in Malolos, Bulacan, on May 2, 1967, which produced a two page document, *The Current Standpoint of MASAKA*. The statement makes clear that the organization was continuing to fight for the implementation of RA3844, the Land Reform Code of the Macapagal administration, and were continuing to demand the transfer of land under this law to a system of cash rent, as this demand was the first point on *MASAKA*'s political agenda. *MASAKA* also called on the government to set up cooperative banks on behalf of farmers, to assist with land irrigation, and to amend RA3844 to include coconut, sugar, tobacco lands and fisheries.⁴¹ It gave no broader political perspective and did not mention its relationship to any other organization. In 1967, *MASAKA* was functioning as a peasant cooperative respectfully requesting that the government implement a toothless law designed to turn sharecroppers into cash rent tenants.

Thus were the battle lines drawn in the face of an imminent social explosion. *MAN*, expressing the interests of layers of the capitalist class closely tied to the Marcos administration, would move increasingly into the camp of the *PKP*; the *SPP* would retain ties to the Sison group, but it was controlled by Lacsina and he was an untrustworthy ally at best; and *MASAKA* would remain with the *PKP*, but it proved entirely incapable of moving beyond the sickly reformist grounds on which it had been founded. It was among the youth and student groups on the Diliman campus that the split would dramatically intrude onto the public stage.

⁴¹Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka (*MASAKA*), *Pangkasalukuyang Paninindigan ng Malayang Samahang Magsasaka (MASAKA)*, May 1967.

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Split in the Front Organizations

Watching the youth movement in this country is something like trying to keep tab of the stock market: nothing is static; the only law is motion, seething development, geometrical expansion. Lines of organization are constantly in flux; alliances are made, broken, re-formed only to be dissolved again. Members cross over from one organization to another; seeming allies are liable to suddenly exchange verbal barrages or boot each other out from one uneasy front or the other.

— Ninotcka Rosca, “Word War I,” 1971

Cultural Revolution

The cohort of students intending to travel in China in late 1966 were thwarted by the refusal of Narciso Ramos, at the head of Marcos’ Foreign Affairs Ministry, to grant them permission to travel. A handful defied the injunction which, based on the flimsy pretext that the travelers were not sufficiently mature, could not last long. By mid-1967 travel to Beijing opened and a flood of students from UP, alongside leading Philippine politicians and reporters for the major papers, spent their summer in ‘Red China.’ The students brought back with them the ideas and the trappings of the Cultural Revolution – Mao caps and Red Books, purges and re-education. The language of student radicals underwent a marked development from the nationalism of Recto to the mass line of Mao; their fundamental ideas, however, remained the same.

As the 1967-68 school year opened, the split which had taken place in the PKP exploded the campus front organizations of the Communist Party, beginning with the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. The split in the PKP was the expression of the Sino-Soviet split; the split in the BRPF of that in the PKP. The intractable fault lines running through the front organizations of the Communist Party were never probed, however; they were depicted exclusively as the result of the personal perfidy of individual rival leaders. These tensions reft the movement and by late November they exploded the Kabataang Makabayan into multiple

opposed organizations, each denouncing the other in language that was both strident and vague.

During the summer of 1967, as many of the leading members of the youth movement traveled to China, a popular conception of China as the center of progress and revolution in the world was becoming widespread in Manila. Teodoro Locsin's report on China published in the *Philippines Free Press* in August 1967 is indicative of this emerging attitude.

Though dictatorial, it was truly a government FOR the people, according to them. The dictatorship of the proletariat, in brief. Certainly, it was not a government for landlords or for capitalists or for foreigners. It was a government for the people. The Chinese people. And the people, far from being hungry and oppressed by the government, as we had been told they were, were doing well. Much better than they had ever done before. They were far from rich, but they were becoming less poor every day. They were certainly not about to rise in revolt against the Communist regime. The Filipino reports destroyed overnight, a French journalist was afterward to observe, the work of almost 20 years of American anti-Communist propaganda. . .

But is not the Communist regime a dictatorial one? Certainly, it is. That is what it calls itself – a dictatorship. The dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the workers. It is not a dictatorship of the landlords, for they have been abolished; the only thing left of them is the evil memory they left behind. . .

It is not a dictatorship of the capitalists, for the capitalists who did not leave with Chiang are all working for the government now. The Fascist dictatorship in Italy under Mussolini and the Nazi dictatorship in Germany under Hitler were such a dictatorship – to keep the workers in their places and the rich in possession of the wealth of the state. Such a state can produce only tension, with the workers always on the verge of revolt; hence, the need for the most repressive measures. But against what would a worker want to revolt in China today? Against a regime that would not allow him to exploit his fellow workers? The absurdity is obvious.

It is not a dictatorship, of course, for the “foreign devils” that exploited and degraded a great people in a manner that was burnt into their memory. Foreign concessions with extraterritorial rights no longer exist. Chinese may now walk in parks where signs once said: “Dogs and Chinese not allowed.” The “devils” have been driven out and when they come back to do business, it is on Chinese terms. The Chinese are no longer anybody's dogs.¹

¹Teodoro M. Locsin, “Meeting the Dragon: Who Really Wants Government FOR the People?” *PHP*, August 1967, 18-19.

The admiration for the social system ‘Red China’, expressed in the front pages of the country’s leading newsweekly was open and effusive. It expressed a growing outlook, fueled by a wave of travel, among broad layers of Philippine society.

In mid-May, Joma Sison again traveled to China. Of this trip, Sison stated, “I went to China again in 1967 for a study tour and spoke at the conference of the Afro-Asian Writers Association to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Chairman Mao’s ‘Talks at the Yen’an Forum on Literature and Art’. I had the distinct honor of meeting Comrade Mao and having a photograph taken with him.” Sison brought back four volumes of Mao’s collected works.² In June the *Philippines Free Press* led another press delegation to China, including Nick Joaquin, who wrote on the Cultural Revolution, and several members of *KM*, among them Carlos del Rosario who was in China for thirty-five days.³ On July 12, the *Collegian* reported that another group of twenty students traveled China in defiance of the ban, against which the Student Council had filed a legal appeal challenging its constitutionality.⁴ In late July, congressmen Edgar Ilarde, Antonio Cuenco, and Jose V. Yap attempted to take an official state visit to Beijing, issuing a statement on their departure from Manila, “Our trip to Communist China, which is the first official mission undertaken by the House of Representatives, seeks to explore the feasibility of establishing closer relations with these two nations.”⁵ The Ilarde delegation was refused admission, however, on the grounds that China could not accept an official delegation from a country that still recognized Taipei, and the congressmen announced that they were therefore traveling to China in a private capacity.⁶

The students who returned from China adopted the language and politics of the Cultural Revolution, a development which had begun on a small scale with the return of the first delegation from China in January 1967. The materials and souvenirs they brought back from China acquired a fetish value on the

²Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 45; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 24. The picture seems to have never been published.

³Quijano de Manila, “Revolution Revisited,” *FFP*, July 1967, 2–3, 73–74, 76; Jose F. Lacaba, “Of Cabbages and Kings,” *FFP*, July 1967, 7; Carlos B. Del Rosario, “What I Saw,” *FFP*, September 1967, 7.

⁴PC, 12 Jul 1967. This new group of travelers, who met with Vice Premier Chen Yi, was headed by Ramoncito Abad, Sixto Carlos Jr., Danilo Gozo and Orly Mercado, all Council members. (PC, 19 Jul 1967, 2).

⁵“To Red China,” *FFP*, August 1967, 73.

⁶“[F]or Beijing to accept an official mission from the Philippine government would mean that Beijing was implicitly giving approval to a two China policy, which Beijing rejects.” (Edgar U. Ilarde, Jose V. Yap, and Antonio V. Cuenco, “The Reason Why,” *FFP*, August 1967, 5, 88). Yap, a Liberal Party politician from Tarlac with close ties to Aquino, used this trip to collect Maoist literature which he supplied to Joma Sison and his allies. In early 1969, along with Aquino, he assisted Sison in getting in touch with Dante and establishing the New People’s Army (NPA). Yap provided Dante with a copy of Mao’s *Red Book* which he had acquired during his travels in China in the summer of 1967.

UP campus and ‘Mao caps’ and pins bearing the image of Mao Zedong were displayed and circulated, the highly prized commodities of rebellion. On May 7, the *Collegian* published a letter written by Nilo Tayag, Orly Mercado, Sixto Carlos and Maximo Lim entitled “Purge in the UP.” The letter is instructive as it reveals the extent to which the KM, SCAUP and other youth organizations associated with Joma Sison were mouthing the language of the Cultural Revolution. The letter opened

In line with the October 23 Nationalist General Declaration and the clear principles of the October 24th Movement we, the undersigned, demand a thorough examination of the University of the Philippines to remove all traces of imperialism and all remnants of feudalism so that we can have a free university truly dedicated to the principles of national democracy. ...

We demand at least the re-education of colonial professors since they are the ones who maintain, to a certain extent, the vise-hold of American imperialism in our country and our University. ... They form a conspicuous and petulant minority who control positions of power and influence in this institution. ...

The library is full of imperialist propaganda materials. ...

We demand that scientific socialism be taught thoroughly in the University by a competent staff ...

Scholarships and cultural exchanges should be made with all willing socialist countries including the People’s Republic of China.⁷

The call for a purge within the university and the re-education of professors would have been unthinkable but six months prior. While its ideas had not been thought-through – who would carry out this re-education, the Marcos administration? – clearly a new political ferment had gripped the Diliman campus.

Nationalist Corps

The original project for implementing the Maoist ‘mass line’ at UP, the Nationalist Corps, had been delayed by political focus on first the O24M and then the struggle over travel to China, and it was not until mid-April that the NC was finally founded.⁸ The public announcement of its founding stated

To attain for the Corps members a certain degree of mastery of the basic principles of the nationalist movement, the Council will pro-

⁷PC, 7 May 1967, 4.

⁸It had taken so long to achieve this goal that opponents had taken to referring to the proposed organization as the Nationalist Corpse. (PC, 29 Mar 1967, 11) The organizing committee of the NC was headed by Sixto Carlos, Orly Mercado and Delfin Lazaro.

vide the necessary training in the “six basic areas” of nationalism: the historical development of nationalism, economic nationalism, nationalism in culture, nationalism as a political movement, nationalism in foreign policy, and nationalism and national security. This will be supplemented by training in community development work.⁹

This mandatory education program of the NC would be based on Sison’s newly published book, *Struggle for National Democracy*.¹⁰ At the same time the announcement declared that “proper representation with government agencies involved in community work like ... the PACD will be provided by the Council.” The NC thus proposed to implement Mao’s mass line using the writings of Joma Sison while working in coordination with the appropriate government authorities.¹¹ Sixto Carlos negotiated with the PACD and agreed to cooperate with both the government agency and with the Peace Corps. The Nationalist Corps volunteers would go through two phases of training. The first phase would involve receiving lectures and demonstrations on community service from the PACD and the Peace Corps while the second phase would consist of “a series of lectures on six aspects of nationalism.”¹² After all its talk about being a nationalist alternative to the ‘CIA-front’ Peace Corps, the NC, under terms negotiated by Sixto Carlos with the Marcos government, agreed that all of its members would in fact be trained by the Peace Corps.

The Nationalist Corps announced on May 7 that it would launch in four pilot areas: Los Baños, Tarlac, Angeles and Tondo. One hundred students participated in the NC over its first summer.¹³ Annie Andrada wrote on the Nationalist Corps on July 26, stating that the NC had adopted the slogan “live with the people, learn their problems from them, and on the basis of this knowledge help them solve their problems.”¹⁴ The NC aimed, she wrote, to “establish medical clinics ...

⁹PC, 19 Apr 1967, 11.

¹⁰Sison’s speeches over the past year had been collected together into this volume which was to serve as the basis for educating “nationalist activists” in the KM, the NC and other organizations in the coming years. Sison dedicated the book “to the new rising generation of Filipinos.” It was published over the summer and formally launched on July 31 at Erehwon bookstore on P. Faura. (PC, 19 Jul 1967, 6; SND). Subsequent editions were dedicated to “All Freedom Loving Filipinos.” (Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*). Luis Teodoro wrote a brief editor’s note which stated that SND “will certainly remain as a guide for humane and honest men everywhere,” which was followed by an introduction written by Teodoro Agoncillo, chair of the UP History Department, who characterized Sison as “the most harassed and maligned youth today” (vii) (SND, v). Teodoro’s introductory note was not included in subsequent editions.

¹¹The Presidential Assistant on Community Development (PACD) was a government agency created under the leadership of Edward Lansdale with CIA money during the Magsaysay administration. The leadership of the PACD retained their ties to Lansdale and the CIA even in the late 1960s.

¹²PC, 7 May 1967.

¹³PC, 12 Jul 1967.

¹⁴PC, 26 Jul 1967, 5. Annie Andrada traveled to China in June 1967 and went on to play a

Athletic Leagues, Cultural Organizations and to present plays and folk dances.” It “brings nationalism to the masses of our people – the peasants, the workers, the professionals, the intellectuals, the students, and the national capitalists.” Just how what was essentially student volunteer charity work, carried out in Tondo under the auspices of the Peace Corps, was bringing nationalism to anyone, let alone “national capitalists,” is unclear. What is clear is that students returning from China, as well as well those influenced by them, regarded the NC to be implementing the mass line.

The Split at Diliman

At the beginning of the first semester of the new school year – in late July 1967 – the expulsion of the Sison group from the PKP and the imported politics of the Cultural Revolution found open expression in an explosion of political conflict at UP Diliman.¹⁵ A strained calm hung over the campus as the semester convened; the expelled and the expellers both had their hands on the reins of the party’s front organizations, and they eyed each other nervously, waiting to see who would make the first move. On July 13, Joma Sison chaired a meeting at UP Town Hall to plan a joint seminar on nationalism which was to be held at the end of the month. The meeting involved the Plebeians – who were sponsoring the seminar; Sanduguang Kayumanggi [Brown Blood Brotherhood] (SK); BRPF; SCAUP; Humanist Association; and KM. The article announcing the meeting concluded “Observers anticipate the formation of a federation among the six groups. According to one of the leaders, it is high time that nationalist organizations unite to thwart the anti-nationalist elements in the University.”¹⁶ This move toward federation, which involved bringing loosely nationalist organizations such as the Plebeians and Sanduguang Kayumanggi into an alliance with the front organizations of the PKP, precipitated a fierce battle for control of the BRPF, SCAUP and KM.

Over the coming semester the pages of each week’s *Collegian* carried the allegations, counter-allegations and denunciations made by the rival parties within the various Stalinist front organizations in a battle which would culminate in the explosion of the KM into a host of rival groups. Throughout this period, the one unmentionable yet all determining feature of the struggle within the front organizations of the PKP was that their internal factions were shaped by the split within the party itself. Despite its centrality, no one discussed the PKP or its split. When the PKP expelled the Sison group in April 1967, the rival sections did

leading role in the SDK. She was the daughter of Naval Commodore Jose Andrada, who was a graduate of Annapolis, relative of Manuel Roxas and head of the Philippine Navy in the post-war period.

¹⁵That the conflict emerged first here was an expression of the centrality of the University in the political work of the party.

¹⁶PC, 12 Jul 1967, 2.

not openly discuss within the Philippines the question of loyalty to Moscow or Beijing, but in a deliberately subjective manner focused on the personal treachery of their rivals which manifested itself seemingly without any political basis. So too now, as the various front organizations of the PKP fell upon each other in a vicious faction fight, they focused on personal treachery and subterfuge, never once mentioning that the fault lines in the various front groups corresponded to the fault lines within the party, and that these, in turn, followed the fault lines of Stalinist geopolitics. The leadership of these organizations were aware that the roots of this dispute rested in the split within the PKP, and the highest echelons of leadership knew that it was rooted in the Sino-Soviet split. The majority of the membership, however, were told that what was at stake was not a political dispute whose roots and logic could be analyzed and assessed, but rather the individual rottenness of certain leaders. All told, the manner in which both the PKP and Sison's group handled the split ensured that the students, youth and workers were systematically politically miseducated.

On July 18, the BRPF held an election on the Diliman campus for a new executive committee and a new set of officers.¹⁷ Nemenzo had been serving as the chair of the BRPF for the past two years. Jose David Lapuz had been elected to the post in May 1965, but for reasons which are not entirely clear, when Nemenzo returned from England he was appointed to the office, replacing Lapuz. Nemenzo in turn had appointed Ruben Torres to the position of General Secretary and later appointed Maximo Lim as acting vice chair of the organization. By 1967 not one of the leaders of the BRPF had been elected to office; everyone had been appointed. In order to gain control of the BRPF, Sison's group needed to wrest executive power away from Nemenzo and Torres, and the best asset that they had within the BRPF for carrying this out was Maximo Lim. Through Lim, the Sison group called the July 18 meeting and during the meeting announced that they would be holding elections. Nemenzo was not in attendance, as neither Nemenzo nor Torres had been informed that there would be a meeting or that elections would be held. Sison's group meanwhile stacked the elections, bringing a large crowd to attend the meeting, a majority of whom were not members of the BRPF but were associated with the KM, and most of these not yet members of the KM but simply applicants. Maximo Lim and Ernesto Macahiya were nominated for the position of General Secretary of the BRPF. Macahiya, whose loyalties were to Nemenzo and the Moscow group of the PKP, decried the proceedings and refused to accept his nomination, claiming that the entire election was unconstitutional. He accused Lim and his allies of "importing" members and applicants from SCAUP and KM to the BRPF election, "which they themselves packed, planned, executed and adjudicated."¹⁸ Maximo Lim was elected General Secretary; Jose David Lapuz was elected Chair. One of the newly elected officials of the BRPF,

¹⁷PC, 19 Jul 1967, 6.

¹⁸PC, 16 Aug 1967, 10.

Vivencio Jose, had not been a member of the BRPF prior to the election.¹⁹

Sison maneuvered to remove Nemenzo from the editorial board of the *Progressive Review*. Juliet de Lima was the business manager for the journal and controlled its funds. Using this control, Sison prevented Nemenzo from printing a new issue and effectively took control of the journal.²⁰ In early August, the tenth issue of *Progressive Review* finally came out; it was the first issue for 1967. The ninth issue, published in the latter half of 1966, had been edited by Nemenzo, and it seems likely that Sison had been too busy with his speaking engagements to manage the journal. The tenth edition contained a notice from the Editorial Board – “Apology and Announcement,” which read,

In order to put out the *Progressive Review* regularly and competently, the Editorial Board has been re-organized and its editor-in-chief, Francisco Nemenzo, Jr., has been expelled for the following reasons:

1. Under the influence of certain sinister elements, he actively participated in a campaign of vilification against many of his fellow staffers;
2. He has been found to be maintaining some improper connections which disqualify him from membership in the Board;
3. Failing to put out the magazine for a period of more than one year, he is deemed not competent to continue as editor-in-chief; and
4. Following the instructions of some pseudo-left elements, he participated in a systematic campaign of vilification against major nationalist mass organizations and their dedicated leaders.²¹

Points one, two, and four all pertained to Nemenzo’s ties to the PKP and the Lavas. In response to point three, Nemenzo wrote in the *Collegian* that the page proofs for the tenth issue of the *Progressive Review* had been ready in April, when Sison “eased me out of the editorship.”²² The only significant changes, Nemenzo claimed, to the issue which he had edited were Sison’s replacement of the editorial Nemenzo had written with his own and the insertion of two documents in place of an article by Horacio Lava. While it is clear from its contents that the majority of the articles in the tenth issue of the *Progressive Review* were in fact prepared before the April split, in the editorial on foreign news developments, the journal for the first time denounced the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.²³ On September 21, Jose David Lapuz wrote that Nemenzo had been removed from the editorial board of the *Progressive Review* because he

¹⁹PC, 23 Aug 1967, 8.

²⁰Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 43.

²¹PR, 10, p. 45.

²²PC, 21 Sep 1967, 9.

²³PR, 10, p. iv.

was the “nervous henchman of a decadent family dynasty.”²⁴ *Ang Bayan* in 1969 was much more direct: Nemenzo was ousted “for using the organization as a tool of Soviet modern revisionism and the Lava revisionist renegade clique.”²⁵

On August 9, Ernesto Macahiya published in his regular column in the *Collegian*, “Diliman at Liwanag,” [Darkness and Light], an article entitled “Mao pin-wearing group, nationalism & campus politics.” “Militant nationalism,” he declared, was the answer to imperialism, yet “the very students who are supposed to be the foremost nationalists succumb to behaviors which can only be described as *exhibitionist* and *reckless* if not totally *infantile*.” He denounced this “breed of nationalist (?) student (?) leaders (?) who roam around the campus wearing Mao Zedong pins (of bold red and gold) and chanting the *Communist Internationale* while waving and brandishing Marxist books in no less popular a place than Vinzons Grill where all eyes could see.”²⁶ He continued, “To wear this peculiar kind of pins is IN; to do otherwise is OUT. One is yellow if he is discreet about brandishing Marxist books; and definitely ‘reactionary’ if not downright ‘revisionist’ if he shows prudence in the use of slogans and footnoting of quotations.” Macahiya accused this pin-wearing group of attempting to grab the leadership of the BRPF through an “illegitimate and rigged election,” using “the wily ways of coercion and fraudulent machination.” Nationalism, he concluded, “is more profound than wearing Mao Zedong pins; more serious and substantial than singing songs and hurling quotations from the Red Guard’s Red Book for no reason at all; and positively more principled than rail-roading elections.” (8)

Macahiya launched his second salvo on August 16. It is important to note the continuity between his political line and that of Sison’s group. He wrote that the “sectors, like labor, peasant, business, industrial and intellectual which consider imperialism as their main enemy constitute rightfully the totality of the nationalist movement in the Philippines.”²⁷ The political program of a bloc of four classes waging a national democratic revolution against imperialism had not altered an iota. Macahiya accused the “pin-wearers” of having “wrecked a confederation of nationalist student organizations,” by attempting to impose their will on the Plebeians and SK with a list of “ready-made speakers prepared and cooked up outside the meeting.” Macahiya named the “leaders” of the pin-wearing group as Perfecto Tera, Vivencio Jose, Ninotchka Rosca (“who has a fetish [*sic*] on various kinds of pins”), Leoncio Co, and Maximo Lim. Most of

²⁴PC, 21 Sep 1967, 8. Lapuz’ writing continued to be insufferably pretentious. The [Lava] family dynasty “became hump-banks in the process, of course, for they always stooped to make their whispers have a conspiratorial air. Parenthetically I may add that the last hump-back I know in that famous novel by Victor Hugo at least won a lovely Esmeralda. His present day counterpart, however, has only succeeded in winning a trollop named Contempt.” Parenthetically I may add that Lapuz seems to have never actually read Hugo.

²⁵AB, October 1969, 11.

²⁶PC, 9 Aug 1967, 5. Emphasis and question marks in original.

²⁷PC, 16 Aug 1967, 10.

these figures in a few months would become the core of the group that split from the KM to form the SDK.

In the same issue of the *Collegian*, Maximo Lim, adopting the title of General Secretary of the BRPF, published a lengthy response to Macahiya, entitled “Why the truth shall always prevail.”²⁸ Lim came close to revealing the connection between the split in the BRPF and the split in the Communist Party when he indirectly alluded to the Lavas, writing that the BRPF is not “an organization for incompetent leaders, saboteurs, pretenders and puppets of pretentious elements of a certain family dynasty that wants to rule – without any basis in fact – the anti-imperialist nationalist movement.”²⁹ He continued, “How can a certain family dynasty, for instance, maintain its leadership if it would discourage the rising youth from developing into new leaders of a movement which they have terribly bungled?” (5) Lim defended the pin-wearing, writing “spurred by enthusiasm for, and curiosity among the students in general ... a China Study Group has been organized ... As for the pins they are part of the new things which those who came back from China ... brought over. The students from various organizations and groupings had a headstart in wearing the Mao pins cherished by the Chinese people and distributed to their guests as a mark of honor. Proof of this is that many student, employees and even faculty members were allegedly clamoring for pins to wear that even those who brought them were literally divested of their own pins.” He reiterated exactly the same political line as Macahiya, stating “On the one hand, there are the forces of national independence and democracy and they are: the peasantry, the working class, the petty bourgeoisie to which the students, youth, intellectuals and professionals belong, and the nationalist bourgeoisie. These forces are united by the common lot of oppression imposed upon them by the American imperialists, and their local allies the landlord-comprador class and the bureaucrat-capitalists.” There was one significant development in Maximo Lim’s formulation: it was the first inclusion that I have seen of the group ‘bureaucrat capitalists.’

When word reached Nemenzo of the rigged BRPF election, he hastily arranged travel to London to meet with Bertrand Russell and Ralph Schoenman to secure their support for his continued chairmanship of the Philippine Chapter of the BRPF.³⁰ Nemenzo’s response to the anti-democratic maneuvers of the Sison group was not the democratic mobilization of the membership of the BRPF but the invocation of external authority. On August 25, immediately upon his return to the Philippines, Nemenzo went to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and incorporated the BRPF. He informed the *Collegian* that he had a letter

²⁸PC, 16 Aug 1967, 4.

²⁹Emphasis added.

³⁰William Pomeroy claimed that Sison, in an attempt to thwart this move, sent a Filipino contact in Belgium to London to dispatch a telegram to Manila purporting to be from Ralph Schoenman approving of the recently concluded BRPF election. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 44) I have seen no evidence to substantiate this claim.

from Ralph Schoenman stating that his group was the rightful BRPF and added that the recent act of incorporation meant that no other organization was legally entitled to use the name.³¹ Nemenzo's faction of the BRPF held a meeting on September 10 in which he informed the membership that the Lapuz faction was not recognized by London. Lapuz and his group arrived and demanded to see Schoenman's letter. Nemenzo claimed that the letter was "too personal and in any case, he forgot to bring it with him to the meeting," telling the assembly that he would write to Schoenman requesting a more formal letter. Lapuz announced that his faction of the BRPF would hold a meeting on September 17.³² Schoenman sent a cable to Nemenzo, which Nemenzo made public, declaring the BRPF's "complete confidence" in Nemenzo as chair of the BRPF Philippine Council, the "authorized branch of our foundation in the Philippines." Schoenman claimed that he had sent a cable to this effect to Maximo Lim on September 8, i.e. prior to Lapuz protest at the September 10 BRPF meeting.³³

In the August UP Student Council elections, the Katipunan-Makabansa alliance expanded to include another student political group, the Lapiang Pilipino, and thus effectively became an alliance of all student political groups against the Kalayaan party of Abbas and Calvo. Some members of the alliance identified themselves by wearing red arm-bands, modeling themselves after the red guards in China.³⁴ They lost to Kalayaan's candidate Delfin Lazaro.

SCAUP began holding a series of Nationalism seminars on August 14, which the *Collegian* claimed was being jointly sponsored with the SK.³⁵ In the last week of August, SCAUP held an election, and the new leadership was comprised entirely of forces loyal to Sison.³⁶ The "first action taken by the new central committee was to endorse a resolution expelling a member of the outgoing central committee." This was almost certainly Ernesto Macahiya who had been president of the Executive Board of SCAUP from 1966-7.

The newly constituted Central Committee of SCAUP published a statement in the September 1 issue of the *Collegian*, entitled "The SCAUP and the Anti-Imperialist Movement in UP," which declared that

the anti-imperialist movement led by a certain family dynasty was a dismal failure ... This leadership which has recently been described

³¹PC, 6 Sep 1967, 12.

³²PC, 13 Sep 1967, 12.

³³PC, 4 Oct 1967, 11.

³⁴PC, 16 Aug 1967, 5.

³⁵PC, 16 Aug 1967, 12 The speakers list was entirely associated with Sison's group. Sison delivered his "Second Propaganda Movement" speech from the previous year to a meeting held on August 17; Nur Misuari gave a talk on the Sino-Soviet split; and Vivencio Jose spoke on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. (PC, 23 Aug 1967, 2).

³⁶Ricardo Ferrer was elected chair; Ninotchka Rosca was elected vice-chair; Monico Atienza became a central committee member; Ellecer Cortes, secretary; and Jose Cardenas, treasurer. (PC, 1 Sep 1967, 3).

as elitest [*sic*], arrogant, dogmatic and sectarian, and liable to commit acts of adventurism that would be disastrous, unable to integrate itself with the masses whom it does not, and cannot understand, committed one serious error after another in the usual fashion of those who were unable to master the needs of the anti-imperialist movement and thus unable to lead the masses in the struggle for independence.³⁷

SCAUP insisted that the nationalist movement “of the working class, peasantry, the professionals, the small traders, the intelligentsia, and the patriotic businessmen should be really a mass movement that is democratic and national in character,” in order to fight against “the landlords, the bureaucrat capitalists, and the American imperialists.” We see again that while each group denounced the underhanded machinations of the other, they consistently articulated an identical political program, giving no substantive reason for the split.³⁸

In the same issue, the SK announced that because of the quarrels between Macahiya’s group and Lim’s group, they were withdrawing their sponsorship of the lecture series. They wrote “we also deplore the apparent Chinese orientation and deification of Mao Zedong as manifested in the braggadocious sporting of Mao pins and displaying of ‘Little Red Books’ by many ... ” (9) SK was a nationalist group which was not directly associated with either of the splinters of the PKP. Its orientation was simply opposition to foreign influences on the basis of the “proud racial heritage” of the Filipino, and this found expression in its name, Sanduguang Kayumanggi [Brown Blood Brothers]. On October 4 the SK staged a symposium along with the Plebeians, entitled “What’s Wrong with the Diliman Nationalists?” They stated that the symposium would address “whether there is a need to redefine nationalism, its goals and methods, or to offer a substitute to the anti-feudal type of nationalism espoused by [the KM-SCAUP-BRPF] complex.”³⁹ It seems likely that the Lapiang Filipino, the SK and Plebeians all constituted one political bloc, and they had been moving toward unification with SCAUP and its allies on loosely nationalist terms. The split, however, and the openly Maoist displays of the ‘pin group,’ thwarted the unification, splitting the student vote and giving the election to Kalayaan.

Ernesto Macahiya’s column did not run in the September 1 issue of the *Collegian*. In the September 6 issue he claimed that leaders of the Mao pin group had begun lurking around the *Collegian* offices on Thursday evenings as the paper was going to print and that “articles and news stories disagreeable to this group of unprincipled sycophants and bogus leaders mysteriously disappeared.” His

³⁷PC, 1 Sep 1967, 6.

³⁸The statement asserted that Nemenzo; Romeo Dizon, instructor of Pilipino at UP; and Juan Tapales, instructor of Political Science at UP, were working to sabotage the lecture series jointly sponsored by SCAUP and SK. Dizon was the son-in-law of Jose Lava..

³⁹Miriam Defensor led the speakers. (PC, 21 Sep, 2; 4 Oct 1967, 2).

last column had been stolen, he claimed and he specifically accused Perfecto Tera, Maximo Lim, Vivencio Jose and Joma Sison.⁴⁰ This was the first time that Sison's name had been publicly mentioned in the student group disputes. He would feature prominently in early November, when he was accused of plagiarism.

Charges of plagiarism

In the latter half of 1967 Washington was negotiating with the Marcos government trade ties with Manila which would extend beyond the expiration of the Laurel-Langley agreement in 1974. On October 18, Sison published an article in the *Collegian* entitled "The Laurel-Langley Agreement" under his byline. He opened, "I am writing in the spirit of trying to reflect the best interests of our people and help the Philippine Government and its appointed negotiating panel protect and promote the sovereignty, patrimony, and well-being of the nation in the course of the forthcoming negotiations on the Laurel-Langley agreement."⁴¹ In Sison's logic, the Marcos government was working on behalf of the well-being of the nation, and he was advising and helping it in this. He continued

The Philippine panel can prepare all the position papers and project studies but unless the government itself takes effective measures to strengthen its position, all these position papers and project studies would be no use. ...

On behalf of Kabataang Makabayan, I wish to suggest the following measures:

Use of the expropriatory powers of the Philippine Government over American business firms, as authorized by the Constitution. ...

Economic relations with Socialist countries. Filipino businessmen have shown interests [*sic*] in trade with socialist countries. ... (5)

Sison concluded "The Kabataang Makabayan hereby urges the Philippine Government and its negotiating panel to act according to the national interests of the Philippine people." Sison, in the name of the *KM*, was placing full confidence in Marcos and his negotiating team to carry out the "national interest." Sison had this article published in a number of newspapers and formally sent it as a letter to Marcos.⁴²

On November 6, MAN National Council members Merlin Magallona and Francisco Lava, Jr. wrote to the *Collegian* claiming that Sison had plagiarized

⁴⁰PC, 6 Sep 1967, 5.

⁴¹Jose Ma. Sison, "The Laurel-Langley Agreement," *PC*, October 1967, 4.

⁴²Kal, 6 Nov 1967, PRP 30/02.03, 8. The final letter which Sison sent to Marcos opened "On behalf of Kabataang Makabayan, I have the honor to extend to your office our official views on the Laurel-Langley Agreement," and was signed "Very truly yours, Jose Ma. Sison." (Jose Ma. Sison, *Letter of Kabataang Makabayan to Pres. Marcos on the Laurel-Langley Agreement*, 1967).

the entire article on the Laurel–Langley negotiations.⁴³ They claimed that the piece published under the byline of Sison had been commissioned by MAN as a joint statement and “it was neither the intention nor the understanding for Sison to author the work as spokesman of the KM nor even in the name of MAN.” A committee had been assembled by Lorenzo Tañada to draft the article, composed of Tañada, Lichauco, Jose Lansang, Francisco Lava Sr., and Sison. The final product, Lava and Magallona claimed, was a joint effort and was meant to be published as a position paper of MAN. They continued “Alas, the article is very correct, but the authorship is a piece of sanctimonious arrogation.” They went on to establish who was responsible for individual formulations in the article, and concluded that if the work of other authors was removed “nothing is left in the alleged article but a few punctuation marks, a scattering of original statements and the audacious byline.”

Who was telling the truth, Sison or Magallona and Lava? Sufficient evidence does not exist to answer this question. Lichauco and Tañada remained silent regarding the authorship. It is noteworthy that some members of the SDK, an organization which was politically hostile to the Lava faction of the PKP, would later accuse Sison of plagiarizing other material. What is far more significant, however, is the political implication of this squabble. Lava and Magallona, both members of the PKP, claimed that Sison’s article was “very correct.”⁴⁴ Either Sison stole his group’s programmatic statement from his political enemies, or these enemies were taking credit for their opponent’s statement. Either way, they were in complete agreement in appealing to Marcos to defend the ‘national interest.’ This is incredibly revealing. There was complete programmatic agreement between the Lava and Sison groups over the political appeal to Marcos, as neither side of the dispute waged any principled opposition to giving support to and relying upon the ruling class embodied in the Marcos administration.

On October 22, the Nemenzo faction of the BRPF held its second national congress at the YMCA in San Pablo, Laguna, with three hundred delegates in attendance.⁴⁵ The BRPF resolved to declare its support for MAN; to declare support for the Russell Tribunal in Stockholm; and to hold a Peace March in the first months of 1968, with a committee elected to prepare this march. Supreme

⁴³Merlin M Magallona and Francisco A Lava Jr., “Footnote on nationalism: A Case of Literary Piracy,” *PC*, November 1967, 6.

⁴⁴Later in their article they stressed this point, this time informing their readers that the statement was “very, very correct.”

⁴⁵The BRPF wrote up an account of the congress which was published in November in the first issue of the journal, *Kilusan*, of the newly founded Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino [Free Unity of Filipino Youth] (MPKP). (“Ang Pangalawang Pambansang Kapulungan Sa San Pablo City,” *Kilusan*, no. 1, 42-4). The delegates came from Bataan, Bulacan, Batangas, Laguna, Rizal, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pampanga, UP Diliman, Los Baños, and Manila. (42) The president of the San Pablo chapter of the BRPF, Juan Peñalosa, delivered the opening greetings to the gathering, followed by “the honorable [kagalang-galang na] Zacarias Ticson,” mayor of San Pablo. Ruben Torres chaired the congress. (43)

Court Justice Jesus Barrera, delivered the keynote speech to the congress on the subject of Peace and Nationalism.⁴⁶ The congress elected a new executive committee, and Hernando Abaya was made president, replacing Nemenzo.⁴⁷ The elected officers were sworn in by F. Macapagal, whom the BRPF's account simply identified as "a representative of the peasants." Felicisimo Macapagal was a central figure in the PKP and would serve as Secretary General of the party under martial law. At no point did the account make any reference to the KM, or to a rival section of the BRPF, all of whom had been excluded from the congress.

On October 26, Sison wrote an article entitled "The Anatomy of Philippine Politics," for the *Collegian*, which presented a political perspective for the midterm elections which would be held in a few weeks time.⁴⁸ Sison stated that "with regard to the basic struggle for national democracy to which all patriotic Filipinos should be committed, the entire range of social classes in the Philippines is divided into two camps. There is the camp of those classes who wish to achieve the completion of the national democratic revolution and there is the opposite camp of those classes interested in the perpetuation of imperialist and feudal power in this country." He ran down the usual litany of progressive classes and reactionary classes, and then asked "Is the electorate allowed to actually make a basic choice, say a choice between political parties and candidates who stand for national democracy on the one hand and those who stand for opposite interests on the other hand. [*sic*]" He answered his question: "A study of the platforms and principal driving forces behind the Nacionalista Party and the Liberal Party shows that they are basically the same." In 1963, Sison had led the LM to back the LP; in 1965, he led the KM and the LM to back the NP; and in 1967, he claimed there was no difference between the two. While MAN endorsed Marcos' candidates, none of the other front organizations of the PKP or of Sison's group participated significantly in the 1967 elections, as all were entirely preoccupied with their ongoing struggle with each other. In November, this struggle shattered the KM.

⁴⁶Barrera's speech was published in the *Collegian* later that week. (PC, 26 Oct 1967, 5).

⁴⁷Merlin Magallona chaired the Election Committee. Ruben Torres was made vice president; Juan Tapales, general secretary; and Aida Dizon – daughter of Jose Lava – treasurer. (44) Eleven council members were elected. *Kilusan* named the representatives as: Students: Ernesto Macahiya, Jorge Bautista; Workers: A.A. Santos, Max Gutierrez, Maximo Francisco; Fishers: Fernando del Valle; Professionals: Romeo Dizon, Francisco Nemenzo, Jr., and Haydee Yorac. Two representatives remained unnamed in the *Kilusan* account. The *Collegian* names them as F. de Leon and R. Pasion [likely Bartolome Pasion]. De Leon represented professionals and Pasion the peasantry. (PC, 6 Nov 1967, 2).

⁴⁸Jose Ma. Sison, "The Anatomy of Philippine Politics," PC, October 1967, 8–9. When this article was reprinted in the second edition of *SND*, it was misdated as having been written in 1968.

KM, SDK, MPKP

The UP chapter of KM resumed publishing the newspaper *Kalayaan* on November 6, dedicating the majority of its pages to the question of the “mass line.”⁴⁹ The KM distinguished itself from unspecified “past leaders,” by which it meant the Lava family, and claimed to be united with both the BRPF and SCAUP in opposition to them. (1)

The lead article put forward the slogan “mula sa masa, para sa masa” [from the masses, for the masses] (2) as the correct implementation of the ‘mass line,’ but later publications would alter this slogan to what became the standard “mula sa masa, tungo sa masa” [from the masses, to the masses.] By following the ‘mass line,’ KM argued, “leaders collected, examined and filtered the experiences and needs of the masses, turning these into the necessary steps and afterwards returning them to the masses as a guide for mass social action.” (2) “This is a bitter lesson that we have been taught by our past experience,” the article continued. “This is the lesson that we have inherited from our past leader, that because of an insufficient understanding of the mass line, he erred in the field of ideology, politics and organization, and shoved the movement into a deep abyss of defeat and wasted thousands of lives.” (2) What lessons would this unnamed past leader have learned by understanding and applying the mass line? The article answered this immediately.

Why does the national democratic movement need the mass line? In order to understand this, it is appropriate to understand the two primary goals of the nationalist movement and these are the following: first, the binding together of all of the progressive classes in an invincible unity within the movement, and second, the quest for national liberation against American imperialism and feudalism. (2)

It is an awkwardly worded paragraph. The author seems conscious of the fact that the two great lessons supposedly revealed by following the mass line had been the core political program of the movement since its inception in the 1930s, and was somewhat embarrassed by this. The article continued by stating that classes within Philippine society were divided into two groups, and that on the one side were the national bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the workers; and on the other the American imperialists and the hacendero-compradors. (2) The organizations of the KM, SCAUP, BRPF, SPP and MAN, the article claimed, were different from the organizations of the ruling class because they fought for “the two primary goals of the national democratic movement.”

The leadership of these organizations was of a new type, the article asserted. It was “not selfish, not sectarian, not elitist, not narrow-minded, not exploitative,

⁴⁹ As best I can determine, the paper had been out of print since its maiden issue in 1965, and it referred to the new issue as the “resurrection” [muling pagkabuhay] of *Kalayaan* after the untimely death of its editor, Roberto Pangilinan. (Kal, 6 November 1967, PRP 32/02.03, 13).

not careerist, not opportunist, not impulsive and adventurist, and not separate from the masses.” The new leadership, the *KM* assured its readers, would necessarily have these characteristics because they adhered to the mass line, and as such they “always represented the needs of the masses at all times.” (3) As a result of the mass line, the new leadership could not be sectarian, or narrow-minded, or selfish “because they are aware that the goals of the movement are for everyone, for the nation.” (3) The article concluded by enjoining its readers to “Study the Mass Line!”

The *KM* in resuming the publication of its journal, *Kalayaan*, and preparing for its second national congress, was working to distinguish itself from the Moscow section of the *PKP* which they identified with the Lava family. They could not name a single programmatic difference between themselves and the old leadership because they shared the entirety of the Stalinist program, from the two stage theory of revolution to the bloc of four classes. They thus attempted to locate the distinction between themselves and the past leadership in the subjective qualities of the leaders – selfishness and selflessness – and rooted the distinction in the ‘mass line.’ The mass-line produced an unquantifiable closeness to the masses, who intuitively but unconsciously understood the correct political line.

Just how close were Joma Sison and his cohort to the masses? Both the *KM*, and the *SDK* which would shortly break from it, romanticized the guerrilla and peasant. Pimentel recounts a trip made prior to November 1967 by leading *KM* members “to a remote barrio in Laguna.” Among those who made the trip were Sison and Ninotchka Rosca.

They knew no one in the area and soon found themselves seeking shelter in a deserted house. Struck suddenly by a consuming passion to do “peasant work,” they all started digging in the ricefields for no clear reason other than to try to experience the kind of work farmers did. It must have been quite a sight, the young Sison in barong Tagalog, and Ninotchka Rosca in a pink long-sleeved mini-skirt dress, in the middle of a rice paddy tilling soil.⁵⁰

Perfecto ‘Jun’ Tera, one of the two leaders of the *SDK* breakaway, had a “pet project” in Taytay, of which Isagani Serrano recounts,

There [Tera] built his prototype of a future revolutionary base. Now and then a select group of us, his “pupils,” would come to visit and “live” the future. We planted cassava, slept in the nipa hut Jun built himself. With gusto, Jun would show us the diversity of his cassava menu. We had cassava for rice, viand, soup or dessert, from breakfast

⁵⁰Pimentel, *Rebolusyon!*, 86-87. Pimentel bases his account on a “former activist” who was present at the time.

to lunch and supper, including *meriendas* in between. He told us that cassava sustained the Vietcong guerrillas and that we would do better off living the life of our models even that early.⁵¹

On other occasions, SDK members Serrano, Antonio Hilario, and Alfredo Isidro would travel to Isidro's vast family estates in Quezon – where there is an island in the family name – and would practice shooting and roasting wild duck. They “learned to shoot like upstart *guerrilleros*, with Che always in our mind.”⁵² The leadership of the KM and SDK romanticized the peasantry, but they were not close to it, or to the act of physical labor in general. The only dirt under their fingernails was acquired through play-acting ‘peasant.’ Regardless of their supposed proximity to the masses, the political program which Sison and his cohort adopted did not derive from their ‘mass line,’ it was acquired wholesale from Stalinism as articulated by Mao Zedong.

Second National Congress of Kabataang Makabayan (KM)

On November 30 1967, KM held its second national congress in the National Library Auditorium.⁵³ In addition to a speech by Joma Sison, the congress included an election of new representatives to the National Council, a vote on amendments to the constitution, and the handing out of “Bonifacio Militance Awards.”⁵⁴ Sison was re-elected national chairman; and Nilo Tayag was made general secretary.⁵⁵ In one year the elected leadership would be the core constituency of the Central Committee of the newly founded Communist Party of the Philippines.

The KM published a new handbook, entitled *Documents of the Second National Congress*, which opened with a brief message from Senator Lorenzo Tañada.⁵⁶ Harkening back to his original address to the KM three years prior, in which he presented the task of the youth movement as bringing pressure to bear upon their elders, Tañada declared that they had succeeded in this task. “Today, the overwhelming sentiment is that ‘parity’ and ‘special relations’ must end, at the latest on July 3 1974 and our government has at last assumed this position. In the shaping of this public opinion and the adoption of the present official stand what role did your protests, your rallies, your brave manifestoes play?” (i) Through

⁵¹Soliman M. Santos and Paz Verdades M. Santos, eds., *SDK: Militant but Groovy: Stories of Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2008), 29.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 30.

⁵³The event was readied by a Preparatory Committee, which met three times prior to the congress in the headquarters of the KM in the Bonifacio Center on Quezon Avenue. The third meeting of the Preparatory Committee was held on November 5.

⁵⁴Kal, 6 Nov 1967, PRP 32/02.03, p. 1, 4.

⁵⁵Jose Luneta was elected first vice chairman; Arthur Garcia, vice chairman for organization; and Carlos del Rosario, vice chairman for education. (KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 3).

⁵⁶Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Kabataang Makabayan Handbook: Documents of the Second National Congress*, Manila, November 1967, PRP 08/17.01.

their protests, Tañada claimed, the KM changed the “mood of the people and the government,” and what is more no one could “deny the link between these internationally publicized protest and the apparently more softened attitude of America today.” However, he continued, “the old causes remain. The cause of Recto and Laurel, of Quezon and Osmeña, the cause of the Heroes of the Revolution, of Filipino independence and Filipino nationalism.” (ii) He concluded his brief remarks, “on the road to a sovereign prosperity for all our people ...

Your task is to keep vigil over the national interest as these and other current day problems are met and resolved by your public officials, study, analyze such problems, discuss them, focus public attention on them, think out solutions, and when convinced of the correctness of a position, marshal, if necessary, the growing power and influence of your organization to uphold that position. (ii)

Tañada was at this time a Marcos partisan, as was the entirety of MAN. This is why he informed the KM that they had won over the ‘mood’ of the government, and that public officials were resolving the problems of the day. Flowing from this understanding, the task of the KM was to occasionally bring pressure to bear on government, and this pressure would take the form not only of demonstrations but also of ‘critical’ support for political leaders who were construed to be sufficiently nationalist. What is more, in late 1967, with the American war in Vietnam raging, Tañada wrote of Washington’s “softening” under the pressure of KM rallies. Tañada’s trite paean to reformism occupied pride of place on the frontispiece of the manual of the Kabataang Makabayan, the sole required reading for its membership over the course of the explosive turn of the decade, a period that witnessed mass repression and blood in the streets of Manila.

Following Tañada’s foreword was Sison’s report on the work carried out by the Kabataang Makabayan over the past three years.⁵⁷ Sison’s entire report was focused on the numerical gains and “phenomenal organizational growth” of the Kabataang Makabayan, which he attributed to its “principled militance.” (1) He gave no account of changes in the objective situation, or of the political positions which the Kabataang Makabayan had adopted. He made no mention of the support which they gave for Marcos in 1965, or any other politician for that matter. He did not examine the track record of any political figure that the KM had hailed as progressive and to whom they provided “critical support.” Sison addressed the congress in the midst of the sharpest political split in the history of Philippine politics and he made no mention of it. On the very day that KM was holding its second national congress, the PKP was establishing its own rival youth group, the MPKP, the majority of whose members were peasant youth

⁵⁷ A typed draft of the report can be found in the PRP. (Jose Ma. Sison, *Report to the Second National Congress*, 1967, PRP 16/23.14). My pagination, however, is based on the printed handbook.

who had formerly been part of the KM. Sison gave no explanation for this, nor did he even mention it. Instead, Sison delivered a vacuous political summing up of the experiences of the past three years and presented a moralistic fable in which the KM militantly waged demonstrations and were fruitful and multiplied.

He warned the KM that they would face enemies in the coming period, not only obvious agents of US imperialism such as [Carlos] Albert and [Fermin] Caram, but also agents “in the garb of nationalists ... who try to creep into our ranks and then destroy us from within.” He continued, “As Kabataang Makabayan becomes bigger and stronger, this latter danger may grow and feed on an ignorance of it ... We must remain ever vigilant.” (8) While it is clear that he was in reference to the PKP and its front organizations, Sison said not another word in regard to this enemy despite his claim that it would feed on the ignorance of the KM. He never named the PKP or its front organizations, he never explained why the KM lost a sizable number of its members, he did not name or explain a single political difference between the KM and its rivals.

Sison’s report was followed by the presentation of the program of the KM for the next three years, which began by reiterating that the political aim of the KM is the “national-democratic stage” of the revolution. (11) This would be carried out by the bloc of four classes – “the broad masses of our people, composed of the working class and peasantry, to which the vast majority of the Filipino youth belong; the petty bourgeoisie composed of self-sufficient small property owners, students, intellectuals and professionals; and the national bourgeoisie, composed of Filipino businessmen interested in a self-reliant economy and in nationalist industrialization, whose progressive tendency should be encouraged but whose reactionary tendency should be firmly opposed.” (12) In opposition to the bloc of four classes, were the enemies of the people, in which camp Sison claimed were the big landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie, and to whose number he now added “corrupt bureaucrats.” (12) In the wake of the split in the PKP, the KM put forward the same warmed over Stalinist program; not a single substantive line had been changed.

Once again, the KM divided its tasks into fields: Political, Economic, Cultural and Security, but in addition to these, the new program added a fifth field: foreign policy. In the political field it stressed that

The Kabataang Makabayan prepares for the Constitutional Convention of 1971. It shall strive to have the voice of the youth and masses, free from the restrictions of vested interests, prevail in that convention. All progressive youth under the leadership of the Kabataang Makabayan, shall exert all efforts to frustrate any evil attempt to subvert our rights to national self-determination and all other sovereign rights in that convention.

The Constitutional Convention of 1971 shall provide the Kabataang

Makabayan the first major opportunity to show its political strength on a national scale. (15)

The Constitutional Convention would commence in 1971 and conclude in 1973 under the control of the firmly established dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. Ostensibly assembled to rewrite the 1935 Constitution, a document bearing the imprint of American colonial rule, the Convention proved to be a circus of ruling class machinations, its arena given over to bribery, backstabbing, and nationalist grandstanding. Alarmed at Marcos' reelection in 1969, his opponents sought to use the convention to secure a guarantee against Marcos' running for a third term, their paranoia palpable, as the modified 1935 Constitution already contained a two-term limit clause for the president. Marcos sought to use the convention to adopt a parliamentary system of government, seeing in the creation of a puppet unicameral body the opportunity to abolish the legislature. Elections for the Constitutional Convention would be held in 1970. As we will see, the KM would continue for two years to call for mass participation in the Constitutional Convention as a show of "political strength". At the end of 1969, however, they abruptly denounced the Convention as thoroughly reactionary and called for a boycott, without accounting for the change in their policy, and then, while still calling for a boycott, they endorsed and campaigned for candidates to the Convention who were loyal to the KM.

Two points are worth noting in the economic section of the program. The first is that the KM partially rehabilitated the political credibility of RA3844, Macapagal's land reform law, stating, "The Agricultural Land Reform Code is the most forward step taken so far by the government but it allows too many opportunities for the landlord class ... " (16) When Sison and the LM were in a coalition with Macapagal, they peddled this law to the peasantry as the continuation of the revolution, but when they broke with Macapagal and backed Marcos, they denounced the law as having been crafted in the interests of the landlord class and US imperialism. In 1967, as the KM hovered between the LP and the NP, Sison expressed an open mindedness regarding the land reform code – he now depicted it as progressive, but nevertheless insufficient. The second was the reference to the socialist stage of the revolution, about which the program stated, "With economic planning we can even advance from a stage of national democracy to socialism ... But so long as planning and political power are in the hands of bourgeois bureaucrats, big private foreign and domestic monopolies and landlords, we shall still have to struggle hard to achieve fully the stage of national democracy at which the nature of the present state is radically transformed." (18) The struggle for socialism was rooted in a distant, imaginary future, in which the economy was still capitalist, and yet political power was no longer in the hands of the bourgeoisie, a conception thoroughly alien to Marxism. Until this future arrived, the KM stated, the political struggle was limited to the achievement of national democratic tasks and there was therefore a section of the bourgeoisie

which was progressive and with whom the working class needed to ally. Notice that even in the distant future, Sison rooted the second stage of the revolution within the boundaries of the nation-state as he saw the struggle for socialism taking place within the confines of the Philippines, in a quest to build socialism in one country.

In the cultural sphere, the program opposed the interference of the church in education, yet shamefacedly would not name the Catholic Church and lamely denounced “the growing interference of the most numerous church.” (23) In the field of security, the KM program opposed the Marxist conception that the police and military function as the agents of the ruling class, but stated rather that “it is regrettable that the Philippine government should allow its military and police forces to be used against the just national-democratic demands of Filipino workers and peasants . . . ” (26) It continued, “The Filipino youth, under the inspiration of Kabataang Makabayan, shall undergo military training with the clear intention of developing our own security forces independent of American indoctrination, advice and manipulation.” The KM thus continued to envision mandatory ROTC as progressive and sought for the Philippine military to train the youth in a fashion somehow independent of American influence. The final section of the program, on foreign policy, stated, “The KM adheres to the policy of international united front, a unity of all forces genuinely and uncompromisingly fighting against US imperialism.” (28) The KM, in a marked development over its previous statements, now explicitly excluded the Soviet bloc from this unity, continuing, “Relations with pseudo-socialist countries will not suffice to widen the grounds of the Philippines for diplomatic maneuver. On the other hand, the Filipino people and youth should be alert to maneuvers for the perpetuation of American imperialist power, with the aid of the Soviet Union.” (30)

The constitution of the KM was amended on numerous points, although which articles had been amended was not indicated in the final handbook. A comparison with the previous iteration of the constitution reveals that at least twenty substantive changes were made; a few are worth noting. Many of the changes simply sharpened the political language of the document. For example the flabby formulation in II.4.b, “preparing them for civic responsibilities,” became “militating them to the urgent task of national liberation, genuine land reform and planned industrial progress.” Every clause in Article II, section 4, was thus revised. The age of membership was altered from 15-35 to include anyone under the age of 40, and for those over the age of 40 a new category of honorary member was created. (III.5) An entire article was inserted, Article IV, establishing rules to allow other organizations to affiliate with the KM, which provided that on acceptance of the program and constitution of the KM, an organization would be allowed to affiliate, becoming subordinate to the Executive Board. The National Chairman of the KM no longer convened and presided over the National Congress (VIII.29.b) and membership dues went up from two pesos a year to six.

Unlike the first handbook, the second did not announce the organization’s

elected officers, and while Joma Sison was listed as National Chairman, no other leader was named in the booklet. In place of a list of elected leaders, the new handbook had the lyrics to “Awit ng Kabataang Makabayan”. [Song of the KM]

MPKP

On the same day – November 30, 1967 – the Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino [Free Unity of Filipino Youth] (MPKP) was founded in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, representing a significant breakaway section of the KM that remained loyal to the Moscow oriented leadership of the PKP and whose youth membership was rooted largely in the peasantry of Central Luzon.⁵⁸ Saulo wrote that “a large group of activists belonging to the Central Luzon Regional Center broke away to hold a separate congress in Cabiao. More than six hundred delegates attended this rival congress.”⁵⁹ As with the San Pablo congress of the BRPF, and the second national congress of the KM, the MPKP made absolutely no reference to its political rival. This silence on the question of the KM had an air of unreality to it as the MPKP was composed largely of youth who had broken from the organization but a few months earlier. The rupture was the seminal political moment for the MPKP and yet they made no mention of it.

In December 1967, the recently founded MPKP published the first issue of a new journal, *Kilusan*.⁶⁰ The maiden issue carried brief articles of fraternal greeting and support for the MPKP from the Philippine League of Academic Workers (PLAW), the BRPF, MASAKA, Nationalist Lawyers’ League, the Union de Impresores de Filipinas (UIF) and the Confederation of Trade Unions in the Philippines (CTUP). The greetings from MASAKA were signed by Felixberto Olalia, then president of the organization. The greetings from the unions called for the formation of a united front of small businessmen, native industrialists, professionals, intellectuals, the impoverished masses and workers against imperialism, and the greetings from PLAW issued a similar appeal. In both cases, the greetings dedicated a majority of their text to the call for the formation of a bloc of four classes in the struggle for national democracy against imperialism and feudalism.⁶¹ The political program of the MPKP and the KM were identical, both were Stalinist to the core. The editorial on the founding of the MPKP stated that in

⁵⁸ Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 45.

⁵⁹ Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 84.

⁶⁰ Ernesto Macahiya was made editor-in-chief; C. Domingo-Tapales, editor; and Nolasco Santos circulation manager. The first issue was a well-produced forty-nine page journal. As a secondary matter it can be noted that the original articles in the MPKP’s journal, *Kilusan*, were generally written in a natural and fairly mellifluous Tagalog. The Tagalog of the KM’s *Kalayaan* feels decidedly stilted, very much as though the authors were thinking in English and writing in poor translation. The higher quality Tagalog more than likely reflects the influence of *Kilusan*’s editor-in-chief Ernesto Macahiya, who, in his column *Diliman at Liwanag* in the *Collegian* in 1966-67, pioneered the use of Tagalog as a language of journalism in the student paper.

⁶¹ *Kilusan*, 1, no.1, PRP 33/12.01, p. 47.

the face of American imperialism what was needed was “the reawakening of the youth in order to lead a nationalist movement.” (2) The only substantive political difference that can be drawn between the documents of the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ and those of the $\mathcal{M}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}\mathcal{P}$ are the references by the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ to the Soviet Union as a pseudo-socialist country and a tool of US imperialism.

SDK

It was in this context of the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ and the $\mathcal{M}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}\mathcal{P}$ holding rival congresses on the same day and neither mentioning the other, that a faction fight erupted within the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ congress, which led to the departure of half of its remaining membership. Jerry Araos, who was one of those who left the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ in November 1967, wrote that “The split in the old Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas ($\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}\mathcal{P}$) was an unclean tattering of organizational lines. The tearing-off caused many shreds to be left out hanging or in the cold, so to speak ...”⁶² The majority of those who left the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ would join the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan [Federation of Democratic Youth] ($\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$), which was founded in early 1968.⁶³ Other, smaller organizations formed as well. A group based in and around Tondo formed the Katipunan ng Kabataang Demokratiko [Union of Democratic Youth] ($\kappa\mathcal{K}\mathcal{D}$); at Manuel L. Quezon University ($\mathcal{M}\mathcal{L}\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{U}$) the organization which broke with the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ and eventually merged with the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$, was named Samahan ng Bagong Kaisipan [Federation of New Thinking] ($\mathcal{S}\mathcal{B}\mathcal{K}$); and a group at the the Philippine College of Commerce ($\mathcal{P}\mathcal{C}\mathcal{C}$) under Nemesio Prudente formed the Samahan Pangkaunlaran ng Kaisipan [Federation for the Development of Consciousness] ($\mathcal{S}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}$).⁶⁴

The $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ emerged out of the groups that Macahiya termed the “Mao pin-wearers.” They identified deeply with the cultural revolution and the mass line, and a strong anarchist streak ran through their program. This streak expressed itself in the name of the organization, the Federation of Democratic Youth. The $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ originally viewed itself as a gathering together, a collection, of individual, democratically-inclined youth. Two years later, after the leadership of the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ had been purged and the group had become the intimate ally of the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$, the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ renamed itself the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan ($\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$) [Democratic Federation of Youth]. It was no longer a loose collection of like-minded indi-

⁶²Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 74.

⁶³No serious account has been written of the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ and its political trajectory, but a volume was published in 2008 compiling personal narratives of leading $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ members into an anthology aptly entitled *Militant but Groovy*. (ibid.). Combining this volume with the numerous publications of the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ available in the Philippine Radical Papers it is possible to reconstruct the political origins and fate of the organization.

⁶⁴Both the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}$ and the $\kappa\mathcal{K}\mathcal{D}$ had stronger ties to workers than either the $\kappa\mathcal{M}$ or the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$. The assertion by Popoy Valencia that the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}$ was the $\mathcal{P}\mathcal{C}\mathcal{C}$ branch of the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ was not initially true. The $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{K}$ was founded separately and only formally joined the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ in October 1970, nearly a year after the $\mathcal{S}\mathcal{D}\mathcal{K}$ ’s rectification movement. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 2; Mal, 26 Oct 1970, 2.)

viduals, but a tightly-run apparatus; the organization itself acquired the word “democratic,” and the individual members became simply “youth.”⁶⁵ At the fringe of the SDK were openly anarchistic groups, such as Jerry Araos’ Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan - Mendiola (SDKM). SDKM organized itself separately from both the KM and SDK under the leadership of Jerry Araos and Rol Peña.⁶⁶ The SDKM adopted a black flag as its symbol, and began supplying the pillbox needs of the KM and the SDK. The SDKM often formed the front-lines in protests, according to Araos, and their propensity for violence and the use of explosives brought them the reputation of being *utak pulbura* [gunpowder brains]. They set up assembly plants of pillboxes in “depressed areas.” Sixto Carlos, later head of the SDK, banned them from areas where UP SDK would be doing expansion work.⁶⁷

The initial split at the November KM congress originated in its Cultural Bureau, under Vivencio Jose and Perfecto Tera. Tera recounted in an interview with Fuller: “What happened was that there were very strong-minded people in the KM and during the elections for the executive committee certain views were expressed, certain lines were expressed, and this did not meet the approval of half of the executive committee. As one side tried to impose its view it was inevitable that the other side would separate. There was a division between the writers, who were advising caution, and the ones who did the footwork in the organizations. Most of the writers and intellectuals went with the SDK.”⁶⁸ Notice that Tera refused to discuss the actual issues – “certain views,” “certain lines” – at stake. What we do learn from the above quote is that it was the writers and

⁶⁵This change of name from s ng DK to SD ng K is consistent throughout the documentary record of the time, and provides a useful means of dating leaflets and manifestos. Any item printed by s ng DK was written prior to January 1971. After January 1971, all documents were signed SD ng K. This does not hold, however, for the secondary literature, which routinely alternates between the two names without drawing any distinction. Even the SDK’s own anthology, *Militant but Groovy*, often errs in this matter. Many of the other organizations which emerged out of the split in the KM likewise signaled by a subtle name change in late 1970 that they had undergone political rectification and were now part of the CPP camp. As it integrated with the CPP, the SPK changed its name to Samahan ng Progresibong Kabataan, [Federation of Progressive Youth] while the SBK changed its name to Samahan ng Bagong Kabataan [Federation of New Youth]. In both cases they retained their acronym, but they shifted from the development of consciousness in abstraction to the development of the youth. MAKIBAKA, a national democratic women’s organization, was initially Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan [Free Movement of New Women] but it changed its name to Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan [Nationalist Movement of New Women].

⁶⁶Araos stated, “our ideological guru was Bunny [Bani] Lansang.” (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 76).

⁶⁷SDKM figured prominently in the most important battles of 1970-1971. At the beginning of the First Quarter Storm, the SDKM commandeered a fire truck and rammed it into Mendiola gate, and when barricades went up at UP, Sixto Carlos called on SDKM to help and “there was an SDKM lead man in every barricade that was set up.” (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 77).

⁶⁸Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 46.

intellectuals who opposed Sison.⁶⁹

The Tera-Jose group put up an anti-Sison slate in the November 1967 KM Congress. Popoy Valencia wrote that “the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan resulted as the organizational expression of a tendency within the Kabataang Makabayan. The elections for the National Council (NC) of the KM saw the election of NC members from this tendency numbering half of the total NC membership. The SDK tendency supported Vivencio Jose for National Chairman. He was defeated by Jose Ma. Sison. In the ensuing dispute over the conduct of the elections, differences between the SDK tendency and Sison’s group led to the resignation of chapters and members of the KM and the formation of the SDK. Among others, UP Los Baños left, Cebu left, UP Diliman was halved, Taytay left.”⁷⁰ Isagani Serrano recounted that many of the new members of the KM – Valencia, Antonio Tagamolila, etc – chose to remain or split from the KM on the basis of the decision of their Political Officer (PO), the head of their Discussion Group (DG). Thus entire groups broke from the KM as blocs.⁷¹ Sison came within a hairsbreadth of losing the chairmanship of the KM. Abinales writes, “So close was the voting in the new national council that Sison had to vote for himself to avert his ouster.”⁷² Ninotchka Rosca was among those who left the KM. She reported that twenty-six members of the KM National Council left. “This organizational crisis coming so soon after the first, forced the KM to turn its attention inward. The KM withdrew its members from the BRPF, abandoned the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, and concentrated on mending its backyard fences.”⁷³

Perfecto Tera wrote up his own accounting of the split, published under the pseudonym Rodrigo Rojas in Sartre’s journal *Les Temps Modernes* in 1971, which argued that “the Lava leadership determined to follow the Soviet parliamentary line,” and they “produced a great split in the party that led to a split in the mass organizations.” He continued, “Because of the confusion due to a lack of communication (resulting from the politics of ‘isolated cells’) there was wavering among the members of the party. The split in the party led to a split in the KM, a part of which retained the name KM, while another part reorganized to form the SDK (Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan), yet both of them followed the Maoist line.”⁷⁴ The SDK “launched, in 1968, the campaigns of instruction and

⁶⁹Araos stated, “The main bulk of SDK splittists were made up of stalwarts from the Cultural Bureau.” (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 74).

⁷⁰Ibid., 2.

⁷¹Ibid., 27.

⁷²Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 23.

⁷³Ninotchka Rosca, “View from the Left: Word War I,” *APL*, April 1971, 11. Abinales claims that twenty-five members of the NC left the KM. (Patricio N. Abinales, “The Left and the Philippine Student Movement: Random Historical Notes on Party Politics and Sectoral Struggles,” *Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies* 1, no. 2 [2007]: 43).

⁷⁴Tera Jr., “Le Mouvement de libération nationale aux Philippines,” 1851-52. My thanks to David Moore for the translation.

organization called ‘Learn from the People’ and sent great numbers of young activists from the petty bourgeois organizations to do different agricultural work.”⁷⁵ From Tera’s account we see that both the KM and the SDK were oriented to China in opposition to the Soviet orientation of the PKP and we also see that the SDK proceeded to immediately implement the “mass line” upon its founding in 1968. Tera depicted the split as simply the result of confusion, but the truth was far more politically complex than mere bewilderment.

Sison himself claimed that the split was led by “a group of KM members who opposed a pre-congress proposal to elect Nilo Tayag as KM chairman.”⁷⁶ If such a proposal was raised in the period leading up to the congress, it was not acted upon, as Sison was re-elected as chair, but only barely. In the wake of the split, Sison resigned and appointed Nilo Tayag to fill the office, and Monico Atienza became Secretary General.⁷⁷ A disagreement over the electoral slate may have been the manner in which this political dispute emerged, but it was not the root of the matter. Contention over an electoral slate is a manifestation of underlying contradictions, for if there had been political unanimity, there would not have been a dispute over who implemented it. By the same reasoning, accusations that Sison’s despotism precipitated the split mask the deeper issues, for despotism is a means of dealing with political disagreement.

The two groups came to refer to themselves by the code names of Karina (KM) and Shelley (SDK).⁷⁸ The membership of the SDK tended to be the children of privilege and wealth, while the KM were more generally of a middle class background, and this socio-economic composition found expression in the popular tongue-in-cheek reference to their pants – Kabataang Maong [Denim Youth] and Samahang Double Knit [Double Knit Federation].⁷⁹ The SDK made its ties to the Cultural Revolution clearer than KM, adopting the star as its symbol on the masthead of its publications.⁸⁰

The political divergence between the KM and the SDK flowed from their understanding of the mass line. As the SDK saw it, the correct implementation of the mass line should mean an explosion of new organizations, each adapting itself to the existing consciousness of various sectors in society, and thus, for example, a separate women’s organization should be founded, something the KM opposed.

⁷⁵He noted regarding these campaigns that “In nearly all the Philippine villages, there is a patriarch, generally the oldest man, who is often found to be the grandfather or great grandfather of all the people of the village. That is why the organizers need to at first meet the patriarch, attract his sympathy and ensure his support before they can really do something in the village.”

⁷⁶Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 55.

⁷⁷Information Center on the Philippine Front, *Resolutely Campaign to Free Nilo Tayag, Filipino Revolutionary and Patriot*, 1971, PRP 08/04.01, 3; Lachica, *The Huks*, 181.

⁷⁸Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, xv.

⁷⁹Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 4.

⁸⁰“One could tell whether [an organization] was a KM or SDK ‘satellite’ depending on whether there was a triangle or star, respectively, in the logo. Sometimes there was both star and triangle, meaning it was a joint project.” (ibid., 13).

Each chapter of the youth organization, responding to existing consciousness at its institution or locale, would need autonomy to adapt its program to the immediate demands presented by the social layer with which it was interacting. Maoism, a variant of Stalinism predicated upon the building of socialism in one country under extraordinarily rudimentary economic conditions, was always premised on voluntarism. It was the will of the people that made their enemies ‘paper tigers,’ and the primary task was to rouse and mobilize this will. As a result, Maoism always tended toward an anarchistic approach to politics, and the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution were in part an expression of this. It was precisely this anarchistic aspect of Maoism that appealed to the more well-to-do and artistic layers of the KM. As Sison sought to extend the centralized control of the youth organization by amending its constitution to require that affiliated groups be subordinate to the KM Executive Board, the SDK breakaway group sought to enhance political autonomy, expanding the freedom to adapt to a diverse range of social layers. This was the root of the SDK’s split from the KM.

In 1969, Sixto Carlos Jr. led a ‘rectification movement’ within the SDK against what was known as the “Tera-Jose clique,” a move which made possible the close alliance of the SDK and the KM during the First Quarter Storm of 1970. After its ‘rectification’, the SDK became the intimate tandem of the KM. SDK Chair Soliman Santos, stated that the SDK was Robin to the KM’s Batman. I do not know if he was aware how unflattering the comparison was; it was certainly apt. He added that “the SDK’s rectification and return to the mainstream were consolidated at its First National Congress on January 30-31, 1971.”⁸¹ The rectification and removal of the Tera-Jose clique was not a bloodless or easy process. Jaime Regalario recounted that in mid 1970,

there was a conflict with Taytay which was organized by the “Jose-Tera” clique because we belonged to the “Carlos-Hilario” clique. Eskrimahan kami noon. [We were fighting. (The reference is to eskrima, the Filipino martial art)] The leaders of Pateros were eased out for so-called “revisionism” and I took over as District Head – ganoon ang proseso. [that was the process] Rizal 1 was composed of Pateros, Pasig, Mandaluyong, San Juan and Taguig and we came into conflict with Rizal 2’s Cainta, Taytay, Antipolo, Baras, Tanay, etc. Rizal 2 was led by Jake then, na “hibo ng Tera-ismo” daw. [he was “a sycophant of Tera-ism” they said] Na-ease out sina Jake atbp. [Jake and others were eased out] Finally Rizal 1 and Rizal 2 were merged and I became Secretary of the merged Rizals up to 1972.⁸²

For all its talk of the peasantry, the central political focus of the SDK prior to its rectification was the university campus, particularly UP Diliman, which

⁸¹Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 9-11.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 86.

they proclaimed to be “a Base for the Cultural Revolution.”⁸³ They envisioned UP to be a ‘Yan’an’ from which students would venture out into urban poor and rural areas in Propaganda-Organizing Teams (POT) to form SDK chapters.⁸⁴ The cultural revolution would thus be exported to the masses.

Sison and his forces limped into 1968. They had lost a great majority of the members of KM, and had effectively lost both the BRPF and MAN. They had no base in the peasantry, as the PKP controlled MASAKA, and had a very tenuous base in the working class. 1968 was to be a year of rebuilding. By its end, Sison and his group had founded the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

⁸³Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 12. This line would be revised in August 1971, in the wake of electoral defeat in the Diliman campus election.

⁸⁴Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 13.

A New Party



A New Party

Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.

— William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Sison and his coterie staged a weak, final attempt to wrest that strange amalgam, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, from the PCKP, but by March they had failed in this effort and turned their attentions elsewhere.

All told, 1968 was a quiet year on the left. Protests against PHILCAG occupied the national stage on several occasions, but they were muted, almost ritualistic affairs. Nursing its wounds from the previous year, the KM was not in a position in 1968 to direct the course of protests or to dominate campus politics, but they did join in several demonstrations and took part in student political life. The quiescence of the KM in 1968 was at the same time bound up with their lingering political alliance with Ferdinand Marcos. They had not yet fully broken with the President and their protests against the renewed deployment of troops to Vietnam only became truly vocal when they were denouncing his rival, Osmeña.

In the middle of the year, the KM and MPKP sparred in the Diliman campus elections, and the as yet gelatinous SDK seated itself awkwardly between the rival groups. The year concluded with the bizarre spectacle of three leading figures of the Philippine left facing disciplinary measures from their university for carrying out a puerile prank.

Sison's attention was elsewhere; he spent the year preparing for the founding of a new Communist Party. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) held its founding congress of twelve delegates in January 1969, and established its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA) under Bernabe Buscayno – Commander Dante, in March. A government raid in June on CPP headquarters in the rice plains of Central Luzon brought the newly established party to national attention and compelled Sison to disperse his forces throughout the archipelago.

— 19 —

Maneuvering

And pulling down his breeches as fast as ever he could, he stood there in his shirt and then did two leaps in the air followed by two somersaults, revealing things that made Sancho turn Rocinante so as not to have to see them again.

— Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

A last grasp after the BRPF

The political year commenced as a new session of Congress opened and President Marcos in his State of the Nation address presented a bill re-authorizing funding for the PHILCAG contingent in Vietnam. The PHILCAG bill would be the hottest political dispute of the first half of 1968, and a number of Congressmen and Senators would burnish their nationalist credentials by posturing in opposition before finally voting for its passage in July. At the opening of the Sixth Congress, on January 22, the Student Council Association of the Philippines (SCAP) staged a demonstration, with a mixed set of demands, ranging from the deportation of “overstaying Chinese” to the recall of PHILCAG.¹ BRPF and the UP Student Council (UPSC) co-sponsored a demonstration to take place the next day. In contrast to the SCAP protest, this demonstration was to have a single objective: opposition to the appropriation of ₱35 million for the extension of PHILCAG’s stay in Vietnam. On Monday afternoon, less than twenty-four hours before the rally was to take place, Mrs. Virginia Romulo, UP President Carlos P. Romulo’s wife, died. Delfin Lazaro, at the head of the Student Council, used this as a pretext to announce that in deference to her death, the UP Student Council would not be participating in the protest and would instead stage a separate rally on January 29.

The BRPF went ahead with the demonstration as planned and was joined by the Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) and KM. The committee in charge of the event headed by Sison, Lacsina, and Tonypet Araneta, determined that

¹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 14.

the protest should be staged first in front of Congress and then move to the US embassy.² None of the groups joining this demonstration were associated with the PKP or its front organizations, and the BRPF that participated in the event was a splinter group associated with Sison. The rally was sparsely attended. Not only did the UPSC cancel but Sison claimed that the workers at US Tobacco Corporation, many of whom were connected with the KM, had been compelled to work overtime in order to prevent them from participating in the rally. As a result of the poor turnout, the rally leadership decided not proceed to the US embassy, and the protesters burned their effigy of Uncle Sam in front of congress instead.³

Lacaba recounted that “Major James Barbers of the MPD called to Sison and put his arm around the young man’s shoulders. Standing there on the pavement, both of them in polo barong, both of them grinning from ear to ear as they talked in Ilocano, the American mestizo and the anti-American nationalist seemed to be a symbol of something or other: an end to discord? peace at last in Manila as in Vietnam?”⁴ James Barbers was Deputy Chief of the Manila Police Department, and was a favorite of Sison’s group. The Lapiang Manggagawa had awarded him with “a plaque for outstanding service to the country on September 12, 1965.”⁵ In 1971, it would emerge that Barbers was in fact Sison’s uncle on his mother’s side. When Sison’s older brother disappeared, likely because his murder was arranged by the PKP, Sison’s mother sought help from Barbers, and the *Manila Times* mentioned in its account that the deputy chief of police was Sison’s uncle.⁶ Familial ties, however, were politically far less significant than Sison’s actions. What is damning is the manner in which Sison and the KM publicly, and over the space of years, cultivated relations with the deputy head of police. James Barbers had been carefully trained by US forces to defend their interests in Manila. He was a senior officers course graduate at the International Police Association (IPA) in Washington DC; studied crowd control with the New York Police Department; industrial security with the Pinkerton Detective agency; and riot control at the US Military Police School in Fort Gordon, Georgia.⁷ Barbers led the dispersal of the crowd at the Manila Hotel on October 24 1966. He received repeated commendations from US Ambassador Henry Byroade for the handling and dispersal of protests and strikes outside the US embassy. A SCAUP member wrote to the *Collegian* later in the year commending Barbers. “If they want an orderly demonstration, the policemen should learn to handle a crowd. Manila

²Ibid., 15.

³The BRPF distributed its Tract No. 21, titled “A Message to the Filipino People,” which denounced the “suggestion to enact a law sanctioning the participation of Filipino combatants under the American flag.” (ibid., 16, 20).

⁴Ibid., 22.

⁵Paruñgao, *The Manila Police Story*, 24.

⁶MT, 12 Jun 1971.

⁷Paruñgao, *The Manila Police Story*, 22.

policemen should learn it from their deputy chief James Barbers. Although handling a police club, Barbers never threatened us when we were at the Hilton Hotel. He was all smiles and spoke with courtesy and treated us with admirable tact.”⁸

On January 29 the UP Student Council staged its own protest, with a manifesto which opposed “the commitment made by our President while in Australia for the retention of the PHILCAG in Vietnam without the official approval of Congress upon pressure exerted by President Johnson. . . . We demand the recall of the PHILCAG troops in Vietnam.”⁹ Neither the KM nor the BRPF had any position of leadership in this rally, but both groups issued statements of support. Maximo Lim, soon to be a founding member of the SDK, published an independent statement entitled “From a Nationalist.”¹⁰

On February 18 1968, the splinter of the BRPF aligned with Joma Sison staged a last attempt to constitute itself as a separate organization, holding the First National Peace Conference on Vietnam at the National Library.¹¹ Amado Hernandez rounded out the speakers’ list, delivering a “Report to the Philippine Council on the International War Crimes Tribunal.”¹² Hernandez had served as a juror in Stockholm on the International War Crimes Tribunal which had been convened by Bertrand Russell and Jean Paul Sartre to document the war crimes of US imperialism in Vietnam. His one recorded contribution to the proceedings, which can be found in the archival records of the Tribunal, took place on May 4 1967. Hernandez submitted a memo entitled, “A Matter of Clarification on the Mention of the Philippines in Justice [sic] Pham Van Bach’s Report.” Addressing the report given by Justice Pham, which mentioned the support for US imperialism provided by Marcos’ deployment of Philippine forces to Vietnam,

⁸PC, 21 Aug 1968, 7.

⁹PC, 29 Jan 1968. This issue of the Collegian was published on Monday, January 29. The masthead of the paper is incorrectly dated to Tuesday, January 29. When Lazaro postponed the January 23 rally, he announced that it would be held on Tuesday January 30. At the last moment, Lazaro moved the rally date to January 29. The Collegian hastily published a day early, announcing the rally on the morning it was to take place, hence the error in the masthead. UP students Delfin Lazaro, Miriam Defensor, and Franklin Drilon spoke at the rally, alongside Senators Kalaw, Aquino, and Salonga, and Congressman Ramon Mitra. (PC, 29 Jan; 1 Feb 1968) The student speakers represented the slate of the student party, Kalayaan, which dominated student government in 1967-68.

¹⁰PC, 29 Jan 1968, 4.

¹¹Hilario Lim spoke on the subject of academic freedom, and Jerry Barican, listed as the deputy secretary of the BRPF, introduced the keynote speaker, Senator Juan Liwag, who spoke on the “Philippine Involvement in the American War in Vietnam.” Jose David Lapuz spoke in the afternoon on “Nationalism and National Language.” He was identified as Chairman, but whether of the organization or the meeting is unclear.

¹²BRPF, *First National Peace Conference on Vietnam*. Marina Dayrit, it seems, in compiling the PRP tentatively dated this document to 1966. It contains, however, a speech by Bertrand Russell from November 1967. Given both internal and external evidence it can be correctly dated to Sunday, February 18, 1968.

Hernandez wrote, “Due to American pressure, the Manila government sent to Vietnam a small contingent of doctors, nurses, engineers and social workers as a humanitarian act, not a military one. They are not belligerents and this was specified in the nature of their mission.” “On the other hand, right in the Philippines, the revolutionary people ... are all for Vietnam ... demonstrations and moves against the murderers of the Vietnamese people and patriots ... are doubly more effective and carries more impact in rallying world opinion ... than the token complement of harmless doctors, nurses, engineers, and social workers.”¹³ Despite Hernandez’ prestige in the Philippines, this was a trivial contribution. All he had succeeded in doing was removing the Philippines from a list of nations charged with supporting US imperialism in Vietnam.

The real substance of the BRPF conference was a document by Bertrand Russell distributed to the delegates in which he called for the founding of a new International. Russell wrote,

I have supported peaceful coexistence out of the conviction that conflict in a nuclear age can only be disastrous. This conviction was based on the hope that the United States could be persuaded to come to an agreement with the socialist and communist countries. It is now painfully clear that American imperialism cannot be persuaded to end its aggression, its exploitation and its cruelty ... Our responsibility is to forge a united and coordinated resistance to this exploitation and domination. The popular struggle of oppressed people will remove the resources from the control of American imperialism, and in so doing, strengthen the people of the United States itself, who are striving first to understand and second to overcome the cruel rulers who have usurped their revolution and their government ...

If the Soviet Union, in its desire for peace, which is commendable, seeks to gain favour with the United States by minimizing, or even opposing the struggle for national liberation and socialism, neither peace nor justice will be achieved.¹⁴

Russell, in opposing the slogan of peaceful coexistence and in singling out the Soviet Union for minimizing struggles for national liberation and socialism, was echoing the language of Beijing. Sison’s group no doubt hoped that this could serve as the basis for winning a larger following to their BRPF splinter group. It did not and the congress was the last hurrah for the Sison splinter of the BRPF. They chose to abandon the organizational structure and it does not crop up again in the archival record.

¹³Amado V. Hernandez, *A Matter of Clarification on the Mention of the Philippines in Justice* [sic] *Pham Van Bach’s Report*, Stockholm, May 1967, IWCTR, Box 01 Folder 11 [First Public Session,



Figure 19.1: The leadership of the KM, soon to be the leadership of the CPP, pose for the press in March 1968. L-R Ibarra Tubianosa, Carlos del Rosario, Joma Sison, Leoncio Co, Art Pangilinan. *Graphic*, 13 Mar 1968.

On March 8, the PKP section of the BRPF staged a peace rally at Plaza Miranda “in conjunction with national labor, peasant, professional and student organizations.” Six buses ferried students from UP to the protest which was endorsed by the Student Council.¹⁵ Senators Juan Liwag, Aquino, Salonga, and Congressman Jose Yap addressed the rally.¹⁶ The KM put out a leaflet on the same day, entitled “Pauwiin ang PHILCAG.” [Bring PHILCAG home], which claimed that the armed liberation force (Vietcong) was entering the period of strategic offensive, the final stage of the people’s war. The Americans, they argued, would therefore no longer be able to protect the PHILCAG and the KM concluded that it would be “a great mistake” for Marcos to commit another ₱35 million to maintain

Stockholm: Minutes].

¹⁴BRPF, *First National Peace Conference on Vietnam*.

¹⁵PC, 6 Mar 1968. That this was the PKP section of the BRPF can be determined by the fact that it included the word “Incorporated” in its name.

¹⁶Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 167.

the PHILCAG in Vietnam.¹⁷ There was a palpable hesitancy to the formulations employed by the KM in the rallies during the first part of 1968, for while they were opposed to funding PHILCAG they were loath to break ties with Marcos and they therefore counseled him against making a “mistake.” The KM’s strident denunciation of Marcos’ ‘fascism’ was yet a year away.

1968 Campus Elections

The loss of the UP Student Council to the Kalayaan party of Delfin Lazaro and Miriam Defensor in the 1967-68 school year significantly contributed to the weakening of student radicalism. Lazaro not only split and undermined the PHILCAG protest movement, he oversaw the transformation of the Nationalist Corps from a student group dedicated to implementing Mao’s mass line into a Catholic community service organization, dedicated to a “mass” line of a different sort. In the summer of 1968, the SDK embarked on its first independent political initiative – building a UP student organization to serve as an alternative to the degenerated Nationalist Corps – and they called this venture the Learning from the People Drive.¹⁸ Milagros Guerrero and Luis Teodoro, who was at the time a leading member of the SDK, delivered preparatory lectures to a group of twenty-five UP students. Guerrero and Dolores Feria then led this group on an five day excursion – lasting from June 19-24 – to Jalajala. There the students distributed *paayap sitaw* seeds to local farmers and assisted in moving a hut. In the evenings they met with families and discussed with them the problems of rural life. The Learning from the People Drive committee published a report in the *Collegian* which stated that the goal of their effort was to “bridge the alienation of the students from the masses and to make concrete the commitment to nationalism that the times demand.”¹⁹ They would achieve this goal, they concluded, by “bringing the intelligentsia – with their capacity to perceive the historical process – and the great masses, with the consciousness engendered by their social condition – together.” Despite the limited success of the Learning from the People Drive, its organizers were aware that it could not rival the Nationalist Corps, which had access to University funds and official sanction. It was imperative to retake the Student Council.

The KM ran a full slate through its campus party, the Katipunan Makabansa. Feeling that they had lost the 1967 campus election because of excess radicalism – with their Mao hats and pins and the chanted slogans of the Cultural Revolution – the KM launched a calculatedly conservative campaign in 1968. They avoided

¹⁷Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Pauwiin ang Philcag*, March 1968, PRP 08/13.22.

¹⁸An assessment written by the Nationalist Corps in 1969, after the SDK had reclaimed leadership of the organization, stated that the Learning from the People Drive was created as a response to the political trajectory of the Nationalist Corps under Lazaro’s leadership. (PC, 20 Apr 1969, 5).

¹⁹PC, 3 Jul, 3; 14 Aug 1968, 10.

referring to Mao; men campaigned wearing distinctive red crowns and the “women’s auxiliary” wore green coveralls.²⁰ The Katipunan Makabansa electoral platform repeated the basic programmatic points of the KM, stressing the need for national industrialization, the fight for the “de-Americanization of Philippine culture,” and so on. They also stated that “the Nationalist Corps shall be continued as it was established under the leadership of E. Voltaire Garcia II but shall be raised to a higher level of development from the abyss it descended to during the Lazaro regime.”²¹ The KM ran Arturo Corona, a comparatively unknown figure, for chair, and Orly Mercado for vice-chair. While the KM tried to shake its reputation from last year, its opponents on campus were determined to keep the memory alive. Issues of the *Collegian* in which the platform of the Katipunan Makabansa was printed were maliciously stamped in red, “Corona and KM / Peking Paid / Subversives.”²²

The SDK organized its own student political party on the UP campus, which it named Partisans for Nationalist Student Power. The Partisans began publishing an occasional paper, entitled *Partisan*.²³ In keeping with the politics of the SDK, which focused on adapting to the existing conceptions of various sectors of society, the Partisans ran a campaign that was focused exclusively on issues of the UP campus. The Partisan’s manifesto stated that their party recognized two basic principles: first, that the “University administration is fundamentally opposed to an autonomous student power movement;” and second, that “the University, and particularly the Administration, is nothing more than a part, albeit an important one of neo-colonial power and interest in our national society.”²⁴ While the KM raised the question, for example, of opposing the basing of US forces in the country in their student government platform, the Partisans raised the slogan of “Student Power” to effect administrative changes on campus focused on the issues of academic freedom and the “Americanization” of the University.²⁵

The “Americanization” of higher education in the Philippines was a topic that dominated much of campus debate at the University of the Philippines from 1967 to 1969. Under dispute was the claim that US imperialism, through the Ford Foundation, USAID, and numerous other means, was dominating academic life in the Philippines. The Americanization of education was made a central focus by MAN under the leadership of Sison in 1967. The basic conception of the slogan was that it would provide a means of channeling emerging student unrest – which was finding initial expression in opposition to tuition hikes, crumbling

²⁰PC, 7 Aug 1968.

²¹PC, 17 Jul 1968, 11.

²²PC, 25 Jul 1968, 9.

²³The first issue came out in July 1968, under the editorship of Sixto Carlos Jr., executive secretary of the Partisans, and Antonio Pangilinan. (PC, 1 Aug 1968, 10).

²⁴Partisans for Nationalist Student Power, “Manifesto Towards a Party for Nationalist Student Power,” *The Partisan* 1, no. 1 (July 1968): 2, 37/16.01.

²⁵Ibid., 1.

educational infrastructure, and abusive lecturers – behind the campaign for national democracy.²⁶ For the Partisans in 1968, the charge of Americanization was focused on the administration’s refusal to renew the teaching positions of Hilario Lim and Vivencio Jose. The Partisans claimed the removal of Lim and Jose was part of a campaign to excise nationalism from the university, and demanded that Lim and Jose be reinstated.²⁷ Jose had, of course, led the split of the SDK from the KM seven months earlier, and had intimate ties with the Partisans. Damiana Eugenio, head of the UP English department, explained why Jose was not re-appointed to his position, “Mr. Vivencio Jose could have been a good teacher if he wanted to . . . His interest in nationalism, however, which seemed to have mounted to an obsession during the academic year 1966-1967 made him sacrifice the goals of the courses he was asked to teach.”²⁸ The Partisans published a supplement to their manifesto in which they singled out Eugenio for criticism and again demanded that Jose and Lim be re-hired. “Student Power,” they said, would be used to secure this end.²⁹ Recognizing their limited campus presence, the Partisans did not run candidates for either chair or vice-chair, but ran a partial slate of four councilors headed by Jerry Barican.³⁰

The MPKP and BRPF released a joint statement in the lead up to the campus elections, endorsing Fred Pascual, of the Lapiang Pilipino party, for Student Council Chair. They wrote that the candidates they endorsed were chosen “for their freedom from the control of some other organizations whose principles and methods of fighting for nationalism are in conflict with ours.”³¹ In other words, the MPKP and BRPF endorsed candidates whose primary qualification was that they were not associated with the KM. While not backing the Partisans’ slate, the MPKP wrote “One of the most interesting phenomenon [*sic*] in the current election campaign is the emergence of a radical group calling itself ‘the Partisans for Nationalist Student Power.’ . . . This is about the most heroic move so far attempted on the campus to try out an unconventional approach to a sickeningly conventional game.” The pamphlet counseled the Partisans that the program of student power, despite its good intentions, was isolationist. Sixto Carlos, at the head of the Partisans, was stung by the partial endorsement. He responded in

²⁶On Sison’s authorship of the anti-Americanization campaign see PC, 4 Sep 1968, 3. Renato Constantino and Lorenzo Tañada both engaged in public debates with University President Carlos P. Romulo on the subject of Americanization, and their back and forth exchanges regularly occupied the editorial pages of the *Collegian*.

²⁷On the removal of Lim and Jose see PC, 18 Jan 1968, 13.

²⁸PC, 25 Jan 1968, 8.

²⁹Partisans for Nationalist Student Power, *Supplement No. 1*, 1968, PRP 37/16.03. Damiana Eugenio remained a favorite target of the KM and SDK. They denounced her as the head of the “spinster mafia” on campus and demanded her resignation during student strikes. (*Bandilang Pula*, 12 Feb 1971, PRP 22/03).

³⁰The rest of the slate was Pedro Chanco III, Felipe Padilla De Leon Jr., and Christine Ebro..

³¹Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) and Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *People’s Power: The Key to Freedom*, 1968, PRP 02/24.02.

the pages of the *Collegian*, calling the pamphlet a “ridiculous and totally uncalled for attack.” The Partisans were not isolationist, he said, but were working to “expose and make the students aware of how the University reflects in essence the neo-colonial nature of Philippine society.”³²

In the end, none of the major campus parties won the chairmanship of the council, as Antonio Pastelero of the “micro-party” Pagkakaisa pulled off one of the most surprising victories in campus history, which the *Collegian* greeted with the banner headline: “Upset – the Dark Horse Wins.” The council seats, however, went almost entirely to Kalayaan, and Miriam Defensor became the editor of the *Collegian*. Katipunan Makabansa lost out completely and did not win a single seat on the council. Although the Partisans only ran four candidates, they won two slots, and both Christine Ebro and Jerry Barican became councilors. For Kabataang Makabayan, the humiliating election results were yet another loss in a string of defeats that had begun with the split of 1967.

The “true labor leader”

Other than the Diliman campus election, there was little direct disputation between the PKP and Sison’s group in 1968. The one exception was in the pages of the MPKP journal, *Kilusan*, which put out its third issue in summer 1968 dedicated to over a labor manifesto from the Confederation of Trade Unions in the Philippines (CTUP). The labor manifesto was fifteen pages long, and opened with statistics on unemployment and workers’ declining wages, (2-3) conditions which were caused, it argued, by “American imperialists deceiving us.” (4) In answer to the question, “What is to be done?”³³ (5), the manifesto declared that the working class should form a “united front” with “all nationalist forces.” (6) This united front, the manifesto contended, must struggle to carry out four basic steps: 1. abrogate pro-American laws, and put new laws in their place that will serve as barriers to the control of imperialism in national life; 2. carry out a “change in the socio-economic structure of our nation, so that our national wealth will be distributed orderly and equally to all Filipinos;”³⁴ 3. implement true land reform, giving farmers their own land; and 4. the government should provide support and protection to national capitalists. Support for Filipino capitalists, the document assured workers, “is the key to national progress, and will solve the problem of the continually growing army of the unemployed.” (6) The document gave no explanation for how the second item – the equal distribution

³²PC, 14 Aug 1968, 10. The MPKP’s overtures to the SDK were partial at best. The Philippine League of Academic Workers (PLAW), closely allied with the MPKP, had opposed the re-instatement of Hilario Lim, ostensibly on the grounds that Lim, a priest recently expelled from the Jesuit order, had no business being employed at a secular university. (PC, 25 Jan 1968, 11).

³³This formulation of Lenin’s was rendered as “Ano ngayon ang dapat nating gawin?”

³⁴“pagbabago sa socio-economic structure ng ating bansa, upang ang kayamanan ng bansa ay mababahaging maayos at pantay sa lahat ng mga Pilipino.” (6)

of wealth – would be implemented; it simply stated that it needed to occur. The PKP was promoting to workers the notion of a social system in which there was simultaneously a flourishing native capitalism and an equal distribution of wealth. Capitalism is predicated upon the private ownership of the means of production and an equal distribution of wealth under such a social system is an impossibility. The demand for equality requires the struggle for socialism. The Manifesto of *Kilusan* wrote of the “equal distribution of wealth” in an attempt to mobilize workers *in support of* capitalism. The document returned to this point, calling on workers to form a “National United Front” with “nationalist businessmen and Filipino capitalists.” (10)

Having dedicated labor to the interests of capital, the *Kilusan* manifesto turned to the question of securing the PKP’s control over the labor movement in the aftermath of the split within the Communist Party, instructing workers to distinguish the genuine labor movement from “fake” ones. The PKP made not a single reference to political program as the means of making this distinction but rather stated that true labor organizations were headed by “true leaders.” [mga tunay na lider] (12) A true leader, they wrote, was not a drunkard or a bully; he was not arrogant or selfish, but rather, was humble. A true leader acted with dignity. Thus far, the criteria of the labor manifesto bore a stronger resemblance to passages from St. Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians than to anything directly political. The manifesto continued. A true leader would not split the organization; a true leader did not tolerate factionalism, and, above all, did not initiate factionalism. A true leader was not sectarian. (12) Neither side of the split could outline a single programmatic, political difference with the other, nor did they explain that the roots of the dispute lay in the national interests of the Stalinist bureaucrats in Moscow and Beijing. Rather, each raised empty denunciations of the leadership of the rival group; each reviled the other as sectarian. But this “sectarianism” had no content; these “fake” leaders seemingly formed sects and fomented factionalism without having any substantive political disagreement. The one question that neither side would answer was this: around what politics did these factions constellate?

Half-hearted protests and stunts

Philcag again

In July Marcos secured the renewal of funding to maintain PHILCAG in Vietnam. While in early voting on the bill, the Senate had been split 12-12, Sen. Sergio Osmeña Jr. reversed his opposition, cast the deciding vote in favor of the bill and broke the Senate deadlock. The final vote of 13-11 ensured the continuation of PHILCAG’s deployment.

SCAUP and KM put out a joint leaflet in response, calling on students to gather at four in the afternoon on July 25 to join a demonstration which had

the support of the UP Student Council.³⁵ The leaflet revealed the continuing contradictory relationship of the KM with Marcos, for while it was compelled to denounce his actions, it yet held out hope that he could be won over as an ally of their organization, which had after all supported him in the 1965 elections. The KM and SCAUP warned that “Fascism is fast emerging as the hallmark of the Marcos administration,” but in becoming a fascist, they claimed, Marcos was making a “mistake.” Marcos’ tendency toward fascism was being supported by a “Jap-collaborator family now well situated in both houses of Congress.” How did the KM propose to respond to what they claimed was the imminent threat of fascism? They argued that “youth and all patriotic sectors of the population should continuously strive to make President Marcos realize the folly of his alienation from the true interests of the people.”³⁶ The KM thus claimed that Marcos was making the “mistake” of tending toward fascism but, with pressure from the youth in the form of rallies, he might yet realize the error of his ways and be won back to the true interests of the people. Demonstrations were a form of a political evangelism to the ruling class. While calling for Marcos to be pressured back into the fold, the KM diverted the mass anger against Marcos onto Osmeña, whose effigy they burned outside the House of Congress.

A second demonstration was held on July 30, for which the UP Journalism club published a leaflet denouncing the second PHILCAG bill and Osmeña’s “turn-about.” Osmeña was “a potential vice presidential candidate under the party in power,” who “now prefers this involvement [in Vietnam] and chooses to smear his integrity and the integrity of the Filipino people as well . . . all for personal gain.” They concluded, “We vehemently oppose the PHILCAG Bill; we condemn a man, Sen. Sergio Osmeña Jr.” The KM declared that it wholeheartedly “endorses and supports today’s demonstration.”³⁷ During this protest, “a group of young Filipino demonstrators pushed past the guards and stormed wildly into the American Embassy compound in Manila,” but police forced them back out of the gate.³⁸ For third time, a large demonstration against PHILCAG was staged in front of Malacañang and the US Embassy, this time two weeks later, on August 16. The demonstration was jointly led by the SPP, NATU, KM, CONDA, SCAUP and SDK, and received the sponsorship of Student Council chair Pastelero and *Collegian* editor Defensor. Twelve hundred demonstrators turned out in front of the Embassy that evening.³⁹ The KM and SPP issued a brief joint statement which articulated the same basic points as the previous rallies.⁴⁰ The account

³⁵PC, 17 Jul 1968.

³⁶Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP) and Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Manifesto Against Marcos’ Reactionary Policies*, July 1968, PRP 17/10.01.

³⁷UP Journalism Club, *Demonstrate Against the Second Philcag Bill!!! Against Osmeña Turn-About!!!*, July 1968, PRP 18/12.02; Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Kabataang Makabayan supports July 30 UP Student Demonstration Against Philcag*, July 1968, PRP 08/13.16.

³⁸David Conde, “Students in the Philippines,” *Eastern Horizon* VIII, no. 2 (1969): 57.

³⁹PC, 14 Aug 1968.

⁴⁰Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) and Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Rally Against US-RP*

printed in the *Collegian* claimed that a riot had broken out when demonstrators began throwing flaming torches at the police, and five students and one worker were injured in the ensuing violence.⁴¹ After another two weeks, on August 30, the KM, SPP, NATU and SCAUP staged another protest, this time targeting US-RP special relations, which began at Malacañang and then marched to the US embassy. The manifesto which the KM prepared for the rally called for a “re-examination” of the relationship.⁴²

There was a ritualistic character to these protests. They were held because it would have been unseemly not to protest the passage of the PHILCAG bill. Students may have sparred briefly with the police, but this was not at the instigation of the KM. Other than the initial spitfire denunciation of Osmeña, the material produced by the KM and its allies was generic, almost diffident in tone. After August 30, the protests died out.

A Skirt on the Oblation

In September the leadership of both the KM and the SDK faced a significant bureaucratic challenge as UP threatened to suspend Sixto Carlos, Monico Atienza, and Ellecer Cortes. Atienza and Cortes were part of the central leadership of the KM, and Carlos of the SDK. The University accused the three student leaders of “desecrating” the Oblation, Guillermo Tolentino’s iconic statue at the entrance of the Diliman campus, during protests over the treatment of Hilario Lim at the end of 1967. Carlos, Atienza and Cortes had wrapped sweaters around the loins of the statue in the form of a skirt. It was a puerile and trivial act, which Atienza, Cortes and Carlos spun as a form of symbolic, albeit misogynistic, protest. They wrote to the *Collegian* calling on students to defend them as they faced suspension of one month for placing a skirt on the oblation to “symbolize that the Romulo administration has made academic freedom impotent . . . the skirt does not even symbolize that it is Miss Panlilio who practically runs the affairs of the university.”⁴³

On September 13, a protest march was held in support of the three students facing suspension. The protesters carried placards which read “Don’t skirt the issue” and “Well done, Madame Secretary.” The latter was a reference to Romulo’s secretary, Iluminada Panlilio. KM and SCAUP distributed a leaflet protesting the “emasculatation” of academic freedom.⁴⁴ Romulo emerged from his offices and addressed the protesters, telling them that they had desecrated the Oblation,

Special Relations, August 1968, PRP 17/02.01.

⁴¹A handful were arrested, and Ignacio Lacsina and Jejomar Binay intervened to have them released. (PC, 21 Aug 1968) A demonstrator, Alexander Rebosura, reported in a letter to the *Collegian* that the violence had been started by the police. (PC, 21 Aug 1968, 7).

⁴²PC, 29 Aug 1968.

⁴³PC, 11 Sep 1968, 5.

⁴⁴Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Manifesto in Defense of Student Rights against the Americanization of the State University*, September 1968, PRP 08/19.06.

by “making it look like a *bakla* [gay].”⁴⁵ The skirt protests occasioned the first display of united political activity since the split of 1967, as the BRPF and the MPKP declared their support for Cortes, Atienza and Carlos. In the face of the protest, Romulo relented and while retaining the charges against the three, lifted the sentence of suspension, allowing them to continue in classes.⁴⁶ At the end of 1968, Carlos P. Romulo at long last stepped down as University President and Marcos appointed Salvador Lopez as his replacement. The KM, SDK, SCAUP and BRPF again joined together in a final protest against Romulo, picketing the farewell concert which was staged in his honor. On November 30, 1968, the KM held what it termed its first national conference under the second national congress, under the general secretaryship of Monico Atienza.⁴⁷ For the KM, it represented the end of a year of weakness and defeat.

⁴⁵PC, 11 Sep 1968, 3.

⁴⁶PC, 18 Sep 1968.

⁴⁷Monico M. Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat sa 1969 – Kabataang Makabayan sa Lahat ng Larangan,” *AM*, December 1969, 6.

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Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)

Sa simula, siya'y isang kalansay na naktalalan sa hangin. Isang matayog, buhaghag na buntong ng patapong mga piraso ng tablang gato, mabukbok, mabitak, masalubsob, pilipit, kubikong, na pinagpaku-pako nang patayo, pahalang, patulibas, kabit-kabit nang walang wawa, tulad ng kahig-manok sa lupa ...

— Edgardo M. Reyes, *Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*

In September, Sison began drawing up and editing the documents for the founding congress of a new Communist Party of the Philippines. The congress was slated to take place in late December but was delayed by a week because the draft documents had been leaked to the press, and Sison feared reprisals. He had circulated the documents to a number of members and ex-members of the PKP whom he perceived were disgruntled and would likely support the founding of the a new party. Among those to whom he gave documents was Lazaro Cruz, an ex-PKP member known as Bull, who the head of the Katipunan ng Kabataang Demokratiko [Union of Democratic Youth] (KKD), a Tondo based youth organization separate from the KM and the SDK but sharing their admiration for Mao. Bull was Sison's connection to leading Filipino publisher Chino Roces, head of the Manila Times. Roces was opposed to Marcos and at times was in a close alliance with the CPP and its front organizations; he also had connections to the CIA. Bull died in Chino Roces' office in December, allegedly of a heart attack, and the draft documents of the founding congress were left in Roces' possession.¹ Despite the fact that its congress was delayed until early January, the CPP backdated its documents and reported that it was founded on December 26 in order to coincide with Mao's 75th birth anniversary, and to this day, it is on the twenty-sixth that the CPP celebrates its founding.²

The twelve founding members of the CPP along with two bodyguards, gathered at the Pantranco bus station in Quezon City on January 2, 1969.³ They

¹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 17; Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 61-62; Caouette, "Persevering Revolutionaries," 116. On Roces connections to the CIA, see Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, 269.

²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 17.

³ibid., 18. Ninotchka Rosca's claim that "on December 26, 1968, Amado Guerrero (Beloved

traveled to the barrio of Dulacac, in Alaminos, Pangasinan, where they stayed in the home of Arthur Garcia's in-laws, the Navarettes, and hiked to an overseer's hut on the estate to hold their session, returning in the evening. Sison claimed that the Navarettes thought that the young men were having a picnic.⁴ The founding congress of the Communist Party was composed of Joma Sison and the following:

Monico Atienza. He was class president of FEU high school in 1964, and in 1965 spent two months traveling in China. He became a UP student and a leading member of SCAUP. In November 1967, Atienza became Secretary General of the KM and in 1968 he survived without suspension the scandal of having put a skirt on the UP oblation statue. He was captured in 1974 and severely tortured by the military.

Renato (Rey) Casipe. He was president of the US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union (USTCLU), in which the KM was very active. Casipe defected to the military in 1976 and provided them with information on party members in Mindanao.

Ruben Guevarra. He was closely associated with Casipe in the work in the USTCLU. He was later responsible for carrying out a number of party orchestrated assassinations, including of party members who were suspected of being government agents. He later became an intelligence officer for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Leoncio Co. Co was a UP student who had traveled to China in 1967. He married Linda Taruc, the daughter of Peregrino Taruc, younger brother of Luis Taruc and former head of the Education Department of the PKP. At the time of the founding of the CPP, Linda Taruc was a paid assistant of Ninoy Aquino. Co was arrested within a year of the founding of the party. On his arrest, both he and his father – a Chinese immigrant – were threatened with deportation.

Manuel (Noli) Collantes. The son of Marcos' Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Collantes was a University of Santo Tomas (UST) graduate. He became head of the National Trade Union Bureau of the Party before his arrest in 1972. On arrest, he immediately turned against his comrades. Not only did he assist the military in identifying and arresting members of the party, he "led the interrogation and torture of comrades whom he had arrested." He was assassinated by the NPA in late January 1973.⁵

Art Pangilinan. A student at Lyceum. I have found very little information regarding him, other than that he surrendered to the military in 1973, according

Warrior) led some 70 men and women in the re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines" is an absurd fiction. (Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 20.)

⁴Prior accounts have claimed that the founding congress was held in Mangatarem, Pangasinan, but Sison in an interview with the Philippine Daily Inquirer in 2007 revealed the exact location where it was held. *Inquirer*, 26 December 2007.

⁵Lualhati Milan Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2009), 241-242; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 220.

to Jones “after a dispute with another ranking Party official.”⁶

Arthur Garcia. He was the son of the personal secretary of long-time Manila Mayor, Arsenio Lacson. He joined the PKP and was briefly on the central committee along with Sison prior to their expulsion in April 1967. He spent a portion of 1968 in China taking a course in small arms training, preparatory to the founding of a guerrilla movement in the Philippines. Garcia was an instructor at the Lyceum. Within a year of the founding of the CPP, Garcia was dead, shot by a member of the NPA.⁷

Hermenigildo Garcia. A UP student, Garcia was chair of SCAUP in 1968. He was the “son of a noted writer.” With his wife Mila Astorga, he was sent to Negros Oriental in early 1969 to found the short-lived *Dumaguete Times*.⁸

Nilo Tayag. Tayag came from a wealthy Pampanga family. He was a charter member of SCAUP and KM and part of the PKP along with Sison and Garcia prior to their expulsion. Tayag was made chair of the KM in November 1967. Having graduated from UP, he was an instructor at the University of the East. He was captured in 1970, and eventually declared his support for Marcos. Upon release he became a priest in the Aglipayan church, rising to the rank of bishop.

Fernando Tayag. Fernando was the younger brother of Nilo Tayag and a UP student.

Ibarra Tubianosa. A journalism graduate of Lyceum, Tubianosa was recruited by Sison at the university. Jones reports that he had a limp from a childhood bout with polio.⁹ In mid 1971 he traveled, along with a large delegation of CPP members and spouses, to Beijing. In China, Tubianosa broke with the party.

Jose Luneta. Luneta was an instructor at Lyceum. He was in China during the founding congress and was elected to the Central Committee of the party in absentia. Luneta was in China as a Tagalog language expert for Radio Beijing, which had switched from broadcasts to the Philippines in English and Cantonese to Tagalog in December 1965.¹⁰ Luneta’s primary task was to serve as a liaison for the party in Beijing and to secure funding for it. In China Luneta met with Kang Sheng, the CCP politburo member responsible for international relations. Luneta translated the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung* into Tagalog.¹¹

A pair of union members from the US Tobacco Corporation in Manila acted as security guards during the two day congress.¹² Sison read the draft documents he

⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 515 fn 1.

⁷Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, 78.

⁸Galileo C. Kintanar and Pacifico V. Militante, *Lost in Time: From Birth to Obsolescence, The Communist Party of the Philippines, Book One: 1930-1972* (Quezon City: Truth / Justice Foundation, Inc., 1999), 15.

⁹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 19.

¹⁰Jones, *Red Revolution*, 72; Van Der Kroef, “Philippine Communism and the Chinese,” 145.

¹¹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 72; *So The People May Know, Volume I* (Quezon City: General Headquarters, Armed Forces of the Philippines, 1970), 618.

¹²In an interview with the *Inquirer*, 26 Dec 2007, Sison stated that one of the guards was

had written, and they adjourned late that night and resumed the next morning. Sison was elected national chairman and Nilo Tayag general secretary. The proceedings ended by the middle of the second day and the participants returned to Manila by bus.¹³

The Party announced its founding with a document entitled “Communiqué of the Congress of Re-Establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines.”

The Congress of Re-Establishment was undertaken as the climax of long, persistent and arduous efforts to put Mao Zedong’s thought in command among old and new cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines. With Mao Zedong’s thought and the proletarian revolutionary line prevailing, the Communist Party of the Philippines has been successfully regenerated and re-established. . .

It was firmly agreed that Mao Zedong’s thought be put in command of everything and that the supreme task of the Communist Party of the Philippines is to integrate the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong’s thought with the concrete conditions of the Philippine Revolution. . .

The Congress put into final form the document of rectification, “Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party” drafted almost a year ago by the Provisional Political Bureau that had directed the affairs of the Party during the last more than two years. This document has been extensively discussed by Party cadres in the spirit of criticism and self-criticism under the guidance of Mao Zedong’s thought. . .

The Congress of Re-establishment hailed the all-round victory of the great proletarian cultural revolution, the overthrow of the counter-revolutionary revisionist renegade, traitor and scab Liu Shaoqi and his likes, the consolidation of the People’s Republic of China as the main bulwark of the world proletarian revolution, and the forthcoming Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China.¹⁴

The central document of the founding congress, *Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party (RERP)*, was a revised version of Sison’s original draft critique of the PKP.¹⁵ The original version of this document can be reconstructed in its entirety from material in the Philippine Radical Papers Archive and from 1969 issues of the CPP paper *Ang Bayan*.¹⁶ In 2013, Sison published a five volume set of his writings

Mariano Lacsá. He also reported that one of the guards fell out of a tree during the congress, having fallen asleep on duty.

¹³Jones, *Red Revolution*, 18-19.

¹⁴So *The People May Know, Volume I*, 13-14.

¹⁵Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 24.

¹⁶Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party*, 1969, PRP 03/18.02; Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Iwasto ang mga Pagkakamali at Muling Buuin ang Partido*, December 1968, PRP 05/01.01.

from 1969-1990. The first volume, entitled *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution*, opened with *RERP*. It presented this document as a reprinting of the original, and gave no indication that the document has been significantly altered. *RERP* had been reprinted in this revised form on a number of prior occasions; none mentioned that it had been fundamentally changed. A careful comparison of Sison's reprinted edition of the *RERP* with the original published versions reveals that the lengthy historical sections of the document had been drastically rewritten. A stunning 39% of the original material was removed, considerable material was added, and many passages were substantially rewritten. Based on a line-by-line comparison of the original document with Sison's "reprint," I calculated that 46% of the text, effectively half, was substantially altered, rewritten or removed. I am not including in this estimate changes made for exclusively stylistic reasons.¹⁷

RERP blamed the Lava leadership for the political errors and crimes of the PKP, effectively divorcing them from the policies and program of Joseph Stalin, and connected these "Lavaite" errors with the "modern revisionism" of Moscow. In truth, the Lavas, along with the rest of the leadership of the PKP, had followed Stalin's instructions; Sison was singling out the Lavas for having carried out what were in fact the crimes of Stalinism.

The document opened with a section entitled "Mao Zedong's Thought is Our Guide to Self-Criticism and Party Rebuilding," in which Sison confronted the CPP with a dilemma: they must adopt either Mao Zedong thought or modern revisionism. He wrote

Mao Zedong's thought is the highest development of Marxism-Leninism in the present world era of the impending collapse of imperialism and the world triumph of socialism. ...

Mao Zedong's thought sets the demarcation line dividing the proletarian revolutionaries from the false pretenders to the title of revolutionaries, in this period of great upheaval, great division, and great reorganization of political forces ...

The history of our own Party is marked by failures on account of serious errors and weaknesses that need to be rectified now in accordance with Mao Zedong's thought.

As modern revisionism is being fostered and spread by the modern revisionist clique, with its headquarters in the Soviet Union, all proletarian revolutionaries are goaded to express themselves and act in accordance with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong's thought ...

In the Philippines ... [c]urrents of opportunism, with the local petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie as their fountainhead, serve as the basis

¹⁷Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*.

for the superimposition of modern revisionism from its world center in Moscow.¹⁸

“Our party has existed for thirty-eight years,” Sison wrote, and yet it has not yet won revolutionary power.¹⁹ While the newly founded CPP advocated taking power by means of a protracted people’s war, clearly in Sison’s conception, thirty-eight years was much too long. Since Sison wrote these words, forty-nine years ago, the CPP has pursued this protracted people’s war and his party is just as far from power as the PKP was in 1969. He expanded his criticisms of the Lava leadership in a “Brief Historical Review” of the the party. Sison attempted in this section to demonstrate that it was the revisionism of the Lavaite leadership that was responsible for the PKP’s failures. Sison repeatedly stressed that their decisions had been a deviation from the program of Stalin, a program which found its modern continuation in Mao Zedong thought. This was false to the core. The political strategy of the Lava leadership of the PKP was not a deviation from Stalinism, but its logical development, and very often the implementation of direct international instructions issued from Moscow. Sison attempted to divorce the political course of the PKP from Stalinism, and depict them instead as early expressions of the ‘modern revisionism’ of Khrushchev and Brezhnev.²⁰

In the light of this historical overview, Sison wrote that “three main tasks” were necessary. These tasks involved building what Sison would later refer to as the “three magic weapons”: the party, the armed struggle and the united front. In building the party, Sison wrote, “the Communist Party of the Philippines comprehensively differentiates itself from bogus and revisionist parties and groups by adopting Mao Zedong Thought as its supreme guide and by applying it in revolutionary practice.”²¹ This meant that the party based itself on the conception that the “People’s Republic of China serves today as a stable base area of all revolutionary peoples now surrounding the cities of the world from the world’s countryside of Asia, Africa and Latin America.”²² The party would thus look to China for aid in both funding and arming its revolution. The party, Sison wrote, “must implement the great strategic principle of making the countryside surround the cities and put principal stress on party work in the countryside instead of in the city”. (45) To carry this out the party needed to build and lead the armed struggle, and Sison wrote, “the people’s democratic revolution which our Party is waging is essentially a peasant war.” (47) The party would carry out this war in “three inseparable components” – expanding the armed struggle, consolidating rural bases, and implementing the agrarian revolution

¹⁸CPP, *Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party*, 1.

¹⁹Ibid., 2.

²⁰Sison elaborated on these claims in his 1970 *Philippine Society and Revolution*, and I will examine them in that context.

²¹Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 42.

²²Ibid., 43.

to win peasant support. (50) The agrarian revolution was envisioned as the people's army confiscating land from landlords and distributing it to peasants without cost, a measure which they would implement in two waves. (51) As long as the party's control over a region was not yet fully secure, they would use their armed force to demand lower rent for peasants from landlords, and only when they had firmly established a base area would they confiscate the land. The party would use the political weight of the armed peasant struggle to carry out its third task: the building of the national united front. Sison stated that "to succeed in the people's democratic revolution, an alliance of the working class and the peasantry must be developed as the basis for a national united front which includes the urban petty bourgeoisie and the patriotic sections of the national bourgeoisie as supplementary allies." (46)

Sison wrote that "the highest task of the people's democratic revolution is the seizure of state power and the consolidation of people's democratic power as the transitional stage toward socialism." (53) We see here that the armed struggle was the strategy chosen to carry out the first stage of the two stage revolution. Sison envisioned workers and peasants seizing state power and turning over the reins to the coalition government which they would share with a section of the national bourgeoisie. The 'united front' alliance of workers, peasants and capitalists was thus not opposed to the armed struggle but was rather a key component of the party's strategy. The armed struggle was envisioned as a means of securing the support of the national bourgeoisie in the united front alliance, who otherwise might be inclined to waver in their loyalties. (54) The "special task of the national united front is to win over the middle forces and elements in order to isolate enemy diehards." (55) The winning over of middle forces, that is the national bourgeoisie, was the constant and unaltered orientation of the party.

Sison argued that "the relationship of the Party with the national bourgeoisie within the national united front . . . requires special attention." The national bourgeoisie, he claimed, has a dual character, "one aspect of which is progressive and the other reactionary." (56) and in response the party must "adopt a revolutionary dual tactic towards the national bourgeoisie, combining unity and struggle." This meant remaining alert, as at any moment the bourgeoisie could "betray" the revolution, but despite this fact it remained an "ally." (56) In order to "develop the cooperation of the national bourgeoisie, the Party must have its own strength; otherwise, this class and its representatives would be reluctant to cooperate." (57) If the party, in other words, did not have control over a significant section of the working class and the peasantry, the bourgeoisie would be reluctant to cooperate with it. Sison made clear why this was in his next sentence: "The Party must respect the legitimate interests of all middle forces, with concessions actually granted to them without undermining the interests of the people and the leadership of the proletariat." The party, at the head of the working class and peasantry, would grant concessions to the national bourgeoisie to win their

support. The qualification “without undermining the interests of the people” was pure sophistry, as any concession granted to the bourgeoisie would be made at the expense of the working class.

Sison concluded with a dose of the dangerous voluntarist nonsense of Maoism, “US imperialism and all other reactionaries are paper tigers. All the nuclear weapons and all the military technology of US imperialism cannot frighten us.” For the struggling masses under the leadership of the CPP, “Mao Zedong Thought is their spiritual atom bomb.” The final sentence of *RERP* read “Armed with invincible Mao Zedong Thought, the Communist Party of the Philippines will surely triumph and the Filipino people under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat will achieve people’s democracy first and socialism next.”

Two other documents were voted on during the founding congress of the CPP: the Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution, and the Constitution of the CPP.²³ The program stressed that the tasks of the revolution were national and democratic, that the national bourgeoisie was a component of the revolutionary classes, but that “at this stage of Philippine history and world history, it no longer suffices to have the old type of national democratic revolution. The era of modern imperialism has long invalidated the leadership of the bourgeoisie.”²⁴ From this Sison concluded that the working class needed to lead the national democratic revolution, in alliance with the peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie. He wrote, “While the old democratic leadership of the bourgeoisie no longer applies to the Philippine revolution at this historical stage, the working class and the Communist Party of the Philippines cannot accomplish both democracy and socialism at one blow. The Party must first achieve a new type of national democratic revolution, a people’s democratic revolution in the concrete semicolonial and semifeudal conditions of the Philippines, before reaching the stage of socialist revolution.” (63)

“Socialism,” Sison averred, “cannot be immediately achieved when the Filipino people under the leadership of the working class still have to liberate themselves from foreign and feudal oppression.” Sison thus envisioned the national democratic revolution – a capitalist revolution – throwing off foreign oppression before the socialist revolution could be launched. According to Lenin, imperialism, the root of foreign oppression, is the necessary “highest stage of capitalism,” and thus, the only means of ending foreign oppression is through world socialist revolution. For the Stalinist program of the CPP, however, foreign oppression could be ended if the working class led the bourgeoisie in building properly functioning domestic capitalism. What is more, Sison envisioned an

²³Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 59-93; Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Programme for a People’s Democratic Revolution*, December 1968, DSUMC; Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Programa para sa Demokratikong Rebolusyong Bayan sa Pilipinas*, December 1968, PRP 13/24.02; Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Programa sa Demokratikong Rebolusyong Bayan sa Pilipinas*, December 1968, PRP 04/02.13.

²⁴Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 61.

alliance with the national bourgeoisie fighting to end “feudal oppression” in the Philippines. The capitalist class in countries of belated capitalist development such as the Philippines is intimately linked to feudal landholdings. In most cases the leading industrial capitalists built their fortunes on the basis of landed wealth, to which they were still tied. Among the principal allies of the CPP in the early 1970s were Aquino and the Lopez brothers, their fortunes and political power tied to vast sugar estates. Sison hammered his point home. “It is dishonest, demagogic and utopian to insist that socialism is the immediate goal under conditions that the people are still dominated and exploited by US imperialism and domestic feudalism.”

On these points, both the core programmatic goal and the methods of achieving it, there was complete unanimity between Sison’s CPP and the Lava’s PKP. Both parties were Stalinist. When Sison insisted that it was “dishonest” to claim that socialism was an immediate goal, he was not arguing with the PKP, but with the possible threat of Trotskyism. He was corralling the working class away from its objective interests, the fight for socialism, behind a program which served the interests of their enemy, the capitalist class.

Sison insisted that “all Filipino Communists are ready to sacrifice their lives for the worthy cause of achieving the new type of democracy, building a new Philippines that is genuinely and completely independent, democratic, united, just and prosperous.” (64) He depicted this revolution to implement capitalism as building a “just” society, and claimed that Communists would die for it. The goal of the revolution was to build a People’s Democratic State and a coalition government of workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. (66) Under this government, the private sector of industry, “run by patriotic entrepreneurs and merchants shall be given assistance and support.” (68) New enterprises would likewise be private, which the government would “encourage and support.” The “people’s democratic government shall exercise regulation of capital only to protect the people’s livelihood and guarantee people’s democracy.” (69) The national democratic revolution was thus envisioned as a government that supported and encouraged private capitalist investment and strictly limited regulation in order to create a “prosperous economy.”

Establishing diplomatic and trade ties with the People’s Republic of China was the central plank of the foreign policy of the Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution. (71) The program concluded by situating the CPP firmly within the camp of Beijing.

Modern revisionism spearheaded by the Soviet revisionist clique is failing to be an effective accomplice of US imperialism in their mutual crime of neocolonialism. The Soviet revisionist renegade bloc is fast disintegrating. The Soviet aggression against the Czechoslovakian people has demonstrated the treacherous character of modern revisionism. While US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism

collude in claiming their respective spheres of influence, they also struggle to redivide the same.

While US imperialism and modern revisionism are in deep crisis, the People's Republic of China has consolidated itself as an iron bastion of socialism and the world proletarian revolution by carrying out the epochal Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and by holding aloft Mao Zedong Thought to illumine the road of armed revolution throughout the world.

Also, in the Eastern European heartland of modern revisionism, the People's Republic of Albania stands forth as an advance post of the world proletarian revolution and Mao Zedong Thought and is encouraging all the oppressed peoples and Marxist-Leninists there to rebel against the ruling revisionist renegade cliques. (76-77)

The Constitution of the CPP stated that "the supreme leadership of the entire Party shall be the National Congress" (86) and that "the National Congress shall be called and convened by the Central Committee every five years, unless it is deemed necessary to hold it later or earlier." (87) The CPP would not hold another congress until 2016. The Central Committee would refill its membership with appointees, and the political line of the party would never again be the subject of democratic discussion.

— 21 —

New People's Army (NPA)

... a people's army created in accordance with Comrade Mao Zedong's theory of army building is incomparably strong and invincible.

— Lin Biao, *Long Live the Victory of People's War!*

The newly founded party needed an army. From January to March 1969, Sison and his comrades in the CPP worked to locate a peasant army they could make their own. Their quest was facilitated by Senator Aquino and his political allies in Tarlac, who placed Sison in contact with the erstwhile lieutenant of Commander Sumulong, Bernabe Buscayno, and on March 29, the New People's Army was formed.

Basing himself on the political conceptions of Mao, Sison idealized the guerrilla as the political archetype of the future, and this idealized guerrilla was the subject of his most famous poem.

The guerrilla is like a poet

The guerrilla is like a poet
Keen to the rustle of leaves
The break of twigs
The ripples of the river
The smell of fire
And the ashes of departure.

The guerrilla is like a poet.
He has merged with the trees
The bushes and the rocks
Ambiguous but precise
Well-versed on the law of motion
And master of myriad images.

The guerrilla is like a poet.
 Enrhymed with nature
 The subtle rhythm of the greenery
 The inner silence, the outer innocence
 The steel tensile in-grace
 That ensnares the enemy.

The guerrilla is like a poet.
 He moves with the green brown multitude
 In bush burning with red flowers
 That crown and hearten all
 Swarming the terrain as a flood
 Marching at last against the stronghold.

An endless movement of strength
 Behold the protracted theme!
 The people's epic, the people's war.

Sison would later repeatedly claim that this poem was written in 1968, attempting to associate it with the founding of the CPP, but in truth he first published it on March 8 1967 in the pages of the *Collegian* immediately below a poem by Miriam Defensor.¹ “The guerilla is like a poet” was not inspired by any encounter with the “green brown multitude;” of its stanzas, all were of the little red book, and none of the Sierra Madre. Not a single image in the poem was truthful, nor were any born of concrete experience. Sison’s actual experiences with guerrillas began in 1968 when he attempted, on at least two occasions, to meet with Sumulong, intending for the gangster to serve as the basis of the party’s guerrilla army.² Sison’s soliciting of support from Sumulong proved fruitless, however, and it was through Sumulong’s lieutenant in Tarlac, Bernabe Buscayno, known as Commander Dante, that Sison would form his guerrilla army.

¹An example of this false dating can be found in Jose Ma. Sison, *Prison and Beyond: Selected Poems 1958-1983*, ed. Edilberto Alegre et al. (Free Jose Ma. Sison Committee, 1984), 48.

²Both Rodolfo Salas and Nilo Tayag later attested to Sison’s failed attempts to establish ties with Sumulong. Salas was so displeased with Sison’s attempts to contact Sumulong that he refused to join the founding congress of the party. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 88-89; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 27; Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 27). Sison claimed that Sumulong attempted on two occasions in 1967 to meet with him, with the intent of assassinating him, but Sumulong’s representative, whose son was a KM member, “deliberately fouled up the arrangements for each meeting.” (Sison and Rosca, *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World*, 43). Whether or not Sumulong in fact attempted to meet with Sison, this was distinct from Sison’s own attempts to contact Sumulong in 1968.

Dante

Bernabe Buscayno was born to a family that managed the mango groves of a local landlord, Jose Ramos, in Talimundoc, Capas, Tarlac. The hamlet of Sitio Mangga – “a cluster of flimsy shacks with a few trees, backyard poultry and a primitive, hand-dug well” – where Buscayno spent his early years, was named after the Ramos orchards.³ Ramos’ land holdings were significant enough to fuel and fund his family’s political aspirations; several members held prominent public offices, and Ramos’ son, Rafael, ran for congress in 1969.⁴ Ramos served as patron to the Buscayno family and “[w]hen Bernabe was old enough to begin his schooling, he and his brother Jose were sent to the landowner’s house in Quezon City.”⁵ Buscayno completed grade school at Burgos Elementary School and finished his second year at Roosevelt High School in Cubao, before moving to Angeles, Pampanga, with his brother, Jose, to live with their aunt. Both Bernabe and Jose took up work as waiters in Angeles City. Within a year, Bernabe had become a runner for Sumulong, and adopted the pseudonym Dante. Dante rose through the ranks of Sumulong’s organization to become a hit man under Commander Fonting, the head of Sumulong’s liquidation squads. The AFP rap sheet for Dante listed twenty-five separate murder charges from his time in Angeles. In early 1966, Dante, now a trusted capo of Sumulong, was assigned to head up the region of Tarlac where he was born, which had previously been under Alibasbas’ jurisdiction. After the assassination of Alibasbas in February 1966, Marcos’ campaign against Sumulong’s Huk rivals continued under the direction of Gen Rafael Iletto. Iletto personally oversaw the killing of Commander Oscar along with three of his bodyguards on December 11 1966. This was followed by the capture of Commander Ely in Cacutud, Mabalacat on March 15 1967. Commander Delio was killed in San Jose, Dinalupihan, Bataan on November 9 of the same year.⁶ As Sumulong’s rivals were killed off, Dante rose in the ranks. By July 1967, Dante was listed by the AFP as the thirteenth most wanted Huk, and by December 1968, he was the fourth most wanted.

The relationship between Dante and Sumulong soured during the November 1967 elections. On instructions from Sumulong, Dante backed the Tarlac mayoral bid of Dr. Jose Geronimo, a close family relation of the Ramoses. Seizing upon the opportunity to repay his client obligation to the Ramos family, Dante threw himself into the campaign with gusto. A week before the election, almost certainly as a result of receiving a better financial offer, Sumulong instructed Dante to drop his support for Geronimo and to back Geronimo’s political rival, and Dante wept when he received the order.⁷ Working with Dante in the Tarlac

³Lachica, *The Huks*, 156.

⁴Ibid., 157.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lachica, *The Huks*, 144-145.

⁷Ibid., 145, 159.

region in late 1967 was Efren Lopez, who was likewise disturbed and angered by Sumulong's reversal in the Tarlac election. According to Lachica, the inseparable Lopez and Dante were known among the Huks as the "Katzenjammer Kids."⁸ When shortly after the November elections, Commander Freddie in Bataan was killed by military forces, Efren Lopez was assigned by Sumulong to replace him, and as was the tradition within the Huk movement, Lopez took the name Commander Freddie in order to maintain the appearance of continuity. Dante and Freddie were not simply Sumulong's mafiosi. Their politics expressed a form of grassroots reformism common to much of social banditry – the popular redress of local grievances; a mild redistribution of wealth in combination with support for landlords who were perceived as just; and support for candidates who articulated agrarian reformist goals. In many ways Dante's politics in 1967-68 were not unlike those of Luis Taruc and the SPP at the time of its merger with the PKP thirty years earlier, and it was these political sentiments that led Dante, now disgruntled with Sumulong, to become the head of the armed wing of the newly founded CPP.

The 'Katzenjammer kids' were not the only forces seeking independence from Sumulong. In March 1967 a group under the leadership of Mariano de Guzman, known as Commander Diwa, broke with Sumulong. There were initially four members in the Diwa splinter group and they had between them one weapon, an automatic carbine which they referred to as the "First Lady." Diwa would later claim that they adhered to "Marxism-Leninism" and were loyal to the PKP, and in an article written in 1972, the PKP claimed that Diwa's men in 1967 immediately set about "systematically liquidating notorious spies and notorious carabao thieves."⁹ Among those whom the PKP claimed Diwa's group assassinated was Angeles City Councilor Benjamin Serrano, a leading bagman for Sumulong.¹⁰ According to Lachica, the assassination of Serrano took place in late 1968, and was "charged to professional assassins organized by the constabulary," but this does not contradict the PKP's claim that Diwa carried out the killing, for the ties between Diwa and the Monkees, the paramilitary force organized under the Philippine Constabulary, were intimate and long-lasting.¹¹

Thus at the beginning of 1969 both the PKP and the newly-founded CPP acquired armed wings from disgruntled capos of the gangster Sumulong. The PKP, with its intimate and growing ties to Marcos, built an armed wing which was deeply connected to the PC, while the CPP formed its armed wing with the support of Marcos' leading rival, Ninoy Aquino. Aquino and Congressman Jose Yap played a crucial role in connecting Sison with his guerrilla army under Dante.

⁸Ibid., 159.

⁹*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972): 13, PRP 36/06.04.

¹⁰Even within the 1972 article this claim was contradictory. One page states that he was assassinated in March 1967, and another in 1968.

¹¹Lachica, *The Huks*, 222. Some details on the shooting of Serrano can be found in Tayag, *Recollections & Digressions*, 155.

The ties between Yap and Aquino, on the one hand, and Dante on the other, had long been cultivated by the politicians. Aquino allowed Dante to move freely throughout his Hacienda Luisita, and Yap, on returning from a visit to China, had given Dante a copy of Mao's Red Book. Lachica explained the motives of Aquino and Yap, "[T]here were important politicians to whom an independent Huk command in Tarlac would not be unwelcome. It could be used both as a buffer against the ambitious Sumulong and as a form of leverage in dealing with rival politicians."¹² Sumulong was Marcos' man and his forces backed the interests of Malacañang. Dante provided Aquino with an armed base of popular opposition to Sumulong and his men, and therefore to Marcos. Connecting Dante with Sison and the CPP presented Aquino the possibility of expanding his base of armed support to a national scale. In October 1968, Aquino and Sison met and discussed "how big a problem Marcos was,"¹³ and Yap, Aquino, and Rodolfo Salas arranged a meeting between Sison and Dante. The meeting took place in late January 1969 in Dante's hometown of Talimundoc, Capas. According to Jones, Aquino later reported to his friends that he personally drove Sison to this meeting.¹⁴ Among the crucial conditions which facilitated both the discussions between Sison and Dante from January to March 1969, as well as the founding of the NPA at the end of March, was the demilitarization of Tarlac from November 7 1968 to April 10 1969. Dante and his men moved about in peace throughout the province, and Sison and his cohort traveled freely between Manila and Tarlac. The demilitarization, which effectively removed the massive military build up of Task Force Lawin from the province, lasted precisely from the founding of the party to the establishment of the New People's Army. The negotiated removal of the military was entirely the doing of Aquino and was referred to in the press as the "Ninoy Aquino peace plan".¹⁵

The founding of the Communist Party and the intervention of Yap and Aquino electrified Dante and after a year of struggle within Sumulong's organization, Dante made preparations for a formal break. He attempted to reestablish communications with Freddie, with whom it seems he had had little contact since November 1967. Freddie was also engaged in a struggle with Sumulong, who dispatched Fonting to kill Freddie and his men, but their attempt, staged in Lubao at the beginning of 1969, was unsuccessful. On January 7, Freddie, Dante and

¹²Lachica, *The Huks*, 161.

¹³The source for this statement was an interview with Sison himself. (Mark Richard Thompson, "Searching for a strategy: The traditional opposition to Marcos and the transition to democracy in the Philippines (Volumes I and II)" [PhD diss., Yale University, 1991], 110).

¹⁴Jones, *Red Revolution*, 27, 29. Sison claimed that he first met Dante in December 1968 in Capas, that the January meeting was their second meeting, and that he returned to live with Dante beginning in February. (Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 59).

¹⁵MB, 3 Aug 1969. Aquino's speech announcing the peace plan and the details of the plan are available in Benigno S. Jr. Aquino, *A Garrison State in the Make and other speeches* (n.p.: Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Foundation, 1985), 173-190.

twelve other men arranged to meet. They were joined by Commander Robert, a Huk commander who had fought under Sylvestre Liwanag in the 1950s and who now owned fifty-four hectares of rice land. During the meeting they arranged to hold a larger gathering of their forces two days later in Orani, Bataan. This was to be “one of the biggest Huk caucuses in years,” and seventy-six people were anticipated to attend.¹⁶ The AFP caught wind of the gathering, and on January 9, the forces of Brig. Gen. Emilio Zerrudo surrounded the meeting site with the US military providing helicopter air support for Zerrudo from Clark Airbase.¹⁷ Conflict erupted between the Huk forces gathered in Orani and Zerrudo’s 250 soldiers, and the firefight was followed by a sixteen hour siege. When the siege was lifted, seventeen Huks had been killed by machine-gun fire, among them Commander Freddie, his wife, and Commander Robert, and their bodies were displayed for the press to photograph. Dante and his men never arrived. Seeing the standoff between Freddie’s and Zerrudo’s forces, Dante returned safely to Tarlac.¹⁸

Many questions emerge out of the slaughter of January 9 in Orani. Why did Dante arrange to meet with Freddie in Bataan, which was under heavy military surveillance at the time, and not on his home turf of Tarlac, which had been demilitarized in November 1968? Why did Zerrudo launch his assault prior to the arrival of Dante? What role did Sumulong play, if any, in either informing or assisting Zerrudo? It is clear that the Huk gathering on January 9 was intended to discuss the possibility, recently broached by Aquino and Yap, of the Huk forces joining with the newly formed CPP. Freddie was found to be carrying in his wallet the “names and photographs of many young students in Manila.”¹⁹

In the wake of the Orani massacre, Sumulong sent four of his men – Madrigal, Tronco, Cruz, and Zaragoza – to attempt to persuade Dante to return to the fold. In February, Dante, now working closely with Sison, traveled on his motorcycle to speak with Sumulong in Angeles. He would subsequently claim that the negotiations with Sumulong were an attempt to win over some of Sumulong’s lieutenants. According to Lachica, Dante succeeded in securing the support of five or six of Sumulong’s sub-commanders and he “installed them in larger positions,” promising them promotions over their current rank.²⁰ These forces won over from Sumulong in February formed a portion of the leadership of the New People’s Army (NPA) at its founding a month later. Among the recruits was Benjamin Bie, Jr., known as Commander Melody, who two months later was made a member of the central committee of the CPP, and within two years became a leading agent of the Philippine military.²¹

¹⁶Lachica, *The Huks*, 146.

¹⁷AB, 15 Jan 1970, 14.

¹⁸Lachica, *The Huks*, 147.

¹⁹Ibid., 160.

²⁰Lachica, *The Huks*, 161.

²¹Lachica, *The Huks*, 168-169.

A final Recto Dinner

In interviews and published accounts, Sison claimed that he took up residency in Tarlac after the founding of the party, but did not mention that he continued to regularly travel to Manila. On February 21, at the 11th Claro M Recto Lecture-Dinner at Eugene's Restaurant in Cubao, Sison delivered a final public speech before going underground, a tribute entitled "Recto and the National Democratic Struggle."²² Despite having just founded the CPP and being in the process of establishing the NPA, Sison found the time to join in SCAUP's semestral tradition, which it still continued nine years after Recto's death.

Sison affirmed, as always, that the necessary struggle was for national democracy and national industrialization through an alliance of all "progressive" classes. Recto himself, Sison argued, had been "essentially a mouthpiece of the progressive anti-imperialist wing of the national bourgeoisie." (5) He had, however, along with the rest of the national bourgeoisie in the Philippines, underestimated the significance of the peasantry, focused exclusively on national industrialization and ignored the need for an "agrarian revolution." Sison stated that

For more than ten years already, every administration has found it suitable to use such slogans as "Filipino First", "Unfinished Revolution" and "New Filipino," with a seemingly national democratic content but actually *devoid of any determination* to achieve national democracy. (12, emphasis added)

The "vacillating" bourgeoisie could be given motive force – determination – toward national democracy only if the great masses of the peasantry were set in motion. To achieve this it was necessary to focus first on agrarian revolution, not national industrialization. This meant that without the motive force of the people's war – which Sison did not yet explicitly mention – the national bourgeoisie lacked the determination to carry out the national democratic revolution, and the working class lacked the capacity. The working class therefore needed to mobilize the peasantry to carry out an armed struggle, for only the armed struggle could create a change in state power which would facilitate the carrying out of the national democratic revolution. What Sison was articulating – the primacy of the agrarian revolution carried out by armed struggle – was a tactical break with his own past, but he did not acknowledge this at all. He dismissed figures like Sukarno as phony "anti-imperialists," and stated that "the objective" of Macapagal's land reform program was "to assuage the peasant masses and keep them passive." He spoke with a self-assurance born of a confidence that either no one remembered what he had said and done but six years prior, or that those who did, shared in his hypocrisy.²³

²²Jose Ma. Sison, *Recto and the National Democratic Struggle* (Manila: Progressive Publications, 1969).

²³Like everyone of Sison's speeches, this speech had a lengthy afterlife, and was reprinted

The Founding of the NPA

On March 29 1969, Dante and eight of his lieutenants, along with Sison and four or five members of the Central Committee of the CPP, gathered in Santa Rita, Capas, Tarlac to officially establish the New People's Army (NPA). As the founding of the CPP had been backdated to coincide with Mao's birthday, the founding of the NPA was scheduled to take place on the anniversary of the establishment of the Hukbalahap on March 29 1942.²⁴ The eight lieutenants who were the founding commanders of the NPA were:²⁵

Juanito Rivera. Known as Commander Juaning, he was the barrio captain of Sta. Rita, Capas and a long-time lieutenant of Dante. At thirty-four, he was among the older leaders in the CPP-NPA at the time.

Jose Buscayno. Known as Commander Joe, he was the younger brother of Dante. Joe was killed in February 1970 by one of the Monkees who was a leading member of a paramilitary Barrio Self-Defense Unit (BSDU).²⁶

Diosdado Layug. Known as Commander Eddie, he was in his sixties and was by far the oldest member present. A veteran of the Hukbalahap struggle against the Japanese occupation, he surrendered to the government in 1973.²⁷

Ruben Tuazon. Known as Commander Rubio, he was an employee of Aquino, and the barrio captain of Tinang, Concepcion, Tarlac. He was killed in Nueva Ecija shortly after the declaration of martial law.²⁸

multiple times, showing up in the *Collegian*, in journals, and in organizational publications from 1969-1972. It was initially published as the first volume of a new publication series entitled *Progressive Pamphlets*. *Progressive Pamphlets* was intended to be a series of slight occasional publications replacing the regular journal *Progressive Review*, which Sison and his editorial board could no longer maintain. The Recto pamphlet projected that the series would soon be publishing two other works by Sison, *Sophism of the Christian Social Movement* and *Rebel Poems*, but it appears that while *Sophism* was eventually published by Progressive Pamphlets, *Rebel Poems* was not. The Recto Pamphlet contained an editorial statement that "the main reason for letting the latter [Progressive Review] have its continued existence in the form of Progressive Pamphlets is to free its publishers from the rigid rule of periodicity which is not made possible by the limited number of Left readers in English in the Philippines today and by the consequently constant financial difficulties. Subscribers to the Progressive Review who agree to receive Progressive Pamphlets shall have their subscription payments applied to the latter. The contents of the Progressive Pamphlets are such as to last long in interest. This will afford its publishers the chance to dispose their stock without being pressed by a periodic deadline." (ibid., backmatter). Despite the editorial disclaimers, the pamphlet was a slight publication and the new series could by no means be considered an adequate replacement for the Progressive Review.

²⁴Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 20.

²⁵Jones, *Red Revolution*, 31; 316, fn. 1.

²⁶Jose Fronda Santos Jr., "Affidavit of Jose Fronda Santos Jr.," chap. Appendix 2 in *Foreign assistance legislation for fiscal year 1985: hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-eighth Congress, second session* (Washington: US GPO, 1984), 334-354.

²⁷Jones, *Red Revolution*, 32, 316. Layug's age can be determined by the fact that in 1977 he was the oldest political detainee at seventy-two.

²⁸Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 491; Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 61.

Segundo Miranda. Known as Commander Goody, he was killed in Tarlac in December 1974 at the age of thirty-eight.²⁹

Benjamin Bie, Jr. Known as Commander Melody, he joined Sumulong's group at the age of sixteen and was nineteen in May 1969 when he was made a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Melody's cousin was a building inspector for the Angeles City government, and Melody's father ran a construction firm. Melody had been responsible for collecting rice and monetary "taxes" from barrio populations which he passed to Dante, who in turn passed a share of the taxes to Sumulong. In January 1971, Melody became an operative and assassin for the Philippine military. After the declaration of martial law he was a key witness for the Marcos government against Aquino. He was killed by the NPA in 1976.³⁰

Roberto Santos. Known as Commander Felman, he was captured in 1973.

And **Elias.** He was the barrio captain of Panaliksikan, Concepcion, Tarlac.³¹

Of these eight men, within five years of the founding of the NPA, one had become a government agent; another had surrendered; one had been captured; and three were dead. Under Dante and his lieutenants were fifty guerrillas armed with approximately thirty-five weapons. This was the New People's Army. On its founding the NPA issued a statement which was subsequently published in the July issue of *Ang Bayan*. The document declared

Our Army is new in two senses. It is new in the sense that it is fundamentally different from the reactionary puppet Armed Forces of the Philippines (and all its supplementary forces) that wages armed suppression of the people and defends the exploiting classes. It is also new in the sense that it is fundamentally different from the black bourgeois line that has persisted in the People's Army and has sabotaged the revolutionary armed struggle for quite a long time already.³²

The document traced the historical roots of the "Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique" to the "black bourgeois line of the Lavaites," more specifically to Jesus Lava's decision in May 1964 to appoint Pedro Taruc as Secretary of Peasants. This "one-man appointment" without democratic consultation led to the deviations of the Sumulong clique. The document did not mention that Lava employed

²⁹Jones misidentifies Goody as Ernesto Miranda. Jones, *Red Revolution*, 316 fn. 1. Ernesto Miranda was Commander Panchito.

³⁰So *The People May Know, Volume I*, 217, 319, 453. After the creation of the NPA the taxes collected by Melody and others were passed to Linda Taruc – wife of Leoncio Co and employee of Aquino – who was the head of finances. An unrecognizably fictionalized film of Melody's life was released in 1983 starring Ramon Revilla.

³¹Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 55.

³²AB, July 1969, 40.

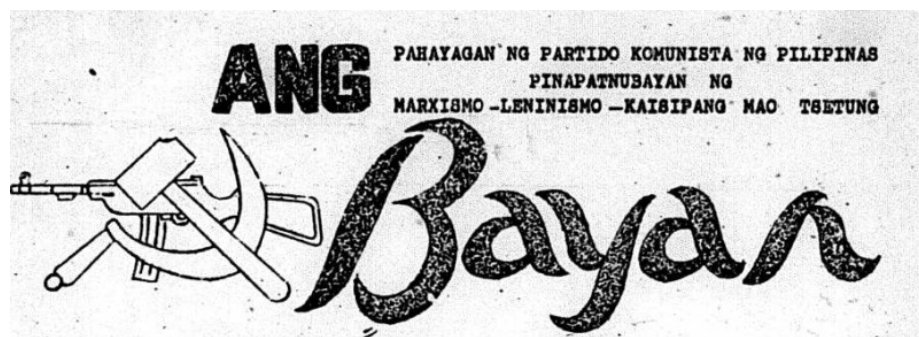


Figure 21.1: Masthead of *Ang Bayan*

this same decision-making process to appoint Sison Youth Secretary, nor that Sumulong's gangster activities long predated the decision.³³

The central task of this new army was to carry out the agrarian revolution as a means of building stable rural base areas for waging a protracted people's war.

... since the peasant struggle for land is the main content of the people's democratic revolution, the New People's Army must launch an agrarian revolution and mobilize the peasant masses, the vast majority of the Filipino people, for the people's democratic revolution.

...

It is only through agrarian revolution that rural bases can be created as great rears for the emergence of more rural bases and more guerilla zones ...

It is only by having stable base areas can [*sic*] the New People's Army wage a protracted people's war. From these stable base areas, it can advance wave upon wave against the enemy. ...

It is now the urgent task of the New People's Army to establish the armed independent regime in the countryside on the basis of agrarian revolution.³⁴

The NPA, in base areas which it had militarily secured, would implement land reform, which it termed "agrarian revolution," and on this basis the CPP would build a united front with all "progressive classes," for they would win the support not only of the peasantry, but of the national bourgeoisie as well. "Because the New People's Army shall confiscate the imperialist goods and deprive the imperialists of markets in the provinces, the national bourgeoisie and small patriotic businessmen shall be encouraged to produce goods locally and to support the revolutionary forces." (52) The CPP-NPA was telling allied businessmen that they would both confiscate the goods of their business rivals

³³AB, July 1969, 44.

³⁴AB, July 1969, 51.

and provide them with privileged market access. This was a protection racket; a protection racket with a political program, but a protection racket nonetheless. Sison elaborated further on his conception of agrarian revolution to secure a base of support in the peasantry in his Political Report to the Second Plenum of the First Central Committee.

Our guerrilla zones cannot be expanded and consolidated without fulfilling certain reforms that a genuine people's army should conduct. Rent and interest rates should be greatly reduced and local landlord despots, local bullies, fascist marauders and bad elements like bandits and cattle rustlers should be punished and done away with. There should be a great difference between our presence and absence in a particular area. When we are around, the peasant masses should enjoy so many benefits that they inevitably lose should the enemy take full control of the area.³⁵

In addition to the founding statement of the NPA, the CPP issued a second document on March 29, *Basic Rules of the New People's Army*, which stated

The New People's Army will pass through three strategic stages in waging the protracted people's war. The first stage is the strategic defensive, wherein it maintains the initiative in tactical offensives against the strategic military advantage of the enemy. The second stage is the strategic stalemate, wherein its fighting capacity is more or less equal to that of the enemy. The third and final stage is the strategic offensive, wherein the forces of the New People's Army have developed their strength capable of assaulting the enemy forces in their very own fortifications within the cities and in big camps.³⁶

According to the Basic Rules, the NPA was responsible for maintaining "public order. It shall arrest bad elements and take them to people's courts for trial." (123) Membership in the NPA was open to anyone "who is physically fit, regardless of age, sex, race, nationality or religion." (124) The fact that membership had no minimum age requirement meant that the NPA could recruit children. Not only was this permissible, but at later stages in the development of the NPA they pursued a calculated strategy of recruiting the very young as child soldiers. In the first half of 1971, the second plenum of the Central Committee of the CPP produced a document on building organs of political power, which called for the formation of Barrio Organizing Committees to "Prepare the masses for

³⁵Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 295.

³⁶*ibid.*, 121. This tripartite division of strategic stages was taken directly from the writings of Mao, who apparently did not play chess, a game in which a stalemate ends play in a draw.



Figure 21.2: A page from a comic to recruit child soldiers to the NPA.

armed struggle.”³⁷ These committees were to be composed of “peasants, workers, youth [kabataan], women, and children [mga bata].” Children, distinct from and younger than ‘youths’, were being prepared for the armed struggle. The document went on to specify that these children, who could be “led by the Party”, ranged in age from *seven to thirteen years old*, and the Party would recruit them by “teaching them revolutionary slogans, stories and songs.”³⁸

One of the most effective means of teaching these “revolutionary stories” were the comic books produced for the NPA which showed young children enthusiastically joining the armed struggle. In 1983, for example, *Ulós*, a literary and artistic publication of the CPP, produced a comic entitled, “Ang Batang Rebolusyonaryo” [The Revolutionary Child].³⁹ The protagonist of the comic, Marlo, was a peasant child of about eleven years old, who determines to take up arms with the NPA. His mother tells him that he is too young and needs to finish his studies first, but he assures her that “Inang, mabuti habang bata pa’y mag-umpisa na ako, para maaga pa’y tumibay na ang aking isip at katawan.” [Mother, it will be good if I begin while I’m still a child so that from an early age I can strengthen my mind and my body.] Besides, he continues, “we do study, the

³⁷Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Mga Kaukulang Probisyon sa Saligang Batas ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, PRP 04/02.02, 9-16.

³⁸Ibid., 20.

³⁹*Ulós*, Sep 1983, 25-33; PRP 43/10.10.

things that you can't learn in school." His mother weeps, but he leaves his parents to take up the armed struggle. Marlo joins the NPA and weeps tears of joy when the NPA gives him a gun. The NPA commander states, "It will be good if we can get more guns, comrades, so that all the members of our children's organization [samahan ng mga bata] could have one as well." Marlo, now referred to as Ka Marlo [Comrade Marlo], proceeds to recruit other children from many barrios to support the armed struggle and the protest movement. Marlo and the other children capture a police officer at gunpoint, telling him "Don't move or we'll kill you." They tie him up, a hostage of the NPA, and the children all delightedly celebrate their first successful military operation [operasyong militar].

In addition to comic books to promote the NPA to children, the CPP produced reading primers along similar lines. The January 1978 issue of *Ulós* published a story which had clearly been written to teach children to read, entitled "The Two Children and the Gun."⁴⁰ [Ang Dalawang Bata at ang Baril] It was published as part of a recurring feature of *Ulós*, "Stories for Children" [Kuwento Para sa mga Bata]. Two peasant children, Tanglaw and Estrella, steal guns for the NPA from the "mean soldiers." A brief sample will suffice.

Outside, Tanglaw quietly carried a long gun. It was heavy! But he could do it! It was good that he was strong. He ran behind the house, where there were many plants. He had to be careful! If he dropped the gun, it would be trouble! The enemy would notice. They should not notice!⁴¹

Under conditions of military dictatorship the Communist Party of the Philippines sought to recruit children to the NPA with stories which they could have published in a charming little volume entitled "See Dick and Jane take up Armed Struggle."

⁴⁰ *Ulós*, Jan 1978, 14–19; PRP 43/10.08.

⁴¹ Sa labas, walang ingay na binuhat ni Tanglaw ang isang mahabang baril. Mabigat! Pero kaya naman niya! Mabuti't malakas siya. Tumakbo siya sa likod ng bahay, doon sa maraming halaman. Kailangan mag-ingat! Pag nabagsak ang baril, lagot na! Mapapansin ng kaaway. Di nila dapat mapansin!

— 22 —

The First Plenum

Sa piling mo, o, Sierra Madre
Kandungang mo'y laging hinahanap

— Coritha, *Sierra Madre*

The CPP had secured its army, but to carry out its program of agrarian revolution it needed a base of support in the peasantry. Unfortunately the PKP controlled MASAKA entirely, and while the leadership of the PKP peasant group was splitting into two factions, neither faction in 1969 had any ties to the CPP. In April, the CPP attempted to create a peasant organization of its own by mobilizing the ties of Dante's Huk units and, above all, the financial and political support of Ninoy Aquino. The group staged a spectacular one-day protest and then disappeared from the historical record. Lasting gains in the peasantry would require a different approach. In May the Central Committee held its first plenum, ratifying the decisions made at the founding of the NPA and expanding the central committee to include its leadership. A month later a military raid captured the vital documents of the party, forcing the leadership to redirect a significant portion of the party's work to other regions and Sison began planning to establish a Yan'an-style base for the party in Northern Luzon.

On April 18, a contingent of nearly ten thousand peasants from Central Luzon traveled to Manila to demonstrate in front of Congress, in buses which had been quietly paid for by Aquino.¹ The event marked the brief emergence of the Pagkakaisa ng mga Magbubukid sa Pilipinas [Unity of Philippine Peasants] (PMP) on the national stage. The PMP was an attempt, using the funds and influence of Aquino, to win the Central Luzon peasantry away from MASAKA. The KM wrote in 1984 that with this protest it “served notice that it enjoyed the support not only of MASAKA (Malayang Samahan ng mga Magsasaka) led by the late Felixberto S. Olalia but also a new and larger peasant organization.”² The

¹Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat,” 6; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 380. In 1984, the KM claimed incorrectly that the demonstration took place on April 11, and that twenty thousand attended. (KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 4).

²Ibid.

CPP did not have the support of Olalia. While Olalia did break with the majority of MASAKA in the latter half of 1969, taking a very small contingent of members with him, this was not out of support for Sison and the CPP. Both Olalia and the majority of MASAKA opposed Sison's party in 1969. The fight between Olalia and the majority of MASAKA led by the attorney, Romerico Flores, commenced in July 1969 over the endorsement of Blas Ople for a seat in the Senate. *Ang Bayan* wrote, "All the love and labor expended by the Olalia and Flores-Santos factions went to naught when the senatorial line-up of the Nacionalista Party was finally announced. Ople did not make it."³ The details of the dispute over Ople are not available, but it is clear that *Ang Bayan* ridiculed both sections of MASAKA in August 1969; they as yet had no alliance with Olalia, and while he did eventually ally with the CPP, this did not take place in 1969. After the April 18 protest, the PMP disappeared from historical record. It appears to have been a false start, lacking any political core beyond the mobilizing effect of Aquino's money.

The First Plenum of the Central Committee

On May 12, the CPP convened the first plenum of the Central Committee in Sta Rita, Capas. Carlos del Rosario and Rodolfo Salas, both of whom had been invited to join the CPP's founding congress but did not, attended the Plenum, which lasted for two days. Sison chaired the gathering and delivered the opening address, laying stress on "the necessity of waging an armed agrarian revolution to create and consolidate the base areas and guerrilla zones to encircle the cities."⁴ Dante read the NPA's March 29 resolution repudiating "once and for all" the Taruc-Sumulong group. The plenum ratified the Basic Rules of the NPA and passed a number of resolutions. They voted to expand the Central Committee of the CPP to twenty-two members incorporating Dante and his commanders into the leadership of the Communist Party.⁵ A Military commission of the CPP, comprised of Sison, Art Garcia, Nilo Tayag, Dante and Diosdado Layug, was created to directly control the activities of the NPA.⁶ Dante was named commander in chief of the NPA and made a member of the Executive Committee of the CPP, the body responsible for its day-to-day decision-making.⁷

³AB, August 1969, 11.

⁴Jones, *Red Revolution*, 34; Caouette, "Persevering Revolutionaries," 120; *So The People May Know, Volume I*, 16; AB, July 1969, 5.

⁵Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 105.

⁶Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 104; *So The People May Know, Volume I*, 94.

⁷Dante and Leoncio Co had spent most of March translating the founding documents of the CPP into Tagalog. Mao's Red Book had also been translated into Tagalog and published in Central Luzon, including the introduction by Lin Biao. (Mao Zedong, *Mga Siniping Pangungusap mula sa Tagapangulong Mao Tse-Tung*, 1969, PRP 13/04.01). The plenum passed a resolution that every party member and candidate member would be supplied with a Tagalog language edition of *Quotations of Chairman Mao Tse-tung* "as a constant companion guide in dealing with every

In July, the lead editorial of *Ang Bayan* hailed the gathering as the first plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party since 1951, and described this gap as “a damning indictment of those who assumed the formal titles of leadership in the Party but who have wantonly abandoned their responsibilities.”⁸ The editorial listed the primary achievements of the plenum in a single grammatically confused sentence, “The First Plenum can never be forgotten as the occasion when preparations are made for the agrarian revolution, when the Central Committee is re-strengthened with the representative inclusion of more proletarian revolutionary cadres from the New People’s Army and the peasant movement, when the Military commission is formed, when the *Basic Rules of the New People’s Army* is ratified and the party organization, party education and party finances are further improved.”⁹

The central focus of the May 1969 plenum was the armed struggle in the countryside. Building the armed struggle would provide the basis for an agrarian revolution which, in turn, would cement the unity of the working class and the peasantry, which would serve as the foundation for the united front with all progressive classes including the national bourgeoisie. The documents of the plenum asserted that “All the national democratic struggles of workers, students, teachers, the entire urban petty bourgeoisie and patriotic businessmen will be rendered weak if the Communist Party of the Philippines and the working class do not intensify their efforts to lead, rouse up and mobilize the poor peasants and farm workers in an agrarian revolution.” *Ang Bayan* declared “Contrary to the expectations of the US imperialists, the landlords and bureaucrat capitalists, the bourgeois Agricultural Land Reform Code is proving to be more of an accelerator of revolt among poor peasants and farm workers all over the country than a damper.”¹⁰ The CPP, it stated “repudiates the counter-revolutionary class line of the Lava revisionist renegade clique which maintains a legalist and reformist peasant organization, covers up the key role of the agrarian revolution and leaves the land problem to the bourgeois government.” While they did not acknowledge it, what the CPP was repudiating was the political line which Joma Sison had been instrumental in crafting and implementing six year earlier. The CPP called for the creation of “revolutionary barrio councils,” claiming that the peasants “can seize the lands, confiscate the landlord’s granary and livestock, eradicate usury, punish all local despots and establish political power, *if they want to*.”¹¹ The only thing that was needed in order to carry out the agrarian revolution according to the CPP was political will. The NPA existed to “rouse up and mobilize” this will in the peasantry.

problem and situation.” (So *The People May Know*, Volume I, 15-16).

⁸AB, July 1969, 1.

⁹AB, July 1969, 1.

¹⁰AB, July 1969, 8.

¹¹Emphasis added.

The Raid at Sta. Rita

Arthur Garcia spent a good portion of the first half of the year supervising workers digging in the clay soil of Sta Rita. He had a conception, derived in part from the conflict in Vietnam, that the NPA should construct a network of tunnels between the various villages of Tarlac. As the digging went on, members of the CPP leadership set up their lives in the barrio, building homes and establishing a piggery. Behind one of the houses was a large underground shelter, ten feet wide, ten feet high and thirty feet deep.¹² The tunnels and the underground shelter were neatly cemented affairs; Sison made one of them his office and in another the party kept its papers, PC uniforms, arms, a jeep and a Rambler car.¹³ On June 9, 1969, the tunnels and documents of the party were discovered by the military during a raid on Sta. Rita. The AFP arrived in the barrio in pursuit of a policeman named Antonio Lansangan, an ally of the CPP, and in the process stumbled across the CPP's hideout.¹⁴ The internal documents of the party were captured, along with bags [bayong-bayong] full of the application papers of the KM.¹⁵

This was a serious blow. The CPP lost its base of operations and the government discovered its existence, its membership, and its intimate connection with and control over the KM. When the Marcos government began to accuse the KM of being a front organization of the Communist Party, they were speaking the truth and they knew it.¹⁶ The CPP tried to spin the raid in the pages of *Ang Bayan*:

These thugs of the reactionary government get nowhere. Although on June 9, in their raid on Barrio Sta. Maria [*sic*] of Capas Tarlac, they stumbled upon two tunnels and some books and mimeographed documents, they failed to come upon a single Red cadre or soldier. They merely stumbled upon some facilities captured from them by the New People's Army in previous engagements and some reading materials inadvertently left and which could in no way help them suppress the rising wave of armed struggle.¹⁷

The military knew that the tunnels were not AFP tunnels captured by the

¹²So *The People May Know, Volume I*, 426.

¹³Among their other possessions was a movie projector. Some of these details are from an interview with Juanito Rivera. (Dabet Castañeda, "Armed Struggle still Relevant – CPP Founding Member," *Bulatlat*, May 2006, <http://bulatlat.com/main/2006/05/08/armed-struggle-still-relevant-%7B%5C%7DE2%7B%5C%7D80%7B%5C%7D93-cpp-founding-member/>).

¹⁴Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 88.

¹⁵Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 42.

¹⁶The AFP chose to publish selections from the captured documents in a series entitled *So the People May Know*. They later used these publications as evidence in arguments before the Supreme Court in 1971 in defense of Marcos' suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

¹⁷AB, July 1969, 6.

NPA, and that the documents they had captured were not “reading materials inadvertently left behind.” *Ang Bayan* was not lying to the government, but to its readership. Rey Casipe and Ruben Guevarra were tasked with immediately informing the central committee of the raid, and on June 11 an emergency meeting was convened in Guevarra’s home. Arthur Garcia called for escalating armed strikes and the renewed construction of a network of tunnels between barrios in Central Luzon, but Sison and Tayag opposed him and won over the central committee. They determined to redeploy the forces of the CPP throughout the country. The raid on Sta. Rita thrust the newly founded party into national prominence. Beginning in August, select details from the captured documents made headlines in the major papers, and the party was the topic of discussion in the editorial pages: a new Communist Party had been founded and it was at the head of a New People’s Army – this was news.¹⁸ The name Dante, in particular, as head of the New People’s Army, entered national discussion. The Collegian published statements from Dante, including a call to “Study the Mass Line,” and by November, the *Intercourse*, a satirical paper, had popularized the slogan “Commander Dante for President!”¹⁹

Deployment

Sison’s basic conception was to build a base of operations in Isabela province in Northern Luzon, in the thick of the Sierra Madre mountains, which would serve as a Yan’an, a liberated zone from which the NPA could build and to which it could fall back. He began drawing up a study of the region in preparation for the deployment of the NPA. He traveled with Guevarra to the home of Satur Ocampo in Parañaque where he stayed for two days and then journeyed north to Pangasinan and Baguio, where he wrote a Preliminary Report on Northern Luzon. Ibarra Tubianosa went to Baguio with Sison and assisted him in the writing of the report, which established the geographical, economic and political bases for building revolutionary fronts of the NPA in Northern Luzon, and which was distributed to Party members in mimeographed form on August 8.²⁰ Salas recounted that Faustino Dy, the mayor of Cauayan, Isabela, “was instrumental

¹⁸The Manila *Bulletin* published photos of Vivencio Jose in China on its front page, captioning him the “Fidel of Mindanao,” where they claimed he had been deployed by the party. (MB, 6 Aug 1969.) It was far from the truth, as Jose at the head of the SDK was a political enemy of Sison and the CPP and he claimed that Sison attempted to have him assassinated in 1969. Whether or not this was true, there was no love lost between the two. Voltaire Garcia filed libel charges against the *Bulletin* on behalf of Jose, and both the SDK and the BRPF issued statements defending him, but the KM remained silent. (PC, 13 Aug; 20 Aug 1969).

¹⁹“Commander Dante for President!,” *Intercourse* 1, no. 1 (November 1969), PRP 31/03.01 The paper announced that Alfredo [*sic*] Buscayno, alias Commander Dante, had been endorsed by both the famed gangster Nardong Putik and by the Iglesia Ni Kristo. By January 1970, the satirical cover had become a slogan of the First Quarter Storm.

²⁰A reprinted version of the report is available in Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 229-253.

in enabling the NPA to develop a base in the province.” Ninoy Aquino, Salas claimed, “introduced Dy to the NPA ... For some time Joma even stayed in Dy’s house. ... He helped us a lot.”²¹ Salas further reported that “With the NPA’s help, Dy was elected governor of Isabela in 1971.” Dy broke with the NPA with the declaration of martial law and allied with Marcos, thus securing his hold as governor for the next twenty years. The NPA was friendly not only with the local political elite of Isabela but with logging corporations as well, and Sison recounted that “in the forest region of Isabela, we did united front work with logging businessmen.”²²

While Sison and others engaged in preparatory work for the move to Isabela, expansion work was being conducted elsewhere. Nilo Tayag traveled to Laguna with Rey Casipe and Ruben Guevarra where they worked to organize striking workers in an alliance with the KM. Tayag continued to work in the Southern Tagalog region, while Casipe and Guevarra returned to Manila. Art Garcia went back to Tarlac with Dante and Rodolfo Salas. Garcia set about the military training of new recruits to the NPA. Dante and Salas became political instructors in a party training school set up within the Voice of America radio relay station compound, housed on Aquino’s Hacienda Luisita. Dante’s men worked as security guards there and they gave Dante and Salas, dressed in blue security guard uniforms, access to the compound.

As it spread, the CPP began to see its first casualties. In September, a contingent of the NPA under Juanito Rivera had an encounter with the military in Baluarte, Mabalacat, and Edgardo Payawal, a member of the US Tobacco Union and of KM, was killed.²³ In January 1970, as the First Quarter Storm was beginning in Manila, Arthur Garcia was shot in Tarlac by one of his own men. The CPP did not publicly admit that Garcia had been killed, and as government reports were published announcing his death, the CPP persistently denied the accounts. In September 1970, the KM was still proclaiming that Garcia was alive, “despite being reported dead thrice now.”²⁴ In February, Dante’s brother, Jose Buscayno, was killed, ambushed by a Barrio Self-Defense Unit (BSDU) in Capas. Leoncio Co was arrested in Capas in the same month.

Hermenigildo Garcia traveled south to Negros Oriental, where he founded a newspaper, the *Dumaguete Times*, which had a brief run publishing articles on the exploitation of the *sacada* laborers, the seasonal sugar plantation workers on island.²⁵ On August 7, Garcia, his wife, Mila Astorga, and the entire editorial staff

²¹ Antonio Lopez, “Running Revolution: The Life and Times of the Philippines Most Formidable Guerrilla Chief,” *Asiaweek*, March 1994, 35.

²² Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 90.

²³ Jones, *Red Revolution*, 36.

²⁴ PC, 4 Sep 1970, 6.

²⁵ Garcia also founded the Negros Oriental Youth Progressive Movement (NOYPM), a chapter of the KM in Dumaguete. Philidore Quingco was made president, Garcia was secretary.

of the *Dumaguete Times* were arrested on trumped-up charges of murder.²⁶ The NPA was actively recruiting sacadas to the armed struggle on Negros, and three members were arrested by the PC in Cadiz after a shootout.²⁷ One of the arrested, Apolinario Gatmaitan, was shot in the back and killed by the police, who claimed that he had been attempting to escape. Antonio Zumel, then a reporter at the *Manila Bulletin* and president of the National Press Club, called up his friend, Senator Doy Laurel, and they travel to Cadiz to attempt to secure the release of Garcia and his companions, and by September they were released on bail.²⁸ The charges against the *Dumaguete Times* group were dropped in February 1970, and Garcia went on to head the CPP's Preparatory Committee for the National Democratic Front.

At the core of the party's recruitment strategy was its work among the youth. Norman Quimpo accurately described the sentiment that the leadership of the CPP cultivated among youth in the city.

The student activists dream, at least for those aligned with the Nat-Dems, was to forsake their lives in the city and to settle in remote rural areas – *mamundok*, to go to the mountains, a figure of speech that was literally correct because of the mountainous terrain of the Sierra Madre, Bicol, and the northern provinces where they were headed ... The daunting challenge of leaving family and friends behind to embrace a life of hardship and constant danger working among the peasant masses took on the nature of a Grail Quest, because the writings of Mao and Sison imbued it with a heroic character.²⁹

By the end of 1969 party membership had risen to three hundred; most of those recruited to its ranks came from the KM.

²⁶The other arrested staff members were Noel Etabag; Vic Clemente, a leading member of the KM; and managing editor Philidore Quinco, a second year journalism student at Silliman University. (MB, 8 Aug 1969). They were charged with double murder in Cadiz and with triple murder in Victoria. (PC, 20 Aug 1969).

²⁷The three arrested were Apolinario Gatmaitan, Reynaldo Mallari and Damian Santoyo.

²⁸Zumel, *Radical Prose*, 318. Zumel had deep ties to the CPP at this point, and by the early 1970s had joined the party, becoming editor of *Ang Bayan*. Mila Astorga – headlined in the *Collegian* as the “Cadiz newshen” – Hermenigildo Garcia and Philidore Quingco spoke on the UP campus on September 12. (PC, 17 Sep, 23 Sep 1969).

²⁹Susan F. Quimpo and Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, *Subversive Lives: A Family Memoir of the Marcos Years* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2012), 37.

A Storm on the Horizon



A Storm on the Horizon

And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

— 1 Kings 18:44

The year 1969 was marked by a sense of impending crisis as the country's economy entered a tailspin. A series of strikes and protests broke out in the private universities of downtown Manila among the largely working class student population. They erupted outside of the control of the KM and were violently suppressed by the state. The KM, under the leadership of Sison, sought to corral these protests behind the national democratic movement, defusing the explosive class conflict that fueled the strikes.

In November both the PKP and the CPP split their endorsements in the presidential elections. Their front organizations among the youth either called for a boycott of the election or kept entirely silent. In other capacities, however, including through the NPA, they endorsed and campaigned for candidates – the PKP backed Marcos, the CPP Osmeña. Osmeña and the Liberal Party were routed, and in the wake of Marcos re-election, sections of the LP leadership began plotting to remove Marcos from office. Osmeña schemed coups and assassinations, while Aquino and others sought to mobilize the youth in mass protests to destabilize the Marcos government. The CPP, through the KM, happily complied.

Marcos had a falling out with his Vice President Fernando Lopez, with historic consequences. Lopez, in coordination with other sections of the ruling elite, bankrolled the KM and the protest movements of the next two years, actively seeking through a variety of means to destabilize the President.

A new sector of youth organizations came to national prominence in this period, proponents of Social Democracy. These groups, whose founders had ties to the Second International and to the CIA, were based largely at the elite universities run by the religious orders and were collectively known as SocDem. The CPP and its front organizations initially denounced them as clerico-fascists, but within a year they had formed an intimate alliance.

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Student Power

Now, the fact was, that both Mr. and Mrs. Squeers viewed the boys in the light of their proper and natural enemies; or, in other words, they held and considered that their business and profession was to get as much from every boy as could by possibility be screwed out of him.

— Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*

Nineteen sixty-nine opened with an explosion of student strikes in Manila. The strikes originated among working class youth in the university belt district, outraged by exorbitant tuition rates and decrepit facilities; by February, the majority of Manila's universities had been shut down. Some members of the CPP and the KM participated in the strike wave, but they did not inspire it nor did they lead. Sison, the KM, and the SDK sought to stymie the protests and used the slogan of "Student Power" to redirect social anger behind the banners of nationalism. Despite these shared political maneuvers, tensions between the SDK and the KM reached a high point in the middle of the year. The SDK allied with the MPKP against the KM in the Diliman campus elections and the KM in turn yoked itself to the conservative student organization, Young Philippines. Defeated again, the KM withdrew from campus life and the rivals all fixed their attention on Nixon's visit to Manila. Both the PKP and the CPP greeted the American President with bombing campaigns which would escalate over the course of the next three years and serve as the central pretext for martial law.

The preponderance of higher education in the Philippines was concentrated in Manila and disseminated from privately owned, profit-driven institutions. Their facilities stood clustered along Azcarraga on the northern bank of the Pasig, and within the squat stone walls of Intramuros on its south. Most were crowded, multi-story affairs to which entrance was afforded by a single roadside gate under the watchful eye of armed security guards, who inspected the entering students' uniforms and identification cards. There were in 1969 over half a million college students in the Philippines, one of the highest college enrollment per capita figures in the world.¹ The majority of these students came from working

¹Conde, "Students in the Philippines," 57; Student Power Assembly of the Philippines, *The*

class and peasant families, and were working their way through school – they were janitors on the night shift, stringers for newspapers, secretarial assistants for the university administration, and sales clerks on Escolta.

From Azcarraga, traverse the length of Quezon Boulevard past the circumferential Highway 54 – now renamed de los Santos, but the name had yet to take – and you would arrive in Diliman on the outskirts of Quezon City. There the state university – UP – sat in seeming rural isolation, its expansive facilities still spreading outward into fields of cogon and talahib. At its southern and eastern fringes were the impoverished communities of Cruz na Ligas and Balara, pushing towards Marikina. Twenty-five centavos and a thirty minute jeepney ride could get you from Diliman to Azcarraga, but a lifetime of labor would not have gotten most students in the university belt into the state university. UP provided an education to the children of the elite and the upper middle class, but also to the most outstanding scholars throughout the nation. The valedictorian of an impoverished provincial high school could be expected to attend the state university, and on a full scholarship. For the rest of the students, they would work their way through school downtown. Finally, there were the elite religious schools – Ateneo, La Salle, San Beda. These were the enclaves of the extremely wealthy, their corridors of power reserved to cassocks and caciques. They were entirely quiescent in 1969. It was the class divide between Azcarraga and Diliman that shaped the course of the protests.

Student Strikes

The global climate of student unrest in the summer of 1968 provided the initial impetus to the protests that began in the Lyceum and set fire to the fuel of student grievances throughout downtown Manila. Nick Joaquin, writing in the *Philippines Free Press* in September 1968, anticipated that Paris would be emulated by the “anarchs of academe” in the Philippines, but he had his eye on the “groves of Diliman” not the pavement of Azcarraga.² The government, too, anticipated a surge of student protests. Aquino, in an attempt to channel and win the support of the emerging unrest, drafted a Magna Carta of Student Rights, which codified a set of limited rights and obligations for students, asserting, for example, the students’ right to free assembly on campus. He did not, however, address the skyrocketing tuition rates and crumbling infrastructure that set off the 1969 explosion.

Writing in November 1968, in direct response to Nick Joaquin’s article of two months prior, Sison attempted to subordinate the anticipated protests to

Diliman Declaration, March 1969, PRP 17/12.01.

²For a cogent analysis of the development of student protest, and the role of Stalinism, in Paris in the summer of 1968, see Peter Schwarz, “1968: The general strike and the student revolt in France,” *World Socialist Web Site*, September 2008, accessed 29 April 2016, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2008/09/1968-so8.html>.

the national democratic movement. He held up the Red Guard in China as the model for the struggles of the youth, and derided the “ultra-revisionist youth” of Eastern Europe.³ To succeed, he wrote, “the growing ferment manifested often by student action” needed to adopt the program of national democratic revolution articulated by the КМ, by demanding “the national-democratic reorientation of our educational system.”⁴ What this amounted to, as we will see, was the demand that universities appoint members and allies of the КМ and SDK to faculty positions.

Sison’s perspective was in keeping with the immediate class interests of the leadership of the Communist Party which would be founded in the month prior to the eruption of protests. The heads of several of the institutions in the university belt were key political allies of the CPP. Nemesio Prudente, the president of the Philippine College of Commerce (PCC), had studied at the University of Southern California (USC) where he had been heavily influenced by Herbert Marcuse in the early 1960s and espoused the ideas of the New Left. His campus was a political haven for the КМ. Carlos del Rosario, the head of the PCC Political Science department, was Sison’s brother-in-law, and, in 1969, a member of the Party’s central committee. The Lyceum, owned by the Laurel family, was likewise a base of operations for Sison’s group. Sotero Laurel happily hired the leadership of КМ to serve as faculty members at Lyceum, including Joma Sison, Jose David Lapuz – who chaired the Political Science department, Art Garcia, and Jose Luneta.

Lyceum student Rene Alejandro wrote a regular column in the campus student paper – *The Lyceum* – during the 1967-68 school year in which he detailed a number of grievances that students were routinely expressing regarding the school, largely having to do with school fees and the general disrepair of the facilities. The Laurel administration responded in the first semester of 1968, suspending Alejandro from the school for one year, and suspending the publication of *The Lyceum* for the majority of the first semester. The journalism students at Lyceum responded by publishing their own paper, *The Reporter*.⁵ Students circulated a petition in defense of Alejandro, calling for his reinstatement, but the school administration refused. In December, at the opening of the second semester, an additional three members of *The Lyceum* staff were expelled and all four students physically barred by security from entering the campus. The cause of the suspended students and their advocacy of improved school facilities and reduced tuition fees found broad sympathy among students throughout the University Belt in downtown Manila.

Lacaba wrote that

On January 13, the *Guilder*, official publication of the College Editors Guild, reported: “The case of the three dismissed *Lyceum* scribes

³Jose Ma. Sison, “Youth on the March,” *FPF*, November 1968, 12.

⁴Sison, “Youth on the March,” 60.

⁵My account of the developments at the Lyceum is based on Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 23-37.

appears to have stirred a tempest of student unrest as sympathizing students plan to stage a protest demonstration soon if no justice is done them by the proper authorities.”⁶

On January 22, striking students formed a picket line at Lyceum but initially only drew about thirty students to their ranks. The picketers formed the Lyceum Student Reform Movement and circulated a leaflet that concluded: “Let us raise the banner of student power!”⁷ The Laurel administration responded to the picket by suspending classes at Lyceum for one week, hoping that the protests would disappear in the interim.⁸ Far from disappearing, they spread.

The next day students at Far Eastern University (FEU) formed the FEU Student Reform Movement and likewise went on strike, demanding a “reduction and itemization of tuition fees.” They also “objected to the security guards’ uniform, which is combat fatigue, and their arms, which include carbines, Armalites, and riot guns.”⁹ On January 24, three thousand demonstrating students at FEU “broke decorative pots along the streets that border the university, hurled stones at the school buildings and burned placards.” Morayta was closed to traffic. On the same day a group calling itself the Movement of Students for Reforms (MOSTURE) at FEATI distributed a manifesto demanding improved conditions and academic freedom.¹⁰

On January 27 the police arrested two of the Lyceum student leaders “for their belligerent attitude.” Denouncing the arrests, the striking students attacked the squad car, causing serious damage to the vehicle.¹¹ Sotero Laurel, head of the Lyceum, refused to meet with the protesters and issued a statement that he was determined to expel the three students. He stated that “a school has the right to defend itself against or rid itself of those who would seek to harm it.” The next day the protest at Lyceum again turned violent as striking students were being prevented by security guards from exiting university buildings. A crowd of students gathered, angrily demanding that the guards allow the students to leave. One of the guards fired a warning shot with his shotgun. Students began throwing rocks. The guards beat some of the students, and at least one student was shot. A fire truck arrived and attempted to disperse the students with water; the students stoned the fire truck. Laurel finally agreed that he would meet with the students on the next day, provided they dispersed. Lacaba wrote at the time

⁶Ibid., 32.

⁷Among those who joined the striking students was Julius Fortuna, who had been around the KM since 1966 and would become the secretary general of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP) by 1971.

⁸Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 151.

⁹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 35.

¹⁰Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 152.

¹¹Ibid., 151.

that “what happened at the Lyceum that night was by far the most vehement expression of dissent in recent history of the Filipino youth.”¹²

On January 29, students at the University of the East (UE) walked out of classes to protest “exorbitant and unreasonable fees,” and four thousand students from Manila Central University started a boycott of classes protesting “the deplorable conditions of the university” and demanding a reduction in fees.¹³ On January 30, ten thousand students at FEATI violently demonstrated, hurling rocks and classroom furniture.¹⁴ On the same day University of Manila students went on strike and classes did not resume until February 20.¹⁵ On January 31, the Student Movement for a Better Mapua at the Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT) led a demonstration of two thousand students demanding a reduction of fees and the improvement of facilities “which turned violent;” no other details are available.¹⁶ Also in the last week of January, students at the Philippine College of Criminology went on strike. On February 3, a group calling itself the Thomasians for Reforms Movement (TRM) launched protests at the University of Santo Tomas (UST), and stones were thrown.¹⁷ On the Fourth, the students at Manuel L. Quezon University (MLQU) went on strike.

By the first week of February all of the universities in the University belt had been shut down by student strikes, many of which had responded forcefully against violent suppression. These included the Philippine Maritime Institute, February 1; St. Catherine’s School of Nursing, February 3; Araneta University, February 6; Arellano University, February 7. The strikes began to spread beyond Manila. Students at universities in Bacolod, Cabanatuan, Laguna, Laoag, and Cebu all began to go on strike as well.¹⁸

And at Diliman ...

At the end of January the UP Student Council worked to get involved in the explosion of student protests. As one strike followed another downtown, Diliman was being left in the wake of political developments and the majority of the council blamed Student Council Chair Antonio Pastelero for poor leadership. Partisan council representative Jerry Barican threatened Pastelero with impeachment, but Pastelero vowed to resign if requested. The council passed a resolution, by a vote of twenty-four out of twenty-nine councilors, calling on Pastelero to resign. He refused.¹⁹

¹²Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 23.

¹³Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 156.

¹⁴Ibid., 153.

¹⁵Ibid., 157.

¹⁶Ibid., 158.

¹⁷Among those leading the TRM was Noli Collantes. (ibid., 159).

¹⁸Ibid., 164-8.

¹⁹Partisans for Nationalist Student Power, “Pastelero asked to Resign,” *The Partisan* 2, no. 1 (January 1969): 6; PRP 37/16.04 *The Spearhead*, 1969, 1 no. 5, 4.

On January 30, Antonio Tagamolila wrote an article in the *Collegian*, entitled “Student Power, the Second Act,” in which he wrote

The second act often sees the unfolding of the plot, after the prologue that is the first act. The first act was written and played by UP, UP all the way. The stage – the American embassy, Congress, and Malacañang. The issues too were prologue-like – graft, imperialism, crime.

The current rash of rallies and strikes is a second act in more ways than one. The action has shifted from the sites of symbols of impersonal power to somewhere nearer to home – the school. The actors are different too. The slogan-branding state university ideologue has been replaced by disgruntled Downtown U students. Where the former is often met with puzzled looks, the latter gets an understanding nod of approval. This is not to say that issues on the higher and more general level are wrong or irrelevant but that the sympathetic audience they get is confined to those versed in the intricacies of historical and political premises. But everyone understands high tuition, profiteering schools, arbitrary expulsions. Rallies may be noisier but a strike is a more effective weapon.²⁰

Tagamolila continued: “The UP studentry must rethink its role in the present stage. No longer do we have the monopoly of militancy. No longer can we confine our scope to such sweeping issues like ‘imperialism’ and ‘colonialism.’ We are a small percentage in the masses of studentry that is in Manila and elsewhere. UP must lend its voice to these new forces.” Tagamolila, who was a member of the SDK, did not articulate a way forward, but he did suggest that the political slogans of the KM were bankrupt. His position was opposed, not only by the KM, but by a majority of the SDK as well. Both groups sought to direct the student protests behind the campaign against “Americanization.”

On February 4, UP students launched a strike. They presented twelve demands to the administration, of a very different nature from those articulated in Azcarraga. They included the resignations of Iluminada Panlilio and Damiana Eugenio; the security of tenure for faculty members; and the termination of UP’s contracts with the Asia Foundation. The KM, SCAUP “and other activist groups” initiated the Diliman strike by “stopping vehicles from passing through the University Avenue and asking students to alight from them.” Five activists were arrested.²¹ UP Los Baños students likewise went on strike. The students demanded the “the resignation of Dean Dioscoro Umali from all but one of the four positions he is reportedly occupying, security of the tenure of faculty members

²⁰PC, 30 Jan 1969, 4, 7.

²¹PC, 4 Feb 1969, 3. This same tactic would be repeated, with explosive consequences, in February 1971.

and workers, and investigation of the American supported SEAMEC and Cornell University grants.”²² The demand for security of tenure at both Diliman and Los Baños responded to the University’s refusal to renew the contracts of Hilario Lim and Vivencio Jose. On the Diliman campus, newly installed President Salvador Lopez met with the striking students to review their list of demands. The SDK wrote that “On the demands, the students were assured of the administration’s substantial compliance,” including the termination of contracts with the Asia Foundation.²³

It was not sufficient, the SDK stressed in its February publication, to protest locally. Many of the demands on some of the striking campuses “are too petty, local and limited to cause lasting changes in the servile institutions where the educational system is rooted ... Concerted political action in an intra-university basis can change this system ... we therefore enjoin the students of Diliman to strike in solidarity with Los Baños and other units.” The SDK did not issue a call for coordination with striking students in the university belt, but only between the various units – Diliman, Los Baños – of the University of the Philippines.

At the end of the 1968-69 school year, the UP Student Council reported that that “One of the few February strike demands that have been substantially fulfilled has been the English department change of regime ... Nationally known writers like Vivencio Jose, Gelacio Guillermo, Luis Teodoro, Petronilo Bn. Daroy, and Mila Aguilar have been added once more to the department roster.”²⁴ These incoming and reinstated faculty members were the leadership of the KM and SDK. The changed roster was the result of the forced resignation of Damiana Eugenio as head of the English department and her replacement with Elmer Ordoñez.²⁵

Sison intervenes

In late January or early February 1969, between the founding of the CPP and the founding of the NPA, Joma Sison wrote an article for the Hong Kong based *Eastern Horizon*, entitled “Student Power.”²⁶ Sison was at pains to establish three points in the article. First, according to Sison, the student strikes in the Philippines were entirely petty bourgeois in origin; second, they were now developing under the leadership, and inspired by the program, of the Kabataang Makabayan; and third, it was imperative for students to take up the “ideology of the working class,” which Sison claimed was national democracy.

²²Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK) – UP, “Diliman Supports Los Baños Strike,” *The Partisan* 2, no. 1 (February 1969): 1, PRP 37/17.01.

²³Ibid., 2.

²⁴*Kalatas*, 1969, I, no. 2, 7.

²⁵*The Spearhead*, 1969, 1 no. 5, 4.

²⁶Jose Ma. Sison, “Student Power,” *Eastern Horizon* VIII, no. 2 (1969): 52–56.

Sison began, “the social basis of college and high school students is the petty bourgeoisie, although a little minority of them come from exploiting classes.” (52) As petty bourgeois, the student is thus “principally concerned with his selfish ambition of pursuing a career within the established system.” However, “in time of developing social crisis, the students largely supported by their petty bourgeois parents can easily become agitated when the meager and fixed incomes of their parents can hardly suffice to keep them enrolled in school with the proper board and lodging or with enough allowances.” Sison may have been aptly characterizing the student milieu with which he was himself familiar, largely selfish but easily agitated over their declining allowances. His description, however, was grossly incongruous with the character of the majority of the student population. In Sison’s depiction none of the students – not even the high school students – were from working class or peasant backgrounds, and none were working their way through school.

Sison was not alone in this thinking; it characterized the attitude of the *KM* and *SDK* leadership generally. Christine Ebro, a Partisan representative and a leader of the *SDK*, wrote in September 1968 to describe the “situation of almost every college girl in the country.”

Born into a set of conventions, and social restrictions ... the only activities legitimately open to her, in the traditional viewpoint, are the trivial – cocktail parties, balls, discotheques, picnics, soirées, etc. As a result, she remains isolated from the harsh realities of life; protected from the plight of the “dirty” masses. Her flighty little brain remains untapped like our rich natural resources, as she attends to petty concerns: confined to the latest dance craze, powdering her pert nose, going to novenas regularly, fingering the rosary, thinking of her next dress and gewgaw to wear.²⁷

Sison, and his entire cohort, had a manifest contempt for the students striking in downtown Manila.

Sison’s conception of the students class background and political goals stands in stark contrast to the actual literature being produced by the striking students themselves. On September 17 1969, a group calling itself the “Progressive Youth of *MLQU* / Progresibong Kabataan ng *MLQU*,” issued an appeal to the Manuel L. Quezon University student body to support their strike, which had begun on September 11, when students in the College of Business walked out of their classes and were followed by students in the Colleges of Engineering and Education.²⁸ The striking students stated that they were opposed to University President Monzon who was seeking to turn a profit out of the exploitation of the students,

²⁷PC, 4 Sep 1968, 3.

²⁸Progresibong Kabataan ng *MLQU*, *Nasa Atin ang Tagumpay*, September 1969, PRP 14/15.01.

the staff and the faculty. The leaflet cited the raising of fees and the cutting of the wages of the faculty and staff and concluded:

If we allow ourselves to be taken advantage of and place our hope in promises, not only will we be victims, not only will our brothers and sisters who will study and follow after us [be victims], but also *our parents who have with great difficulty worked day and night in the fields and factories to pay for our education*. Remember our poor parents ... rise up!

This fight is not just for students, this is for everyone! Professors, workers, and students.²⁹

A footnote among the many stories coming out of the First Quarter Storm was that of Francisco Opao, a working student at FEATI, whose foot was shot on January 30. He had not seen his provincial parents in years because he could not afford to go home, yet he had nowhere to stay in Greater Manila and was commuting a great distance each day to school. His story was representative of the majority of the student population.³⁰

Sison insisted in his article over the space of two and half pages that the “student power” movement was the work of the KМ. Sison claimed that “the Kabataang Makabayan has been able to anticipate and plan the development of the national student protest movement in the Philippines.” He could not provide a single concrete example of this, precisely because none existed. He instead pointed out that some of the strikes were being waged on campuses where there was a strong presence of the KМ. Sison recounted a potted history of the struggles of the youth movement from the CAFA protest in March 1961 to the October 24 Movement in 1966. He attempted to thus situate the 1969 student protests within the history of his movement, but made no mention of the split with the SDK.

Sison turned to the question of the political orientation of the student protest movement. He wrote “we have always advocated the achievement of real national democracy as the goal of our struggle.”³¹ He directed students to “a comprehensive presentation of this goal ... the Programme of Action of Kabataang Makabayan.” Sison referred to the struggle for this program as a “cultural revolution ... It is the phase of creating the public opinion necessary for a comprehensive national democratic revolution. The struggle for national democracy cannot be won without this cultural revolution.” Sison characterized the struggle for national democracy, to be carried out by “the broad national front for national democracy among workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie,” as “the unifying ideology of the working class,” the “justest [*sic*] and most progressive class.” (56)

²⁹Emphasis added.

³⁰MT, 4 Feb 1970.

³¹Sison, “Student Power,” 55.

Subordinating the conflict between workers and capitalists to the struggle for national democracy is not the ideology of the working class, for such a political line serves the interests of their enemy, the bourgeoisie. The ideology of the working class is socialism. Genuine socialist leadership during the student strikes of 1969 would have channeled the grievances, social anger, and protests of the students behind the demand for free universal public education through university level. This is a transitional demand which responds to the immediate objective situation of the students and yet would require socialist measures to be fully implemented. This demand would require a turn by the students to broader layers of the working class in order for it to be achieved as it would not be granted by a school administration or by a bourgeois government.

Sison's characterization of the Student Movement was mirrored in the program of the Nationalist Corps which was once more firmly in the hands of the SDK. They outlined their program in an article entitled, "The Nationalist Corps and the Apathetic Student,"

The Nationalist Corps is an organization which struggles to shock the masses of apathetic and complacent students out of their smugness.

...

As students we do not fully comprehend the problems of the masses because we never experience the problems the way they do. The fact that students come from a different class that is quite a departure from the class of the worker and the peasant prevents them from going through the very same experience.³²

Sison, the KM, and the SDK displayed the extraordinary class gulf between their perspective and program and the needs and struggles of the working class. As tens of thousands of students shut down their campuses in strikes motivated by poverty and exploitation, Sison and his co-thinkers decried the students for their "apathy" and "petty bourgeois" smugness and selfishness. They used the energy of the strikes to secure tenured positions for their allies on the UP campus and instructed the striking students downtown to redirect their protests behind the banner of nationalism.

Student Power Assembly Philippines (SPAP)

The KM and SDK worked to build an organizational means of implementing Sison's perspective and channeling the student protests into the struggle for national democracy, subordinating the interests of the working class to the bourgeoisie, and of Azcarraga to Diliman. The organization they created to

³²PC, 20 Apr 1969, 5. This exact statement was reprinted by the SDK in their own publication, Partisans for Nationalist Student Power, "The Nationalist Corps: Down from the Ivory Tower," *The Partisan* 2, no. 2 (May 1969): 3, PRP 37/16.05.

this end sought to unify the struggles of students throughout Manila behind the banner of “student power,” and a conference was announced to prepare for its founding. The preparatory committee for the conference entitled “Student Power for National Democracy” was composed of both KM and SDK members.³³ The UP Student Council sponsored the event, which was held on the Diliman campus on February 22-23. The keynote speaker was Joma Sison, who was not yet in hiding, and he spoke on the “Goals and Ideology of Student Power.”³⁴ The conveners of the conference claimed that it represented the start of a Student Power movement that would “put an end to factionalism among the various youth groups now existing in the country.” This statement was in reference to the persistent differences between the KM and the SDK and other pro-Beijing youth organizations, as the BRPF and MPKP did not participate in the Student Power conference.

The hopes for unity were premature. Sison and his allies were unable to secure a vote during the two day conference for the declaration which they had drawn up on Student Power and National Democracy and which was to have been the founding statement of the new organization. After the conclusion of the conference, the conveners declared that this failure had simply been due to “a lack of time,” and informed the press that an ad hoc committee would be formed to approve the statement. It seems clear from the press releases that the ad hoc committee had not been elected by the assembly but had rather been appointed by the initial steering committee in order to salvage their organizational intent. The resolutions proposed before the gathering declared “national democracy as the ideology of student power;” mapped out a “strategy to unify the studentry with the other progressive classes;” and called for the “establishment of a national student newspaper.”³⁵

On March 9 1969, the ad hoc committee announced in the name of what they called the Student Power Assembly of the Philippines (SPAP) that they had issued the “Diliman Declaration.” The Declaration, which was a poor compromise between the SDK’s fixation on campus politics and the KM’s slogans of national democracy, stated that “Student power is a new force in a society in crisis.” It called on students to “view their problems within the context of national problems . . . Student power must not alienate itself from the masses.”³⁶ But, the Declaration continued, “student power has a special line of action within its

³³This committee was Jerry Barican, Ibarra Malonzo, Hermenigildo Garcia, Victor David, Ed Araullo, Gary Olivar, and Christine Ebro. (PC, 20 Feb 1969).

³⁴PC, 13 Feb; 27 Feb 1969, 7. Not only was Sison not in hiding in late February 1969, his public speaking was being prominently announced over the course of several weeks in the *Collegian*. He was the subject of headlines like “Sison speaks on Recto.” (PC, 20 Feb 1969, 2). His later biographical claims that the government had put a price on his head and that he was hiding in Tarlac are false.

³⁵PC, 27 Feb 1969, 7.

³⁶Student Power Assembly of the Philippines, *The Diliman Declaration*, 2. On 20 April 1969, the Diliman Declaration was published in the *Collegian*.

own setting, the campus. Within the school the most basic demands are: first, total student autonomy and, secondly, student participation in the governing and policy-making bodies.” (2) It called for students to fight for the abrogation of trade and military deals with the United States, and against the danger of Japanese imperialism, and then concluded,

The national student movement must adopt more militant tactics. It must adopt confrontation politics as a means of focusing attention on the crisis of Philippine education. It must mobilize mass awareness of this country’s penury of values in order to shake a decadent order from prolonged indifference, from sustained denial of the blessings of freedom to the oppressed majority. The youth, in collective patriotism and alliance with the masses, can redeem the eternal promise of a better life for all. (5)

The “collective patriotism” of youth would arouse “a decadent order from prolonged indifference.” With these mealy-mouthed phrases, the SPAP sought to raise over the ranks of students striking on Azcarraga the threadbare flag of nationalism and reform.

The SPAP announced that it would be holding a congress on May 13. The keynote speaker, as always, was Lorenzo Tañada. Noli Collantes was made secretary of the organization. The leadership of the coming congress included Hermenigildo Garcia, Monico Atienza, Jerry Barican, Ibarra Malonzo, and others drawn from both the KM and the SDK. At the core of the leadership of the SPAP was the central committee of the CPP.³⁷ The cobbled together alliance that was SPAP fell apart before it could carry out a single substantive political action. It issued one leaflet in July 1969 and then disappeared entirely from the historical record.

The East is Red

During the 1968-69 school year, the UP Student Council sponsored two major events: the performance in the Philippines of the Bolshoi Ballet and showings of the film, *The East is Red*. These two events expressed the contention between the rival Stalinist parties and their front organizations – one event from Moscow and another from Beijing. A component of the strength of the PKP in this dispute was the quiet support which they provided to, and in turn received from, the Marcos administration. The performances of the Bolshoi Ballet were funded by Eugenio Lopez, who in early 1969 was still a key ally of Marcos, and the Foreign Affairs office made the needed arrangements for the ballet company’s travel to and from the country.³⁸ The Bolshoi Ballet not only appeared in Imelda

³⁷PC, 20 Apr 1969, 12.

³⁸The UPSC awarded Lopez a plaque of appreciation for his funding of the event. *Kalatas*, 1969 1, no. 4.

Marcos' newly constructed Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), it staged a free performance of Swan Lake in Luneta Park, as a form of "art for the masses." The KM and SDK turned out to jeer the event. The SDK, in the May 1969 edition of *The Partisan*, described the Bolshoi Ballet's performance of Swan Lake as an "unabashed celebration of bourgeois sensuality," and an "escape into elitist fantasy." They argued that the film *The East is Red*, on the other hand, carried a "revolutionary message necessary to express the feelings of a historic mass movement."³⁹ *Ang Bayan* denounced "the Soviet cultural mission" as "one of a series of missions to carry out the social imperialist designs of the Brezhnev revisionist renegade clique."⁴⁰

While the Bolshoi Ballet performances received full state support, *The East is Red* was suppressed by the Marcos administration.⁴¹ *The East is Red* was a two hour long recounting of the 1949 revolution told through the song and dance of a Peking Opera stage performance filmed during the midst of the cultural revolution. The reels of the film had been brought back to the Philippines from China by Manila *Times* columnist J.V. Cruz, who supplied them to the KM, but the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) quickly arranged for the government Board of Censors to issue a ban on its public display.⁴² During the Student Power conference in February, the organizers showed the first reel of the film, in partial defiance of the ban.⁴³ In the last week of February the Board of Appeals granted a petition from the UP Student Council partially overturning the Board of Censors' ban. For the KM, it was a very limited victory. The Board of Appeals upheld the ban on the showing of "the film with the English subtitles" but allowed the display of the "Chinese version". The unsubtitled musical was shown for nine days at the beginning of March.⁴⁴ During the second showing of the film, the Quezon City police under police chief Tomas Karingal "barged into UP theater" without a warrant and "attempted to snatch the film."⁴⁵ Tagamolila described how "members of the student council, Nationalist Corps, some fratmen, and individual students literally played tug-of-war with leather

³⁹ *The Partisan*, (1969), 2 no 2, 2.

⁴⁰ AB, July 1969, 13.

⁴¹ This was not the first time that students had tangled with the Marcos administration over a film on China. In April 1967, Voltaire Garcia and the Student Council succeeded in getting approval from the Board of Censors for a limited showing of Felix Greene's film *China*, despite official disapproval by NICA, which denounced the film as "definitely Communist propaganda." When it was slated to be shown in a downtown Manila cinema in June, however, NICA succeeded in recalling the film and getting the board of censors to ban it. (PC, 12 Jul 1967, 3).

⁴² *Kalatas*, 1969–1972, 1969 1, no. 4, 4. PRP 31/08.

⁴³ PC, 27 Feb 1969. The legal conception behind only showing the first reel was that if you did not show the entire film, you had not violated the ban.

⁴⁴ *Kalatas*, 1969, 1, no. 2, 6.

⁴⁵ PC, 13 Mar 1969, 12. Karingal also led the police raids on the campus during the Diliman Commune in February 1971. He was assassinated by the NPA's urban hit squad, the Alex Boncayao Brigade, in 1984, and was the subject of an unrecognizably fictionalized film starring Eddie Garcia in 1990.

jacketed big-bellied policemen.”⁴⁶

UP Campus elections

Despite their joint jeering of Tchaikovsky and shared disdain for the striking students in the University Belt, the *KM* and the *SDK* remained rivals and the 1969-70 Diliman Student Council election was the springtide of their hostilities. They shared a common orientation to China, but the *SDK* in 1968 and the first part of 1969 had no ties of a direct political nature to Beijing. Its geopolitical orientation was entirely on the basis of its enthusiasm for the Cultural Revolution, which it saw as embodying the political leadership of youth and students, an anarchistic rejection of authority and structure, and the hailing of the new. The *KM*, in contrast, served as the youth arm of the *CPP*. Its political allegiance was to a party and that party in turn articulated the interests of the Beijing section of global Stalinism. There was thus at times a shared set of interests between the two groups. They were allied in their enthusiasm for *The East is Red*, although for slightly different reasons. They had a common opposition to the staid, Moscow politics of the *BRPF* and the *MPKP*. The attempt at reconciliation under the banner of Student Power, however, proved to be an overreach. The *SDK* sought to use Student Power to pursue its campus politics, while the *KM* wanted the *SPAP*'s organizational apparatus and slogans to further its broader cause of National Democracy. In mid-1969, for the *KM* and newly founded *CPP*, this meant supporting candidates in the Constitutional Convention. The *SDK* had general contempt for the convention, support for which had been a plank in the *KM*'s congress of 1967. They were unable to reconcile these differences democratically and the ad hoc committee's resolution of the crisis satisfied neither party. These tensions between the *SDK* and the *KM* led them again to campaign against each other on the *UP* campus in June and July 1969.

Antonio Tagamolila reported that the *KM*'s campus party from the prior year, the Katipunan Makabansa, entered into a new party, the Young Philippines Movement (*YPM*), whose “principal objective” was to secure the “active representation of the youth in the forthcoming Constitutional Convention.”⁴⁷ The platform of the *YPM* stated that “the Young Philippines recognizes the semi-colonial, semi-feudal nature of Philippine society,” and to remedy this, they sought to “participate in the 1971 Constitutional Convention.”⁴⁸ The Young Philippines Movement was the revival of a party founded in the early 1930s by Wenceslao Vinzons, which

⁴⁶PC, 13 Mar 1969, 12. *The Partisan* claimed that Christine Ebro and Ed Araullo prevented the raid from seizing the film, which, however, was damaged in the tussle. (*The Partisan*, (1969) 2, no. 2, 2; *Kalatas*, (1969) 1, no. 4, 4).

⁴⁷PC, 3 Jul 1969, 8.

⁴⁸PC, 3 Jul 1969, 5 The merger party ran Ramon Paterno for *UPSC* chair, a student who was closely tied to the *KM*. He was on the steering committee of the Free Nilo Tayag movement in 1970, and ran as a delegate from Rizal for the Constitutional Convention.

Table 23.1: UP Student Council Chairs, 1965-72

	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Party</i>
1965-66	Tristan Catindig	Pilipino
1966-67	E. Voltaire Garcia	Katipunan-Makabansa
1967-68	Delfin Lazaro	Kalayaan
1968-69	Antonio Pastelero	Pagkakaisa
1969-70	Jerry Barican	Pagkakaisa-Partisans
1970-71	Ericson Baculinao	Sandigan Makabansa
1971-72	Manny Ortega	Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa
1972-	Jaime Tan	Sandigan Makabansa

had served as the political vehicle of Sergio Osmeña Sr. among the youth during the Commonwealth period. For the KM to revive this political name in June 1969, was a clear signal that they were weighing support for LP presidential candidate, Sergio Osmeña Jr., the man whom they had denounced as a “fascist” and “Jap-collaborator” during protests against PHILCAG a year before.

On July 7, SCAUP issued a “position paper” on the upcoming campus elections, which stated:

The slogan “nationalist student power” is much bandied around by certain “progressive” groups in the University ... SCAUP, true to its national democratic commitment, views “nationalist student power” being established in the University alone without the people wielding national democratic power as a *bankrupt concept*.⁴⁹

SCAUP criticized the role of the Nationalist Corps as “inherently limited,” particularly the fact that it ignored the cities and workers entirely, and asserted that it had become obvious that for “a certain group” [SDK] the Nationalist Corps were “only a springboard for victory in the Student Council.”⁵⁰ In opposition to the SDK, which it never named, SCAUP stated what it considered the tasks of students to be: establishing nationalist military training for students by ending the American model of ROTC; struggling for the progressive amendment – unspecified – of the University charter and code; and “encouraging active student participation” in the “forthcoming Constitutional Convention of 1971.” The piece concluded by pointing out that “a certain pseudo-nationalist group” – again unnamed – “is brazenly using the name of SCAUP in its desperate bid for council posts.” SCAUP denied having endorsed this “handful of progressive (sic) leaders (sic).”⁵¹ Apparently the SDK attempted to take over SCAUP in 1969 in order to

⁴⁹Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP), *Student Activism and the National Democratic Struggle*, July 1969, PRP 17/10.04, emphasis in original.

⁵⁰SCAUP, *Student Activism and the National Democratic Struggle*, 2.

⁵¹Ibid., 3, sics in source.

endorse its own political platform, the Pagkakaisa-Partisans.

In the run up to the 1969 UP election campaign the SDK allied its Partisans party with Pagkakaisa, the party which had managed to pull off an upset victory for Antonio Pastelero in the previous academic year. The alliance was an odd one on its face. In January, Jerry Barican had attempted to impeach Pastelero for “incompetence, gross negligence of duty, and grave abuse of powers,” but by July they had coalesced their parties into the Pagkakaisa-Partisans, and were running a joint slate.⁵² The alliance was further complicated by the fact that the Pagkakaisa-Partisans incorporated the right wing Vanguard party, an organization which in 1970 and 1971 would be responsible for physically menacing and assaulting members of the KM and SDK. Finally the Pagkakaisa-Partisans Party included the BRPF; the SDK solidarized itself with the enemies of the KM in order to get their candidate, Jerry Barican, elected chair of the Student Council.⁵³ The party’s platform put forward a host of student reform demands for the UP campus, including improving the quality of food served in the cafeteria through the use of private catering services. The YPM attacked the program of the Pagkakaisa-Partisans, stating “UP student leadership must rise much higher than pork-barrel demands and petty alliances.”⁵⁴

The elections were held on July 10 and 11 and Barican was elected chair.⁵⁵ The Young Philippines Movement (YPM) lost by a narrow margin and sued for a recount, but on July 22, Jerry Barican was sworn in as head of the UP Student Council. Barican made the Nationalist Corps responsible for the orientation of the incoming class of freshmen in 1969-1970. Gary Olivar coordinated this program, which was designed to meet “the necessity of inculcating the need for nationalism in the minds of the students.”⁵⁶ In order to become a student at UP it was now officially necessary to receive an inculcation of nationalism from the SDK.

In the first semester of 1969, at least in part in response to their electoral defeat, KM disappeared from the UP campus as its members were pulled out of school and put into full-time political work. At the end of the semester many were re-enrolled; most were now members of the CPP. Other universities followed a similar pattern, as the KM removed itself from campuses and directly thrust its membership into the work of the Communist Party. Lualhati Abreu wrote that in late 1969 it was recognized that it was necessary to “rebuild the KM chapters

⁵²League of Independent Voters, *The UP Students Ought to Know*, 1969, PRP 10/04.01.

⁵³Running on the Pagkakaisa-Partisans slate were Gary Olivar, Rene Ciria-Cruz, both SDK, and Ed Tadem of the MPP-BrPF. (PC, 19 Jun 1969, 7; Pagkakaisa-Partisans, [*Election Flyer*], 1969, PRP 02/19.01). Running for vice-chair on the Pagkakaisa-Partisans slate was Emma Mamisao, who in February 1971, would denounce the SDK as responsible for “student brutality” on the barricades. (Ortega, Manuel, Gordon, Richard J., et al., *Manifesto*, February 1970, PRP 02/28.01).

⁵⁴PC, 3 Jul 1969, 5.

⁵⁵*Kalatas*, 1969, 1, no. 2, 1.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 1969, 1, no. 2, 2, 7.

in the schools, especially at the State University.”⁵⁷ The KM thus returned to college campuses, on direct instructions from the CPP, just before the outbreak of the First Quarter Storm.

Terror Campaigns

On July 24, the Apollo 11 splashed-down in the Northern Pacific. President Nixon flew out to the deck of the USS Hornet to greet the returning astronauts and stage a photo op. He then flew from the Hornet to Manila, where he was received by Ferdinand Marcos.

It was during Nixon’s visit that the PKP, with the knowing complicity of Marcos, launched a terror campaign that it would continue and deepen over the course of the next three years, providing a pretext for the declaration of martial law.⁵⁸ This campaign was headed by Pastor Guerrero Tabiñas, who, under the name Commander Soliman, launched the PKP’s Urban Guerrilla Force in 1969. The twenty-two year old son of a fisherman had been orphaned at a young age and dropped out of high school in his third year, becoming a factory worker. A PKP labor organization established a union in his factory of which he became president, and by 1967 he was working directly with Ruben Torres in the BRPF.⁵⁹ Taking the name Soliman in 1969, he established HMB urban guerrilla forces, known as the People’s Revolutionary Front (PRF), in both Manila and Angeles, setting up a “laboratory” to create blasting caps and gunpowder from “easily available ingredients.”⁶⁰ The CPP was taking similar steps. In the same month that Soliman set up his laboratory, Rodolfo Salas instructed Lualhati Abreu to acquire the necessary supplies to begin the construction of explosives in Angeles.⁶¹ Both the PKP and the CPP discovered from these attempts that it was easier to carry out bombings with grenades pilfered or acquired from the military than it was to make their own.

On July 23, Soliman’s PRF threw a US manufactured grenade at the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center of the US Information Service (USIS), killing an eighteen year old, Rodolfo Carlos, who had been standing in front of the building.⁶² Police Chief Tamayo used the bombing as to justify “a discreet roundup” of “potential troublemakers” before Nixon’s state visit. The next day, the PRF threw another grenade, this time at the Joint US Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG). Police Chief Karingal announced that “A big student organization, led by a former

⁵⁷ Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 51. Boni Ilagan and Lualhati Roque chaired the restored UP KM.

⁵⁸ The evidence for the PKP’s Manila bombing campaign under Soliman from 1969 to 1972 is based on the accounts written up in *their own* publications, particularly in the issues of *Ang Mandirigma*.

⁵⁹ Joaquin, *A Kadre’s Road to Damascus*, 79, 81.

⁶⁰ *Ang Mandirigma*, (1972) 1 no. 3, PRP 36/06.04, p. 13.

⁶¹ Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 46.

⁶² MB, 24 Jul 1969.

university professor who joined the Huks in Central Luzon recently, is being eyed as behind the incidents.”⁶³ He was referring, of course, to the KM and Joma Sison. Soliman’s bombings provided a pretext for the Marcos administration to escalate its security preparations for Nixon’s visit and to crack down on the PKP’s rival. It would later emerge that some of the “most active members” carrying out this campaign “were actually agents planted by the military.”⁶⁴

The CPP wrote in *Ang Bayan* that the best way for the NPA to “expose Nixon’s lies and call the people’s attention to the continuing aggressive presence of US imperialism is to direct fire at its military personnel.” US soldiers should be attacked “in their urban haunts and along highways.” This would “certainly compel the Philippine reactionary government to use the PC-Army troops as security guards for their foreign masters, thus exposing the real puppetry of the local reactionaries.”⁶⁵ They denounced the Lavaites, who “proclaim themselves as the revolutionary leaders” but will not “explode the guts of a single US imperialist serviceman.” (4) In contrast, the NPA on July 4 shot four US servicemen at their “sin center” in Angeles, killing two and wounding the others. They left a leaflet at the scene of the shooting which stated “37 Filipinos were murdered in US military bases. From now on justice will be served.”⁶⁶ In September, *Ang Bayan* reported that it had carried out two bombings near the Balibago gate of Clark on July 31 and August 4, killing six airmen.⁶⁷

During the rally staged against Nixon’s visit, tensions reemerged between the SDK and the front groups of the PKP with whom they had temporarily allied in the UP campus election. The PKP would support Marcos during the 1969 election and did not want to alienate him by an embarrassing display during American president’s visit. While secretly they carried out a bombing campaign with the blessing and support of Marcos, publicly they limited themselves to a quiet rally. The SDK, which would call for a boycott of the elections, had no such reservations and they created a new federation to attempt to realign themselves with the KM to protest against Nixon. This split with the front groups of the PKP launched a political shift by the SDK which over the course of the next year and a half would effectively reunite the breakaway group with the KM and the CPP. The SDK’s ‘rectification’ was a bloody process which purged from the organization the leadership loyal to Perfecto Tera and Vivencio Jose. A detailed history of this process remains to be written but certain basic facts are clear. The SDK used the wave of student strikes in early 1969 to secure tenured faculty

⁶³MB, 25 Jul 1969.

⁶⁴Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 135. Within two weeks of the bombings, three delegates from the PKP – Ruben Torres, Haydee Yorac, and Soliman – traveled to Moscow via Tokyo. Yorac and Soliman remained there until 1970 and, upon returning to Manila, reported to Torres. (Joaquin, *A Kadre’s Road to Damascus*, 80).

⁶⁵AB, August 1969, 1.

⁶⁶AB, August 1969, 7.

⁶⁷AB, September 1969, 11.

positions for Vivencio Jose as well as several of his leading supporters within the organization. Now comfortably situated in the University, this leadership headed a Student Council election campaign which focused exclusively on campus conditions, eschewed the national democratic politics of the *KM*, and allied with the front organizations of the *PKP*. In the wake of their election victory, their allies in the *PKP* moved to endorse Marcos in the 1969 elections and sought to defuse protests against Nixon. The majority of the *SDK* opposed these positions and began to move away from the Tera-Jose leadership of their organization. It was in this context that redbaiting accusations against Vivencio Jose began mysteriously to appear on the front page of the *Manila Bulletin*, and Jose claims that Sison attempted to have him assassinated. Thus was the rectification of the *SDK* launched; its growing ties with the *KM* would be cemented by the shared experiences of the First Quarter Storm.

On July 26, the *SDK* issued a two page edition of the *Partisan* in which they announced that they were joining a demonstration which was being led by a new federation called the Samahan ng Mamamayang Malaya ng Pilipinas [Federation of the Free People of the Philippines] (*SMMP*).⁶⁸ The *SMMP*, known as Samama, was described by the *UP* Student Council as an ad hoc grouping of “all the better known progressive and militant youth, students, workers and peasant organizations.”⁶⁹ *SMMP* held its rally on the evening of July 26, marching from Agrifina circle to the US Embassy, where they sang “militant patriotic songs” and a listened to a “relay of speakers.”⁷⁰ *SMMP* issued a leaflet for the rally which denounced Nixon’s visit, stating, “It should be noted that this year being an election year, both Marcos and Osmeña are trying to outdo each other in carrying the blessings of American Imperialism. The subjugation to a bunch of puppets propped by a neocolonial power is therefore ingrained within the political system. The struggle for national democracy, however, cannot be fazed by the economic and military might of the imperialist power which is behind these puppets and running dogs of the United States.” The backside of the leaflet featured a drawing of Nixon in a stars and stripes Uncle Sam top hat controlling two marionettes, Marcos and Osmeña.⁷¹ The leaflet’s reference to

⁶⁸Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (*SDK*) – *UP*, “Pahayag ng Samahang Demokratikong Kabataan,” *The Partisan*, July 1969, 1, PRP 37/17.02.

⁶⁹*Kalatas*, 1969 1, no. 4.

⁷⁰*Kalatas*, 1969 1, no. 4.

⁷¹Samahan ng Malayang Mamamayan ng Pilipinas, *Manifesto*, July 1969, PRP 15/29.01. This leaflet is the first that I have found that embodies all of the traits that came to define the pamphleteering from the period of the First Quarter Storm onward. It is a quickly mimeographed, and seemingly hastily written screed. There is little concrete substance to distinguish it from any other leaflet at any other rally. It denounces “running dogs” and shameless “puppetry,” and uses far too many exclamation points. It hails the undefeated struggle for national democracy. It includes a caricatured artwork. And it ends with the four-line, double exclamation point conclusion:

Down with American Imperialism!!

neo-colonial power, rather than the semi-colonial state of the Philippines, as well as its denunciation of both Marcos and Osmeña, reveal that it was the SDK and not the KM that dominated the SMMP. KM members who participated in the march burned Nixon's effigy and four US flags; the police assaulted them with clubs and several were hospitalized.⁷²

During the protest of Nixon's visit a fight nearly broke out between SMMP and MAN. As the two hostile groups competed for space in front of the US Embassy, the MAN group denounced SMMP – "Speaking in Pilipino, the MAN group said that there were only a few liberals in the student council while the rest were trying to alienate the students from the laborers."⁷³ SMMP attempted to rush the MAN group, but the police intervened and prevented them. The alliance between the SDK and the front groups of the PKP thus ended, less than a month after it was established, in a brawl staged in front of the US embassy. SMMP dissolved as quickly as it had formed and all of the various groups who had gathered to denounce Nixon turned their political attention to the imminent presidential election.

Down with Nixon, Imperialist Chief!!
 Victory to the People of Vietnam!!
 Long Live the Filipino People!!

⁷²PC, 31 Jul 1969.

⁷³The liberals explicitly mentioned by MAN were Manny Ortega and Richard Gordon, both of whom had just been defeated in the UP election. (MB, 27 Jul 1969, 3).

— 24 —

The 1969 Election

We were outgunned, outgooned, and outgold.

— Sergio Osmeña Jr., November 1969.

The presidential election of 1969 was a bloody and expensive affair. Osmeña’s famous witticism may have been true, but it was not for want of trying; both Marcos and Osmeña spent inordinate sums to purchase Malacañang. In the end, Marcos trounced Osmeña and the Liberal Party not because he spent more money but because Osmeña was grossly unpopular. Against the strong advice of the younger members of the Liberal Party – including Aquino – to court the vote of the youth by posturing in opposition to Washington, Osmeña took the opposite tack, denouncing Marcos for flirting with “the Reds” and for infidelity to the United States. The SDK and some of its campus allies called for a boycott of the election. The CPP and the PKP responded to the election with nearly identical tactics, endorsing Marcos (PKP) or Osmeña (CPP) while instructing their front organizations among the youth to oppose both sides. The BRPF and MPKP joined the boycott campaign; KM kept silent. In the wake of the LP’s disastrous defeat, Osmeña began plotting a coup. Aquino and a number of others, alarmed at Marcos’ clout, reached out to the students, offering them their support, and anticipating in return an explosion of unrest and protest to destabilize the newly reelected President.

Crisis of the Liberal Party

The Liberal Party nominated Sergio Osmeña Jr. as its presidential candidate in June 1969, selecting him over rival candidates Genaro Magsaysay and Antonio Villegas.¹ The LP calculated that his Visayan bloc could counter the Ilocano bloc of Marcos. None of the possible candidates for the Liberal Party in 1969 had either the charisma or the political clout of Ferdinand Marcos. The only LP

¹Magsaysay had departed the NP precisely to seek the LP nomination for president, recalling the reverse tactic of his brother, Ramon, in the 1950s.

member who did was Ninoy Aquino, the secretary general of the party, but he could not run for president until 1973 because of his age. Many leaders of the LP were aware, as early as December 1968, that they could not mount a viable campaign against Marcos in the 1969 election. There was intense discussion within the Executive Committee of the Liberal Party over the possibility of endorsing Marcos as a coalition candidate and thus securing some of the spoils from the election. Diosdado Macapagal intervened, delivering a speech before the Executive Committee of the LP on December 22 rejecting this proposal.²

Aquino and a group of first-term LP Congressmen known as the Young Turks – Ramon Mitra, Jose Yap, Eddie Ilarde and Vincenzo Sagun – were thoroughly displeased with the direction of the Liberal Party under the candidacy of Osmeña. Aquino, Mitra and Yap had carefully cultivated ties with the CPP and the KM and were looking to mobilize their support in the 1969 election. They recognized, however, that Osmeña did not have a prayer of getting elected, largely because he was popularly seen as being even more pro-Washington than Marcos himself. At the same time, the Young Turks were looking to secure at least one slot for their group on the Senatorial slate of the Liberal Party, and thus, they could not directly oppose the candidacy of Osmeña.

When Osmeña traveled to Washington after his nomination, the Young Turks drafted a Foreign Policy Position Statement for the LP which professed the “utmost nationalism,” and postured as being non-aligned between Washington, Moscow and Beijing.³ Aquino traveled to Japan to personally deliver the statement to Osmeña. Osmeña was in Tokyo en route from Washington to Manila, Aquino en route to Moscow. Aquino sought unsuccessfully to get Osmeña to sign on to the Young Turks statement and thus to launch his campaign in Manila with the appearance of independence from Washington. Aquino’s travel to Moscow, in turn, was meant to provide weight to this posturing. To the consternation of Aquino and the Young Turks, on his return to Manila, Osmeña did precisely the opposite. He attacked Marcos for having deviated from his allegiance to the United States by opening diplomatic and trade ties with Eastern Europe. Osmeña told the press,

I denounce his administration’s two-faced policy vis-a-vis other countries. While professing friendship for the United States, his administration has been shamelessly flirting with Red China and other Communist Countries.

In total disregard of our established national policy against Communism, Mr. Marcos has been threatening to establish diplomatic and trade relations with the Reds, especially when he wants something

² PFP, 6 Jan 1969, 3.

³ MB, 8 Jul 1969.

real bad from the Americans. This is a form of diplomatic blackmail to which I do not subscribe.⁴

Marcos responded, defending the pursuit of trade relations with Eastern Europe and Moscow. He stated “the country must work towards the time when the nation would not be merely a supplier of raw materials but a manufacturer and producer in its own right.”⁵ Osmeña’s anti-Communist bluster ceded to Ferdinand Marcos the appearance of independence from Washington. On July 12, the Manila Bulletin – which was both a staunchly anti-Communist and pro-Marcos paper – ran an editorial responding to Osmeña. It stated that while Marcos was showing a “softening attitude toward red bloc countries” this was selective and “limited to the Soviet Union and East Europe. There is no known contact with mainland China.” Marcos’ moves toward Moscow and Eastern Europe were not mere posturing, however. He saw Moscow as a needed counterweight to Beijing. Speaking with CBS Radio, Marcos announced that if the US withdrew from Asia the Philippines would rely on relations with the USSR to serve as “a counterfoil against communist China.” He stated that “The Soviet Union will try to neutralize Red China and this is what we’re hoping for in Asia.”⁶ *Pravda* reported that Marcos stated that “the foreign relations board is now considering the question of establishing diplomatic relations with socialist countries and is to produce its recommendations towards the end of this year.”⁷

In a move to retain the support of the disgruntled Aquino and the Young Turks, Osmeña added both Sagun and Ilarde to the LP senatorial line up on July 16.

Boycott and Endorsement

The SDK and its UP campus organization, the Pagkakaisa-Partisans, issued a call for the boycott of the 1969 elections. Jerry Barican and Antonio Pastelero, the current and former chairs of the Student Council, appeared on Lopez’ television network, ABS-CBN, on September 18 to launch the boycott campaign, claiming that it “would serve as a protest vote and, at the same time, as a warning against the politicians to reform their ways.”⁸ The conception behind the boycott campaign was further articulated by Vic Manarang in an editorial in the *Collegian*, “The boycott will not be in the negative sense of rejecting altogether the idea of elections, but in the positive of protesting the way they have been held and are

⁴MB, 11 Jul 1969, 19. Osmeña’s claim that Marcos was flirting with “Red China” was completely baseless.

⁵MB, 11 Jul 1969, 20.

⁶MB, 29 Jul 1969, 17.

⁷MB, 29 Jul 1969.

⁸PC, 17 Sep 1969, 3. Jorge Sibal, also of the SDK, repeated the call for a boycott on October 2. (PC, 2 Oct 1969, 10).

being held – to serve only the interests of the few dominant powers-that-be, the interests opposed to those of the people.”⁹ The SDK put forward the slogan “Be smart, don’t vote! / Maging matalino, huwag bumoto!”

Both the PKP and the CPP found their ranks split on the question of the 1969 election. Uncertain where to place their bet, they played the field – supporting a boycott through some of their front organizations and endorsing candidates for election through others. This strategy, pursued by both parties, was not the result of poor communication or a lack of coordination. It was a calculated and dishonest policy designed to secure the greatest advantage out of the election. It simultaneously cultivated ties with leading bourgeois political figures through endorsement, on the one hand, and attempted to retain mass support by protesting the rotten political system, on the other.

PKP

The PKP had strong incentive to support Marcos in 1969: Marcos openly advocated ties with Moscow and Eastern Europe; he had provided salaried government positions to leading members of the party; he was negotiating the release of the PKP members in prison. The Marcos administration facilitated the international travel of the PKP, and they in turn assisted with his foreign diplomacy with the USSR. The emerging armed wing of the PKP was intimately tied to the military, and had just launched a bombing campaign that would later serve as the calculated pretext for military dictatorship. Hernando Abaya, a longstanding intimate ally of the PKP, traveled to Moscow in late 1969 where he delivered a lecture to Soviet scholars at the Institute of Oriental Studies. He informed them that “a second Marcos term might augur well for the further easing of contacts between our two peoples since it is under Mr. Marcos that travel to the socialist countries had been permitted.”¹⁰

In August the Central Committee of the PKP discussed and approved a “Thesis on the National Situation.”¹¹ The document laid out the “errors and mistakes” of the organization in the past, and established its “strategic aims ... outlook and perspective” going forward.

At the present stage of the struggle, the CPP [Lava is in reference to the Moscow oriented party] sets for itself the strategic aims of achieving complete independence from American imperialist economic exploitation and political domination and the liquidation of the powerful remnants of feudal exploitation and political control, leading

⁹PC, 3 Nov 1969, 4. The entire issue in which this editorial appeared was dedicated to the boycott campaign.

¹⁰Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 194.

¹¹I have not been able to locate a copy of this document. Its substance, however, was summarized by Jose Lava in an article published in November 1971. (Jose Lava [Francisco Balagtas, pseud.], “The Philippines at the Crossroads,” *World Marxist Review* 14, no. 11 [1971]: 42).

to the establishment of a national-democratic state (in which political power is shared by the alliance of the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the progressive national bourgeoisie) which will proceed to restructure the economy ultimately leading to socialism.

In the pursuit of these strategic aims, the party was “prepared to combine skillfully and flexibly, as the situation dictates, both peaceful and violent, legal and illegal, parliamentary and armed forms and methods of struggle.” One of the criticisms which the document leveled was that “the CPP [i.e., PKP] has not yet learned to make proper use of the potentialities of the revolutionary students, intellectuals, and other petty bourgeois elements. It is confronted with the phenomenon of intelligent, sincere and dedicated revolutionary students engaged in militant mass actions, following the leadership of the ‘Maoist’ group or the leadership of the church-led Christian Social Movement.” Again we see in the August Thesis that there was nothing in the program, strategic aims or even tactics of the PKP to distinguish it from the CPP. It was pursuing a national democratic revolution and not yet socialism; was looking to form an alliance with the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie; and it was willing to pursue both parliamentary and armed means to achieve this end. The difference was one of geopolitical orientation – Moscow or Beijing – and flowing from this an alliance with rival sections of the Philippine bourgeoisie. There was thus genuine enthusiasm on the part of the PKP leadership for Marcos and his reelection, but there was also legitimate concern that they were not winning the support of the youth.

To resolve this dilemma, the PKP pursued a fragmentary approach to the 1969 election: MAN and MASAKA endorsed Marcos while the MPKP and BRPF joined the boycott campaign, looking to retain support within the youth movement. MAN had been a reliable supporter of Marcos since its founding in the first half of 1967 and at its second national congress, held on March 15-16 1969, it continued and deepened this support. The leadership of the PKP played a central role in the congress, which was co-chaired by Ruben Torres and whose preparatory committee and coordinating committee were in their majority composed of party members.¹² The program of the Congress called for a “New Philippine Society,” parroting the political slogan of Ferdinand Marcos who had himself lifted the phrase from LBJ’s Great Society. By September, MAN explicitly endorsed Marcos’ reelection. In the same month, MASAKA endorsed Marcos in a mass rally staged at Plaza Miranda, spending “a large amount of money (at least ₱30,000) on chartered buses last September 19 to ferry about 5,000 people from the provinces. . . .”¹³ The rally was indirectly funded by Marcos and declared its

¹²Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN), *M.A.N.’s Goal: The Democratic Filipino Society* ([Manila]: Malaya Books, 1969), 58-60.

¹³AB, October 1969, 10. This was the Flores-Santos faction of MASAKA, which according to *Ang Bayan*, was “closely identified with Land Authority Governor Conrado Estrella.”

support for his promises of land reform and called for his reelection.¹⁴

NPA

In Central Luzon, Sumulong aggressively campaigned for his political patron, disseminating Marcos-Lopez propaganda material throughout the region. His endorsement carried with it the threat of violence against anyone who dared oppose his candidates.¹⁵ The NPA, largely composed of the lieutenants of Sumulong who had broken from his ranks less than a year before, engaged in the traditional election campaign negotiation and support for which the Huks were known. This was not, however, simply the residue of old habits. As MASAKA and Sumulong provided the NP with peasant support in Central Luzon, so the LP expected and received support from the newly founded CPP. Lachica wrote that “Sumulong campaigned for Marcos in 1969. Dante supported Marcos’ opponent Sen. Sergio Osmeña, Jr.” Territory controlled by the NPA was among the few places where Osmeña won the vote.¹⁶ A great deal of the weight carried by the endorsement of Dante and the NPA came not from their campaigning, but simply from the instructions which Dante would extend to peasant communities immediately prior to the election telling them for whom to vote. Thus, Dante held a meeting with his lieutenants in Pitabunan, Concepcion, Tarlac, a week before the election to determine the broader slate of the NPA’s political endorsements.¹⁷ They were torn between endorsing the LP incumbent Jose Yap and independent candidate Max G. Llorente, for while Yap had close ties to Dante and Sison, the lawyer Llorente had volunteered legal services to defend accused dissidents held in Camp Makabulos. Dante split the NPA’s support, instructing certain areas to vote for Yap and others for Llorente. Yap was reelected.¹⁸

The 1969 election escalated the Central Luzon turf war between the Monkees and the Beatles. The paramilitary gangster force around Sumulong, with intimate ties to the Philippine Constabulary and the Marcos administration, and numerous links to the PKP, was popularly referred to as the “Monkees.” Dante’s forces, the newly formed NPA, were called the “Beatles.” The names originated because

¹⁴A year later, MASAKA would commemorate this rally as “a legendary and great day [maalamat at dakilang araw] for MASAKA and the peasantry, because on this day MASAKA announced its overall perspective regarding social change and the program of a broad and genuine Land Reform, that is needed by the Filipino people especially the peasantry.” They declared September 19 to be MASAKA Day and staged another demonstration again in support of Marcos’ promises of land reform. (*Ang Masaka*, September 1970).

¹⁵Lachica, *The Huks*, 217.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 209, 219.

¹⁷Among those present were Commanders Melody, Madrigal, Joe Buscayno, Quinez, and Ligaya..

¹⁸Lachica, *The Huks*, 220. In January 1970, the KM hailed Llorente as “a progressive element” and denounced the PC for his attempted “assassination.” (*First Quarter Storm of 1970* [Manila: Silangan Publishers, 1970], 161).

everyone knew that the Beatles were legitimate and the Monkees were a knock-off. Behind the humorous monikers, however, was a very real war. Drive-by shootings, assassinations, and village massacres plagued Central Luzon. The Beatles and the Monkees were simply armed wings of the political interests of rival sections of the ruling class. There was nothing particularly new to this, it had characterized Philippine politics for decades. The NPA had thrown itself into a very dirty business, and it was the peasant population of Central Luzon that suffered the consequences.

SAFL

On August 28 1969, the Partisans for Nationalist Student Power and a new organization called Students Against Fascism (SAF) passed a resolution denouncing the increased militarization of Central Luzon, which it declared to be “a portent of the coming of a fascist regime.” The militarization, they declared, was “a plot of the ruling oligarchy and of American imperialism to wreck the nationalist movement on the occasion of our national elections.”¹⁹ The resolution concluded that “all the resources called to the fore by the representatives of reaction shall not stop the millions of peasants, laborers, and progressive intellectuals, students, and bourgeoisie from protesting.” At some point someone went back over the typed document and inserted in pen the word “nationalist” over the “bourgeoisie.” The Partisans and the SAF launched a “nationwide campaign to collect 100,000 signatures” for this resolution, a goal which they subsequently abandoned. Two points stand out. First, while the document attacked the coming “fascist regime,” it did not mention Marcos or his administration even once; he was not yet the direct subject of attack. Second, the SDK was not yet calling for a boycott, they launched this campaign a month later. The SAF, however, would form the basis for a new organization in early October – the Student Anti-Fascist League (SAFL).

On October 6 the KM staged a protest against the not guilty verdict which had been handed down against Michael Moomey, an American serviceman who had shot and killed a Filipino employee, Glicer Amor, at Subic Naval Base, on the grounds that Moomey had mistaken Amor for a pig.²⁰ The KM distributed a leaflet at the rally that stated that the exploitation and parasitism of the United States in the Philippines would continue unless Filipinos rose up in a broad united front engaged in militant, revolutionary struggle in the “style of the heroic people of Vietnam.”²¹ Police forces assaulted and beat the protesters.²²

¹⁹Partisans for Nationalist Student Power and Students Against Fascism (SAF), *Manifesto*, August 1969, PRP 13/20.01.

²⁰This incident famously served as the basis for the 1976 film, *Minsa’y isang Gamu-gamo*, in which Nora Aunor delivered one of the more renowned lines in Philippine cinema: “my brother is not a pig!”

²¹Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat,” 6.

²²Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat,” 6; AB, 15 Jan 1970, 12-13.

Two days later the Student Anti-Fascist League was formed. The preparations for denouncing Marcos as a fascist, which would become the repeated cry of the First Quarter Storm in 1970, had now been laid. “Progressive organizations” of students sent representatives, but other than the SDK it is unclear who attended and the KM made no mention of participating in the event.²³ According to *Ang Masa*, the SAFL was concerned with increased militarism and with US control over the upcoming constitutional convention. The SAFL stated that this “drive to fascism” would increase under either candidate, but that Marcos was a greater danger. In response to the violent suppression of their demonstration the KM staged a second protest on October 10. They issued a statement that “While the forces of national democracy and freedom continue to progress in our society, the armed agents of the imperialist-hacendero dictatorship will intensify their assault against the former [laban sa una]. However, as this assault becomes cruel [nagiging malupit], the progressive forces become increasingly firm in carrying out militant struggle. And in the fight between the forces of change and the forces of reaction, fascist methods do not succeed [ang mga pamamaraang pasista ay hindi nagtatagumpay].”²⁴

NATU

Ignacio Lacsina had by 1969 become an informant for Marcos, secretly meeting with him and providing him with details on developments in the youth and workers movement, and he led NATU and the SPP to support Marcos in the 1969 election. In the wake of the election, Lacsina wrote “In November 1968, NATU and other labor unions proposed to Congress the establishment of a workers’ bank. Since early this year, Pres. Marcos has repeatedly assured the workers of its approval and on the strength of this promise wangled support for his reelection bid.”²⁵ Lacsina justified NATU’s support for Marcos in pseudo-revolutionary language, opening his article, “To make a revolution, one needs arms. To buy arms, one needs money. To have readily available money, one goes to a bank. And this, even a dedicated revolutionary knows or should know.”²⁶ Citing Marx’s writing on the Paris Commune, Lacsina continued, “The lesson is clear. To tame the bourgeoisie the workers must hold captive that which the bourgeoisie uses to enslave others. The workers must vigorously wangle every concession.”²⁷

²³1896, 1970, 1 no. 1, PRP 30/07; AM, 25 Oct 1969.

²⁴Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat,” 6.

²⁵*Pingian*, (December 1969), 6. Lacsina had an odd love for the word “wangle” and used it repeatedly.

²⁶*Pingian*, 1969–1970, (December 1969), 6, PRP 38/02. It is noteworthy that NATU, a union of bank employees, was calling for the establishment of a workers’ bank. Lacsina at the head of NATU would almost certainly have been appointed chair of the bank.

²⁷In a second set of articles in *Pingian*, a new journal published on the UP campus by various radical faculty members, NATU used the subject of the workers’ bank to directly attack Aquino as a politician who was opposed to the scheme. I have not been able to locate this source, but

Despite this endorsement of Marcos, the KM continued to work within and collaborate intimately with NATU and the SPP; they did not break with Lacsina until early 1971.

Movement for a Democratic Philippines

Marcos and Osmeña both invested a small fortune in the election and Marcos' spending in 1969 became the stuff of legend. Imelda Marcos campaigned with her Blue Ladies; Minnie Osmeña with her Pearls. November saw Marcos win in a landslide, the first president reelected in Philippine history.²⁸

For the Liberal Party, the 1969 election was a devastating defeat. Marcos received five million votes to Osmeña's three million, and Osmeña did not even manage to win his home turf of Cebu. Only one Liberal Senator, Gerry Roxas, managed to secure reelection. Rotea wrote that Osmeña, alleging fraud, "petitioned Congress to annul the election. He wanted to stop the proclamation of the first reelected Filipino president. But the NP-dominated legislature through sheer force of number proclaimed him."²⁹ When his petition failed, Osmeña filed a formal protest before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal. The general sentiment prevailing at the time seems to have been that Marcos – of course – had cheated, but that he would have won even if he had not. When Congress opened on January 26 1970, the number of LP Senators had been reduced from nine to five, and its congressmen from thirty to sixteen, and within weeks, some of the few remaining Liberals had defected to the Nacionalista Party. Surveying the situation in February 1970, *Graphic Weekly* concluded "Were it not for the students ... one would indeed be led to believe that Marcos is politically invulnerable."³⁰ The task of the leadership of the devastated LP – "Roxas, Salonga, Aquino, Montano, and young Rep. Ramon Mitra" – was "to take up the cause of the students, to provide a mode by which the students and those who agree with them can make themselves heard, and make themselves politically potent." The Liberal Party, under the leadership of Ninoy Aquino, pursued precisely this course and the alliance which they concluded with the students organized in the KM and SDK led to the political explosions which culminated in the declaration of martial law. It would be seventeen years before the country would hold another presidential election.

In response to the dirty election the UP Student Council sent a fact-finding team to Ilocos to research allegations of military coercion. The team claimed to have found "incontrovertible proof" of such coercion, and issued a statement

the nature of the material can be ascertained from a letter written by Aquino and published in the February issue of *Pingkian*. (ibid., (1970) Feb, p. 2).

²⁸A good deal of the election data is drawn from Jose Veloso Abueva, "The Philippines: Tradition and Change," *Asian Survey* 10, no. 1 (1970): 56–64

²⁹Hermie Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire* (Manila: Daily News, 1970), 6.

³⁰Manuel F. Almario, "Where Lies the Opposition," *Graphic*, February 1970, 13.

denouncing “Election Terrorism.”³¹ The UP Student Council committee formed to investigate electoral fraud took the name Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP).³² On November 27, the MDP published a declaration of principles in the *Collegian*, which opened “We, citizens of the Philippines, ... conscious of the need for all progressive Filipinos to consolidate in order to expose and combat all adversaries of a genuine Filipino democratic society, commit ourselves to the principles and objectives of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines.” The MDP subscribed to five basic principles: people’s democratic rights; civilian supremacy over the military; basic land reform and nationalist industrialization; national self-determination; and a progressive and independent foreign policy. On this basis they committed to “consolidate all progressive sectors of our society into a united front of the nationalist movement.”³³

The UP Student Council ad hoc committee to investigate the rigging of the 1969 election in Ilocos thus established itself as a permanent body. Committed to national democratic goals, but without allegiance to either the PKP or the CPP, it spent its initial months working as a student reform group but by February 1970 it had been transformed into an umbrella group of the entire Philippine left. It played a crucial role in the First Quarter Storm and through its auspices the KM and the SDK overcame of their split and began working intimately together.

In December the MDP was a small group pursuing student reforms, by January it was thrust into the maelstrom. On December 11, for example, the MDP issued a manifesto which addressed specific details of student reforms. “We believe that the Albarracin circular and the similar De La Salle directive were rescinded, not as an admission of error nor a reasonable concession to student protest, but only to diffuse and undercut the projected show of unity by different studentries in a massive demonstration.”³⁴ The manifesto denounced the Manual of Student

³¹UP Council of Leaders, *UP Council of Leaders Denounces Election Terrorism*, 1969, PRP 17/47.01. On November 19, the Student Council, in an effort at “elevating the political consciousness of our people,” who “despite the seeming meaninglessness of our democracy ... still cling to it,” called for a boycott of classes to “express alarm over the indications of a moribund society.” (UP Student Council, *Boycott our Classes and Join the Show of Protest Against the Fraudulent Elections!!*, November 1969, PRP 18/02.04). They created a steering committee to coordinate a nationwide rally with all schools and sectors against election fraud. (“Leaders Denounce Nov. 11 Terrorism,” *The Partisan*, November 1969, PRP 37/18.01). An additional resolution by the Arts & Sciences Student Council on the same day noted that *both* political parties were guilty of cheating and violence. The UP Student Council issued a similar resolution stating that “both political parties are merely two faces of the same dirty coin, two factions of the same exploitative alliance of hacendero, comprador and American imperialist classes.” (UP Student Council and UP Council of Leaders, *Manifesto*, November 1969, PRP 18/02.25).

³²*Breakthrough*, 3, nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 4, PRP 29/11.02 The MDP was also occasionally, but rarely, referred to by the Tagalog Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya [Movement for National Democracy] (KPD).

³³PC, 27 Nov 1969, 2.

³⁴Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Manifesto of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines*, December 1969, PRP 11/18.12.

Rights and Responsibilities published by the Marcos administration, saying that it was “an example of the anti-nationalist position of our neo-colonial educational system,” and cited two examples of this ‘anti-nationalism’: the requirement that student demands be submitted through school governance and that school papers be subjected to school rules. The manifesto concluded with the demand for the “rescindment of the Manual,” stating that “sufficient guidance is already provided in our Constitution, particularly the Bill of Rights.” This was a limited organization, and precisely this limited but loosely national democratic character allowed it to serve as the coordinator of the varied interests of all of the groups participating in the First Quarter Storm (FQS).

SPAP and SMMP had been concerted efforts to resolve the split between the KM and the SDK through organizational means without addressing its political foundations. Now the MDP, this ad hoc grouping on the Diliman campus created with other intentions, was able to accomplish what focused political will over the course of 1969 had failed to achieve. What had changed? A bloody faction fight within the SDK began in approximately August. Tera and Jose had secured tenured positions at UP through the SDK’s protests and then had allied with the PKP on the Diliman campus as the PKP moved to back Marcos in the 1969 elections. A significant portion of the SDK membership opposed these maneuvers by Tera and Jose and, in conjunction with machinations by the CPP, had launched a purge of their own leadership. Both the SPAP and the SMMP were founded prior to this purge and thus failed. While the SDK thus effected a shift toward the politics of the CPP, the KM altered its position on alliances with other front organizations. While the offending Article IV of the KM constitution was not rescinded, in practice the demand that affiliated organizations be subordinate to the Executive Board of Kabataang Makabayan was dropped.³⁵ The CPP, through the KM, would no longer demand the direct political loyalty of front groups, but would work to secure their allegiance through backroom machinations, rigged elections, and stacked executive bodies. The ongoing purge within the SDK and the tactical reorientation of the KM allowed both groups to work effectively within the MDP over the course of the storm, despite the presence of the MPKP in the umbrella group alongside them. The fury of the storm itself welded the KM and SDK together within the ranks of the MDP in a manner in which the struggles of 1969 had not. It was not until the political lull of early 1972 that the old tensions between the KM and SDK would reemerge.

On November 30, Monico Atienza, General Secretary of the KM, delivered a report on the activities and development of the KM in 1969 to the second national conference of the KM held at the National Press Club.³⁶ As was the case with all such reports to the KM, Atienza’s speech paid no heed to either global or national political developments and focused entirely on the activism of the

³⁵See page 341.

³⁶The report was published in Hernandez’ *Ang Masa*. (Atienza, “Pangkalahatang Ulat”).

organization, how it succeeded and how it could be organizationally improved. Atienza singled out the work of KM activists at the US Tobacco Corporation as the most important work done by the KM among the working class over the past year. He correctly pointed to the danger of mounting government suppression of the organization, and mentioned the arrest of leaders and the bugging of KM offices. Atienza mentioned a manifesto published by the KM earlier in the year, which attacked the “social imperialist Soviet Union” for its invasion of Czechoslovakia.³⁷ He made no mention, however, of the KM’s role in the Student Anti-Fascist League, the formation of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines, the boycott campaign, or the 1969 elections. There was nothing to tell. As Marcos and Osmeña had competed for office, as the NPA backed Osmeña, and students organized a boycott – the KM had been entirely silent.

³⁷The manifesto, as best I can ascertain, is no longer extant. (ibid., 7).

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Cacique Conspiracies

*Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then happy low, lie down!
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.*

— William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2*

Economic Crisis

The Philippines entered the 1970s, like much of the rest of world, in the grip of an immense economic crisis. The crisis first manifested itself in the country's plummeting dollar reserves which began to fall on June 17. By August 1 the peso was exchanging on the black market at a rate of ₱4.84 to the dollar, while the official rate was ₱3.91.¹ In an attempt to retain its reserve funds, the Central Bank raised its rediscount rate to ten percent and a number of smaller financial institutions went bankrupt. Marcos sought to secure an emergency loan to shore up the nation's dollar reserves. US banks deemed this too risky and refused to extend credit to the Philippine Central Bank, but HSBC and another British bank offered Manila a \$10 million emergency loan. Marcos allocated \$15 million to the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) to cover up to ₱10,000 per depositor with money in defaulting banks. By August 18 the blackmarket exchange rate had reached ₱5.50 to 1, and the *Bulletin* ran a front page headline on the dollar reserve crisis which read "Dive, dive, dive."²

Inflation skyrocketed. The price of consumer goods more than doubled, as the economic crisis combined with a rice shortage in the latter half of 1969, for

¹MB, 1 Aug 1969.

²MB, 18 Aug 1969.

which the front organizations of the CPP repeatedly blamed the ‘Kumintang Chinese.’ *Ang Masa* ran a cover story by Amado Hernandez on December 6 entitled “Biglang Taas ng mga Presyo,” [Sudden Rise in Prices] which opened “It seems likely that the sudden rise in the price of goods will be the cause of demonstrations.”³ These demonstrations, he argued, needed to demand from the government that they compel the “Chinese grocery and bodega owners” to release the goods they had hoarded. Bread prices, he stated, had risen precipitously. “And remember,” he wrote, “almost all bakeries [panaderia] are monopolized by the Chinese [intsik] just like the groceries and clothing stores.”⁴ By December 1969, the Philippines had a balance of payments deficit of \$137 million, and by February 1970 the country was confronting the worst economic crisis it had seen in decades. On February 21 Marcos floated the peso; it devalued in a single day by nearly 50%. The cost of imports shot upward. “As a result of devaluation, by 1971 nearly half the population, about 16 million people, were not earning enough to buy their minimum food needs. Consumer prices rose 32% by the end of 1971.”⁵

The crisis launched the political explosion of the early 1970s. When half of the population cannot afford its minimum food needs, massive social unrest is inevitable. The ruling class was also feeling the pinch; profits were imperiled. Those sections of the bourgeoisie with access to political power could use that power to guarantee their profits and shunt the weight of the crisis onto their rivals. The sections of the ruling class who lost out in the 1969 election saw their business interests jeopardized. Osmeña, Aquino and their allies began to plot the ouster of Marcos.

Plots and Machinations

Like Marcos, Vice President Fernando Lopez was reelected, but in the immediate aftermath of the election, Lopez and Marcos had a falling out with explosive political consequences.⁶ Lewis Gleeck stated that “The relationship of President Marcos, the political sovereign, and the Lopez brothers, the economic giants, was always an uneasy one . . . In the beginning, each needed the other, but in the end only one, of course, could be top dog.”⁷ The Lopezes were not to be taken lightly, as Aquino made clear in his apt description of their political influence.

³AM, 6 Dec 1969. The banner article carried the byline Mando Plaridel. This was almost certainly Amado Hernandez’ pen-name, as Mando Plaridel was the protagonist in Amado V Hernandez, *Mga Ibong Mandaragit* (Quezon City: International Graphic Service, 1969).

⁴AM, 6 Dec 1969, 3. Hernandez then detailed a number of rising prices: vegetable prices had doubled, the price of both bread and eggs had gone up by twenty percent, and the price for the fish *dalagang bukid* had risen from ₱1.60 to ₱2.60 per kilo.

⁵Rodrigo, *Phoenix*, 351.

⁶This was Lopez’ third term as vice president; the first was in 1949-1953, under Quirino.

⁷Quoted in Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 227.

The Lopezzes are the only family that has consistently stayed on the fringes of power since 1945, when they came to power with Roxas. Consistently they have been the giant-killers. Consistently they have been the manipulators of political balances in this country. When they abandoned Quirino and the LP, there was a stampede out. When they joined the Magsaysay bandwagon, they forced Garcia down. Then Macapagal came; but in two years the Lopezzes were able to bring about a crisis of major proportions against him, and so bring on his downfall. And it was the Lopezzes who engineered the coup of Marcos. Very few people know this, but it was the Lopezzes who financed Marcos against Amang to win the support of the Senate. All right, they rode with Marcos. First term. Now they are abandoning Marcos. The giant killers are again true to form.

What makes them so deadly?

One: their control of media. They have one of the best radio and TV networks in the country. Two: their political base. Having been in power since 1945, they have many people beholden to them, unknown numbers of people in the bureaucracy, in the judiciary, in the political field. Faceless at this moment; but when the chips are down, these people surface. Third: their reckless use of funds. When they fight they put in everything. So groups of politicians gravitate around them. Fourth: the Lopezzes are known to fight to the end. Other people you feel inhibited about joining them, for fear they will abandon you in mid-fight. Not the Lopezzes.⁸

The rancor between Marcos and Lopez was precipitated by the economic crisis. The business interests of the Lopez family felt the impact of rising prices and they sought relief from the Marcos government; Marcos in turn sought a larger share of ownership in a lubricating oil facility the Lopez brothers were intending to buy. In exchange for approving the deal he asked for forty percent ownership, but the Lopez brothers insisted on fifteen percent. The haggling turned into open political conflict in the first quarter of 1970 which was followed by a temporary reconciliation. When Marcos raised the import duty on crude oil in December from ten percent to fifteen, "to cover the government deficit," the operating costs of Meralco, the Manila Electric company owned by the Lopez brothers, went up significantly.⁹ Rodrigo writes,

By 1971, Meralco had incurred a large dollar-denominated debt that it would have a difficult time repaying under its current cost structure

⁸Quijano de Manila, "Why did Ninoy throw that bomb?," *APL*, May 1971, 52.

⁹Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 226. The rising oil prices, for which both the Lopez brothers and the CPP denounced Marcos, were in large part the result of the formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1969.

and rates. On top of existing debt, it also needed to access an additional ₱1B in financing over the years 1971-77 to finance construction of new plants and the expansion of the distribution network.

The only way for Meralco to survive was to secure a rate increase from the government to keep pace with rising costs. The trouble was, Malacañang held the key to any rate increase.¹⁰

The Lopez brothers threw themselves back into political battle against Marcos at the end of the year. On December 5, Eugenio Lopez made Renato Constantino a regular columnist of the *Chronicle*, and Constantino used this column to satirize the first couple for their gaucheness and gaudy practices. It was a public humiliation, but it was not a political exposé.¹¹ A significant portion of the Philippine news media pursued a similar anti-Marcos bent. Abinales correctly notes that

Radical propaganda got a great boost when Marcos's discarded allies, notably the Lopez and Laurel families, sensing that he was faltering, announced their sympathy with "the revolution" and opened their media outlets to student radicals. The television stations and newspapers highlighted demonstrations... Suddenly, a relatively small left-wing group became a major national player, thanks to the political opportunism of anti-Marcos elites. When Marcos warned of an unholy alliance between radicals and "oligarchs," therefore, he spoke the truth.¹²

On January 8 1970, in the lead up to the First Quarter Storm, the *Chronicle* published an editorial, "The Students and the Press," announcing a shift in the policy of the paper to provide sympathetic coverage of the students, particularly in the face of police brutality. The paper wrote that the police were "uniformed bullies," "illiterate" and "incapable of understanding the most trivial of sentiment in the student mind," and called for "demonstrators – meaning the student activists – to be dealt with fairly and just in the columns of the press." It called for an end to the "glamorization of police brutality and the denigration of the young."¹³ The *Chronicle* was not alone in this editorial shift, for Marcos had alienated a good deal of the remaining press by "cutting dollar allocations for their newsprint."¹⁴ "Freedom of the Press without newsprint?" asked the *Philippines Free Press*. The FQS protests received overwhelmingly sympathetic press coverage.

A savagely anti-Marcos weekly launched in April 1971, the *Asia-Philippines Leader*, which during its first year of publication demonstrated its ties to the

¹⁰Ibid., 236.

¹¹Ibid., 232.

¹²Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 202.

¹³MC, 8 Jan 1970.

¹⁴Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 23.

student radicals by publishing the polemics of the PKP and CPP. The *APL* was operated by Jose Ma. Jacinto, scion of the Jacinto family, which had interests in steel production and like the Lopez brothers was in a bitter economic dispute with Marcos, who had demanded shares of the corporation in return for continued government subsidies to their steel mill.¹⁵ Jacinto set up *APL* on old *Chronicle* press machinery sold to him by the Lopez brothers,¹⁶ and staffed the paper with the polished journalists of the *Philippines Free Press* who had gone on strike and been brutally suppressed by Locsin, as Resil Mojares explained in a tribute to Nick Joaquin,

In 1970, he joined a labor union organized by the workers of Free Press and agreed to be its president. ... Organized at a time when Manila was seething with civil unrest, the appearance of the union sparked a bitter fight in the company. When management cracked down on the union, Joaquin resigned. With Free Press editor-writers Gregorio C. Brillantes and José F. Lacaba, artist Danilo Dalena, and close to thirty personnel of the administrative and printing departments, Joaquin launched the weekly *Asia-Philippines Leader* in 1971 and served as its editor-in-chief.¹⁷

Mark Thompson identified five major factions in opposition to Marcos that came into alignment between 1970 and 1972: Aquino; Laurel; Osmeña; Roxas; and Lopez. Each was a dynasty of the landed elite. The leading collaborators during the Japanese occupation, they had been immediately rehabilitated by Washington in the wake of the war and were now the most politically powerful families in the country.¹⁸ Osmeña, Aquino and Roxas were Marcos' longstanding opponents, but the animosity of Lopez and Laurel was a political fallout of the economic crisis that gripped the country at the opening of the decade. Jose Lacaba depicted the alignment of forces arrayed against Marcos in an article in April 1971,

If a distinction must be made, it must be between natural born oligarchs and self-made oligarchs. Not a coincidence is the fact that the names arrayed against Marcos belong to families with a distinguished lineage: Osmeña, Roxas, Lopez, Laurel. One way of viewing the NP split and the almost certain emergence of a United Opposition is as a realignment of forces within the oligarchy, as a power struggle between the *ancien* and the *nouveau* within the oligarchy.¹⁹

¹⁵Thompson, "Searching for a strategy," 115.

¹⁶Ibid., 114.

¹⁷Resil B. Mojares, "Biography of Nick Joaquin," Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, 1996.

¹⁸Thompson, "Searching for a strategy," 44-52.

¹⁹*APL*, 23 Apr 1971, 7.

The feuding dynasts did more than provide the CPP with favorable press coverage; they directly and generously funded its front organizations, provided salaried positions to some of its leaders, and granted the demonstrators nearly daily access to broadcasting rights on their major radio and television networks. Behn Cervantes wrote, "Since this was the crest of the First Quarter Storm, it was relatively easy to get contributions [for the KM and SDK] from big business tycoons."²⁰ Not only the Lopez brothers, but also Aquino, Ramon Mitra and John Osmeña were actively engaged in funding the front organizations of the CPP, particularly the KM.²¹ The allied elite opposition helped "plan, pay for, and give favorable press coverage to the rallies."²² Sergio Osmeña Jr. followed a strategy of leaving the country just ahead of the explosive protests which he funded, so that he could deny that he was connected with them.²³ The support which they cultivated with the CPP won the Liberal Party the 1971 election. As the elite opposition bankrolled the CPP front organization's rallies, Marcos began funding the protest marches of the MPPK which by 1971 was violently clashing with the KM in the streets of Manila.²⁴ Thus this heavily-funded proxy fight between Moscow and Marcos on the one hand and between Beijing and Aquino on the other began to tally a body count.

The money of Aquino, Lopez and company was well spent. They not only secured the support of the front organizations of the CPP and the growing protest movement which they headed, they also acquired the coercive muscle of the NPA as a counterweight to Marcos' increasingly personal hold over the AFP which he routinely deployed for his own political ends. Each of these elite figures controlled groups of hired armed men; Aquino in particular had a sizable private army supplied with an arsenal of over one hundred guns. These mercenary militias, however, were local and therefore limited in their usefulness. What Aquino and the rest of the opposition needed, and helped build, was an armed force that spanned much of Luzon.²⁵ Thompson writes, "[a]nti-Marcos politicians felt they needed the help of new armed groups to survive politically (if not physically). By helping to establish a new communist party ... traditional leaders were able to add 'muscle' to their local election campaign."²⁶

The elite opposition, not content with funding protests to destabilize Marcos, began plotting assassinations and coups as well. Sergio Osmeña Jr. during the election of 1969 formed a secret organization called the Workshop Group, composed of ex-military and intelligence operatives, under the leadership of Terry Adevoso. In the wake of Osmeña's election defeat, the Workshop Group

²⁰Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 113.

²¹Thompson, "Searching for a strategy," 111.

²²Ibid., 116.

²³Ibid., 52.

²⁴Ibid., 151.

²⁵Thompson, "Searching for a strategy," 118.

²⁶Ibid., 117.

began plotting to assassinate the reelected president, hiring foreign hitmen to carry out the job, and evidence suggests that the Lopez brothers gave money to assist with these schemes.²⁷ The hired guns made multiple attempts on Marcos' life, but each was thwarted, as Marcos was secretly informed of the activities and plotting of the Workshop Group by a mole in the organization, Jose Maristella.²⁸

Aquino, Diokno, and Manglapus meanwhile attempted to organize a military coup to overthrow the president, and the CPP was intimately involved in this as well. Danilo Vizmanos, a captain of the Philippine Navy and secretly a member of the Communist Party, participated in the plotting sessions.²⁹ Vizmanos wrote of multiple meetings held in Manglapus' home in Urdaneta village, attended by a "number of generals and colonels, almost all of whom were from the grounds forces".³⁰ In September 1972, but weeks before martial law and as coup plotting reached its fever pitch, Sison met with Aquino and offered him the leadership of a revolutionary coalition government. Aquino promptly went to the US embassy and told them of the offer, informing them at the same time that if he became president he would declare martial law to bring order to the country.³¹

SocDem

At the center of these plots and machinations was a new political actor which emerged in the wake of the 1969 election: the various right-wing student groups, known collectively as the Social Democrats or SocDem, which were based almost exclusively at elite private universities run by the religious orders, particularly the Jesuits. A leading SocDem organization was the Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas (KASAPI). [This might be loosely translated as the Gathering of the Pillars of the Philippines] KASAPI was founded by the Jesuit Fr. Jose Blanco, a

²⁷ibid., 148. The hitmen were August McCormick Lehman, Robert Pincus – both of whom had mafia ties; Larry Trachtman, Sam Cummins, and Brian Bothwick. (ibid., 149).

²⁸Ibid., 109 fn. 51.

²⁹This can be reconstructed on the basis of snippets and stray details scattered throughout Vizmanos' three books. (Danilo P Vizmanos, *Through the Eye of the Storm* [Quezon City: KEN Inc., 2000]; Danilo P Vizmanos, *Martial Law Diary and other papers* [Quezon City: KEN Inc., 2003]; Danilo P Vizmanos, *A Matter of Conviction* [Quezon City: Ibon Books, 2006]).

³⁰Vizmanos, *Through the Eye of the Storm*, 169. In the midst of their plotting, Manglapus recommended that Diokno, who would be traveling to Latin America, "visit Chile and find out how the socialist government of Salvador Allende has managed to coexist with the military." (Vizmanos, *Through the Eye of the Storm*, 169). It was an accurate and deadly comparison. The Chilean Stalinist Communist Party supported the popular front government of Allende, subordinating massive social unrest behind his administration by promoting illusions that he was the progressive representative of the national bourgeoisie carrying out the national democratic revolution. As Allende brought generals into his cabinet, and made Pinochet head of the armed forces, the Party continued to support him. When Pinochet carried out his coup, tens of thousands were imprisoned, tortured and executed.

³¹Thompson, "Searching for a strategy," 155.

man known by the nickname ‘Derps.’³² Blanco studied at Fordham University in the United States in the late 1950s and worked in Yogyakarta from 1959 to 1967. In 1965, Blanco organized Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia [Indonesian Students Action Front] (KAMI), a group which was central to the persecution and hounding of the PKI during the slaughter which commenced that year. They stormed the Chinese consulate and demanded the ouster of Sukarno and transfer of power to Suharto. Suharto routinely and secretly met with KAMI leaders.³³ When Blanco returned to the Philippines he took up work organizing students at the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in a nested series of student organizations, each group kept secret from the other.³⁴ These groups spread to other campuses and in August 1970 gathered together to form KASAPI. KASAPI began creating various sectoral front organizations, parallel to those of the CPP.³⁵ In February 1970, Jesuit priest Ed Garcia founded another SocDem group – Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanggi [Strength of the Brown Spirit] (LAKASDIWA). Many of the SocDem organizations received support through the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) offices in Manila, demonstrating their deep ties to the Second International.³⁶ These were sharply right-wing organizations, based among the most elite layers of youth and students enrolled at sectarian private universities. They were deeply integrated into Student Catholic Action (SCA), as well as Johnny Tan’s FFW, and Montemayor’s FFF. They focused their energy above all on organizing urban poor squatter communities, and it was these shantytown populations that formed the base of political power which the SocDem groups mobilized in their protests.

Franco writes,

From the beginning, however, the student movement was increasingly divided between two ideological poles – the militantly anti-clerical national democrats who had been inspired by Maoism and the communist China experience on the one hand, and the virulently anti-communist social democrats whose main base was in Manila’s elite sectarian schools and universities on the other. ...

In particular, social democratic or “SD” groups such as *Lakasdiwa*, founded by Fr. Edmundo Garcia, the Catholic youth organization *Kilusang Khi Rho ng Pilipinas* or simply *Khi Rho*, considered the youth arm of the FFF, and the NUSP were militantly anti-communist

³²Benjamin T. Tolosa Jr., ed., *Socdem: Filipino Social Democracy in a Time of Turmoil and Transition, 1965-1995* (Manila: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), 2011), 11.

³³On the role of KAMI, see John Hughes, *The End of Sukarno: A Coup that Misfired, a Purge that Ran Wild* (Singapore: Archipelago, 2002); Justus M. Van Der Kroef, *Indonesia After Sukarno* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971).

³⁴Tolosa Jr., *Socdem*, 13.

³⁵Among KASAPI’s members was Karen Tañada, granddaughter of Lorenzo Tañada.

³⁶Tolosa Jr., *Socdem*, 51.

and distinguished themselves from the CPP by an avowed commitment to a non-violent and reformist political strategy.³⁷

While Franco is correct that these groups were anti-Communist, they were not opposed to the use of violence. During the later martial law period, they would stage bombings throughout Manila to destabilize the Marcos regime. Aquino, by this point in political exile in the United States, hailed a SocDem group which called itself the April 6 Liberation Movement (A6LM) in an interview with Pat Robertson on the 700 Club. Aquino had deep ties to the A6LM, which was attempting through terrorist bombings to overthrow Marcos, and among those carrying out the bombings were Lorenzo Tañada's son and granddaughter. In 1980 another SocDem group, working in conjunction with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) staged Operation June Bride, a bombing campaign waged throughout Manila, prepared and staged from Sabah.

Emerging in the wake of the 1969 election, the SocDem groups were opposed to Marcos and allied with Osmeña and Aquino, and as a result of their common ties and shared opposition, they became the allies of the CPP. CPP members joined these groups and sought to win them over to the perspective of the party, National Democracy, known as NatDem. The struggle and cooperation between the allied forces of NatDem and SocDem in the early 1970s shaped the course of politics in the period leading up to martial law.³⁸ The CPP and its front organizations initially denounced the SocDem groups as 'clerico-fascists,' but as an alliance with them grew they revised the name to 'clerico-reformists.' The KM later wrote that

As a result of the extreme barbarism and mendacity of the US-Marcos regime, many of the clerico-reformists veered toward the national-democratic line. The majority of the members of reformist organizations bolted these organizations and became national democrats. The

³⁷Franco, *Elections and Democratization in the Philippines*, 88-89.

³⁸LAKASDIWA, for example, split between SocDem and NatDem members, as a LAKASDIWA member who joined the CPP recounted in an interview,

I felt that they [the NatDems] were doing better work than we were, and without thinking of transferring, I joined some members of the organization asking questions of the [LAKASDIWA] leadership – “How come we don't have answers for these questions?” And then they got antagonized, so they tried to harass us. But it turned out that we were the majority. When we got to talk to each other we found [sic] out that we were in the majority. So we demanded elections and before that could be held the leadership said that there would not be any elections because we would rig it. They were the leaders anyway. So the organization was split, not really in half because it was about 20 to 80 percent. The 80 percent declared they would support or be with the national democratic movement, while the other 20 percent said they were not going to join. (ibid., 90)

moderate Khi Rho was transformed into a national-democratic organization, while LAKASDIWA became Lakasdiwang Rebolusyonaryo, to strongly express its revolutionary character.³⁹

The basic orientation of the SocDem groups, in keeping with their roots in KAMI in Indonesia, was to back a military coup. In the beginning of 1971, while in an alliance with the KM, KASAPI published statements addressed to the Armed Forces, calling on them to remove Marcos from power.⁴⁰ As the CPP allied with the SocDem forces they became closely associated with a wide range of CIA assets and former military intelligence figures, all of whom were plotting the ouster of Marcos. By mid 1971, Jaime Ferrer, a key CIA asset, announced his support for the KM-SDK and the “revolution of the youth,” and the KM trumpeted his support in *Ang Masa*.⁴¹ A CIA agent and former head of military intelligence, Bonifacio Gillego, who was a leader in the coup plots against Marcos, became a prominent speaker at KM rallies. The KM was aware of Gillego’s ties to the CIA and to military intelligence but claimed that he had been won over to the perspective of national democracy.⁴²

The spikes and lulls in the protest movement from 1970 to 1972 closely followed the tensions between Lopez and Marcos. When Lopez was fighting Marcos, the KM was in the streets; when the tensions between Lopez and Marcos diminished, so too did the street battles. The first break between Marcos and Lopez came at the end of 1969 and was followed by the First Quarter Storm, which Lopez heavily funded and supported during the first three months of 1970. In March 1970 Marcos was ready to reach a deal with the Lopez brothers on the lubricating oil facility, and the Lopez brothers agreed to tone down their support for the protests. By the end of March, the protests had stopped and, on May 20 1970, the Public Service Commission approved a provisional Meralco rate hike of 37%, effectively concluding a ceasefire between Lopez and Marcos. The economic crisis worsened, however, and by the end of the year they had another falling out.⁴³ On December 26 1970, Marcos announced a fifty percent tax hike on imported crude oil from ten to fifteen percent, and the Lopez plotting against Marcos resumed. On January 13 1971 Marcos met in Malacañang with a collection of labor groups loyal to him, vowing to “crush the Lopez oligarchy.” On the same day the KM led violent protests against the oil price hike in Manila and police opened fire on the demonstrators, killing four. The KM and SDK worked furiously

³⁹KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 7.

⁴⁰Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas (KASAPI), *Bukas na Liham sa mga Kawal ng Gobyerno*, PRP 08/32.01, 1971.

⁴¹AM, 15 Jun 1971, 2.

⁴²Ina Alleco R. Silverio, *Ka Bel: The Life and Struggle of Crispin Beltran* (Quezon City: Southern Voices, 2010), 77. Gillego later, with funding and support from Ninoy Aquino, carried out a series of bombings in Manila in the late 1970s. This was known as Project Mactan and was separate from the A6LM which was likewise supported by Aquino. (McCoy, *Closer than Brothers*, 156).

⁴³Thompson, “Searching for a strategy,” 114.

to whip up protests akin to those of the previous year, erecting barricades at multiple locations throughout the city and surrounding provinces. Among the results was the week long stand-off that became known as the Diliman Commune. On May 10 1972 the warring parties reconciled. The Public Service Commission granted Meralco another 36.5% rate increase, and Marcos drove to the offices of the Lopez brothers and shook their hands. The Lopez family, it seemed, had won. Four months later Marcos declared martial law. While he imprisoned one member of the Lopez family, most went into exile, and Marcos confiscated a majority of their business interests.

From 1970 to 1972, in the midst of a devastating economic crisis which saw the price of basic goods move beyond the reach of the working class and peasantry, the CPP and its front organizations were in an alliance with leading representatives of the old landed oligarchy. The wealth of Lopez and Aquino was based in sugar, Laurel in coffee, and their sugar and coffee money provided financial and political support to the CPP. In return the CPP used its forces among the youth, peasantry and working class to whip up protests and strikes designed to destabilize Marcos on behalf of their allies, channeling all of the immense social anger of the time behind the interests of a section of the ruling class. The CPP entered alliances with the right-wing SocDem forces, whose roots lay in the ouster of Sukarno and the murder of the PKI, and whose political orientation in the Philippines was to agitating for a military coup. Thus, the CPP not only provided Marcos with a pretext for martial law, they disarmed the only genuine opposition to military rule. None of the ruling class allies of the CPP were opposed to martial law; many, including Aquino, favored it, but desired to be sitting in Malacañang when the curtain of dictatorship rung down. Successful opposition to dictatorship rested in securing the independence of the working class from the entirety of the bourgeoisie, with its coup plotting and assassination schemes and machinations toward military rule. The CPP, in keeping with its Stalinist program, labored to thwart this independence, working at every turn to subordinate the class struggle of workers to the interests of the bourgeoisie. That the explosion of massive anger from the working class, confronting crisis and near starvation, was directed behind the interests of the ruling class rivals of Marcos was almost entirely the work of the CPP.

The Storm Bursts



The Explosive Opening of a Decade

Akalain mong ang tubig na di bumububô, hindi bumababâ sa mga kababaan at di nagwawalat at kumâkaladkad ng bawa't maraanán, hanggang hindi muna napupunô ang mga guwâng o bahay-tubig na dating mahinay sa pagdaloy at sa pag-ahos, ay nagiging bakal na pangwasák at panggibâ ng lalong matitibay na katatagán.

— Lope K. Santos, *Banaag at Sikat*

The new decade dawned to protests and repression in the streets of Manila, and Marcos readied the apparatus of martial law. In January 1970, in the thick of demonstrations, “Marcos sent a large military convoy racing north to the Mansion House in Baguio, filled with money, guns, ammunition and government papers in crates, to set up an alternative seat of government.”⁴⁴ Amando Doronila, then writing for the *Daily Mirror*, “exposed a Department of Foreign Affairs circular asking all Philippine embassies and missions abroad to conduct research on cases where martial law had been imposed in other countries.”⁴⁵ According to Rodrigo, Marcos wrote in his diary in 1970

“The disorders must now be induced into a crisis so that stricter measures can be taken . . . A little more destruction and vandalism, and I can do anything.” He also wrote: “we should allow the communists to gather strength, but not such strength that we cannot overcome them.” On February 12, 1970, he rued that a noisy student demo had ended peacefully: “I secretly hoped that the demonstration would attack the Palace so we could employ the total solution.” His end goal was plain: “I have that feeling of certainty that I will end up with dictatorial powers.”⁴⁶

As Marcos wound up the spiral spring of state repression, his rivals funded the protests; but when Lopez reached a temporary truce with Marcos in March

⁴⁴Rodrigo, *Phoenix*, 346.

⁴⁵Rodrigo, *Phoenix*, 348.

⁴⁶Rodrigo, *Phoenix*, 346.

the First Quarter Storm (FQS) dissipated. The social anger of the masses marching in the streets was fueled by the skyrocketing prices of basic necessities, massive social inequality and state repression in defense of it. They were organized, however, behind banners which denounced Marcos' puppetry and called for his ouster. At no point did the CPP or its front organizations address the root of the social ills confronting the working class – capitalism.

The MPKP lost out during the Storm. Nemenzo claimed that in 1970 the PKP organizations were “much larger than the KM and SDK put together.”⁴⁷ As the KM and SDK continuously escalated their rhetoric denouncing Marcos, Marcos mobilized troops to attack the protestors. The MPKP meanwhile, looking to preserve ties with the President, tepidly criticized his administration and then denounced the KM for leading an “exclusively anti-Marcos struggle.” They did not call for an independent struggle against the entire capitalist class, of course; they were Stalinists. Rather, they sought to defuse tensions, and by the end of the FQS, the MPKP had lost a great deal of credibility. In the latter half of 1970, the KM sought to organizationally consolidate its gains coming out of the storm. By the end of the year it had been able to win back as close allies all of the groups which had broken from it in November 1967, with the exception of the MPKP.

The year ended with the news that Lt. Victor Corpus had led a raid on the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) armory and defected to the NPA. Nineteen seventy-one promised to be every bit as explosive as 1970.

⁴⁷Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 36.

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The First Quarter Storm

... the blood-spattered truncheons, the fires in the night, the staccato of Armalites, the thunder of home-made bombs, the tear gas crawling down streets and alleys, the flag carried with the red field up, the fists in the air, the tramp of tired but resolute feet, and most of all the faces of an awakened nation, the dusty, sweaty, exultant faces of militant young men and women on the march, signing the vivid air with their courage. It was a glorious time, a time of terror and of wrath, but also a time for hope. The signs of change were on the horizon. A powerful storm was sweeping the land, a storm whose inexorable advance no earthly force could stop, and the name of the storm was history.

— Jose F. Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet, Nights of Rage*

An eruption of protests, of violence – molotov cocktails and gunfire – in the streets of Manila, defined the heady and charged days of January to March 1970. The paroxysm that opened the decade came to be known as the First Quarter Storm (FQS), a period which began on January 26 as Marcos delivered his State of the Nation address and which ended in late March as final exams commenced, the semester drew to a close and students returned to their homes for the summer.

The approaching rumblings of distant political thunder were heard on December 29 1969, when US Vice President Spiro T. Agnew visited Manila to attend Marcos' inauguration, and the KM and the SDK staged a joint rally at the US embassy to protest his visit. Lacaba wrote "It was the first public manifestation at which the Kabataang Makabayan and Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan, the two largest radical youth organizations, which had heretofore been vehemently at odds, acted in concert."¹ Gary Olivar and other leaders of the rally visited the television networks of ABS-CBN, ABC and IBC earlier in the day to present their perspective, for which they were given airtime.² This television appearance was the first public hint of the support which Lopez and his allies would be providing the youth movement. The rally itself was a small one, largely because it was

¹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, xiii.

²PC, 5 Jan 1970, 4.



Figure 26.1: Rene Ciria-Cruz and Aimee Laurel surrounded by police. Protests against Agnew's visit, December 29 1969.

Christmas break and the majority of students had gone home.³ Someone threw a Molotov cocktail at Agnew's vehicle and the police waded into the protesting crowd, swinging their truncheons.⁴ Jorge Sibal was the first arrested, as explosions were set off in front of the US embassy. He was repeatedly beaten by the police and his lip was split and bleeding.⁵ Aimee Laurel and Rene Ciria-Cruz were arrested shortly after Sibal. A photograph of them clinging to each other as they were arrested was on the front page of some of the daily press. When explosions occurred again, Gary Olivar was arrested.⁶ Ciria Cruz, Olivar and Sibal were all members of SDK, and were charged with inciting a "riot."⁷

In the first regular issue of *Ang Bayan* in 1970, published on January 15, the CPP assessed the political climate at the opening of the decade, writing that the "principal activity of the Party now is developing the armed struggle in the countryside in a protracted way."⁸ "It is correct," *Ang Bayan* continued, "for the

³The *Collegian* estimated that 150 people attended. (PC, 8 Jan 1970, 7).

⁴Eduardo T. Gonzales, "A Chronicle of Protests," *Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win*, January 1971, 2, PRP 30/03.01.

⁵PC, 5 Jan 1970; Gonzales, "A Chronicle of Protests," 2.

⁶The accounts of Olivar's arrest are contradictory. Some place him in front of Precinct Three at the time of his arrest, on his way to visit Ciria Cruz. (*The Guild*, 17 Nov 1971, 3, PRP 30/18.01.

⁷PC, 5 Jan 1970.

⁸AB, 15 Jan 1970, 1.

party to fight resolutely the fascist regime of the Marcos reactionary clique.” In carrying out its central task of building the armed struggle in the countryside it was necessary, according to *Ang Bayan*, to ally with sections of the national bourgeoisie in opposition to Marcos. “So that the revolutionary armed struggle that we are preparing and initiating at several strategic points in the countryside will succeed, we must create the broadest national united front to isolate the enemy and put him at the weakest position for our mortal blows.” (2) On the eve of the greatest urban unrest in the country’s history, the CPP called for intensifying the armed revolution in the countryside and for the creation of a broad united front with the section of the ruling class currently opposed to Marcos.

26.1 January

A series of protests, held in front of Malacañang on January 7, 16 and 22, saw tensions mounting in the lead-up to the State of Nation Address on the twenty-sixth. Over the first weeks of January, the language of the protests shifted from the KM’s initial rhetoric of “student reform” to the denunciation of Marcos as a “fascist.”

Preparations

January 7: The Logic of the FQS

In keeping with the initial, limited purview of the MDP, both the KM and SDK launched the first demonstration of 1970 narrowly focused on the issue of student reform. They envisioned protests proceeding along similar lines of those which had opened the previous year, but sought this time to be at their head. Assembling in front of Malacañang on January 7, they describing themselves to the press as the “student reform movement,” and the KM distributed a leaflet which focused its ire on UP President Salvador Lopez stating that “Reactionary elements of the like of UP President SP Lopez were quick to commend the ‘rules’ even as the order continues to uncover itself as a fascistic maneuver by the reactionary state.”⁹ The *Collegian* reported that “Close to a thousand students from the University and other schools rallied before the Malacañang Palace yesterday [Jan 7] ... Workers who were on strike at Northern Motors joined the students.”¹⁰ The rally turned, however, from the question of student reform to that of police brutality and the ‘fascism’ of the Marcos administration. This cantus firmus, adopted by group

⁹Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Uphold People’s Democratic Rights, Fight the Fascistic State*, January 1970, PRP 08/19.18. The same leaflet identified the protesters who had been suppressed on December 29 as “student reform movements.”

¹⁰PC, 8 Jan 1970 The paper noted that “Student leaders from UP, Lyceum and a labor leader took turns speaking before the Palace.”

after group in counterpoint, served as the theme of the political fugue that was the FQS.

Rene Ciria-Cruz and Gary Olivar were among those who addressed the crowd. They explained that “the real enemies of the police are not the students, nor the workers and farmers but the American imperialists and the hacendero-comprador class who exploit them indirectly.”¹¹ With a flippancy of political rhetoric, these spokesmen of the SDK argued to a rally which was in part dedicated to denouncing “fascism” and police brutality, that the police were in truth the allies of the assembled workers and students.

The leaflet which the KM produced for the rally turned from the topic of student reform to that of Marcos and fascism, concluding with a formulation that encapsulated the fundamental political logic of the CPP and its front organizations in the heady period between the storm and the onset of military dictatorship: “the intensification of the fascistic suppression of the national democratic aspirations of the people by the Marcos military regime only serves to enlist more adherents to the struggle for genuine emancipation from US imperialism and local feudalism.” Fascism, they argued, only causes the movement to grow.

This was the basic logic underpinning all of the mimeographed leaflets circulated by the KM during the First Quarter Storm. Marcos was a fascist puppet, the main representative of US imperialism and local feudalism, and as such he should be the primary target of all protests. The people would rise up to demand national democracy and they would be violently suppressed. This suppression would expose the character of the fascist Marcos regime to even more people, who would then rise up and be suppressed. The people would never be cowed by fascism. The more that Marcos was “fascist” and violent, the more people would rise up. But rise up to what end?

At no point were workers and students educated in the need for an independent struggle of the working class for the seizure of power, or that in order to implement national democratic tasks, socialist measures must be taken. Rather the students were instructed to demand, to request – stridently, but nonetheless to ask – of the ruling class that national democratic measures be carried out. In fact, no political program at all was presented. None beyond the need for what became the clichéd slogan of the movement, “Makibaka, huwag matakot! / Struggle, don’t be afraid!” The act of struggling, of making demands to the state, would precipitate state violence, which would, in turn, cause the movement to grow. This was the entire perspective of the KM during this period.

Whose political interests did the First Quarter Storm serve? Not workers

¹¹PC, 8 Jan 1970, 7. In arguing that the police were somehow really the class allies of the students, workers and peasants, Ciria-Cruz and Olivar were repeating the perspective of Joma Sison in his 1966 speech at Ateneo, “Nationalism and Youth.” See page 289. Ciria-Cruz and Olivar had spoken in a similar vein the day before at a UP convocation, entitled “The Rise of Fascism,” at the AS Theater. (PC, 8 Jan 1970).

or students. They fought courageously and were bloodied in the affair, but the Stalinist leadership worked to ensure that they did not draw independent political conclusions from the experience, and that workers did not organize themselves separately from the bourgeoisie for their own class interests. The PKP lost out as a result of the FQS. They fought a rearguard battle to simultaneously negotiate ties with Marcos and maintain support among the youth. This was an impossible task, and they lost a good deal of their political credibility in the process. The CPP and its front organizations benefited immensely from the FQS. Both the shared barricades of Mendiola and the exposure of the MPKP served to heal many of the wounds which had been caused during the breach with the SDK. A generation of students were radicalized by the FQS – some only briefly, but for others it was a life-changing experience – and many found their way into the ranks of the CPP. The greatest short-term beneficiaries of the storm sat in the board rooms of Meralco and the political headquarters of the Liberal Party. For Lopez and Aquino and their allies, the protesting students were an ideal proxy in their fight against Marcos. These forces aspired to destabilize and overthrow him, and the blood in the streets served this purpose. They did not succeed in this, however. In the end, the events which began on January 26 1970 set in motion a countdown to martial law. Marcos recognized in the violent demonstrations a pretext for dictatorship. He fomented violence through agents provocateur and began preparing the architecture of a police state.

January 16 and 22

Demonstrations followed on January 16 and 22; the theme of student reform – still audible – was fading, while the staves on fascism augmented. According to the SPK, students gathered outside Malacañang on both the sixteenth and the twenty-second to request from the government the disbursement of funds which had been promised for public education.¹² The placards and slogans of the assembled demonstrators, however, revealed that the political logic of the emerging movement was tending toward a far sharper conclusion. Over a thousand workers and students from a range of organizations, including KM, SDK, and SPK, rallied on the sixteenth; their signboards read “Justice is a slow process, revolution is faster,” “PC-MPD—military arm of the ruling class,” and “Ibagsak ang pasismo. [Down with fascism]”¹³ The assembled demonstrators denounced “the alliance between alien capitalists and the armed forces and the rise of fascism under the Marcos administration.” Rodolfo del Rosario, the Vice President of NATU, and a member of KM, addressed the crowd, denouncing the conspiracy of foreign capitalists [kapitalistang kayuhan (*sic*)] and the police

¹² 1896, 1 no.1.

¹³ 1896, 1 no.1. 1896 reports that this rally took place on the fifteenth, but comparing the various press accounts leads to the conclusion that the rally was in fact held on Friday, January 16. The *Collegian* reported that “close to 3,000 students and workers” participated. (PC, 22 Jan 1970).

in suppressing the ongoing strike at Northern Motors, and arresting workers without cause.¹⁴ The union leaders who spoke at the rally “revealed the increasing unrest in the labor sector as they spoke against the exploitative relationship perpetuated by American capitalists in collusion with their Filipino puppets in the business and government sectors.”¹⁵ The demonstrators – workers and students – were violently dispersed by the police.¹⁶

MPKP Second National Convention

On January 25, the eve of Marcos’ State of the Nation Address, the MPKP held its Second National Convention in which 750 “students, workers, and peasants from all over the country participated. . . [and] amended the constitution and discussed a draft program of action.”¹⁷ Francisco Lava Jr addressed the convention, stressing that imperialism prevented the Philippines from developing industrial economy, “which would have granted a great blessing for the very ones who create the wealth of our nation – the peasant, the worker, the oppressed and ill-treated masses!”¹⁸ He ran through a brief history of the successive presidential administrations since 1946, ending each political vignette with the refrain, “The imperialists and their supporters were happy. The poverty of the masses continued.” He developed this simplistic theme without touching upon the one vital question: the role of the PKP. He denounced Macapagal, but did not mention the coalition they formed with him; he denounced Marcos, but did not mention their campaign for his election. This final silence was particularly striking as MAN and MASAKA had campaigned for Marcos but two months before.

The strength of the national democratic struggle, Lava told his audience, is based on “the strength of the people – People’s Power.” The task of the MPKP was “to find and carry out everything, every tactic and action, that will strengthen and bring to victory the struggle of the people, in every time, whatever the particular prevailing circumstances . . . Our task is to strengthen and unite the

¹⁴Northern Motors was at the time the largest General Motors assembly plant outside the United States. For details on the Northern Motors strike, see chapter 33. Del Rosario was the head of the executive committee of the January 16 rally.

¹⁵PC, 22 Jan 1970. The Kamanyang Players, a radical dramatic society at PCC, staged a production of a play, “Alay sa Anak-Pawis,” [Offered to Workers] at the protest.

¹⁶PC, 15 Jan 1970. Scant details exist of the protest on the twenty-second, other than the fact that it was headed by the NSL.

¹⁷Ruben Torres was elected chair of the MPKP; Romeo Dizon general secretary; Carlos Alejandrino, VP for organization; Ana Maria Nemenzo VP for education; and Chit Tapales, treasurer. (Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 96; PC, 28 Jan 1970, 2). The convention “paid tribute to Dean [Jose] Lansang and Lenin.” Jose Lansang, a dean at Lyceum and long-time member of the PKP, had died two weeks prior.

¹⁸“Industriyalisasyon na makapagdudulot ng malaking biyaya para sa mismong lumilikha ng kayamanan ng bayan – ang magbubukid, ang manggagawa, ang masang siil at api!” The text of this speech was printed in *Kilusan* in October 1970. (*Kilusan*, 1967–1970, 4 Oct 1970, 9–12, 14, PRP 33/12.01 (1967)).

people and to build the broadest revolutionary united front based on principles, based on a correct ideology, theoretical line and practice.” Lava never elaborated this “correct ideology” or “theoretical line;” for all his talk of principles, his audience was left with only two words of substance: ‘broad’ and ‘unity.’ Less than two months before, at the second anniversary gathering of the MPKP on November 30, Lava had spoken in a similar vein, constraining the embryonic socialist aspirations of youth to a “broad national unity” with capitalists and landlords. “What is needed,” he declared, is the struggle of the peasants, and the workers, and the entire oppressed nation. The struggle of the first two classes is clearly a class struggle, but the struggle of the entire nation against the imperialists and their supporters refers to a broad national unity that can be joined by some land owners and capitalist anti-imperialists. It was imperative for the Stalinist leadership to insist that the current stage of the revolution still required this broad unity, for a layer of youth were growing restive under these politics were beginning to speak in terms of socialism not nationalism. “There is a growing number of youths,” he asserted, “who no longer fit in with merely being nationalist [pagka-makabansa lamang] and they are asking about the contradiction and struggle of classes, and also about socialism.”¹⁹

Lava concluded his January 25 address with the trite observation that the youth are the leadership of the future, and he told these future leaders how to conduct themselves. “If you notice anything in the movement that is wrong in your opinion, do not be shy about criticizing those who are older than you, so long as this criticism is conducted in the place and manner specified by the laws of your organization and in accordance with your agreements with those older than you.” Lava and the leadership of the PKP sought to avoid a repeat of the events of 1967. Criticism would thus be tolerated to a certain extent so as not too alienate younger members, but it would be circumscribed by “laws” and “agreements.” Triple exclamation marks could not make his final sentences rousing: “Strive to have unity of thought and action. This does not mean that you are all the same in all things down to the smallest idea and the smallest step. Long live the MPKP!!!” (14) It was an unimpressive speech delivered by an unimpressive man. The fundamental weakness of the MPKP on the eve of the storm, which found expression through its milquetoast mouthpiece, was the result of its objectively untenable political position. The economic crisis was sharpening tensions toward the imminent rupture of established political life; youth and workers were dissatisfied with the pap of nationalism and sought for a revolutionary alternative. The CPP and its front groups, allied with a scheming bourgeois opposition and preaching armed struggle in the countryside, could give the old political line the veneer of the new and the radical. The MPKP,

¹⁹Francisco A Lava Jr., *Ang MPKP at ang Panahon ng Aktibong Mapanghimasik* [sic] *na Kabataan*, November 1969, PRP 09/35.01, 5. Lava concluded this speech by calling on his audience to give their “blood and their lives for their country and for the world!”

however, was tied by its geopolitical orientation to the president, a position which they could not sell to the youth. It was necessary therefore to constrain the political aspirations of its membership and to retain their support, to back Marcos and to join the storm. This was an impossible balancing act.

A Non-Partisan Convention

A new theme – neither student reform nor fascism, but a non-partisan Constitutional Convention – was briefly heard during the protests outside of the legislature during Marcos’ State of the Nation Address as moderate student groups initially held the stage – the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), National Students League (NSL) and the Young Christian Socialists of the Philippines (YCSF), a group allied with Raul Manglapus. Edgar Jopson, head of the NUSP, produced a statement entitled “A Call for a Constitutional Convention Without Interference from Political Parties.”²⁰ Sison responded with a statement, “The Correct Orientation on the Constitutional Convention,” in which he argued that the “essential nature of the Philippine Constitution since the very start has been its being an instrument of national and class oppression and exploitation.”²¹ It was “patently a colonial document on incontrovertible grounds.”²² The 1971 Convention was thus being formed to raise “false hopes” that it could serve as “a possible means of ‘revolutionary’ change to head off a real armed revolution of the broad masses of oppressed and exploited people.”²³

Sison hid the fact that the KM had placed working within the Convention at the center of its program in 1967 and that, as late as July 1969, it had remained the core focus of both the KM and SCAUP and had served as the basis of their common campus election platform in the Young Philippines.²⁴ He now claimed that “the main task of all proletarian revolutionaries and all those who adhere to the people’s democratic revolution is to expose and oppose the 1971 constitutional convention as a farce.” The convention was “another swindle perpetrated on the

²⁰Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 32. Jopson’s basic points were re-articulated in the leaflets distributed by the NUSP at the protest, which were issued in both English and Tagalog. The NUSP laid out the terms for a non-partisanship convention in a six part appeal, calling for (1) a non-partisan election of delegates; (2) non-partisan poll inspectors; (3) public officials to be made to resign their position in order to run as a candidate for the convention; (4) COMELEC to regulate election propaganda and candidate expenses; (5) delegates prohibited from running for office in the elections immediately following the convention; and (6) the reduction of the minimum age of delegates from twenty-five to twenty-one. (National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), *Support the Rally for a Non-Partisan Constitutional Convention*, January 1970, PRP 12/19.02).

²¹The statement was published in the 28 Feb 1970 issue of *Ang Bayan*, but was in independent circulation prior to this. I am using the reprinted version of the text from Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 195-204.

²²Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 195, 196.

²³*Ibid.*, 198.

²⁴See page 409.

people.”²⁵ Both the immediate political orientation of the bourgeois opposition and the mood of the masses had shifted, and the tactic of participation in the Convention was no longer politically viable. The bourgeois allies of the CPP desired an explosion in the streets against Marcos. In a partially articulated but nonetheless palpable fashion, the masses of workers, students and peasants sought a solution to the stranglehold of economic crisis through increasingly drastic political means. The task of the CPP was to subordinate the latter to the former and this required burying, at least for the present, the question of the convention.

January 26: “On the trembling edge of Revolution.”

The forces were all now in place: Marcos, aspiring for a pretext for dictatorship, his bourgeois opponents for violent destabilization; a restive youth and working class; and two Communist Parties, one subordinate to each faction of the ruling class.

During the First Quarter Storm, Sison was in Northern Luzon, but he “monitored mass actions in Manila over the radio.”²⁶ Sison and the CPP issued regular statements through *Ang Bayan* and communicated with the leadership of the protests, attempting to direct the course of the FQS, but the day-to-day decisions rested with the KM, SDK and other member organizations of the MDP in Manila.²⁷

Anticipating unrest, Metrocom, the unit of the Philippine Constabulary operating in Metro Manila, made preparations to suppress it.²⁸ Two organizations were granted permits to rally in front of Congress, the NUSP and Ang Magigiting [The Brave], the political vehicle of radio personality Roger Arienda, while the MPKP was able to secure a permit to stage a protest behind Congress. Neither the KM nor the SDK were able to obtain a permit at all. As late as January 22, there was still discussion in these organizations as to how best to protest during the State of the Nation address. The UP Student Council under Jerry Barican of the SDK stated that it intended to demonstrate to “clarify its stand on the

²⁵Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 202, 204.

²⁶Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 39.

²⁷There are a number of first hand accounts written of the First Quarter Storm. Three stand out: Ceres S.C. Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...* (Manila, 1972); Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*. Rotea's and Lacaba's accounts are compilations of articles written at the time of the events. Alabado's work takes the form of a first person account of participation in the FQS through the eyes of Alabado's daughter. Lacaba's account is by far the most memorable. *Days of Disquiet* is a compilation of articles written for the *Philippines Free Press*, but it transcends reportage and embodies in its prose both the shock and anger of the storm. Lacaba's account ranks among the better works of Philippine literature in English.

²⁸Rotea reported that “as early as Jan. 19 [law enforcement] started mapping out security measures for the Jan. 26 public appearance of President Marcos in Congress. ... Col. Cezar C. Jasmin of the Metrocom served as the over-all task force commander. In effect, Manila was placed under Metrocom control. The city police merely provided the sub-task force. But it was the Metrocom which called the shots.” (Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 43).

Constitutional Convention and to bid for public support.” They weighed holding a separate rally at Plaza Miranda, where, Tagamolila reported, the Kamanyang Players would perform, “reinforcing the issues with dance and drama.”²⁹ This proposal wound up being rejected and the UPSC, KM and SDK all decided to join the NUSP rally in front of Congress.

Opening the first session of the Seventh Congress, on Monday, January 26, Fr. Pacifico Ortiz – the president of Ateneo University – delivered an invocation. The country was standing, he intoned, “on the trembling edge of revolution.” Marcos delivered his State of the Nation speech, which he entitled “National Discipline: the Key to our Future.”³⁰ Marcos had ordered speakers to be set up in front of Congress to broadcast his speech, overpowering the public address system of the protesters, whose “lone amplifier was ... drowned out by four loudspeakers set up by the Army Signals Corps.”³¹ The protesters dispatched a representative who quickly met with Senator Aquino to request that Marcos’ speakers be taken down, but they were not removed.³² Newspapers estimated that forty thousand people rallied outside of the halls of Congress, while “the number of security forces mustered for the occasion was estimated at 7,000”³³ Arienda’s group had brought a mock coffin which they said symbolized the death of democracy, while a separate group of demonstrators from UP carried a papier-mâché crocodile with a dollar sign on its belly and they set the crocodile on top of the coffin.³⁴

In a manner unintentionally symbolic of their increasing political isolation, the MPKP distributed their leaflet, *The Sad State of the Nation*, behind the house of Congress. The statement stressed that the organization had no illusion that “Mr. Marcos will take advantage of his position as the first reelected president to pull the country out of the disastrous path of neocolonial development ... Change can only come from the people themselves, particularly those who are most oppressed.”³⁵ The MPKP called for “a mighty wave of mass action to deal with the following problems: The Fascist Menace ... ” In this section the MPKP charged the military with “recruiting student leaders to intelligence agencies and using them to infiltrate progressive youth organizations ... to push these organizations along a disastrous adventurist line and to sow dissensions in the ranks of the genuine anti-imperialist groups. Just the other day they again circulated a slanderous leaflet against MPKP, charging it of subversion and denigrating its leaders.” While denouncing ‘fascism,’ the MPKP rooted this

²⁹PC, 22 Jan 1970, 12.

³⁰Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, xvii; Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 36, 38.

³¹PH, 27 Jan 1970, 11.

³²Benigno S. Jr. Aquino, *When Law and Order went Amok*, January 1970, PRP 01/28.01, 29.

³³PH, 27 Jan 1970, 10.

³⁴Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 46.

³⁵Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *The Sad State of the Nation*, January 1970, PRP 10/29.19.

political danger not in capitalism, but in the KM and SDK who, infiltrated by the military, were pursuing a “disastrous adventurist line.” The other problems which mass action needed to solve were “Economic Sabotage” on behalf of US imperialism; “Bogus land reform;” and the worsening economic conditions of the masses. They put forward no concrete program to solve any of these problems but simply issued a repeated call for mass action. Action to what end? This was never addressed. The MPPK’s call for mass action was subsumed under the slogan: “Build Parliament in the Streets!” Given the political line articulated by the MPPK it was logical to assume that mass action should be mobilized to pressure Marcos to “take advantage of his position.”

Arriving at four in the afternoon, just as Marcos was about to speak, “the KM members surged forward through the crowd in a diamond formation until they positioned themselves in the forefront of the demonstration site, their huge red streamer very noticeable and overshadowing all the other placards.”³⁶ They distributed a “position paper” to the crowd entitled “A Neo-colony in Crisis” which began, “As the Seventh Congress of the Philippines opens today, the Kabataang Makabayan presents to the Filipino people the real state of the nation. In the interest of exposing to the people the conditions in the country so that they may act to change them, the KM joins today’s demonstration in unity with progressive and national democratic organizations and individuals.”³⁷ (156) The “reactionary Marcos administration,” they stated, “has strengthened and deepened its commitments to the neo-colonial schemes of the imperialist United States and Japan and social-imperialist Soviet Union in Asia.” The KM denounced Marcos’ “plan to open trade relations with pseudo-socialist countries, specifically the Soviet Union.” Marcos’ plan was “in consonance with the US-Soviet policy of dividing the world between themselves. . . . the Soviet Union has been transformed into a neo-capitalist state that exploits and oppresses not only the Soviet people but also the peoples of its colonies in the same fashion as the United States does.” (158) The KM repeated Sison’s recent denunciation of the Constitutional Convention, and warned that “resurging fascism . . . emphatically characterizes the Marcos administration.” (159) This was evidenced by violence against “the people” carried out by “Hitler-worshippers in the reactionary armed forces.” (161) The KM drew this conclusion:

But one thing is sure. As the ruling class can not rule anymore in the old way, more violent repressions are bound to unfold. Yet, it is a truism that in any society, as the ruling class becomes more violent, the resistance of the oppressed is increased tenfold. The revolutionary movement emerges to destroy the inequities of the old order. (162)

³⁶Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 48.

³⁷Reprinted in *First Quarter Storm of 1970*, 155-168.

An array of speakers addressed the crowd, struggling to be heard over Marcos.³⁸ When Luis Taruc was given the microphone the demonstrators loudly booed him and shouted, “We want Dante!”³⁹ Lacaba reported that “There were two mikes, taped together; and this may sound frivolous, but I think the mikes were the immediate cause of the trouble that ensued. . . . Now, at about half past five, Jopson, who was in polo barong and sported a red armband with the inscription ‘J26M,’ announced that the next speaker would be Gary Olivar of the SDK.”⁴⁰ Jopson then hesitated, reluctant to give the mic to Olivar. He led the crowd in singing the national anthem. When the singing finished, he continued to clutch the microphones, and then announced that the NUSP rally was over and called on students to disperse. “It was at this point that one of the militants grabbed the mikes from Jopson,”⁴¹ and passed them to “a labor union leader” – most likely Rodolfo del Rosario. He “attacked the ‘counter-revolutionaries who want to end this demonstration,’ going on from there to attack fascists and imperialists in general. By the time he was through his audience had a new, a more insistent chant: ‘Rebolusyon! Rebolusyon! Rebolusyon!’”⁴²

Marcos emerged from Congress. “No less than Col. Fabian Ver, chief of the presidential security force, and Col. James Barbers, Manila deputy chief of police, personally led the heavy escort. Brig. Gen. Hans Menzi, the inseparable chief presidential aide, trotted behind.”⁴³ The protesters set Marcos’ effigy on fire, hurling the crocodile and coffin at his entourage; the police charged the protesters and “flailed away, the demonstrators scattered.”⁴⁴ The President and his wife safely drove away. The protesters quickly regrouped and began throwing rocks and soft-drink bottles at the police, who arrested some of the demonstrators on the spot. Rotea wrote that “[t]hey continued hitting demonstrators they had just caught even if they were not resisting at all, or were pleading for mercy, or were already down.”⁴⁵ The police violence was indiscriminate and a number of reporters were beaten alongside the demonstrators. The police then “retreated into Congress with hostages. The demonstrators re-occupied the area they had vacated in their panic. The majority of NUSP members must have been safe in their buses by then, on their way home, but the militants were still in possession of the mikes.”⁴⁶

About two thousand demonstrators remained in front of Congress. They

³⁸ Among those who spoke were Portia Ilagan of the NSL; Crispin Aranda, PCC; Luis Taruc; Renato Constantino; Roger Arienda; Fr. Navarro, a seminarian of San Carlos; and Edgar Jopson of the NUSP. (Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 46-47).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁰ Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 44.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 47.

⁴³ Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 50.

⁴⁴ Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 48.

⁴⁵ Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 53.

⁴⁶ Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 48.

began chanting “Makibaka! Huwag matakot!” and then sang the Internationale. Senator, and former Vice President, Emmanuel Pelaez emerged from the Congressional building to address the crowd and the SDK supplied him the microphone. The crowd chanted for the arrested protesters being held inside by the police to be released, but the KM and SDK leaders silenced the crowd so that Pelaez could speak.⁴⁷ Pelaez made a lengthy speech in an attempt to calm the crowd, while the police regrouped, moving around to the north side of the building. As Pelaez completed his speech, they charged the demonstrators. Lacaba recounted that

The demonstrators fled in all directions ... Three cops cornered one demonstrator against a traffic sign and clubbed him until the signpost gave way and fell with a crash. ... The demonstrators who had fled regrouped, on the Luneta side of Congress, and with holler and whoop, they charged. The cops slowly retreated before this surging mass, then ran, ran for their lives, pursued by rage, rocks and burning placard handles. ... In the next two hours, the pattern of battle would be set. The cops would charge, the demonstrators would retreat; the demonstrators would regroup and come forward again, the cops would back off to their former position. ... There were about seven waves of attack and retreat by both sides, each attack preceded by a tense noisy lull, during which there would be sporadic stoning, by both cops and demonstrators.⁴⁸

The demonstrators had hired a jeepney and some crowded into it for shelter. The police “swooped down on the jeepney with their rattan sticks, striking out at the students who surrounded it until they fled, then venting their rage some more on those inside the jeepney who could not get out to run. The shrill screams of women inside the jeepney rent the air. The driver, bloody all over, managed to stagger out; the cops quickly grabbed him.”⁴⁹ The police began firing shots in the air and the demonstrators fled.

By eight in the evening, less than two hours after it had started, the battle in front of Congress had ended. Among those injured were members of both the NUSP and the KM. Rotea reported that “initial official reports showed that about 300 youths were injured while 72 law enforcers were wounded in the Congress riot.”⁵⁰ A great many demonstrators were arrested – “thrown into and packed like sardines at the city detention jail.” Salvador Laurel and John Osmeña, along with a handful of other politicians, “personally spent the night there and helped expedite their release.”⁵¹ Of those arrested, nineteen were charged but were released without bail.

⁴⁷Ibid., 50.

⁴⁸Ibid., 51-52.

⁴⁹Ibid., 55.

⁵⁰Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 59.

⁵¹Ibid., 60.



Figure 26.2: The police beat demonstrators huddled defenselessly in a jeepney. January 26.

Aftermath

The next three days saw a relentless stream of recriminations and posturing with regard to the violence of January 26. Nemesio Prudente, President of the PCC, who had been beaten by the police alongside students, told the press, “I will support a nationwide revolutionary movement of students to protest the brutalities of the state.”⁵² James Barbers, Deputy Chief of the MPD, and long-time darling of the KM, issued a statement that “We maintain that the police acted swiftly at a particular time when the life of the President of the Republic – and that of the First Lady – was being endangered by the vicious and unscrupulous elements among the student demonstrators. One can just imagine what would have resulted had something happened to the First Lady!”⁵³ Mayor Villegas defended “the police action and said they acted on his orders to protect the President.”⁵⁴ Edgar Jopson published a statement washing his hands of the event, claiming that the riot started when he attempted to end the demonstration. Ruben Torres, chair of the MPKP, issued a brief statement, which concluded, “Police brutality, blatantly displayed in the January 26th demonstration will not dampen the surging activism of the youth. All the more, this even increases the enthusiasm and determination of the youth in their struggle for national

⁵²Ibid., 61.

⁵³Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 58.

⁵⁴PH, 27 Jan 1970, 10.

democracy.”⁵⁵ The BRPF issued a similar statement denouncing the “the use of naked force” by “the power holders.”⁵⁶ Neither the MPKP nor the BRPF mentioned Marcos at all.

Marcos released a press statement regarding the events.

Reports received by me on the demonstration tend to show that the students were not responsible for the riot that ensued during the demonstration.

I accept the veracity of these reports and I accept the statement of responsible student leaders present at the demonstration that they were not responsible for the riots.

Initial reports from police and intelligence indicate that the riot was instigated by non-student provocateurs who had infiltrated the ranks of the legitimate demonstrators. This is being investigated.⁵⁷

Marcos was looking to blame the riots on the CPP – whom he labeled provocateurs infiltrating the ranks of the demonstrators – yet he was well aware that part of the responsibility for the riot rested with police agents provocateur who had infiltrated the ranks of the students, a number of whom played leading roles in the January 26 events and in the subsequent development of the FQS. Lacaba related how a young woman denounced the police during the riot – “Those sons of bitches, their day is coming. [Putangna nila, me araw din sila.]” She was Elnora ‘Babette’ Estrada, a member of the National Council of the KM, and an undercover police agent with the rank of sergeant.⁵⁸

On **Tuesday**, the day after the violence, Jerry Barican announced that students at UP would be staging a week-long boycott of classes to express the students’ “vehement denunciation of police brutality and of other terroristic means being perpetrated by the Marcos administration.”⁵⁹ Student leaders held a meeting at Far Eastern University (FEU) where they resolved to stage a demonstration on January 30.⁶⁰

On **Wednesday**, January 28, the KM issued a leaflet in which they claimed that the “students dramatically exposed to the people the deteriorating conditions in the country” and called for the continuation of the “anti-fascist” struggle.⁶¹ A

⁵⁵Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Police Riots Again!*, January 1970, PRP 10/29.18.

⁵⁶Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 62.

⁵⁷Ibid., 64.

⁵⁸Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 57, 176 fn 57.

⁵⁹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, xviii; PC, 28 Jan 1970.

⁶⁰Perfecto Tera Jr. [Rodrigo Rojas, pseud.], “The State of the Nation,” *Eastern Horizon* IX, no. 1 (1970): 46; Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 74.

⁶¹Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Continue the Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Struggle!*, January 1970, PRP 08/13.05; Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Ipagpatuloy ang Rebolusyonaryong Anti-Pasistang Pakikibaka*, January 1970, PRP 08/13.13.

Senate and House joint committee, chaired by Lorenzo Tañada, was formed to investigate the “root causes of demonstrations in general.”⁶² Five hundred UP Faculty members gathered on the same day and drafted a declaration, adopted unanimously, which stated that they

strongly denounce the use of brutal force by state authorities against student demonstrators on January 26 1970 ...

We strongly urge that congressional and other investigations be so conducted and concluded as to reaffirm democratic principles ...

The Faculty holds the present administration accountable and responsible for the pattern of repression and the violation of rights.⁶³

On **Thursday**, January 29, the UP Faculty, including President Salvador Lopez, marched to Malacañang where they held a rally and then met with Marcos and presented him their declaration.⁶⁴

January 30: The Battle of Mendiola

The demonstrators regrouped on January 30, a split emerging in their ranks. The majority, shocked by the violence of the twenty-sixth, rallied in front of Congress behind the banners of the KM and SDK denouncing the “fascism” of Marcos; the moderate student groups, clinging to the theme of a non-partisan convention,

⁶²Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, xviii. The committee would call upon faculty members at UP to testify in early March on the subject of demonstrations. On March 3, Tañada asked the faculty members to submit a position paper on the root causes of student unrest. In response, UP President Salvador Lopez appointed a panel of seven faculty members to draw up the position paper on behalf of the UP Faculty assembly and they submitted their paper to the committee on March 10. On March 21, they were called back before the Tañada committee to testify regarding the “strong language of their position paper.” (Hernando J. Abaya, *UP Spells Out the Issues*, April 1970, 15). The thirty-one page document drawn up by the faculty is Merlin M Magallona et al., *Position Paper by the UP Panel to the Joint Congressional Committee on Student Unrest*, March 1970, PRP 17/12.02. The position paper concluded that the grievances of the students flowed from objective conditions in Philippine society, and for “the more politically conscious student groups, these conditions are summed up in the three point issue of ‘imperialism, feudalism and fascism.’” (Abaya, *UP Spells Out the Issues*, 16) The faculty paper issued a series of concrete proposals to end the student protests, calling for the abrogation or renegotiation of all military and economic treaties with the United States; the opening of diplomatic and economic relations with all countries regardless of ideology; and the repeal of the anti-Subversion law. (*ibid.*, 18).

⁶³Faculty of the University of the Philippines (UP), *UP Faculty Protests Repression of Civil Liberties!*, January 1970, PRP 17/13.01.

⁶⁴A group calling itself the “Students-Faculty-Workers for a Democratic University and Society” issued a statement denouncing the faculty meeting with Marcos, which they claimed only provided Marcos an opportunity to posture as “maestro” and to deliver a lecture to the faculty about the behavior of the students. (Students-Faculty-Workers for a Democratic University and Society, *So the the Whole University May Know*, January 1970, PRP 17/17.03). A similar denunciation was issued on the same day by the UP Journalism Club. (UP Journalism Club, *On Today’s Lopez-led Delegation*, January 1970, PRP 18/12.03).

sent a delegation to meet with the president at Malacañang. Tensions were high. *Ang Bayan* declared that the January 26 protest “was merely the opening salvo for bigger mass actions of the near future. It is a blow against the reactionaries to be followed by more and bigger blows.”⁶⁵ On the morning of the thirtieth, UPSCA circulated forged leaflets purporting to be from the UP Student Council, claiming that the demonstration did not have the sanction of the Council and warning students, “Don’t blame anyone if you get hurt!”⁶⁶

Finding that neither camp expressed its interests, and unable to articulate an independent position, the MPKP tagged along to the KM and SDK rally. They circulated a leaflet grossly incongruous with the mood of the assembled masses, calling for a partisan constitutional convention. The MPKP, they wrote, “did not and does not support the slogan of ‘non-partisan constitutional convention.’ ... [This slogan] is deliberately designed to create illusion [*sic*] about the convention and to conceal the truth that the convention, whether openly partisan or not, will reflect the bankruptcy of the present political system.”⁶⁷ The leaflet continued,

We must therefore rally the masses in a relentless struggle against neo-colonialism. The election of delegates and the convention itself may, however, be good opportunities to accomplish this principal task; but this could only be accomplished if we dispel all illusions in the minds of the masses ...

MPKP calls for a People’s Constitution that will declare illegal and obsolete the power of imperialism, feudalism and capitalism, and project the concept of people’s power. The People’s Constitution should be a rallying program of the struggle for national democracy.

By rejecting the call for a non-partisan constitutional convention, the MPKP kept voting open to the two major political parties, while with its demand for a People’s Constitution it promoted the idea that by voting for delegates – including representatives from the LP and NP – the ‘people’ could secure representatives who would by legislative fiat make imperialism, feudalism and capitalism illegal. The reformist illusions which the MPKP were attempting to promote are staggering. As Marcos’ forces trained their guns on the protesters

⁶⁵AB, “On the January 26th Demonstration,” Jan 1970. It denounced the attempts to subordinate the demonstration to the demand for a non-partisan constitutional convention, as well as the House-Senate investigation, which it termed “a worn-out device of the reactionaries to conduct a witch-hunt under the guise of helping the students. The ‘nationalist’ prestige of Tañada is now being conveniently used for this purpose.”

⁶⁶*The Partisan*, (1970) 3 no. 5, PRP 37/15.02, 6. UPSCA disputed this, stating that to circulate fake leaflets would be “unchristian.” (UP Student Catholic Action (UPSCA) Committee on Mass Media, *So that the People May Know*, June 1970, PRP 18/20.01). The fake leaflet is “NUSP Leadership Censured,” *The Partisan* [counterfeit issue], January 1970, PRP 37/18.02.

⁶⁷Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *For a People’s Constitution*, January 1970, PRP 10/29.04.

and fired, the *MPKP* activists had this leaflet in their hands. It made no mention – none – of the violence of January 26, and it claimed that the central task was to elect representatives to the constitutional convention who would simply declare capitalism illegal. The events of January 30 and the public outcry that they produced, compelled the *MPKP* to begin speaking of “fascism” while attempting to deflect the focus of public ire away from Marcos.

In the afternoon, Edgar Jopson, Portia Ilagan and others of the *NSL* and *NUSP* held a meeting with Marcos. Jopson demanded that Marcos put his commitment not to run for another presidential term in writing, and Marcos, irritated by Jopson’s demand, famously denounced him as the mere “son of a grocer.” As they were leaving, at shortly after six in the evening, violence broke out at the entrance to the presidential palace.⁶⁸ The demonstrators had moved from Congress to Malacañang and as Marcos emerged from his meeting with Jopson they had gathered at Gate Four. Col. Fabian Ver and Major Ramos were “waiting for the President to give the order to shoot and the President did order: ‘Shoot them with water and tear gas.’”⁶⁹ As security forces launched their assault, Gary Olivar issued instructions to the protesters by means of an ABS-CBN soundtruck, which Lopez had apparently supplied to the protesters. Olivar used the vehicle to direct the ensuing Battle of Mendiola.⁷⁰ A firetruck arrived to blast the protesters with water, but members of the *SDKM* commandeered the vehicle, which they crashed through the palace gates. A series of explosions followed and the protesters retreated, constructing barricades on Mendiola bridge as they fell back from Malacañang. They briefly held this position and then fell back again.

For several hours police and protesters waged a battle for the bridge. The police and military repeatedly fired on the student protesters, who responded with pillboxes, molotov cocktails and rocks, setting fire to vehicles in the street to slow the passage of the military. The barricades on Mendiola fell at around midnight. “There was nonstop hail of bullets, deafening gunfire as we scrambled on the sidewalk on the left side of Recto Avenue towards Lepanto and Morayta.”⁷¹ As they retreated the protesters overturned the concrete flower beds set up by Villegas along Recto, and some “abandoned vehicles were cannibalized, their tires turned into bonfires that gave off the pungent smell of burning rubber and the unmistakable look of an insurrection.”⁷²

Radio news reports initially announced that five or six protesters had been killed, but four were eventually named: Ricardo Alcantara, a student from *UP*; Fernando Catabay, *MLQU*; Bernardo Tausa, Mapa High School; and Felicisimo

⁶⁸Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, xix.

⁶⁹Benjamin V. Afuang, “Special report: The students vs the state, 1970,” *Sunday Times Magazine*, February 1970, 23.

⁷⁰PC, 23 Jul 1970, 6.

⁷¹Nelson Navarro, *The Half-Remembered Past: A Memoir* (Quezon City: Alphan Publishers, 2013), 70.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 69.

Singh Roldan, of UE. The dead ranged in age from sixteen to twenty-one; each had been shot by the police.⁷³ One hundred seven students were injured on January 30, seventy-four of them from gunshot wounds, among them a boy from Roosevelt Academy in Cubao whose leg had to be amputated.⁷⁴ Hundreds of students were arrested. They were detained in Camp Crame long past the legal maximum of six hours without charges. When protests were raised over the illegality of the mass detention, the PC charged the students with sedition, holding them for eighteen hours without food and then dismissing all charges for lack of evidence.⁷⁵ Marcos promoted the commander of the Metrocom, Colonel Ordoñez, who had directly overseen the assault on the students, to General on the spot.⁷⁶ In 1972, the AFP admitted that a number of “government penetration agents” had participated in the “violent demonstration,” including Sgt. Elnora Estrada.⁷⁷

26.2 February

Aftermath

The next day Marcos delivered a nationally televised address, denouncing the demonstrators as “Communists” and warning that he would respond to such demonstrations with the force of military arms.

To the insurrectionary elements, I have a message. My message is: any attempt at the forcible overthrow of the government will be put down immediately. I will not tolerate nor allow communists to take over ... The Republic will defend itself with all the force at its command until your armed elements are annihilated. And I shall lead them.⁷⁸

Everyone began to speak of martial law. Father E.L Victoriano, wrote in the *Philippine Herald* on February 1, “Widespread disturbances throughout the

⁷³ Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 101. Lacaba has “Feliciano Roldan of FEU.” (Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 69). Aquino has Felicismo Singh Roldan of FEU. (Benigno S. Jr. Aquino, *Black Friday, January 30*, February 1970, PRP 01/28.01, 6). Of those killed, we know the most of Alcantara, who was not an activist but was memorialized in *Sinag* as “an ordinary fellow about campus. His classmates remembered him mostly as an habitue of the Basement very much preoccupied over his part in ‘Hair.’” (August 1972, *Sinag*, 5.) In early March, the UP Student Council passed a resolution renaming the Town Hall on the second floor of Vinzons, Alcantara, in honor of the “martyr,” Ricardo Alcantara. (Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 387).

⁷⁴ Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 151; *Pingkian*, (1970) Feb, 6.

⁷⁵ Aquino, *Black Friday, January 30*, 11.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁷ *So the People May Know, Volume VII* (Quezon City: General Headquarters, Armed Forces of the Philippines, 1972), 18.

⁷⁸ Aquino, *Black Friday, January 30*, 12.

country would give [Marcos] the excuse to declare martial law with all its unlimited executive powers.” A wave of fear swept through the better-off layers of society; Saturday morning saw panic buying in the supermarkets and military patrols in the streets.

Government troops made no effort to be inconspicuous: though supposedly no longer on red alert, they roamed the city in rumbling trucks from which carbines and Armalites stuck out like sore thumbs, and occasionally made forays into the universities. Banks and stores started boarding up their glass facades with plywood or steel sheets. The stock market didn’t crash, but the prices of stock took a sharp plunge that brought about an orgy of short selling. Refugees from Forbes Park nervously paced the carpeted floors of the Hotel Inter-Continental, filled to capacity for the first time since its inauguration. Classes in Greater Manila were suspended for a whole week, and for a whole week the mayors of Manila and Makati refused to grant permits to demonstrate.⁷⁹

A series of recriminations, threats and demands filled the daily papers. Dante sent a letter to Marcos warning that “the New People’s Army would exact reprisals from senior Government agents for incidents of this type.”⁸⁰ Jopson and Ilagan issued a statement, on behalf of the NUSP and NSL, demanding the ouster – “not mere retirement,” they insisted – of Gen. Vicente Raval, head of the PC.⁸¹ Manuel Alabado, Executive Vice President of the US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union testified before Tañada’s joint congressional committee that he had been kidnapped on January 26 by five soldiers and made to assert that he was a Huk and that the Huks were behind the demonstrations. He claimed to have escaped and to have sought refuge with Ignacio Lacsina.⁸²

Immediately after the events of January 30, the CPP published a statement in *Ang Bayan* – “On the January 30-31 Demonstration” – hailing the “four student heroes” who had been killed.⁸³ The CPP argued that the violence of January 26 and 30 indicated that “the entire Filipino people are increasingly awakened to the need for armed revolutionary struggle in the face of armed counter-revolution.” (40) The demonstrations “have served as a rich source of activists for the national democratic revolution and, therefore, of prospective members and fighters of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army.” (44) *Ang*

⁷⁹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 71. Classes were suspended on the orders of Education Secretary Onofre Corpuz. (Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2).

⁸⁰Robin Blackburn, “Rebirth of the Filipino Revolution,” *Australian Left Review* 1, no. 25 (1970): 27.

⁸¹MT, 4 Feb 1970. Marcos replaced Raval with Gen Eduardo Garcia. (Reuben R Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution: Martial Law in the Philippines* [Manila: n.p., 1980], 149).

⁸²Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 158-159.

⁸³*First Quarter Storm of 1970*, 36-45.

Bayan saw in the violent suppression of the students – who had gathered behind a confused array of political banners – the ideal scenario for recruitment to the armed struggle, and concluded excitedly, “The revolutionary situation has never been so excellent!” (45)

The funeral rites for the four who had been killed on January 30 saw a massive turnout of students. Jerry Barican and Dick Gordon – political rivals on the UP campus – served as Alcantara’s pallbearers.⁸⁴ The peaceful cooperation lasted for the duration of the funeral, as a group of UP students, led by Manuel Ortega and Dick Gordon, issued a manifesto and a declaration of principles on February 2 denouncing both police brutality and what it called “student brutality.” It condemned the “violent,” “rabble-rousing,” “vociferous minority” among the students who were responsible for the violence of the protests.⁸⁵ The phrase “student brutality” would become a mantra of right-wing elements on the UP campus over the next two years, particularly under the leadership of Ortega.

Marcos began claiming that his political rivals were acting in cahoots with the “Maoists” to overthrow him, and on February 2, the KM published a response. Marcos was “going berserk and so fearful of popular criticism that he imagines at every turn that his political opponents are out to destroy him. He has even started to voice out the fear that his own vice president is interested in his assassination or his political failure.”⁸⁶ Marcos’ fears were not mere paranoia; there was in fact a conspiracy between Lopez and the CPP and the KM knew it. The KM was receiving financial support from Lopez to prepare and mount their demonstrations. Marcos, the KM continued, “having been given the go-signal by his imperialist masters” had entered into relations with “the Russian ‘communists.’” At the same time, however, he was denouncing the “Maoists” in the Philippines, who were, he claimed, attempting to seize power on January 30. In this Marcos revealed his “appalling ignorance,” the KM claimed. First, they insisted “the theory of protracted people’s war that applies to a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country like the Philippines does not permit that a mass action as that of January 30 would suffice to overthrow the present reactionary state.” What is more, the KM was at pains to be clear that “the issue is not yet communism. We are clearly fighting for a national democratic revolution.”⁸⁷

⁸⁴MT, 4 Feb 1970.

⁸⁵Ortega, Manuel, Gordon, Richard J., et al., *Manifesto*; Ortega, Manuel, Gordon, Richard J., et al., *Declaration of Principles*, February 1970, PRP 17/20.01.

⁸⁶Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Be Resolute! Unite and Oppose the Murder, Maiming and Mass Arrest of Fellow Students and Countrymen!*, February 1970, PRP 08/13.03.

⁸⁷In an attempt to shore up the claim that the Maoists were behind the violence of the demonstrations, the military published a selection from the documents captured in Sta. Rita in June 1969. The first volume of the series, *So the People May Know*, was released on February 5, and AFP Chief of Staff Manuel Yan wrote the foreword. “The violence which accompanied the student demonstrations in Manila last 26 and 30 January 1970 was instigated by subversive elements and provocateurs who subscribe to Mao Zedong’s dictum of armed revolution . . . In the light of these developments, I fell [sic] that we must takes [sic] steps to inform the general public

Determined to dispel the claim that they were fighting for socialism, the CPP published a statement, “Turn Grief into Revolutionary Courage,” signed by both Guerrero [Sison] and Dante on February 8.⁸⁸ To Marcos’ claim that the demonstrations were led by “Maoists” who were “raising the issue of communism,” they responded, “We communists recognize that the nature of Philippine society is semicolonial and semifeudal and that the pressing issue is national democracy. The issue now in the Philippines is neither socialism nor communism.”⁸⁹ What is more they were not fighting for an uprising of workers, but insisted rather that:

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army are not putschists. They firmly adhere to Chairman Mao’s strategic principle of encircling the cities from the countryside. All counter-revolutionaries should rest assured that the day will surely come when the people’s armed forces shall have defeated the reactionary armed forces in the countryside and are ready to act in concert with general uprisings by workers and students in the final seizure of power in the city.⁹⁰

The CPP was not fighting for socialism, and it would not act in concert with an uprising of workers until the people’s war had won victory in the countryside. While this people’s war would be of a protracted character, Sison and Dante insisted that “fascism” hastened its success, for “the use of counterrevolutionary violence, restrictive procedures and doubletalk will only result in more intensified revolutionary violence.”⁹¹ Sison and Dante gave direct political instructions to the student protesters. The Party would distribute to “militant demonstrators” three works for their political education: *Guide for Cadres and Members of the CPP*, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*.⁹² Students should form “propaganda teams (of at least three members).” Such a team

assumes the specific task of arousing and mobilizing the students and workers in a well-defined area in the city; or the students, peasants, farm workers, national minorities and fishermen in a well-defined area in the provinces.

The mass work of student propaganda teams in urban areas and

about the intentions of the local Communist movement.” (*So The People May Know, Volume I*, 152). The copious typographical and spelling errors throughout the foreword reveal the haste with which this publication was produced.

⁸⁸This statement was later published in AB, 28 Feb 1970. I have not located an extant original and am using the reprinted version in Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 153-168.

⁸⁹Ibid., 157.

⁹⁰Ibid., 159-160.

⁹¹Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 155.

⁹²Ibid., 165.

in provinces close to Manila will result in bigger and more articulate demonstrations and more powerful general strikes. The mass work of student propaganda teams in the provinces will create the best conditions for getting hold of a gun and fighting the armed counterrevolution successfully.⁹³

Sison and Dante concluded by assuring students that “they shall certainly be approached by the Party for recruitment or for cooperation on the basis of what they have already contributed to the national democratic revolution.”⁹⁴

Negotiations

On February 9, classes resumed across Manila, and the MDP secured a permit to stage a rally at Plaza Miranda on the twelfth.⁹⁵ Looking to negotiate a commitment to call off the demonstration, Marcos held a five hour long meeting in Malacañang with the MDP leadership.⁹⁶ Representing the MDP and NATU were Ignacio Lacsina, who – undisclosed to the others – was working as a regular informant for Malacañang; PCC President Nemesio Prudente; Teodosio Lansang; Felixberto Olalia; Carlos del Rosario; Jerry Barican; and Ramon Sanchez, “among others.”⁹⁷ The SDK had at least two representatives in the room; the KM at least one. The MDP presented thirteen concrete demands to Marcos, “among them the dissolution of the Special Forces, the disbandment of the Monkees, the dropping of charges against the *Dumaguete Times* newsmen,” and five long-term demands, “nationalization or transfer to public ownership of oil, mining, communications, and other vital industries; nationalization of all educational institutions to thwart commercialization and sectarianism; abrogation of all inequitable treaties with the United States; promotion of trade and cultural relations with all countries, whatever their political color; implementation of land reform by expropriating big landed estates.” Marcos warned the MDP representatives of the danger that the protests and instability would be used as a pretext for a right-wing coup. Rotea reported that Prudente responded “If that is your only fear, Mr. President . . . then arm us, lead us, and we will fight and rally behind you! We are ready to die for you if you are sincere in helping the Filipino people!”⁹⁸ The *Collegian* wrote

Representatives of the Nationalist-Progressive sector met with President Marcos at Malacañang for a five hour conference on the issues

⁹³Ibid., 166.

⁹⁴Ibid., 167.

⁹⁵Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2.

⁹⁶Labor Secretary Blas Ople, the man in Marcos’ cabinet with the closest ties to the left, assisted the President in the negotiations.

⁹⁷Rotea, *I Saw Them Aim and Fire*, 287.

⁹⁸Ibid., 288.

and developments that arose from the January 30 bloody demonstrations. . . .

They [the representatives] also deplored the overt attempts of some sectors in the ruling oligarchy to convert student activism into a Hate Marcos campaign to conceal its own share of the guilt for American domination and local feudalism afflicting Philippine society. They reiterated their position that the Marcos administration is only a small segment of the ruling oligarchy and its downfall by right-wing conception [*sic*] and agitation can only bring about a military and repressive government.⁹⁹

Marcos declared his intention to “grant what he could, to study what he could not,” and in return the MDP representatives agreed to call off the Plaza Miranda rally and to hold small “localized demonstrations” to discuss issues.¹⁰⁰ They stated that “this move would entail minimum security risks since smaller groups would be easier to control.”¹⁰¹ Tera wrote on this: “Out of fear of a *coup d’etat* by the extreme Right [meaning the concerns of Marcos about the plottings of the Lopez-Osmeña bloc] Marcos immediately called for a dialogue with the leaders of the nationalist groups, including the MDK [*sic*], SDK, MASAKA, NATU, KM, Molabe and others. In a closed door meeting at the palace . . . Marcos acceded [*sic*] to 13 of their demands.”¹⁰²

Sison immediately responded, instructing the KM to distribute a leaflet which denounced fears that Marcos might face a military *coup d’etat* if the protests continued. The KM put forward the simple-minded argument that “Events have shown that Marcos is rightist and bad enough to deserve the denunciation of the Filipino people . . . We must always bear in mind that Marcos stands as the chief agent of US imperialism and domestic feudalism in our society.”¹⁰³ Sison later stated that “I consider as my most important contribution to the First Quarter Storm of 1970 the reversal and undoing of the agreement entered into with Marcos by leaders of major mass organizations calling off the mass action scheduled for February 12 in protest against the outrageous killing of six students and other barbarities on January 30-31, 1970.”¹⁰⁴

February 12: the First People’s Congress

Headlines on the morning of the twelfth announced that the Miranda rally had been called off and that separate rallies were to be held on individual campuses.

⁹⁹PC, 11 Feb 1970, 1, 6.

¹⁰⁰Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 72-73.

¹⁰¹PC, 11 Feb 1970, 6.

¹⁰²Tera Jr., “The State of the Nation,” 50.

¹⁰³Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Fight Fascism. Join the February 12 Demonstration*, February 1970, PRP 08/13.07.

¹⁰⁴Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 39.

There was widespread speculation that the MDP leaders had been “bought off.” The *Collegian*, for example, ran the headline “Demonstration goes on tomorrow in UP: Plaza Miranda plan put off due to ‘risk.’”¹⁰⁵ The MDP held an emergency meeting that morning and the perspective of the KM won over the majority. The umbrella group reached a compromise: they would hold simultaneous separate rallies – largely to save face over the reversal – and then converge on Plaza Miranda for “a People’s Congress.”¹⁰⁶ An estimated fifty thousand participated, the largest attendance of any rally during the First Quarter Storm as subsequent events saw fewer and fewer people turn up.¹⁰⁷ The KM and the SDK were now clearly in the leadership of the storm, and the NUSP and NSL were not to be seen in the plaza. Their rivalry was rapidly disappearing, but the KM was under direct instructions from the CPP and the SDK was not. At the first People’s Congress and at subsequent rallies throughout the storm, the KM sought to provoke the crowd to violence, while SDK sought to calm it. As the SDK continued its rectification process and as the CPP recruited its leadership to its ranks, this tactical division gradually disappeared and by the opening of 1971 the two organizations proceeded in lockstep in response to the instructions of party leadership. A speech delivered by the KM’s Nonie Villanueva, full of irreverent profanity, established the tone which would dominate the rostrums of the storm going forward, with *putang ina* and *hindot* standing in for political analysis and program. Lacaba recounted that “[e]ach time a small group right in front of the speakers got up calling for a march to Malacañang, other demonstrators surrounding the group – suspected to be one led by an LP hatchetman – persuaded or ordered them to sit down.”¹⁰⁸ To calm the crowd, the SDK repeatedly led them in the singing of the national anthem as a means of defusing tension. As the rally drew to a close, they sung the national anthem one last time and then announced that the MDP would be holding a meeting on Valentine’s day at Vinzons Hall, UP.

Ang Bayan hailed the February 12 demonstration, which it claimed one

¹⁰⁵PC, 11 Feb 1970.

¹⁰⁶Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 73. Both the KM and the SDK would later denounce their opponents for having attempted to call off the February 12 demonstration. In 1971, after they had broken with Lacsina, the KM attacked him on this point, writing “Cowed by the threat of martial law and appeased by Marcos’s promises to act on the set of demands presented by the MDP, Lacsina opposed the historic February 12 People’s Congress, since, in his own words, ‘if we can get what we want without demonstrating, why should we demonstrate?’” (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “And what is Lacsina’s racket?,” *APL*, April 1971, 50). In 1970, however, the KM remained in an alliance with Lacsina and kept silent on his role in the affair, as well as that of Carlos del Rosario. The SDK denounced the MPKP in 1971 as the organization that had tried to shut down the February 12 rally, but they too made no mention of the fact that several of their leading members participated in the agreement with Marcos. (BP, 1, no. 4 [July 1971]: 10, PRP 22/02.

¹⁰⁷Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2.

¹⁰⁸Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 77. It is significant that the “hatchetmen” of the Liberal Party were known to be present at the First Quarter Storm rallies and were suspected of attempting to instigate violent protest. The fact that Lopez and the LP benefited from these rallies was a poorly kept secret.

hundred thousand people had attended.¹⁰⁹ They blamed PKP for negotiating with Marcos to call off the protests, asserting that the “Lava revisionist renegades took the initiative of peddling through the Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino [Free Unity of Filipino Youth] (MPKP) spokesman as early as February 4 the erroneous line that ‘Marcos is only a small, although significant part’ of ‘the neocolonial-bourgeois political system’ (whatever that means) and to complain about a ‘purely anti-Marcos line.’” Using this language the MPKP had sought to call off the protests, and according to *Ang Bayan*, a BRPF statement declared that dialogues with Marcos could be used to “further intensify the national democratic struggle,” while an MPKP press release “announced that they were in a quandary whether or not to join the February 12 demonstration.”¹¹⁰ This defense of Marcos, *Ang Bayan* claimed was made in exchange for a set of promises from the President that “trade and cultural ties will be instituted with Eastern European countries immediately with the sending of officially accredited representatives. The possibility of securing loans or aid from said countries shall be explored.”¹¹¹ *Ang Bayan* observed,

This is obviously the booty being dangled before the Lava revisionist running dogs of Soviet social-imperialism for their cooperation with the Marcos fascist puppet regime. ... Relations with Soviet social-imperialism ... will only add to the intensification of the exploitation of the Filipino people. The Soviet Union is no longer a socialist country; it has become capitalist, social-fascist and social-imperialist. Soviet social-imperialist “loans” and “aid” are no different from US imperialist “loans” and “aid” ...¹¹²

The CPP again insisted on its claim that dictatorship facilitated revolutionary struggle, openly expressing their hope that Marcos would suspend democratic processes: “How much nicer it would be if the US imperialists and reactionaries in the Philippines can no longer boast of their regular election! That would be a striking manifestation of how strong the revolutionary mass movement has become.”¹¹³ The party, *Ang Bayan* claimed, had no responsibility for the emergence of “fascism,” stating “It is stupid to blame revolutionaries for the rise of fascism and the supposed possibility of a rightist coup.” The CPP rejected the revolutionary task of fighting against the rise of dictatorship, which can be waged neither by passive abstention nor anarchistic violence, both of which facilitate its emergence, but rather through the conscious organizing of the masses in an

¹⁰⁹The article appeared in AB, 28 Feb 1970 and was reprinted in Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 175-183. This estimate is belied by the fact that in a separate article in the same issue they would claim that the February 18 demonstration “was even larger,” with “tens of thousands” participating.

¹¹⁰Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 177.

¹¹¹Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 179.

¹¹²Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 179.

¹¹³Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 177-178.

independent struggle for power. Thus, while the *MPKP* looked to defuse protests, the *KM* sought to provoke repression; both facilitated the declaration of martial law.

On February 14, fifty representatives from various student and labor organizations met to plan the next steps of the protest movement. They resolved that the February 18 rally, which had already been scheduled, would be a second people's congress. The *KM* circulated a leaflet at the meeting calling for the "intensification of the struggle against the fascist puppet government of Marcos."¹¹⁴ Following the political line of *Ang Bayan*, they denounced the "opportunist line" of the *MPKP* that "Marcos is a small but important part of the political system." Countering that "the fascist puppet Marcos is the primary political agent of the native exploiting and oppressing classes and of American imperialism in our country," they called for continued and strengthened anti-Marcos protests, and concluded by expanding the tripartite "Down with Fascism! Down with Imperialism! Down with Feudalism!" to include a final slogan: "Down with Soviet Social Imperialism!"¹¹⁵

February 18: the Second People's Congress

An estimated twenty thousand students – and "a sprinkling of workers and farmers" – assembled in Plaza Miranda on February 18 for the Second People's Congress.¹¹⁶ The *MPKP* was reeling from the criticisms of the *KM*; they produced two leaflets for the demonstration, each written in a petulant and defensive tone. The first hailed the assembly as the development of their perspective of building "parliament in the streets,"¹¹⁷ and declared that

MPKP views Marcos as an agent of American Imperialism. However, it does not equate the system as a whole with the person of Marcos. *MPKP* is well aware of the contradictions within the ruling class (and these contradictions tend to grow sharper in periods of crisis like the present). It therefore warns against a possible plan of rival factions

¹¹⁴Kabataang Makabayan (*KM*), *Pasidhiin ang Pakikibaka Laban sa Pasistang Papet na Pamahalaan ni Marcos*, February 1970, PRP 08/13.23.

¹¹⁵The remaining conservative layers of the *MDP* were being edged out and were looking to pull the umbrella group back from the clutches of the *KM*. On the same day that the majority of the organization agreed to hold a second people's congress, the spokesperson of the *MDP*, Nelson Navarro, met with Justice Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, at the Butterfly Restaurant where he was celebrating his forty-sixth birthday. Miriam Defensor and Violeta Calvo were both now employed in his office and they had arranged his meeting with the *MDP* spokesperson. (Navarro, *The Half-Remembered Past: A Memoir*, 54).

¹¹⁶Gonzales, "A Chronicle of Protests," 2 Among the organizations gathered there were the *KM*, *SDK*, *MPKP*, Socialist Party of the Philippines (*SPP*), *NATU*, and the *NSL*.

¹¹⁷Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (*MPKP*), *The People's Congress and the National Democratic Struggle*, February 1970, PRP 10/29.15. See page 451.

of the same ruling class to seize power and create the illusion of change. The goal of the national democratic movement is to abolish neo-colonialism, not just to replace the man who presides over the operation of the same exploitative system.

The MPKP stated that the “only real alternative ... is *people’s power* – the collective might of the workers, peasants, students, and all other anti-imperialist forces,” mobilized to build “national democracy.” The language of this leaflet expressed the dilemma of the MPKP during the First Quarter Storm. They could not endorse Marcos and would not endorse his bourgeois opponents. The only alternative was an independent fight of the working class leading the students and peasantry in opposition to the entire capitalist class, but the Stalinism of the PKP and its front organizations was intrinsically hostile to this perspective. The MPKP thus warned against both Marcos as well as the “rival factions” of the ruling class, while at the same time calling for a united front of “people’s power” with all “anti-imperialist forces” for national democracy. The MPKP unwaveringly insisted that a section of the national bourgeoisie was a component part of these progressive forces, and a necessary element of “people’s power,” yet they could not during the FQS publicly identify which section of the capitalist class was in their opinion progressive. This was precisely because their allegiances lay with Marcos and to say as much in early 1970 was political suicide.

Later the same day the MPKP released a second leaflet defending themselves against charges made by the KM that they were diffusing anger against Marcos. They accused the KM of the “unwarranted resort to slanderous phrase-mongering” and distorting the MPKP political line.¹¹⁸ Protesting overmuch, they stated,

MPKP never advocated shifting the people’s revolutionary actions against Marcos to “dissipated attacks” against various forces. MPKP did not exculpate the blood debts of Marcos by branding the revolutionary actions of the youth as a purely anti-Marcos line. MPKP has not fallen for the Marcos “nationalist” line at all, and it does not becloud the issue of puppetry and fascism of the Marcos regime. MPKP is not disarmed by the rhetorics [*sic*] of Marcos. MPKP does not underestimate the role of Marcos in the neocolonial-bourgeois system. MPKP does not consider Marcos as only a “victim” of this system.

The demonstrators marched to the Embassy, despite attempts by some of the organizers of the event to prevent them from doing so. Gary Olivar told the crowd that there would be a rally at the Washington Day Ball at the Embassy

¹¹⁸Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *The Neocolonial System and the “Purely Anti-Marcos Line”*, February 1970, PRP 10/29.09. One wonders what resort to “slanderous phrase-mongering” would be warranted.

on Saturday the twenty-first and that they should wait to demonstrate at the Embassy then. He led the crowd in repeated renditions of the national anthem in an attempt to defuse the mounting anger of the demonstrators.¹¹⁹ While the SDK was carefully attempting to limit the protests and prevent violence the KM was seeking to provoke it. *Ang Bayan* celebrated how the demonstrators “brilliantly” feigned to Malacañang, “completely outwitted practically all the fascist brutes” who deployed to the presidential palace, and then marched on the Embassy.¹²⁰ At nine thirty at night, violence erupted at the Embassy. Nelson Navarro, spokesperson for the MDP, stated that the organization peacefully finished its rally, and “the events that transpired afterwards it was unable to prevent or control,” as demonstrating students broke into the Embassy compound with “sticks, stones and homemade bombs.”¹²¹ *Ang Bayan* hailed the demonstrators who left the Embassy and “broke up into several groups and attacked such alien establishments as Caltex, Esso, Philamlife and other imperialist enterprises. They carefully avoided doing harm to petty bourgeois and middle bourgeois establishments.”¹²²

February 21: Devaluation

The economic crisis continued to worsen, and on February 21, upon the insistence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Marcos devalued the peso and adopted the floating rate. The peso declined from \$1:₱4 to \$1:₱5.90, falling 47.5% almost overnight.¹²³ Gradually the conception emerged that the collapse of the peso had been the product of Marcos’ profligate election spending.

[Marcos] it is generally concluded, so debauched the Philippine peso – he is said to have spent no less than 800 million during his campaign – that the Government could not but devalue under the pressure of the International Monetary Fund, thus aggravating further the widespread poverty that characterizes Philippine society. As a result of the IMF-imposed ‘floating-rate’, the prices of all prime commodities soared by nearly 40 per cent while wages inched up by

¹¹⁹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 86.

¹²⁰Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 185-6.

¹²¹PC, 19 Feb 1970.

¹²²Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 186. Gleeck also wrote on the students breaking into the Embassy compound. (Gleck Jr., *Dissolving the Colonial Bond*, 240). Adding further to the political confusion of the FQS, the *Collegian* published a letter the next morning in its February 19 issue purporting to be from Bernabe Buscayno, head of the NPA. It stated “We also warn the students, if they are bent on pursuing the ideology of national democracy, they must not forget that they alone could never change and bring about radical changes in our society. Student power is limited. If the students continue to insist that it is their power alone that could bring about the downfall of exploitation in our country they are wrong.” (PC, 19 Feb 1970, 7) In its June 1 issue, *Ang Bayan* disavowed this statement as a “fake letter ... carrying the patently forged signature of the commander-in-chief of the New People’s Army.” (AB, 1 Jun 1970, 27).

¹²³Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 225.

10-15 per cent ...

In an attempt to give the people the impression that his government is not powerless to halt spiraling costs, Marcos created in mid-1970 a Price Control Council which proved to be more than ready to grant official approval to price increases, especially when these were 'requested' by American oil companies.¹²⁴

Rodrigo writes

The devaluation slowed the economy and stoked even more the public discontent. The peso wobbled further to \$1:₱6.50 in 1971. As a result of the rise in the cost of imports, the Philippine economy slowed to a crawl. GNP growth dropped to 2.74%, the worst level since 1960 and the second worst since 1946. Public discontent, already high, soared even further. Inflation rose to 15%, compared to the average of 4.5% in previous years. By 1971, nearly half the population were not earning enough to buy their minimum food needs.¹²⁵

As late as December 9 1969, in a speech at the Asian Institute of Management Marcos had declared, in the presence of Eugenio Lopez, that he would not devalue the peso. "The devaluation's impact on Meralco was direct and considerable. Meralco got many dollar denominated loans during 1962-70. Its old financial projections were now obsolete and unless rates were hiked, the company was in danger of defaulting on some loans."¹²⁶ Tensions between Marcos and Lopez persisted and deepened.¹²⁷

February 26: Sunken Garden and the Raid on PCC

The MDP called off its promised Washington Day demonstration at the last moment but the front groups of the PKP it seems did not receive notification of the cancellation. Approximately fifty demonstrators, all associated with the

¹²⁴Federico Angel, "The Philippine Crisis," *Eastern Horizon* X, no. 5 (1971): 58.

¹²⁵Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 225.

¹²⁶Ibid., 225-6.

¹²⁷On March 12, the KM published its analysis of Marcos' devaluation of the peso, which concluded

The way to genuine economic independence lies in combating US imperialism and feudalism. To build a strong national economy, it is necessary to institute basic industrialization and genuine land reform, which can only be achieved under a national democracy. To achieve national democracy, workers, peasants, progressive intellectuals, and the patriotic national bourgeoisie must unite to isolate and defeat the US imperialists, landlords, compradors, and bureaucrat-capitalists. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), "Devaluation and IMF Dictation," *PC*, March 1970, 4-5)

PKP showed up in front of the embassy, which was surrounded by nearly one thousand police officers.¹²⁸ The attention of the MDP was turned to the staging of a “Third People’s Congress” at Plaza Miranda on February 26. Manila Mayor Villegas announced on the twenty-third that he would not grant a permit for a rally at Plaza Miranda, but would issue one for the use of the Sunken Gardens instead.¹²⁹ The Sunken Gardens were part of the old moat outside the southern walls of Intramuros, and now served as a hazard in the nine hole municipal golf course circling the ancient city bulwarks. While it was but a stroll away from Agrifina Circle and Congress, it was nonetheless isolated and, from the perspective of law-enforcement, easily controlled. On February 24, in a meeting of the MDP leadership at UP, spokesperson Nelson Navarro announced that the MDP would appeal Villegas decision before the Supreme Court. The appeal was filed by E. Voltaire Garcia, now employed in the offices of Senator Salvador Laurel, the next day.¹³⁰ On February 26, at four in the afternoon on the day of the rally, the court upheld Villegas denial of a permit for a gathering in Miranda by a vote 8-2.¹³¹ The forces of the MDP gathered outside Plaza Miranda, waiting for the Supreme Court ruling, and there was a tense stand-off as they were blocked by anti-riot police “in full combat gear” from entering.¹³² On word of the decision, they moved to the Sunken Gardens.¹³³ From the rally at the Sunken Garden the

¹²⁸Placards visible in photographs of the event reveal that the protesters belonged to either AKSIUN or the MPKP, both front organizations of the PKP, and the MPKP issued a three-page leaflet for the demonstration, denouncing US imperialism in stock political language. (Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 95; Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *American Imperialism is the No. 1 Enemy*, February 1970, PRP 10/29.01). The next day the MDP launched a four day picket of the Embassy, from February 22-26, but it is unclear how many participated. (Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2). On February 24, in the midst of the picket, leading SDK member Fred Tirante was “abducted” by “burly men who claimed that they were policemen,” and upon his release, Tirante claimed that he had been intimidated and physically threatened. Tirante, it later emerged, was a military spy. The abduction was no doubt staged to win him further credibility within the ranks of the SDK and perhaps the CPP. (PC, 26 Feb 1970; Pio Verzola Jr., “The summer radio kid grows up,” 2012, accessed 9 August 2015, <http://iraia.net/blog/2012/10/21/the-summer-radio-kid-grows-up>).

¹²⁹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 100.

¹³⁰Ibid., 102.

¹³¹ibid. On March 1, the MPKP published a leaflet denouncing the Supreme Court decision and calling for a “struggle against bourgeois legalism.” (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Philippine Judiciary is an Inseparable Part of the Neocolonial System*, March 1970, PRP 10/29.17).

¹³²Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2.

¹³³Among those who spoke at the Sunken Garden rally was Robin Blackburn of the International Marxist Group. (Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 241; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 105) Blackburn stayed in the Philippines for a month, in the home of leading MDP member Rodel Rodis, and met with key figures from both the PKP (which he referred to as the CPP) and the CPP (which he termed the CPP-ML). He enthusiastically hailed both organizations, and saw the existing rivalry as healthy, declaring that both parties saw the national-bourgeoisie as “a potential ally.” (Blackburn, “Rebirth of the Filipino Revolution,” 30) Blackburn’s article was subsequently reprinted in the Philippines in *Graphic*, published by Tonyet Araneta. During his stay in the

MDP proceeded to the Embassy.

Late that night – at two-thirty in the morning on February 27 – the Manila Police Department (MPD) raided the Philippine College of Commerce (PCC) with a warrant issued by Judge Hilarion Jarencio, arresting thirty-nine people, including Teodosio Lansang, and confiscating, they claimed, several weapons.¹³⁴ Simeon Del Rosario claimed that among the documents taken from the office of Lansang was a hand-written set of notes outlining a scheme for the reconciliation of the PKP and the CPP under what Lansang termed a Provisional Philippine Revolutionary Council.¹³⁵

26.3 March

March 3: People's Anti-Fascist March

Denied access to Plaza Miranda, the MDP adopted a new strategy – “People’s Marches” – and on March 2 they circulated a leaflet announcing a “People’s Anti-Fascist March” to be held the next day.¹³⁶ The leaflet cited the raid on the PCC as evidence of the fascism of the state and insisted that despite this fascism the movement would continue. It called on everyone to join the march, which was to begin at one in the afternoon at the Welcome Rotonda.¹³⁷ The MDP was able to promote the march on national television as Lopez had, at the beginning of the month, provided the MDP with a weekly television program which broadcast from nine-thirty to ten-thirty on Thursday nights on ABS-CBN.¹³⁸ The SDK, KM and MDP were given extensive access to radio as well, where the Lopez family and others in the media industry supplied them with regular free airtime. The MDP ran a daily two hour program, Impressions of the Nation, hosted by SDK member and future NPA leader Rafael Baylosis, with the explicit intent of broadcasting material regarding imperialism, feudalism, and fascism and the program of national democracy.¹³⁹

The KM issued a leaflet, calling as always for the “continuation of the struggle for national democracy.” The developing struggle, they claimed, was evidence

Philippines, Blackburn spoke on the UP campus at the invitation of SCAUP, and published a brief article on the New Left in the Collegian. (Robin Blackburn, “Development of an International United Front,” *PC*, February 1970, 5).

¹³⁴Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 110; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 43.

¹³⁵Trinidad P Calma, “Lansang the Poseur Further Exposes Himself,” *APL*, July 1971, 43; *So the People May Know, Volume VII*, 43.

¹³⁶Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 259.

¹³⁷Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Pagibayuhin ang Pakikibaka Tungo sa Pambansang Demokrasya!*, March 1970, PRP 11/18.15. The insistence in this leaflet on the continuation of the struggle suggests that there may have been discussion or opposition on this point.

¹³⁸PC, 9 Mar 1970, 2-3.

¹³⁹Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 357-8, 391. The KM and SDK were provided with their own separate radio broadcasts as well.

of the “growing revolutionary consciousness of the Filipino people who are fighting to destroy the evil forces of exploitation and suppression.”¹⁴⁰ Fascism, the leaflet claimed, was the last weapon of American imperialism and was being deployed to hide the weakness of their puppet Marcos, who had lost the trust of the masses, something a government needed in order to succeed, as a result of the unceasing struggle of the forces of national democracy.¹⁴¹ The MPKP publish their own leaflet for the march, responding to charges of violence which were being raised against the protest movement. It stressed that the root of violence was the “fascist repression and brutality” of the “neocolonial bourgeois state,” and “an oppressed and exploited people have a right to meet force with force.”¹⁴² Seeking, however, to blame the KM as well, the MPKP continued

The national democratic forces do not plan or participate in or condone acts of ‘vandalism’ or violent acts on the persons and properties of individuals who are not their violent enemies. These are the isolated deeds of provocateurs, looters, and thrill-seekers, or of emotional and extremist elements whose wrath is understandable but whose leaders are duty bound to guide them into a recognition of the distinction between enemies and friends.

Provocateurs must be identified and exposed as mercenary tools of the imperialist-fascist puppet factions now intensely engaged in their own fierce competition for neocolonial power and authority. Extremist and anarchistic elements must be led into the correct revolutionary line, or consciously isolated should they prove to be intractable ...

Expose Mercenary Provocateurs! Struggle Against Anarchists!

A highly sympathetic account in the *Collegian* reported that as the march past through Binondo “the Chinese have boarded up. The marchers scream at them before them [*sic*] are calmed by their leaders and their fury redirected at police brutality and colonialism.”¹⁴³ At the end of a circuitous route through Manila, approximately twenty thousand marchers converged on Plaza Lawton, where they were violently dispersed by police who set upon them with truncheons.¹⁴⁴ Fleeing to Intramuros, Enrique Sta. Brigida, a freshman in Commerce at Lyceum and a member of the Lyceum Student Reform Movement, was killed by a blow to the skull. The CPP published a statement on the March 3 People’s March in

¹⁴⁰Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Ipagpatuloy ang Pakikibaka Laban sa Imperyalismong Amerikano, Katutubong Piyadalismo at Pasismo! ...*, March 1970, PRP 08/13.12.

¹⁴¹The leaflet singled out the use of tear gas against protesters in Sampaloc on February 18 and 26 and the brutal [makahayop] raid on the PCC as evidence of this growing fascism.

¹⁴²Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *People’s Violence Against State Violence*, March 1970, PRP 10/29.16.

¹⁴³PC, 9 Mar 1970, 2.

¹⁴⁴Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2.

the June 1 issue of *Ang Bayan*, which hailed Enrique Sta. Brigida for “adding one more to the list of heroes who have sacrificed their lives.”¹⁴⁵ “However,” the article continued, “the bloody suppression of the March 3 People’s March failed to intimidate the masses of workers, student [*sic*] and youth who joined the historic mass action. It only goaded them more to wage a resolute struggle for national democracy.” In response to the dispersal of the march and the killing of Sta. Brigida, Tony Zumel, President of the National Press Club (NPC), declared on March 8 that the NPC building on Arroceros – a stone’s throw from Lawton – could be used by fleeing students as sanctuary from the police.¹⁴⁶ On March 10, three thousand students marched from Lyceum to South Cemetery in a funeral procession for Sta. Brigida that was at the same time a protest rally.¹⁴⁷

March 17: Anti-Poverty March

The MDP held a meeting on Saturday March 14 to finalize plans for another march, to be held on Tuesday the seventeenth and to be called “an anti-poverty march.” Olivar told the press that the MDP “takes the uncompromising position that poverty is historically a mere consequence of the exploitative semi-feudal and semi-colonial character of our society.”¹⁴⁸ In the early morning of the sixteenth, the ROTC and armory buildings on the UP campus burned to the ground.¹⁴⁹ The *Collegian* wrote, “On the eve of final exams, dormers scampered out in night clothes to watch the DMST [Department of Military Science and Tactics] giant hut, seen by many as sanctuary of local fascist authority, burn down as dormer-activists shouted ‘Maki-BAKA, huwag MA-TA-kot.’”¹⁵⁰ A leaflet, put out under the name *Ang Tutol* [The Protest], hailed the burning of the DMST building as a victory of the national democratic movement over the fascist state.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵AB, 1 June 1970, 26.

¹⁴⁶Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 2. Zumel joined the CPP in 1970 on the invitation of Satur Ocampo and Bobbie Malay. By 1971, Amando Doronila had replaced Zumel as head of NPC. (Satur Ocampo, “Preface,” in *Radical Prose: Selected Writings of Antonio Zumel* [Manila: Friends of Antonio Zumel / the First Quarter Storm Movement (FQSM), 2004], ix; Zumel, *Radical Prose*, 320).

¹⁴⁷PC, 12 Mar 1970. Renato Constantino, Amado Hernandez, Jesus Barrera, Voltaire Garcia, and Crispin Aranda spoke at the funeral, and Lyceum President Sotero Laurel led the procession. (PC, 12 Mar 1970, 7). It was Hernandez last political act, as he died two weeks later.

¹⁴⁸PC, 12 Mar 1970.

¹⁴⁹Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 289, 294; Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 129. Classes had ended that weekend, and final exams were about to commence. Jerry Barican sponsored a resolution in the Student Council calling on the UP administration to suspend departmental final examinations in view of the chaos of the preceding semester. In their place, Barican called for instructor administered final exams specific to the individual class and in keeping with the material that had actually been covered. (UP Student Council et al., *Resolution Requesting the Administration to Suspend All Types of Departmentalized Final Examinations This Semester*, March 1970, PRP 18/02.38).

¹⁵⁰PC, 8 Oct 1970, 5.

¹⁵¹“Hurray for the Anti-Fascist Movement,” *Ang Tutol* 1, no. 1 (March 1970), PRP 43/08.01.

The day before the anti-poverty march, the MPKP published a leaflet proclaiming that the organization adhered to four basic principles. The first was people's power, a formulation which they opposed to "student power," writing, "MPKP rejects the slogan of Student Power."¹⁵² The second basic principle was integration with the masses, which they asserted was not merely "philanthropy," targeting with this remark the Nationalist Corps. True integration with the masses, the MPKP wrote, was reflected in the fact that seventy percent of the six thousand members of the MPKP were workers and peasants. The third principle was "revolution from below," stating that the "MPKP rejects Marcos' concept of 'revolution at the top' ... revolutionary change can only be brought about by democratic action from below. It cannot come as concessions from the oppressors and exploiters." The final principle was "Internationalism." By this, the MPKP did not mean the international struggle of the working class for socialism, but rather referred to the need to promote the interests of the Soviet Union, writing that "MPKP deplores the current efforts of reactionaries to inculcate chauvinist emotions in the anti-imperialist movement." With these principles, the MPKP attempted to distinguish itself from the SDK (first principle), the NC (second), the Marcos administration (third), and the KM (fourth).

On Tuesday, March 17, the MDP launched its anti-poverty march. The march began at nine in the morning at three locations and converged on Plaza Moriones in Tondo to stage what they termed a People's Court [Hukuman ng Bayan].¹⁵³ The speakers at the rally accused Marcos and his cohort of a list of crimes "against the Filipino people," pronounced a death sentence, and publicly hanged their effigies.¹⁵⁴ The College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), which was increasingly entering the camp of KM, issued a statement, "We call for egalitarianism, which diffuses socio-economic and political powers from the few to the many, from the present ruling oligarchy to the people at large ...

¹⁵²Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *MPKP and the National Democratic Struggle*, March 1970, PRP 10/29.10.

¹⁵³The march commenced from Makati, at the corner of Tejeron and Pasong Tamo; Quezon City, at the Welcome Rotonda; and Tondo at Plaza Pritil. Speakers at the event included Crispin Aranda, Peter Mutuc of the US Tobacco Corp Labor Union, Gary Olivar, and Leo Hernandez of KM. Ceres Alabado claimed that Ruben Torres of the MPKP also spoke at the rally. The MDP when it reviewed her book disagreed, claiming that the MPKP had already been kicked out of the MDP by March 17 and that Torres did not speak at this event. (Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 304; Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), "The Victory of the Vietnamese People," *National Liberation Forum* 1, no. 4 [May 1972]: 6, PRP 36/16.01) In the same passage Alabado claimed that while students showed up for the anti-poverty march and people's court, the poor did not. The available evidence strongly supports Alabado's claim that the MPKP participated. Not only did the MPKP issue a leaflet for this rally, but they were, as late as July, still participating in the radio broadcasts of the MDP, and the removal of the MPKP from the MDP did not take place until August 1970. The MPKP, BRPF and AKSIUN were promoting their participation in the MDP broadcast "Impressions of the Nation" in a July issue of *Struggle*. (*Struggle*, (1970) 2 no. 2, p. 5). A copy of this issue of *Struggle* can be found in JHP, 92/9.

¹⁵⁴Gonzales, "A Chronicle of Protests," 2.

The CEGP sees two valid and realistic means: one peaceful, the other violent ... [which means are used] is highly dependent on how the forces of reaction – the beneficiaries of this highly exploitative system – will react.” Either, the CEGP, claimed, the elites would allow “an authentic Constitutional Convention ... [of] delegates without vested interests and unbrainwashed,” or they would face violent revolution. The statement concluded: “Ours is a democracy for the elite, a bourgeois democracy, and must be replaced by a genuine national democracy of, for and by the Filipino people.”¹⁵⁵

The KM distributed a leaflet which developed its analysis somewhat. While it pointed to the “mounting fascism” of the Marcos administration, this was no longer depicted as its subjective response to the mass protests, but was rooted in the larger crisis of US imperialism. In its attempts to resolve this crisis, the United States was compelled to increase its exploitation of its semi-colonies and this required the growing use of the repressive apparatus of the state.¹⁵⁶ In this aspect of their analysis, the KM was correct. The architecture of dictatorship being erected in the Philippines paralleled the rise of dictatorship around the globe beginning in the mid-1960s and was an expression of the crisis of US imperialism. The international character of this threat highlighted the bankruptcy of local, nationalist solutions to the crisis. Only the coordinated international struggle of the working class for socialism could respond to the international drive to military dictatorship from Chile to Greece and from Indonesia to the Philippines. The KM drew no new political conclusions from this analysis however, and still called for a broad united front in the struggle for national democracy. The solution to the problems of poverty and the threat of dictatorship in the Philippines, they asserted, was national industrialization and agrarian revolution under a national democratic government. What is more, in their subsequent analyses and leaflets, the KM reverted to their older conception, claiming again that the ‘fascism’ of the Marcos administration was rooted simply in the subjective response of Marcos to the protest movement.¹⁵⁷

The MPRP also circulated a leaflet at the March 17 rally, which stated that “One

¹⁵⁵College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), *Manifesto of the State of the Nation*, March 1970, PRP 03/17.01. Because this was a march against poverty, the leaflet mentioned socialism twice and even mentioned the 1917 Russian Revolution. Its political conclusions, however, were strictly limited to pressuring the elite – with the threat of violence – to carry out national democratic measures.

¹⁵⁶Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Ibunsod ang Malawakang Pakikibaka Laban sa Imperyalismong Amerikano, Katutubong Piyudalismo at Burokrata-Kapitalismo!*, March 1970, PRP 08/13.10.

¹⁵⁷The MDP produced a statement which claimed that the anti-poverty rally was part of the broad movement of the masses of exploited and enslaved people to attain true national democracy. The rally “desired above all [higit sa lahat] to censure, and fight against, the current administration ... which was none other than Marcos, [na dili iba’t si Marcos]” on whose profligate election spending the MDP blamed the sharp increase in prices and the drop in dollar reserves. (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Magkaisa at Makibaka para sa Pambansang Demokrasya*, March 1970, PRP 11/18.10).

of the many questions of people regarding the issues raised by the demonstrators is what is meant by imperialism, feudalism and fascism.”¹⁵⁸ The key, the MPKP argued, to ending poverty was national industrialist development of the “basic industries,” in particular, the creation of complex machinery using metal from Philippine mines. However, “because the prevailing system is bad, it needs to be changed and not merely the people. Even if we get good leaders if the system itself is rotten, they will still not succeed because they themselves will become its victims.”¹⁵⁹ The MPKP made no reference to any specific political event or person, and Marcos was never mentioned. The logic of their leaflet however, could easily be interpreted to argue that Marcos himself was a good leader but the rotten system was corrupting him. It was not a stretch of logic to assume that if the system could be repaired then Marcos could be rescued to be the good leader that he had always intended to be.¹⁶⁰

Ang Bayan claimed that “hundreds of thousands of people” participated in the anti-poverty march. The numerical estimates of revolutionary strength being issued by the CPP were increasingly out of keeping with reality. In the same issue of *Ang Bayan*, they asserted that “more than 90 per cent of the masses ... are on the side of the revolution.”¹⁶¹ These figures were not merely dishonest, they were absurd. If ninety per cent of the masses were on the side of the revolution in any meaningful sense of the word, the party would have already taken power.

The Storm Subsides

The First Quarter Storm was a student protest movement, and while the majority of these students were intimately connected to the working class and peasantry, the FQS never moved beyond its social base in the student population. At no

¹⁵⁸Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Paghihirap ng Bayan at ang Imperyalismo*, March 1970, PRP 10/29.13.

¹⁵⁹“Sapagka’t ang sistemang umiiral ang masama, dapat ito ang baguhin at hindi lamang ang mga tao. Magkaroon man tayo ng mabubuting lider kung ang sistema naman ang bulok, hindi rin sila magtatagumpay dahil sa sila mismo ang magiging biktima nito.”

¹⁶⁰On the same day, MPKP held a separate protest in Malolos, in the center of its mass base in the peasantry of Bulacan and Pampanga, for which they produced a bizarrely titled statement, “Commandment of the People Number One (1)” (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Kautusan ng Taumbayan Bilang Isa (1)*, March 1970, PRP 10/29.08). The leaflet proclaimed three points: first, the poverty of the peasantry was the result of the feudal conduct [pamamalakad] of agriculture; second, the destruction of feudalism was the responsibility of the peasants, who needed to be united, but they were not alone in this struggle as the entire movement for democracy [kilusang pangdemokrasya] would join with them. Third, the hacendero class was strong and had the force of the state at its disposal, but no matter how strong it was, it could be defeated by the strength of the united front. Flowing from these three points, the leaflet issued three commands [utos]: fight for the rights of the peasantry to their own land; use all means to destroy the feudal system; join with all classes [makiisa sa lahat ng uri] building a national democratic movement.

¹⁶¹AB, 1 Jun 1970, 28.

point did the leadership of this movement, which rested largely with the CPP, fight for its independence from the bourgeoisie and the traditional political elite. On the contrary, it consciously and secretly pursued the interests of a faction of the ruling class and profited out of the relationship. At the same time, the CPP did not orient the protesting students to broader layers of the working class. The chanted slogans and newsprint manifestos all directed the students merely to escalate their denunciations of Marcos and “fascism,” and ultimately to join the armed struggle in the countryside. For all its fiery rhetoric and pitched battles in the street – and no matter how truly courageous and self-sacrificing many of the young people were who joined its ranks – the First Quarter Storm was, in the end, but a violent venting of steam. The political turbines through which this steam coursed were those of Lopez and Osmeña, with their scheming plots, and Marcos, who steadily readied the architecture of martial law.

On April 5, the MDP and an organization calling itself Crusaders for Democracy held a rally of five thousand people at Plaza Miranda.¹⁶² The crowd moved from Miranda to the Embassy, but the MPD attempted to divert the demonstration with tear gas as it neared Manila City Hall. The protesters responded with Molotov cocktails and pillboxes, and the Metrocom fired their guns to disperse the crowd. It was the last gasp of the First Quarter Storm.

As a movement composed almost exclusively of students the storm’s life was necessarily a short one. Graduation rites succeeded final examinations, and the second week of April saw the majority of students returning home to the province or taking up full-time summer work. As the semester ended and Lopez temporarily reconciled with Marcos, the storm subsided as rapidly as it had started. On March 22, Marcos addressed the graduation rites at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), vowing to impose martial law “in case the communist threat becomes a positive danger that would imperil the security of the country.”¹⁶³ On April 11, UP staged its graduation rites and the MDP produced a leaflet which it distributed to the class of 1970. It expressed its “firmest fraternal support for the planned protest actions at this year’s UP commencement exercises by graduating national democratic activists,” and denounced US imperialism and their Filipino and Chinese accomplices in the Philippines.¹⁶⁴ The denunciation of the local Chinese accomplices of US imperialism was a striking addition to the rhetoric of the national democratic movement. It would develop rapidly into racist attacks on the *kumintang intsik* [Kuomintang Chinese], and would play an increasingly prominent and noxious role in the propaganda of the KM, SDK and their allies over the next year. The First Quarter Storm was over.

¹⁶²Crispin Aranda spoke on behalf of the MDP denouncing imperialist control of oil as the cause of the rising price of transit. Alfredo Paras spoke for the Crusaders condemning the “fascism” of Marcos. Nonie Villanueva spoke for the KM, telling the crowd that People’s War was the answer to the “threat of martial law.” (PC, 10 Apr 1970, 2).

¹⁶³Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 224.

¹⁶⁴Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Manifesto*, April 1970, PRP 11/19.01.

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The Wake of the Storm

Ah, what a cesspool of folly and foolishness, what preposterous fantasies, what corrupt police tactics, what inquisitorial, tyrannical practices! What petty whims of a few higher-ups trampling the nation under their boots, ramming back down their throats the people's cries for truth and justice, with the travesty of state security as a pretext.

— Émile Zola, *J'Accuse...!*

The contending political forces regrouped in the wake of the storm. Steadily preparing the architecture for a police state, Marcos deported the journalist brothers, Rizal and Quintin Yuyitung, testing his ability to curtail the freedom of the press by targeting its most vulnerable layers. He arranged the arrest of Nilo Tayag, head of the KM and member of the Central Committee of the CPP, seeking legal grounds for banning the youth group as a front organization of the Communist Party. In the process it was revealed that a network of military and police agents had infiltrated the KM and its sister organizations to their highest levels of leadership. The KM and SDK united in the UP campus elections for the first time and won a sweeping victory; victories for the front groups of the CPP followed on campuses across the country.

The Yuyitung Brothers

On March 24, as the First Quarter Storm dissipated, Marcos arrested the journalist brothers Rizal and Quintin Yuyitung.¹ Rizal and Quintin's father, Yu Yi Tung, had arrived in the Philippines in the 1900s "to teach at the only Chinese school in Manila during the early years of the American administration."² By 1922 he had founded a newspaper, the Chinese Commercial News (CCN), which in the 1930s was consistently critical of Chiang Kai-shek and the GMD, in contrast to the leading rival Chinese language newspaper in Manila, the *Fookien Times*,

¹Gonzales, "A Chronicle of Protests," 3.

²Rizal Yuyitung, ed., *The Case of the Yuyitung Brothers: Philippine Press Freedom under Siege* (Binondo: Yuyitung Foundation, Inc., 2000), i.

published by Go Puan Seng, which enthusiastically backed both.³ Yu's two sons were both born in Tondo, Quintin in 1917 and Rizal in 1923 – both named after famous Filipino historical figures. Yu was executed by the Japanese forces in 1942 for refusing to comply with the occupation, but his sons survived the war and resumed publishing the CCN, which became the leading Chinese language daily in the Philippines.⁴ In 1962, Macapagal had the Yuyitung brothers arrested for publishing material “favorable to the Communist cause in general.” While Rizal was released after two weeks, and Quintin after six months, deportation orders were issued against them despite the fact that they had lived their entire lives in the Philippines. They were ordered to report to the Immigration office every week, for as long as their deportation case was pending. This state of affairs continued until 1965.⁵ Thus, the PKP through the Lapiang Manggagawa entered a coalition and enthusiastically supported Macapagal, while he was actively harassing and attempting to deport the Yuyitung brothers for their alleged sympathy for Communism and the PKP never said a word.

During the FQS, not only did the mainstream English language press provide largely favorable coverage to the protestors, so too did the CCN. Unable yet to directly crack down on his bourgeois rivals, Marcos singled out the Yuyitung brothers, resurrecting Macapagal's deportation charges against them.⁶ On May 4 Marcos deported Rizal and Quintin Yuyitung to Taiwan, where they were tried before a military court in Taipei in August 1970. Their lawyer was not allowed to speak to them before the trial, nor were they informed of the charge against them – “spreading Communist propaganda.” The trial lasted four hours and the brothers were sentenced to several years in prison.⁷ By the time of their release, martial law had been declared. Both took up life in exile from the home whose government had deported them as aliens; Quintin moved to San Francisco and Rizal to Canada.

On May 12, the MDP staged a rally in front of the Taiwanese Embassy to protest the treatment of the Yuyitung brothers.⁸ The English version of the leaflet circulated by the MDP at the rally denounced the deportation of the Yuyitung

³In the 1950s and onward, Go was closely tied to Edward Lansdale.

⁴Caroline S. Hau, *The Chinese Question: Ethnicity, Nation, and Region in and beyond the Philippines* (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2014), 91; Yuyitung, *The Case of the Yuyitung Brothers*, iii.

⁵Yuyitung, *The Case of the Yuyitung Brothers*, v.

⁶While Marcos was attacking the press through his deportation of the Yuyitung brothers, it is important to note that the roots of their deportation were more complex than this. Hau documents that the Yuyitungs had “run afoul of certain Chinese community leaders and the GMD and the Embassy of the Republic of China for refusing to toe the Taipei line.” This was in part the result of the Yuyitung's “campaign for citizenship by jus soli and mass naturalization by administrative process.” (Hau, *The Chinese Question*, 93-94).

⁷Yuyitung, *The Case of the Yuyitung Brothers*, x.

⁸UP Student Council, *Manifesto on the Fascist Deportation of the Yuyitung Brothers*, May 1970, PRP 18/02.26.

brothers as “anti-intellectual in the least. More fundamentally, the act is anti-social, racist, anti-nationalist, and anti-democratic in principle.”⁹ It called on the “Filipino people to unite and join the militant workers, peasants, intellectuals and progressive national capitalists in their struggle for genuine democracy and freedom. We also call upon the Chinese nationals in the Philippines to join their Filipino brothers in the fight against the collaboration of the Chiang-Kai-Sek [*sic*] bandit gang with the American imperialists ... the corruption and puppetry [of Chiang] has long been rejected by the greater number of Chinese in the just and prosperous nation of People’s Republic of China.” The Tagalog face of the leaflet was a completely different text, which made no reference to racism nor did it explicitly denounce the deportation. It stated that “The Yuyitung case is still necessary in order to make the broader mass of people aware [Kinakailangan pa ang kasong Yuyitung upang magmulat sa lalong malawak na masa ng sambayanan] of the truth of fascism that the progressive sectors of society have long been fighting.” It concluded, “As fascism intensifies, or when Marcos brings down his martial law, the answer of all Filipinos is people’s war! Down with the Hitler-like Marcos government!”¹⁰ The use of English and Tagalog versions of a text on facing sides of a single leaflet was common practice in the movement, but the one side was always a translation of the other. This is the first instance I have seen where the Tagalog side was a completely different text. Gone was the appeal to Chinese nationals and in its stead was an appeal to the odd word, *sangkapilipinuhan* [All Filipinos. One might literally translate it ‘Filipinodom’]. The English side called for a united front with the national bourgeoisie and the Tagalog for people’s war. These were the two sides of the same Stalinist program, but they were being addressed to different audiences who were being distinguished on the basis of language.

Teddy Locsin wrote an editorial in the Philippines Free Press, aptly denouncing the deportation as “A Philippine Dreyfus Case.”¹¹ In the Summer 1970 issue of *The Partisan* the SDK wrote that

[T]he Yuyitung case is portentous [*sic*] of the more serious and violent times ahead. The President has repeatedly dangled the threat of Martial Law like a hanging sword poised over the heads of the citizens. But it is apparent that even without the formal declaration, Martial Law *does* exist today.

But the growing strength of the masses cannot be stifled. It has been clear that for every act of suppression committed by the Marcos

⁹Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Justice for the Yuyitung Brothers!*, May 1970, PRP 11/18.07.

¹⁰“Sa pagsidhi ng pasismo, o sa pagbababa ni Marcos ng kaniyang *martial law* ang sagot ng sangkapilipinuha’y digmaang bayan! Ibagsak ang mala-hitler na pamahalaan ni Marcos!”

¹¹PPF, 30 May 1970.

reactionary and fascist forces, the opposition from the people has become louder, bolder, and stronger.¹²

The logic was clear. De facto martial law existed already but it could not thwart the masses. The attention of the $\kappa\mathbf{M}$ and \mathbf{SDK} was rapidly focused elsewhere and they rarely mentioned the Yuyitungs again.¹³ School break was ending and students would soon be returning to classes. Popoy Valencia, the new editor of the *Collegian*, wrote

Summer 1970 came with a threat. The organized nationalist youth groups had earlier called for the vacationing students to turn summer vacation into a summer politicalization drive. ... And the nation waited for the response to the call and the results as thousands of vacationing youth went to the countryside, with them the experience of the past Semester of Protest. ...

The period of frontal, heroic clashes seemed over for a while. The youth national democratic movement, like a guerilla, was resting after having fought several fast, short battles. Summer was this interregnum. A summer of holding actions, delaying tactics, consolidation and digging in. A summer to keep the fascist pig in his pigsty off balance, while one gathered the destroyed placards for repair. Refill the Pentel pens. And to learn to hold the barrel from which political power grows, as Mao had said.¹⁴

The event that dominated the summer of 1970 was the arrest of Nilo Tayag, chair of the $\kappa\mathbf{M}$ and central committee member of the \mathbf{CPP} .¹⁵

¹²*The Partisan*, 1969–1972, (1970) Summer, 37/15.01, 4. Emphasis in original.

¹³On May 7, the \mathbf{MDP} held a mass meeting against US aggression in Indochina on the A&S steps at \mathbf{UP} and the next day staged a rally in front of the US embassy protesting the actions of US imperialism in Cambodia. The \mathbf{UP} Student Council sponsored a second picket on the same topic, this time held in front of Malacañang on May 11. (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (\mathbf{MDP}), *Oppose US Imperialist Aggression in Cambodia*, May 1970, PRP 11/18.14; \mathbf{UP} Student Council, *Manifesto*, May 1970, PRP 18/02.22; Samahang Molabe, *Pahayag ng Pakikiisa: Itaguyod ang Pakikibaka ng Indo-Tsina laban sa Imperyalismong Amerikano*, May 1970, PRP 16/03.01). At the rally the \mathbf{MDP} circulated a leaflet that condemned the US campaign in Cambodia and announced its solidarity with struggles around the world against US imperialism, specifically mentioning the four students who had been killed three days earlier at Kent State University. (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (\mathbf{MDP}), *Pahayag ng Movement for a Democratic Philippines Laban sa Digmaang Pananalakay ng Imperyalismong Amerikano sa Cambodia*, May 1970, PRP 11/18.17).

¹⁴PC, 4 Sep 1970, 5-6.

¹⁵The \mathbf{MDP} entered the 1970-71 school year without its lead spokesperson, Nelson Navarro, who had traveled to Japan on the sponsorship of the World Student Christian Federation, a sponsorship for which he had been nominated by Ibarra Malonzo and Carlos Tayag. All three were associated with the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (\mathbf{SCMP}). (PC, 23 Jul 1970, 6.) Malonzo, in particular, embodied the deepening ties between the organizations of the \mathbf{CPP} and various religious groups. The son of union head Cipriano Malonzo, he had been the

The Arrest of Nilo Tayag

On June 11, Nilo Tayag was arrested in Barrio Concepcion, San Pablo City, Laguna, and then taken to Tarlac where he was charged.¹⁶ The AFP claimed that following his arrest, “explosives and documents were seized in Barrio Bautista, San Pablo City . . . [which] revealed a preoccupation with different aspects and applications of urban guerrilla methods.”¹⁷ Preparations for the arrest of Tayag had been made over the course of several months. A subpoena had been filed against him for a preliminary hearing and when he did not appear in court, charges of violating RA1700 were filed against Tayag on June 9, two days prior to his arrest. The SDK stated that “[t]he PC deliberately misled the Tarlac CFI [Court of First Instance] by giving it the wrong address for serving a subpoena upon Tayag to attend preliminary hearings on the charges.”¹⁸ Tayag was charged under RA1700 with “inciting the people of Bo. Botrico, La Paz, Tarlac, between March and August 1969, to rise up in arms against the government.”¹⁹ The charges filed in the Tarlac court included not only Tayag but four other men: Renato Casipe and Manuel Alabado – the president and vice president of the US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union – and two others whom the SDK did not name. Whatever the specific details of the charges against Tayag and his associates, the basic goal of the Marcos administration was to legally establish that the KM was a front organization of the CPP.

Francisco Portem, who had been a member of the KM at Lyceum and was working as Tayag’s assistant in building the CPP in the Southern Tagalog region, was arrested at the same time, although he was not among the five names for whom a warrant had been issued.²⁰ The SDK wrote that Portem was arrested “on the flimsy basis of his presence in a residence where firearms were hidden.” He was denied access to legal counsel and repeatedly beaten. Portem’s arrest was only made public two days after it occurred, and he was shortly afterward released on bail.²¹ Five more “militant activists” were arrested on June 15, including Ramon Sanchez and Benjamin Gaffud of the SDK, and were charged with supplying

chair of KM UP in 1966-67, he had split from the KM with the SDK in 1967, and he was part of the central administrative staff of the SCMP and on the editorial board of its journal, *Breakthrough*.

¹⁶Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 113. Another source claimed that he was arrested in Sta. Isabel, Laguna, in the hut of a farmer, Ananias Panganiban. (UP Student Catholic Action (UPSCA) Committee on Public and National Affairs, *Tayag!*, July 1970). Attorney Vicente Salumbides Jr., Nilo Tayag’s uncle, served as his lead defense counsel. A few weeks before Tayag’s arrest, his brother Jaime Tayag had been “brutally mauled,” but I have been unable to locate further details regarding this event. (Free Nilo Tayag Movement, *Manifesto*, September 1970, PRP 07/19.01).

¹⁷*So the People May Know, Volume VII*, 23.

¹⁸Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), *Free Nilo Tayag!*, June 1970, PRP 15/22.02.

¹⁹Free Nilo Tayag Movement, *Manifesto*.

²⁰Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 204. By late 1973, Portem was working as the highest ranking NPA member in Bicol. (TnB, 21 Oct 1973, 3.).

²¹PC, 8 Jul 1970.



Figure 27.1: Nilo Tayag. *APL*, 9 Jun 1972.

guns to Bautista barrio members.²² The SDK concluded, “Should Nilo Tayag and others like him suffer the full force of the reactionary State’s vindictiveness, others shall take their place, wiser and more resolute by their experience. The masses are an inexhaustible wellspring of revolutionary men and women . . . ”

The news of Tayag’s arrest broke on the morning of June 12 – Independence Day. The MDP had planned a rally, which they called “March and Congress for True Independence and True Democracy,” but they reorganized the event behind the slogan “Free Nilo Tayag.”²³ On June 15, the SDK published a leaflet which cited the deportation of the Yuyitungs, the arrest of Tayag and the attempts by the state to link the national democratic organizations with the Communist Party as portending “the ultimate crackdown on already severely restricted individual freedom of nationalist activists, subsequently of all dissenting citizens.”²⁴

²²SDK, *Free Nilo Tayag!*; Pi Omicron, *Palayain si Nilo Tayag!*, June 1970, PRP 13/35.01.

²³The leaflet which had been prepared by the MDP prior to the announcement of Tayag’s arrest read “What is needed now is a full-scale mobilization of the people – the workers, peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie, and the oppressed national minorities – to wage a militant national resistance movement against the US imperialists, feudal lords, comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists in order to establish a national democratic society that will answer the needs and realize the aspirations of the people.” (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Expose Fake Independence and Fake Democracy! Finish the Unfinished Revolution!*, June 1970, PRP 11/18.04).

²⁴Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), *Resolutely Oppose the Marcos Regime’s Vicious*

Agents

On July 20, Army Sgt. Elnora ‘Babette’ Estrada took the stand in the Tarlac court to testify regarding the ties between the Communist Party and the KМ. Estrada was a KМ National Council member and served on its finance committee; she was also a military spy.²⁵ On orders of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), Estrada joined the KМ while a student at Lyceum in 1967. She came to the attention of the national leadership of the organization in 1968, was asked to fill out a second application form and was made a member of the National Council. The KМ knew that her family background was in the military and that her father was a colonel, that she lived in Camp Aguinaldo, and that she was routinely having coffee with a high-ranking figure in the military who had participated in the 1965 crackdown on the PKI in Indonesia. The KМ did nothing. Lualhati Abreu stated that “This aroused no concern; many KМ members have military brass for parents.”²⁶

Estrada was in a long-term romantic relationship with Antonio Tayco, the chair of the Lyceum branch of the KМ. On July 4 1970, after the arrest of Nilo Tayag, Estrada was ordered by her military superiors to leave the KМ and prepare to testify against the KМ’s national chair. She disappeared. Uncertain how to locate his girlfriend, Tayco posted a love note to Babette on the bulletin board of the KМ Lyceum office on July 17. Three days later, she emerged in the courtroom in Tarlac.²⁷ When Tayco testified in defense of Tayag in early September, he claimed under oath that he had known that Estrada was a military spy since April, but that he chose not to inform the KМ immediately, desiring first to conduct a personal investigation to see if it was true.²⁸ In subsequent interviews with the press he claimed that he informed the KМ leadership at the beginning of May.²⁹ No investigation was conducted, and the KМ went about its business. Tayco traveled to Marinduque to work on a civic project, and when he returned he continued to work within the ranks of the KМ alongside Estrada in late May and early June. Throughout this period Estrada turned over the internal documents of the KМ to the military, including their membership lists, the names of new recruits, and the discussion occurring in National Council meetings. The KМ knowingly tolerated a military spy in their ranks for the space of several months and did nothing. They did not expel the agent, or publicly expose the

Assault Against the Personal Freedoms, Constitutional Rights, and Civil Liberties!, June 1970, PRP 15/18.19.

²⁵The details of Estrada’s infiltration of the KМ can be found in Quijano de Manila, “Love Me, Love My War; or L’Amour Among the Activists,” in *Reportage on Lovers* (Quezon City: National Bookstore, 1977), 92–102.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 95.

²⁷Elnora ‘Babette’ Estrada and Ruben C. Guevarra, “The Parting of Ways,” *Weekly Nation*, August 1970, 90.

²⁸PC, 11 Sep 1970, 2.

²⁹Manila, “Love Me, Love My War,” 99.

machinations of the state. Their only response was silence and denial. Estrada, they later stated, was a good activist – full of “nerve and guts during the demos.” While she might have had “a low level of political consciousness” she was very diligent in carrying out the practical activity of the KM.³⁰

The CPP finally responded to military infiltration in late June after Nilo Tayag had been arrested – not with political exposures but with murder. On June 19, Benilda Macalde, a KM member who was working as an agent for military intelligence, and her boyfriend Eddie Dasmariñas, a member of the KM National Council, were murdered in Tondo. In August, Alfonso Sabilano, the eighteen year old vice-chair of the Makabayang Tagapag-ugnay ng Tondo [Nationalist Coordinator of Tondo] (MTT) was arrested on charges of murdering Macalde and Dasmariñas.³¹ Sabilano confessed to the crime under torture, but then attempted to retract his confession.³² Ma. Lorena Barros wrote a lightly fictionalized account of a visit she made to Precinct Five to speak with Sabilano, revealing that he claimed that Ruben Guevarra, central committee member of the CPP, was the gunman responsible for their deaths.³³ On September 12, Judge Manuel Pamaran, basing his judgment on the coerced confession and ignoring both the retraction and the subsequent accusation against Guevara, sentenced Sabilano to death in the electric chair.³⁴ Sabilano appealed his sentence and was kept in prison until 1984 when he was acquitted on all charges on by the Philippine Supreme Court on the grounds that his confession had been extracted under torture.

Sabilano maintained that on the night of the murder he had been present when Ruben Guevarra executed both Dasmariñas and Macalde. Guevarra shot Dasmariñas in the head with a Colt .45, he claimed, and when Macalde attempted to flee Guevarra held her as she struggled and shot her in the head, shooting her a second time as her body lay on the grass. Lualhati Abreu referred to two comrades who were executed by the CPP on the basis of suspicions in the early years of the party, identifying them as ED and DC. DC was almost certainly Danny Cordero, as we will see in chapter 37, and ED was Eddie Dasmariñas.³⁵

³⁰Ibid., 95.

³¹Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), [*Letter to the Editor*], September 1970, PRP 15/18.12. The MTT was a member organization of the MDP, closely allied with the KM and SDK. By 1972, it had merged with the KM. (*Ang Malaya*, 17 Mar 1972, 4).

³²PC, 17 Sep 1970, 7.

³³Ma. Lorena Barros, “Prison Visit,” PC, August 1970, 5.

³⁴The SDK wrote on the day of the sentence, “Activists like him do not kill, let alone on mere suspicion.” (SDK, [*Letter to the Editor*]) Pamaran had previously acquitted a security guard who stood accused of shooting a bystander during the March 17 1969 FEATI strike. (*Alab*, (1970) 1 no. 1, 8).

³⁵Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 67-68. Guevarra chaired the party trial condemning Cordero to execution. Guevarra later became an intelligence officer for the military and published a book claiming that the party was responsible for the Plaza Miranda bombing.

Campus Elections

What is most striking about the 1970 UP campus elections is the manner in which every candidate, including the conservative Firdausi Abbas and Manuel Ortega, adopted the slogans of the national democratic movement. All four candidates denounced “imperialism, feudalism and fascism;” all four called for a “broad national united front” – the rhetoric of national democracy had become a ubiquitous shibboleth.³⁶ The front groups of the PKP denounced those of the CPP for their ‘adventurism’ which provoked repression and endangered democratic rights. The KM and SDK, unified now behind the leadership of the CPP, responded that there were no democratic rights to be defended and the front groups of the PKP were simply protecting Marcos. The various student organizations tied to the CPP swept to electoral victory on campus after campus.

In July the UP chapter of the BRPF put out a student election statement, entitled “Against Adventurism and Reformism,” which stated, “After a study of all candidates for chairman and vice-chairman and their respective backgrounds and their relation to the present national democratic struggle ... the UP BRPF has decided to support University Councilor Jose Ricafrente for Chairman and University Councilor Jelly Nacino for Vice-Chairman ... In supporting Jose Ricafrente for Chairman, the UP BRPF repudiates a particular political line being peddled by a supposedly progressive youth group and its affiliate groups.”³⁷ The statement continued, “Because of the conspiratory machinations of this youth group, an unnecessary polarization occurred within the national democratic movement ... ” Ricafrente represented himself as “an alternative to ‘the reckless adventurism of the left’ and the ‘corrupt opportunism of the right.’”³⁸ The BRPF’s political support for Ricafrente, who represented one of the traditional student parties, was entirely motivated by its determination to defeat the KM and SDK, who united in a single student party on the UP campus in 1970.

The SDK student group on the UP campus signaled its adoption of the political leadership of the CPP by changing its name from Partisans for Nationalist Student Power to Partisans for National Democracy.³⁹ Having opposed each other in

³⁶Ortega styled himself a “democratic socialist.” (fpnej&r, [*dear fellow student*], 1970, PRP 07/17.01) Abbas stated that his party had “no disagreement” with the “necessity of fighting ... the trilogy of evil [imperialism, fascism, and feudalism].” (Kalayaan, [*UP Election Platform*], 1970, PRP 08/24.01).

³⁷*Struggle*, (1970), 2 no. 2, 1. A copy of this issue of *Struggle* can be found in JHP, 92/12.

³⁸*The Partisan*, (1970) 3 no. 7, 37/15.03, 4; Katipunan Party, *Platform of the Katipunan Party*, 1970, PRP 09/11.01.

³⁹On June 10, the day before Tayag’s arrest, the newly renamed Partisans for National Democracy published an issue of *The Partisan*, which expressed the basic anti-Marcos reformism that had come to characterize the student protest movement. The lead article stated, “One contradiction that the University has to face is its relation to the State. Under normal conditions, the State has the duty to guide and direct the University. But where a ruling-class dominated establishment can only misguide and misdirect a new perspective must place such an establishment squarely where it belongs: as an enemy.” (*The Partisan*, (1970) 3 no. 5 PRP 37/15.02, 2.). Under “normal

the elections of 1968 and 1969, the campus organizations of the KM and SDK, the Katipunan-Makabansa and the Partisans for National Democracy, formed a united front campus group, the Sandigan Makabansa [Patriotic Pillars] (SM), running a slate headed by KM member Ericson Baculinao.⁴⁰ The SM, in their election statement, wrote “In a newly polarized society ... all who fight for change must muster the broadest possible alliance in response ... Sandigang Makabansa has emerged as the broadest possible representation of nationalist groups, campus organizations, and fraternities-sororities interested simply in continuing a job well begun in the past two years.” The SM laid out their platform of proposed reforms, including measures for the introduction of optional co-educational courses in sex education and the creation of a textbook rental center. They concluded,

In the final analysis, the attractiveness or ambitiousness of a party platform is not essentially significant to the individual student. What will most affect him and, hopefully, change his lot for the better, is the party’s actual capacity to realize its goals, to grasp relationships among present developments, and to courageously use this knowledge for concrete change, not simply through negotiations or dialogues, but through resolute political activity involving the whole campus community.⁴¹

This was a program of the emptiest activism. According to the SM, the political platform of their party was not significant, for what mattered was simply the ability to mobilize the largest number of people. SCAUP published an issue of its paper, *The Activist*, dedicated to the topic of the campus election, which opened with the the usual anti-Marcos vituperation, “The fascist puppet Marcos, with all his viciousness and bestiality, employs the full might of the reactionary state,” and continued,

conditions” the Partisans opined, the state is not dominated by ruling class interests and can therefore properly guide the university. The conclusion that must be drawn from this statement is the need to reform society in order to bring about these desired “normal conditions.” The other “contradiction” faced by universities, *The Partisan* claimed, was the “affluent composition of the studentry.” This was the cause among many of the students of “pretentious stupidity,” “sophomorisms and rhetoric,” a lack of “true commitment in bourgeois and petty-bourgeois soil,” whose “social conscience” was “assuaged by the work of charity.” (7) The background of the vast majority of the student population was in the working class and peasantry, but one would not learn this by reading the self-satisfied political perspective of the Partisans.

⁴⁰The SM electoral slate included at least one military spy, Fred Tirante. The SM, according to the *Collegian*, “brings together the old Partisans for Nationalist Student Power and part of the defunct Young Philippines and the old Pagkakaisa.” (PC, 8 Jul 1970.). It was, in other words, the electoral union of the SDK and the KM, along with a section of the SocDems from Pagkakaisa.

⁴¹Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Party Platform of Sandigang Makabansa for 1970-71*, 1970, PRP 16/10.13.

The Student Cultural Association of the Philippines, as an integral participant in the national democratic movement, deems it imperative to once and for all put into proper perspective the principles and issues the impostors have confused and muddled. At the same time, SCAUP calls on all progressive groups and individuals in the university to close ranks, forge a strong alliance, defend the national democratic cause, expose and oppose the duplicity and counter revolutionary dual tactics of the reactionaries and isolate them from the masses of UP students.⁴²

SCAUP delineated its stand on certain “basic issues,” the first of which was the “question of Violence.” SCAUP’s logic on this point was intensely revealing. They wrote “SCAUP maintains that the current struggle of the Filipino people against US imperialism, domestic feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism assumes the primary character of a national struggle under which is subsumed the class struggle between the exploited masses and their exploiters.” (3) SCAUP insisted that while protests might become violent, they should not take the form of a *class* struggle, which was to be subsumed to nationalism. SCAUP and its sister organizations would not lead workers to fight the Filipino bourgeoisie, the local “exploiters;” on the contrary they would oppose such a fight. They would subordinate it, subsume it, to the national interest. Violent demonstrations were acceptable as long as they were mobilized behind the banner of nationalism, and did not take on a class character.⁴³

Taking up this theme of violence, the MPKP published an election statement entitled “On the Correct View of the Campus Elections,” which insisted that

there is a growing danger that the national democratic movement would be taken over by irresponsible adventurist elements whose consistent use of misdirected violence and petty vandalism has more antagonized than gained the support of the greater masses. . . . Left adventurism will, in the final analysis prove reactionary since it will certainly be used by the fascist state as an excuse to violently suppress progressive organizations.⁴⁴

⁴² *The Activist*, (July 1970): 2.

⁴³ SCAUP attacked the candidates recommended by the BRPF as having been selected by “a handful of cantankerous kibitzers in the national democratic movement who have left the history of the Philippine revolution the ignoble legacy of right opportunism, and left adventurism, and capitulation.” (4) SCAUP opposed participation in the Constitutional Convention, stating that it “rejects the bankrupt reformism of pseudo revolutionary parties and candidates who peddle the illusion of ‘change through the constitutional convention.’” The convention “will only be a conspiracy in deception and subservience.” (5) Like the KM, SCAUP had been pushing participation in the Convention but a year earlier, and like the KM, they gave no accounting for this reversal. SCAUP concluded by backing the Sandigan Makabansa in the campus elections.

⁴⁴ Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *On the Correct View of the Campus Elections*, [1970], PRP 10/29.12, 1-2.

The violence of the demonstrations, the *MPKP* argued, jeopardized democratic rights by providing the state with a pretext to crack down on protestors. The *MPKP* developed this logic, writing,

We consider counter-revolutionary all forms of mass actions that lead to the curtailment of the democratic rights of the people before they are able to effectively defend themselves. What democratic rights the people now enjoy are the product of decades of working-class struggle. Irresponsible provocation of fascist repression before the masses have attained sufficient political consciousness and preparation is counter-revolutionary and should be fought. (10)

The *KM* responded with a sharply-worded broadside attacking the positions of the *BRPF* and the *MPKP*.⁴⁵ These “relics of the Old Left,” they wrote, were a group of “pseudo-revolutionaries” spreading “dirty lies calculated to discredit the militant progressives in the campus and work against the candidacy of Ericson Baculinao.” “What makes this group more dangerous from [*sic*] the traditional reactionaries on campus,” the *KM* argued, is that it has the capacity for using revolutionary rhetorics [*sic*] to hide its insidious scheme of subverting the national democratic struggle. They attacked this “revolutionary rhetoric” at several points: the *BRPF-MPKP* had asserted that “the workers’ struggle for emancipation is the decisive factor” in the “dynamics of social change.” The *KM* did not attack the flabby, vapid phrase “dynamics of social change,” but rather the idea of the primacy of the working class. The peasant struggle for agrarian revolution, they insisted, was “principal.” (2) “In the same breadth [*sic*],” the *KM* claimed, “this same group of pseudo-revolutionaries contends that ‘Marcos is a small but significant part of the social system’ and it maintains that ‘Marcos is just a victim of the system.’” The *BRPF* and *MPKP* tried in vain to promote this line within the *MDP*, claimed the *KM*, but they failed and it was rejected. The *KM* claimed that the “fascist puppet Marcos” was the “bloodthirsty hatchetman of US imperialism” who had “personally engineered” the “most exploitative economic relations” for “the Filipino toiling masses.” Finally, the *KM* denounced the position of the *MPKP-BRPF* that “all forms of mass actions [*sic*] that lead to the curtailment of the democratic rights of the people before they are able to defend themselves as [*sic*] counter-revolutionary.” The *KM* concluded

The political line of this group becomes more glaring with this statement: “What democratic rights the people now enjoy are the product of decades of working class struggle.” (*MPKP* pamphlet) This is the most erroneous political line conceived by a group which still has the effrontery to “redirect” the present correct course of the

⁴⁵Kabataang Makabayan (*KM*), “Strip the Handful of Reactionaries of their Revolutionary Pretensions,” *Kal*, July 1970, PRP 32/01.02.

national democratic struggle.

In this period when the masses of the Filipino people are waking up to the reality of class dictatorship of landlords, compradors and their imperialist masters, the MPKP-BRPF group maintains that there exist “democratic rights” within the framework created by the classes.

From the perspective of the KM there were no democratic rights. There would be no difference between the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and its presence, for the writ was just the legal window dressing of already existing fascism. The KM’s political line prepared people to welcome the declaration of martial law.

At the end of July, Baculinao, Rey Vea and nearly the entire slate of the SM won a dramatic victory over their campus rivals. The victory of the KM-SDK on the UP campus was paralleled by victories on university campuses throughout the country.⁴⁶ Campus elections in 1970 saw “a landslide of victories for nationalist candidates . . . the first victory occurred in UP Los Baños, Vic Ladlad of Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan and Ric Umali of Kabataang Makabayan won the council chairmanships of the College of Agriculture and of Forestry. Next in line was UP Diliman’s Eric Baculinao. Victory after victory followed for the activist groups.”⁴⁷ The SM invited Nilo Tayag, now in Tarlac jail, to appear as the convocation speaker at the induction of the Student Council, but the government refused to allow Tayag to attend, so he recorded a message which was played for the assembly.⁴⁸ On August 10, the Partisans for National Democracy published a statement hailing the campus electoral victory. They wrote, “The consciousness of the masses and students was qualitatively elevated by the months of incessant practice. The active support of the students was consequently manifested in the national democratic victory in the UP elections. National democratic groups proliferate both on and off campus. Weekend activists have been transformed into lifelong revolutionaries. The struggle indeed has advanced.”⁴⁹

⁴⁶The significance accorded by the CPP to the UP campus elections is made clear by the fact that Sison published a special issue of *Ang Bayan* with a statement he had written on issues arising out of the campus election, entitled “On the Counterrevolutionary Line of the Lava Revisionist Renegades,” which was reprinted in Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 43-50.

⁴⁷BP, 1, no. 1 (Feb 1971): 2. Among the other victories, were the elections of Crispin Aranda, as Student Council Chair at PCC; Ely Bañares, of the Ligang Makabansa, as Student Council chair at Lyceum; and Roberto Corrales of the Samahang Kaisahan at Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT). (PC, 4 Sep; 11 Sep; 17 Sep 1970, 2).

⁴⁸PC, 13 Aug 1970.

⁴⁹*The Partisan*, (1970) 3 no. 8, 37/15.04.

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Philippine Society and Revolution

Such bloody sophisms, said with such conviction and cold-bloodedness, overwhelmed the young man ...

— José Rizal, *El Filibusterismo*

In the first week of July, Joma Sison wrote an open letter, which he signed with his actual name and sent to Vicente Clemente, secretary general of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines. Clemente had the letter published in a number of newspapers, including the *Collegian*. In his letter, Sison declared

The more the Marcos fascist clique resorts to the use of the army, police, courts and prisons to oppress the people the more shall it bring infamy unto itself and spell clearer the utter bankruptcy of the present reactionary state that is the puppet of US imperialism and class instrument of the compradors and landlords. The Marcos fascist clique has emerged as an unmitigated enemy of Filipino independence and democracy. ...

But fascism will only cast more fuel to the flames of the revolutionary mass movement.

I call upon the people of every patriotic class and group to close ranks and oppose the campaign of fascist terror being waged by the Marcos puppet clique. I believe the people will never waver in fighting for and depending [*sic*] their own sovereignty and democratic rights.¹

Sison was repeating the rhetorical staple of the CPP that fascism aided the growth of revolution. He stated that “I shall soon issue another book which I have been researching on and writing since last year.”² This was a remarkable slip on Sison’s part, for the book which he was about to publish was *Philippine*

¹Jose Ma. Sison, “[Open Letter],” *PC*, July 1970, 3.

²Ibid.

Society and Revolution, which appeared under the name Amado Guerrero. Sison, at the time, vehemently denied that he was Guerrero, and the CPP denounced anyone who made the identification.

PSR, as it rapidly came to be known, was first published in installments in college newspapers beginning in late July 1970.³ At the time of its serialized publication the work was entitled *The Philippine Crisis*. The first chapter was published as “Review of Philippine History” in the *Collegian*; the second chapter was published as “Basic Problems of the Filipino People” in *Ang Malaya*, the student paper of the PCC; and the third in *Guidon* at Ateneo.⁴ Each chapter was serialized in installments across multiple issues of the student paper, and thus each week a new chunk of Sison’s work appeared on campus. In the July 23 issue, which published the first installment of *The Philippine Crisis*, Popoy Valencia member of the SDK and editor of the *Collegian*, included an editorial statement: “This week we print the first part of an intriguing document mailed to the *Collegian* and purports [*sic*] to be a chapter of a book by one Amado Guerrero. We have no way of verifying whether the author is the same Amado Guerrero labeled by the AFP as central committee chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines.”⁵ The second chapter appeared in the September 21 and subsequent issues of *Ang Malaya*.⁶ The editor included a note, “This article was sent to *Ang Malaya* by mail by we-don’t-know-who. We cannot ascertain whether or not this is a continuation of the article published in some school papers recently. Nor can we ascertain whether this was written by the same Amado Guerrero as there was no by-line in the copy sent. Nevertheless because of its social, political, and economic significance – and because of its literary merit – we are serializing this



Figure 28.1: Illustration accompanying the publication of *PSR* in the *Collegian*.

³The timeline in Sison’s 1989 book claimed that *PSR* was published in January 1970. This is incorrect. (Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 205).

⁴Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 35.

⁵PC, 23 Jul 1970, 4 Valencia claimed in 2008 that he wrote the first chapter of *PSR* on instructions from SDK head Tony Hilario and that Sison appropriated it. I have seen no evidence to support this claim. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 7).

⁶Mal, 21 Sep 1970, 6-7, 9.

article to become a part of our readings.”⁷

In late 1970, *The Philippine Crisis* was published in book form under the title *Philippine Society and Revolution* and, according to Sison, was sold “mainly in the lobbies at UP Diliman.”⁸ In the brief introduction to *PSR*, Sison wrote, “The author offers this book as a starting point for every patriot in the land.”⁹ *PSR* was divided into three parts: a Review of Philippine history, Basic Problems of the Filipino People, and The People’s Democratic Revolution.

The structure of *PSR* followed a pattern established by Mao. Writing in Yan'an in the winter of 1939, Mao published a work entitled *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, which was divided into two chapters – “Chinese Society” and “The Chinese Revolution.”¹⁰ In the first chapter, Mao established that imperialism had made China a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country, in which “[t]he contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation and the contradiction between feudalism and the great masses of the people are the basic contradictions in modern Chinese society.”¹¹ On this basis, Mao argued in the second chapter that “[u]nquestionably, the main tasks are to strike at these two enemies, to carry out a national revolution to overthrow foreign imperialist oppression and a democratic revolution to overthrow feudal landlord oppression.”¹² Mao then analyzed each of the classes in Chinese society – landlords, bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, peasantry, and proletariat, drawing a sharp distinction between the “comprador big bourgeoisie” and the “national bourgeoisie,” for the latter “can become a revolutionary force.”¹³ Mao concluded that the Chinese revolution was a “two-fold task” – “[t]o complete China’s bourgeois-democratic revolution (the new-democratic revolution) and to transform it into a socialist revolution when all the necessary conditions are ripe.”¹⁴

Modeling himself on Mao, Aidit in 1957 published a similar work, “Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution.”¹⁵ The work was divided into two chapters. The first chapter on Indonesian Society, established that because of imperialism, Indonesia was a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country. Aidit expanded upon Mao’s opening chapter, incorporating historical material to justify the party’s relationship with Sukarno and to blame Vice President Hatta for the country’s political ills, including the violent suppression of the PKI at Madiun in 1948. Like Mao, Aidit concluded that the tasks of the Indonesian revolution

⁷These chapters then began to be published in other newspapers as well. David Ryan Quimpo recounted that he arranged the publication of selections of the *Philippine Crisis* in the San Beda High School paper, the *Cub Reporter*. (Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 65).

⁸Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 57.

⁹*PSR*, iii.

¹⁰*SWMTT*, II, 305-331.

¹¹*SWMTT*, II, 313.

¹²*SWMTT*, II, 318.

¹³*SWMTT*, II, 320-1.

¹⁴*SWMTT*, II, 330.

¹⁵Aidit, *Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution*.

were national and democratic in character and not yet socialist, and like Mao, he examined each of the classes in Indonesian society and drew a distinction between the comprador and national bourgeoisie.

By the time, Sison wrote *PSR* the Maoist crib sheet for writing the programmatic text for the movement was already well-worn. He followed Aidit's innovation of including polemical historical material in the first chapter and reached the same conclusions as his predecessors: the Philippines was semi-colonial and semi-feudal and, as a result, the tasks of the revolution were not socialist and the national bourgeoisie should be treated as an ally.

Review of Philippine History

The first section of *PSR* presents a history of the Philippines from pre-colonial times to the the founding of the CPP, in which Sison worked to establish two basic points. First, Sison argued that Spanish colonialism and American imperialism had perpetuated the feudal economic structures of the Philippines making the country's economy a "semi-feudal, semi-colonial" one. Second, Sison depicted the policies pursued by the PKP as the results of the treachery of the Lava leadership, rather than the implementation of the decisions and program of global Stalinism.

Sison's account of the history of the party was deeply dishonest and relied upon the cultivated historical ignorance of the party's recruits to palm off its deceits as political analysis. An examination of the section on the "Macapagal Puppet Regime" will suffice to reveal the fluency of dishonesty in the *PSR*.¹⁶ Sison described Macapagal's land reform:

To further make itself appear progressive and to swindle the peasantry, the Macapagal puppet regime enacted the Agricultural Land Reform Code. Like all previous land reform laws, the code amounts to nothing when shorn of its glittering generalities and when the provisions favorable to landlords are exposed. After a few token land reform projects, the bankruptcy of the code becomes conspicuous. The landlords can escape all the provisions that seem to favor the peasantry. (90)

Later in *PSR* he described Macapagal's code as "a bombastic collection of words to cover the oft-repeated lies of the landlord class." (179) Sison had written the handbook to promote this code to the peasantry. More than any other political figure in the Philippines, Sison was responsible for giving Macapagal's code a progressive, even revolutionary, veneer. He now claimed that the program – which he had peddled – was a swindle and conspicuously bankrupt. In the same manner he described Maphilindo.

¹⁶The section on Macapagal runs from pp. 86-96.

The Philippine claim on Sabah and the Maphilindo plan were initiated by the Macapagal puppet regime ostensibly to carry out an irredentist policy but in reality to facilitate the recognition of the Philippines as an intervenor in and supporter of the Anglo-American concoction that is “Malaysia”. The Maphilindo was *nothing but an imperialist trick* to outwit the Sukarno government of Indonesia and to extort more privileges for US monopolies in Malaya and North Kalimantan. (91, emphasis added)

Sison made no mention of the fact that he had been a vociferous supporter of this “imperialist trick”. He did not mention the LM-LP merger which he and Lacsina negotiated on the pretext that Maphilindo was implementing the ‘Unfinished Revolution’.

Sison denounced the treachery of the Jesus Lava leadership in supporting Macapagal, completing divorcing himself from this support. (95) He condemned Lava for his support for Macapagal’s Agricultural Reform Code, as well as for his “arbitrary appointments” to positions of leadership in the party, eliding the fact that he was one of the people thus arbitrarily appointed. Sison described the founding of MASAKA, “The independent kingdom of the Lava’s based in Manila took to using a reformist peasant organization, the MASAKA, to assert its fake authority in the revolutionary mass movement and also to comply with Jesus Lava’s commitment to supporting the sham land reform programme for the reactionary government.” (95)

The audacity of Sison’s lies is breathtaking. Sison was the primary member of the leadership of the PKP responsible for the founding of MASAKA. He was the leading proponent of the land reform code, not Jesus Lava. He wrote the documents promoting it, backed these up in his editorials in the *Progressive Review*, and gave speeches to the peasantry to mobilize their support behind Macapagal’s code. The other sections of Sison’s history were equally dishonest. As he blamed Jesus Lava for the policies of the party of which Sison himself was the primary mover, so too throughout his potted history of the PKP, Sison blamed the treachery of the Lavas for what were in truth the policies of Moscow and global Stalinism.

1938: The PKP swears loyalty to the US government

Sison’s account of ‘Lavaite’ treachery began in 1938:

[A]gents of the bourgeoisie who had crept into the party and usurped authority therein while Party leaders were in prison succeeded in having themselves elected to responsible positions ... These unremoulded petty bourgeois elements represented by Vicente Lava conspired ... in inserting into the 1938 constitution of the merger

party counter-revolutionary provisions supporting the colonial constitution of the puppet commonwealth government.

These counter-revolutionaries who had crept into the Party consistently misrepresented the Popular Front policy as a policy of subservience to US imperialism and the puppet commonwealth government. These anti-communists disguised as communists maneuvered the Party leadership into submitting a shameless memorandum to the US High Commissioner Sayre, Gen. MacArthur and Quezon in December 1941, pledging all-out support and loyalty to US imperialism and the puppet commonwealth government. (52)

On December 10 1941, the РКР Politburo issued a twelve point statement, which it sent to Quezon, MacArthur, and Sayre. The twelfth point read “The Communist Party pledges loyalty to the governments of the Philippines and the United States.”¹⁷ Sison described this as the product of a bourgeois conspiracy carried out by Vicente Lava. It was in truth the policy of Stalinism worldwide. Speaking before the Eighteenth Congress of the CPSU, D. Manuilsky, a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, laid out the perspective of Stalinism for colonial countries during the Second World War.¹⁸ Manuilsky stated that “Communists follow the teachings of Lenin and Stalin in subordinating the actual realization of this right to secession to the fundamental interests of the struggle of the colonial peoples themselves for emancipation, the interests of defeating fascism.”¹⁹ The struggle for secession, for independence from imperialism, was subordinate, the Comintern was arguing, to the fight against fascism. This fight, according to Stalinism, required an alliance, a Popular Front, with US and British imperialism. Thus Manuilsky called for “the achievement of self-determination by the nations enslaved by the fascist states,” mentioning Austria, the Sudeten, Korea, Formosa, Ethiopia, Spain and China.²⁰ In the colonies of the imperialist allies of the Soviet Union, however, the Communist Parties would “demand” from the “imperialist governments” the “immediate and radical improvement in the conditions of the toiling masses and the granting of broad democratic rights and liberties to the colonies,” but would not struggle for independence. They pledged to uphold the imperialist governments of these colonies in the name of the anti-fascist alliance.

¹⁷Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, 160.

¹⁸D.Z. Manuilsky, *The World Communist Movement: Report on the Delegation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) in the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Eighteenth Congress of the CPSU (B)* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1939). In this same document, Manuilsky spent several pages repeating the vile Stalinist lies that ‘Trotskyites’ were working as spies for fascism. He claimed that the Communist Parties had “drawn the lessons of the trials of the Trotskyite and Bukharinite scoundrels” and called for the crushing of the “Trotskyites and every other kind of fascist scum.” (47)

¹⁹Manuilsky, *The World Communist Movement*, 36.

²⁰Ibid., 37.

Trotsky responded to Manuilsky in July 1939, in an article entitled “An Open Letter to the Workers of India.”

The Comintern has completely renounced revolutionary struggle for India’s independence. It “demands” (on its hands and knees) the “granting” of “democratic liberties” to India by British imperialism. The words “immediate drastic improvement in the living standards of the toiling masses in the colonies,” have an especially false and cynical ring. Modern capitalism declining, gangrenous, disintegrating – is more and more compelled to worsen the position of workers in the metropolitan center itself. How then can it improve the position of the toilers in the colonies from whom it is compelled to squeeze out all the juices of life so as to maintain its own state of equilibrium?

The improvement of the conditions of the toiling masses in the colonies is possible only on the road to the complete overthrow of imperialism.

But the Communist International has traveled even further on this road of betrayal. Communists, according to Manuilsky, “subordinate the realization of this right of secession . . . in the interests of defeating fascism.” In other words, in the event of war between England and France over colonies, the Indian people must support their present slaveowners, the British imperialists. That is to say, they must shed their blood not for their own emancipation, but for the preservation of the rule of “the City” [London’s financial district] over India. And these cheaply-to-be-bought scoundrels dare to quote Marx and Lenin! As a matter of fact, their teacher and leader is none other than Stalin, the head of a new bureaucratic aristocracy, the butcher of the Bolshevik Party, the strangler of workers and peasants.²¹

On this basis the Stalinist Communist Parties opposed the struggle to oust British imperialism in India and elsewhere, including the Philippines. This was not a conspiracy of Vicente Lava, it was the policy of Stalin and the Comintern. Nick Beams aptly summed up this point, “The counter-revolutionary line of the Communist Party was not the result of the party leadership being outmanoeuvred by anti-communist elements who had ‘crept into’ its ranks but flowed directly from the Comintern.”²²

²¹WLT, 1939–1940, 31.

²²Nick Beams, *The Way Forward for the Philippine Revolution* (Sydney: Socialist Labour League, 1987), 34.

1944: The PKP welcomes the return of US imperialism

Sison denounced the “black bourgeois gang of the Lava’s and Taruc’s [who] kept on sabotaging the people’s war. It spread the line of limiting the people’s struggle to one exclusively against the Japanese and hailing the return of US imperialism and the puppet commonwealth government. . . . The black bourgeois gang of the Lava’s and Taruc’s contravened the line of the Third International to conduct unity and struggle in the united front at all times and use the anti-fascist popular front to establish a people’s democratic government.”²³

The PKP in late 1944 instructed the Huk guerrillas, who had fought for three years against the Japanese, to welcome and assist the return of the American forces, telling them to surrender their arms to the US military. In response, the US military and its Filipino counterparts systematically arrested and at times massacred the Huk guerrillas. On February 7 1945, 109 Huks were instructed by the Counter Intelligence Corps and the troops under Colonel Adonais Maclang to dig their own graves. They were then each clubbed to death. On other occasions the Huk guerrillas were shot or arrested and charged with “kidnapping, murder, antigovernment activities, or simply with being communists.”²⁴

Despite this the leadership of the PKP continued to celebrate and support the return of US imperialism. A leaflet put out by the PKP requesting the release of arrested Huk guerrillas ended with the slogans “Long Live Our American Allies!” and “Long Live the Osmeña Government!”²⁵ When the PKP subsequently wrote a draft history of the party, they admitted that “Even after the brutal hostility of the US military command was displayed toward the Party and the Huks, no idea was developed of using the arms that had been acquired for continuing the armed struggle on to a further stage against US imperialism and the landlord-comprador class enemy.”²⁶

This was not a mistake, nor was it in contravention of the line of the Comintern, as Sison claimed. The welcome which the PKP gave to the returning forces of US imperialism, even after they began to systematically crack down on the Huks, was the implementation of the political instructions of Moscow, which were carried out by the Stalinist parties around the globe. Nick Beams noted

In fact the Philippine Communist Party carried out the line of the Comintern to the letter. In Yugoslavia, the Stalinist bureaucracy, which had dissolved the Comintern in 1943 as a declaration to imperialism that it had abandoned revolution, opposed the overthrow of the king by Tito’s forces; in China, Mao, following the line of the Kremlin, negotiated with Chiang Kai Shek on the setting up of a

²³PSR, 56-57.

²⁴Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, 224-5.

²⁵Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, 225.

²⁶Quoted in Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, 227.

coalition government and in Greece the Communist Party fought to disarm the partisan fighters on the basis of the agreement reached between Stalin and Churchill that the country should remain under British control.²⁷

Imperialism and ‘semi-feudalism’

The other task which Sison set himself in his historical chapter was to establish that Spanish colonialism and US imperialism had perpetuated the feudal economic base of Philippine society. Sison never defined capitalism, and did not define feudalism until halfway through his book. Sison wrote that “Feudalism is a mode of production in which the principal forces of production are the peasants and the land which they till and the relations of production are basically characterized by landlord oppression and exploitation of the peasantry.” (160) For Marx, capitalism was a social relationship defined by the private ownership of the means of production and the manufacture of commodities. For Sison, however, capitalism simply meant industrialization. Sison conceived of capital as a thing, in the manner of a bourgeois economist, and not as a social relationship. Feudalism, for Sison, was thus agricultural production and the absence of industrialization more generally.

The character of agricultural and raw material production in the Philippines was determined not by the feudal relations of landlord and peasant, but by the dictates of financial and industrial capital organized on a global scale. Global capitalism develops in a combined and uneven fashion, perpetuating and exacerbating backwardness and inequality as part of the process of exploiting surplus value. The underdeveloped and largely raw material based economies of the Philippines and other comparable countries are not an expression of ‘feudalism’ or ‘semi-feudalism’. Social relations in the Philippines, as with every other underdeveloped economy throughout the system of global capitalism, are capitalist ones. The poverty, backwardness and dependency of the Philippine economy are an expression of its thorough-going integration with global capitalism, and not a manifestation, as Sison argued, of the need to yet develop capitalism in the Philippines.

Sison’s account in *PSR* attempted to demonstrate that the development of a cash economy predominantly engaged in the production of commodities was not the development of capitalism, but the perpetuation of feudalism, because the Philippines did not adequately industrialize. Examining Sison’s account in this light, the evidence he presents fully invalidates his thesis. He traces the incorporation of the Philippines into the global capitalist economy and the rise of commodity production in the country. Fixated on industrialization, Sison

²⁷Beams, *The Way Forward for the Philippine Revolution*, 34.

would not see that his evidence revealed the capitalist character of the Philippine economy.

Sison opened his account of the economic development of the Philippines by writing that “The kind of society that developed in more than three centuries of Spanish rule was colonial and feudal. It was a society basically ruled by the landlord class, which included the Spanish colonial officials, the Catholic religious orders and the local puppet chiefs. The masses of the people were kept to the status of serfs and even the freemen became dispossessed.” (11) He claimed that “The fullest development of feudalism under Spanish colonial rule was made.” (20) The evidence he presented for this claim refute it. A surplus in agricultural crops was being produced for commodity exchange and “an ever increasing amount of raw material crops for export to various capitalist countries.” He wrote of “[t]he large-scale cultivation of sugar, hemp, tobacco, coconut and the like in some areas in turn required the production of a bigger surplus in staple food crops in other areas in order to sustain the large number of people concentrated in the production of export crops.” (20) Specialization in commodity production and cash crop, export oriented agriculture – these are capitalist developments, not feudal.

These developments, he wrote, “necessitated the improvement of transportation and communications.” The development of improved communications “aggravated the feudal exploitation of the people.” (21) How did it aggravate feudal exploitation? He continued, “the Spaniards ordered the people in increasing numbers to build roads, bridges and ports and paid them extremely low nominal wages.” Sison depicted mass wage labor engaged in the development of infrastructure, including “the introduction of steamship and railroad,” as part of feudal exploitation. At this point, Sison claimed that “the embryo of the Filipino proletariat became distinct . . . They emerged in the transition from a feudal to a semi-feudal economy.” (22)

The arrival of US imperialism only perpetuated the semi-feudal economy Sison claimed. He wrote “feudalism was assimilated and retained for the imperialist purposes of the United States.” (37) US imperialism sought the Philippines as a “source of raw materials, a market for its surplus products and field of investment for its surplus capital.” US imperialism increased the production of commercial crops for export, “sugar, coconut, and hemp, aside from such other raw materials as logs and mineral ores. Sugar centrals, coconut oil refineries, rope factories and the like were built.” One is almost embarrassed to point out that this is not feudalism. Sison wrote that “free trade” between the United States and the Philippines was characterized by raw materials from the Philippines and finished goods from the United States. “The free trade between these two types of commodities perpetuated the colonial and agrarian economy.” (38) This last statement of Sison’s was correct with the proviso that it was a colonial, and largely agrarian *capitalist* economy.

He continued “US surplus capital was invested in the Philippines both in the

form of direct investments and loan capital. Direct investments went mainly into the production of raw materials and into trade in US finished products and local raw materials. ... Mineral ores were extracted for the first time on a commercial basis. ... Every year, raw material production, and therefore, the exploitation of the people had to be intensified by the colonial regime in order to increase its rate of profit.” (39) The proletariat grew, Sison admitted. “During the US colonial rule, the proletariat increased in number to the extent that the semi-feudal society became reinforced with the quantitative increase in raw material production, trade, transport and communication facilities and minor manufacturing.” (41) Thus, Sison went to great lengths to establish that the Philippine economy was not yet capitalist but semi-feudal. All of the evidence which he presented to this effect contradicted his own thesis. Sison either did not know what capitalism is, or misrepresented it to serve his preconceived political ends.

Beams accurately summed this up.

... the lack of industrialisation is continually reproduced not through feudal but capitalist social relations – the production of raw material commodities for the US market. After taking hold of the “material base of Philippines society,” US imperialism turned it into a supplier of raw materials for the US market, according to the laws of capitalist production. The backwardness of the Philippine economy is spontaneously reproduced by the operation of the laws of the capitalist world market. In other words, it is the existence of capitalist relations which prevents the development of industry, not feudalism.²⁸

Sison concluded his chapter on history with the founding of the CPP, which “heroically and correctly held the great red banner of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.” With the founding of the CPP, he stated, “US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism can no longer ride roughshod over the Filipino people without being isolated and hit back by an invincible revolutionary mass movement of workers, peasants, students, intellectuals and all other patriots.” (112)

Basic Problems of the Filipino People

In the second chapter of *PSR*, Sison wrote of the mechanisms which reproduced and maintained what he claimed was the ‘semi-feudal’ condition of the Philippines, opening with the statement, “Philippine society today is semi-colonial and semi-feudal. This status is determined by US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism which now ruthlessly exploit the broad masses of the Filipino people. These three historical evils are the basic problems that afflict

²⁸Beams, *The Way Forward for the Philippine Revolution*, 22.

Philippine society.” (113) Sison described what he regarded as the relationship between US imperialism and “feudalism.”

The semi-feudal character of Philippine society is principally determined by the impingement of US monopoly capitalism on the old feudal mode of production and the subordination of the latter to the former ... Thus in Philippine agriculture, the old feudal mode of production persists side by side with capitalist farming chiefly for the production of a few export crops needed by the United States and other capitalist countries. As a matter of fact, the old feudal mode of production still covers more extensive areas than capitalist farms. Feudalism has been encouraged and retained by US imperialism to perpetuate the poverty of the broad masses of the people, subjugate the most numerous class which is the peasantry and manipulate local backwardness for the purpose of having cheap labor and cheap raw materials from the country. It is in this sense that *domestic feudalism is the social base of US imperialism*. ... An agrarian revolution is needed to destroy the links between US imperialism and feudalism and deprive the former of its social base. (115, emphasis added)

Sison was arguing that US imperialism exported capital to the Philippines to secure raw material production. This was done through capitalist farming. However the workers employed on capitalist farms relied on other farms to produce the food which they consumed. The farms producing the food which would be consumed by the workers on the capitalist cash crop farms were themselves worked by peasants and tenants. This peasant agriculture was in fact directly tied to global capitalism and was itself engaged in the production of cash crops for the domestic market; this was capitalist production. Sison, however, claimed that the profits of US imperialism, extracted through capitalist agriculture, were dependent upon the ‘feudal’ production of basic staples. Feudalism was thus the “the social base of imperialism.” Imperialism, which Lenin had described as the highest stage of capitalism, thus based all of its weight in Sison’s conception on the narrow basis of peasant agriculture. This claim was the core conception of *PSR*. It was Sison’s fabricated pretext for the protracted people’s war of the *NPA*. By attacking the most backward forms of agriculture in the remotest parts of the Philippines, Sison claimed, the *CPP* was attacking the base of US imperialism.

Sison doubled down on this point, insisting that US imperialism “effected semi-feudalism more effectively in the countryside *by further encouraging capitalist farming and corporate ownership of land*. It put up sugar mills, abaca mills and coconut mills under corporate ownership and around which the landlords were organized ... Capitalist methods of exploitation are strikingly evident in lands where export crops are cultivated and feudal methods of exploitation prevail in lands where food crops are cultivated, *except in some few areas where*

mechanization has been introduced by the landlords.” (169-170, emphasis added) Sison here argued that the encouraging of capitalist farming and corporate ownership “effected semi-feudalism”. He admitted that the only portion of Philippine agriculture which was predominantly ‘feudal’ was food production, and even here he further admitted that portions had been mechanized. Sison’s conception that capitalism was industrialization is here evident, for without changing the class relations in food production, mechanization had somehow transformed the nature of the production from ‘feudal’ to capitalist.

Sison was compelled in the second chapter to admit that industrialization to a certain extent was occurring in the Philippines, but he dismissed this development.

It is bandied about that during the last two years, the Philippine reactionary government made heavy dollar expenditures because it imported mainly machinery, transport equipment, fuel and raw materials for domestic processing. What is falsely implied is that the Philippines is rapidly industrializing. This is a big lie because these imports have been mainly for public works projects, construction of office buildings and sugar mills, mineral extraction, spare parts, motor vehicle and home appliance reassembly and other such so-called intermediate industries as textile, flour and iron mills that rely on imported yarn, wheat and iron sheets. (141)

Sison’s refusal to understand the global nature of capitalism is here most striking. For Sison, industrialization is only genuine if it is an autonomous development, independent of the global market. Intermediate production bound up with the import and export of goods, even if it was heavily mechanized, was not industrialization according to Sison. Sison envisioned nationalist autonomous capitalism developing in the Philippines in which Philippine raw materials were processed in Philippine industries for Philippine consumption. His political correlate to “socialism in one country” was the equally bankrupt notion of building “capitalism in one country.” Capitalism is a global system and it does not permit an isolated and autonomous development artificially secured within the confines of the nation-state, but this was precisely the scheme which Sison was promoting. The class interests behind such a scheme are obvious. They expressed the interests of a section of the national bourgeoisie, who were looking for the government to implement limited protectionist measures and provide subsidies in support of their developing industrial concerns. Sison openly articulated their interests. He bemoaned the fact that because of US imperialism, “Not even the national bourgeoisie can hope to increase its share in the exploitation of the Filipino people. This social stratum is daily facing bankruptcy.” (147)

He warned the national bourgeoisie against the false hope that ties with the

Soviet Union would help them to build their capitalist interests. Soviet ties in the Philippines were a scheme of US imperialism, he claimed.

US imperialism is also calculatedly compelling the Philippines to open diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social-imperialism. Under the guise of being able to extend loans, especially in the form of capital goods, Soviet social-imperialism is trying to have a share of raw material products from the Philippines, dispose of its shoddy commodities in the Philippine market and impose usury. Like Japan, Soviet social-imperialism is being maneuvered by US imperialism to over-extend itself in the defense of the world capitalist system and share in the responsibility of maintaining reactionary governments that are basically puppets to US imperialism. (156)

Not only was US imperialism driving the spreading influence of the Soviet Union in the Philippines to prop up world capitalism, it was also supporting the PCCP. Sison claimed that “US imperialism is specifically interested in allowing Soviet social-imperialism to help the local revisionist renegades sabotage the revolutionary mass movement and help the reactionary government foster the illusion that there is democracy.” (156-7)

Having dealt with imperialism and feudalism – two of the “historical evils” – Sison turned to the third, bureaucrat capitalism. The bureaucrat capitalists were corrupt government officials, who were “capitalists by converting the entire government into a private enterprise from which they draw enormous private profits. They act like the local managers of the US monopolies. They serve the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class which are their internal material basis. Nevertheless, as distinguished from these two exploiting classes, the bureaucrat capitalists build up or expand their wealth by their exercise of political power.” (207) The mess of confusion in this paragraph is extraordinary. Just as Sison’s “semi-feudalism” was in fact capitalism, his “bureaucrat capitalism” was not capitalist at all. Government corruption is as old as the state itself. Extracting wealth from the coffers of the government is not a form of capitalism.

What is more Sison asserted that *unlike* the bourgeoisie and the landlords, bureaucrat capitalists “expand their wealth by their exercise of political power.” Sison’s idea that capitalists and landlords do not use political influence to expand their wealth is bizarre. The state is the mechanism which the ruling classes use to suppress the laboring classes and to secure and expand their wealth against rival sections of the ruling class. Bureaucrat capitalism, according to Sison, “is nothing but an instrument for facilitating the exploitation of the broad masses of the people by foreign and feudal interests.” (210)

Sison used the category ‘bureaucrat capitalism’ to depict this activity – class exploitation and corruption – as an aberration, rather than the intrinsic function of the state in any class society. The CCP’s political line called for the formation

of a coalition government of the working class and capitalist class to carry out the national democratic revolution. It was therefore necessary for a state to function within a class divided society without serving as an instrument of exploitation, foreign domination or corruption, an idea which was fundamentally antithetical to Marxism. Sison attempted to disguise this by condemning the existing government not as the necessary expression of the state, which embodied the interests of the ruling class, but rather as an aberration based on semi-feudalism – bureaucrat capitalism.

Sison turned to the question of “fascism,” which Sison defined as “the use of the state as a coercive instrument of class dictatorship.” By Sison’s definition every government in every state in any class society was “fascist.” From slave-owning Athens to pre-conquest Tenochtitlan, from the Mughal court to the Ming Dynasty, and from the French Constituent Assembly in 1789 to the administration of Abraham Lincoln during the American Civil War – all of these by Sison’s definition were “fascist.” What is more, the Russian Revolution of 1917 used the state as the coercive instrument of class dictatorship, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Taken on Sison’s terms, both the Russian Revolution and the 1949 Chinese Revolution under Mao Zedong were “fascist.” What lurks behind Sison’s conception of fascism is the idea that the state can function as a neutral arbiter between classes, and that capitalists and workers can successfully exercise joint and mutually agreeable governance. For Sison the state was not necessarily the “coercive instrument of class dictatorship;” he opposed this basic Marxist understanding. From his perspective when the government functioned as the coercive instrument of class dictatorship this was not the norm, it was an occasional aspect of the state which he termed “fascism.”

He continued “Bureaucrat capitalism is the basis of local fascism. The bureaucrat capitalists are too well compensated by US imperialism and the local exploiting classes to change their oppressive character in favor of the people.” (217) It followed logically that were government officials less well compensated, freer from US imperialism, they could cease to be oppressive and would govern in favor of the people. The state had the capacity to be a neutral arbiter and respond to the needs of the masses. Behind all of Sison’s rhetoric of a people’s war was the most reformist and anti-Marxist of ideas: the state could serve the interests of the “people” – the working class, the peasantry and the national capitalists – all of whom shared a common national interest.

Fascism was again on the rise under Marcos, Sison asserted, but this was not a cause for alarm. (219)

The rise of fascism is not actually a show of strength. It is in essence a show of despair and weakness by the diehard reactionaries. It shows that they have ceased to fool the people with words. The increased depredations of the reactionary armed forces and the fascist armed gangs will hasten the doom of the present system. Fascism is on the

rise precisely because the revolutionary mass movement is surging forward and the split among the reactionaries is become more violent. It is to be expected that the puppet elections in the Philippines will become more fraudulent and terroristic. The exposure of the violent character of the reactionaries will only teach the masses to defend themselves and assert their own power. (222)

Fascism, according to Sison, meant that the state was weak and the revolutionary movement growing; it accelerated the growth of revolution. Based on Sison's logic, fascism was something that every revolutionary should welcome, for it meant that the revolution was winning.

Sison rounded out the second chapter of *PSR* with a section examining the role of "Modern Revisionism," i.e., Moscow and the pro-Moscow P.K.P. He denounced the "Lava revisionist renegades" for "trying to soften up the harsh fascist picture of the Marcos puppet regime." (226) He wrote that "the Marcos puppet regime and the Lava revisionist renegades are steadily moving towards diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social-imperialism ... It is all a lie that Soviet social-imperialism can extend support to the nation or even only to the national bourgeoisie. ... Soviet social-imperialism will only be able to reinforce to some extent the presently tottering puppet state and connive with the comprador big bourgeoisie in the exchange of overpriced and shoddy Soviet commodities and Philippine raw materials." (227)

Sison concluded the second chapter with this sentence: "But the Filipino people have learned enough of their own history and problems to be deceived." [*sic?*]

The People's Democratic Revolution

On the basis of the conceptions established in the two prior chapters – particularly that the Philippine economy was semi-feudal – Sison laid out the the tasks of the revolution. He opened with the Stalinist refrain:

Because of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal nature of Philippine society, the present stage of the Philippine revolution cannot but take a national democratic character. It is a national democratic revolution, a revolution seeking the liberation of the Filipino people from foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation.

It is a national revolution principally because it seeks to assert national sovereignty against US imperialism and its local running dogs. It is a democratic revolution principally because it seeks to fulfill the peasant struggle for land against domestic feudalism and furthermore it seeks to uphold the democratic rights of the broad masses of the people against fascism. *The basic contradictions in Philippine*

society are those between the Filipino nation and imperialism, and those between the great masses of the people and feudalism. (230)

Because the Philippines was not yet capitalist, according to Sison, the class struggle between capitalists and workers was not the fundamental contradiction, for the “Filipino nation” had a shared interest in opposing US imperialism. The national democratic revolution was of a “new type,” however, as it was to be led by the proletariat, Sison claimed, rather than the bourgeoisie. (231) Even though he argued that the working class was to lead this revolution, he insisted, repeatedly, that “it is not yet a proletarian socialist revolution. Only the muddle-headed will confuse the national democratic stage and the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution. Only after the people’s democratic revolution has been completely won can the proletarian revolutionary leadership carry out the socialist revolution as the transitional stage towards communism.” (234)

Sison proceeded to analyze each of the classes in Philippine society: the enemies of the revolution – the landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalist; and the protagonists – the national bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, peasantry and proletariat.

Sison admitted that the national bourgeoisie, which he claimed was a revolutionary ally, was tied to international capital and to the landlord class. He wrote that “those who belong to the national bourgeoisie are linked in varying ways and degrees with imperialism through contracts involving credit, raw materials, fuel, patents and the like,” (241) and “many of its members belong to the landlord class.” (242) These ties are precisely why the national bourgeoisie is opposed to a revolutionary struggle against either imperialist domination and the landlord class, for such struggles jeopardize their interests. It must necessarily be a struggle against capitalism and the local capitalist class, for they are inextricably connected, by a thousand threads, to landed interests and international finance. Sison, however, depicted this as part of the dual nature of the bourgeoisie, simultaneously progressive and reactionary, lurching between a left-wing and a right-wing. “The Party should always take a prudent policy with regards to the dual character of the national bourgeoisie.” (243) Sections of the national bourgeoisie would at times happily enter a united front with the CPP in pursuit of their own political ambitions, and the “prudent policy” of the party toward these layers meant mobilizing the support of workers and peasants behind these capitalists’ interests for the duration of the alliance. At no point, however, would any representative of any section of the capitalist class present genuine opposition to either US imperialism or the landlord class. Such a struggle would require anti-capitalist measures, and the bourgeoisie do not support such measures.

Sison claimed that while the working class was the “leading force” in the revolution, it was not the “main force;” this was the peasantry, the “most numerous section of the population.” He argued from the predominance of agricultural

production in the country that “[t]he people’s democratic revolution is essentially a peasant war because its main political force is the peasantry, its main problem is the land problem and its main source of Red fighters is the peasantry.” The working class was thus to serve as the leadership, Sison argued, of a peasant war in the countryside.

For all Sison’s talk about the leadership of the proletariat, what he called for was a revolution for capitalism, not socialism; a revolution waged in the countryside, which workers could only lead if they left their jobs and the city and ceased to be workers; and which would lead to a government which sought to harmonize the interests of workers with capitalists, whose fundamental class interest is the increased exploitation of the proletariat. This was not the leadership of the working class. It was the betrayal and suppression of the interests of workers.

Sison’s orientation to the peasantry was particularly apparent in his insipid appeal to superstition, writing that “the *three magic weapons* of the Philippine revolution are the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People’s Army and the national united front.”²⁹ (286) The CPP would lead the NPA in carrying out a people’s war in the countryside and would build a national united front based on the bloc of four classes.

Because of the supposed dual character of the national bourgeoisie, Sison wrote, that “[i]t is with special reference to the national bourgeoisie that the Party is sharply aware of the need for unity and struggle in the united front.” (285) The party always needed to be alert to secure the loyalty of the bourgeoisie and if the bourgeoisie did not support the revolution, it was necessary to “criticize it appropriately for its vacillations or tendencies to betray the revolution.” (286) When the bourgeoisie moved to betray the revolution and suppress the working class, the party would... “criticize it appropriately.”

The goal of the revolution was to build a “people’s democratic state system which the united front dictatorship of the proletariat, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie and all other patriots.” This government would be one which “harmonizes the interests of all revolutionary classes and strata... It shall neither be a bourgeois dictatorship nor a dictatorship of the proletariat but a joint dictatorship of all revolutionary classes and strata under the leadership of the proletariat.” (288) The final phrase “under the leadership of the proletariat” is a meaningless rhetorical flourish. If this government was neither a dictatorship of the capitalists nor of workers, then it would not be under the leadership of the proletariat.

What Sison was articulating is stunningly opposed to the ABC’s of Marxism, which were clearly articulated by Lenin in his work, *State and Revolution*. Summarizing the perspective of Marx and Engels, Lenin wrote that the state was

²⁹The use of the phrase “magic weapons” for these three forces – the party, the people’s army, and the united front – originated with Mao. See SWMTT, II, 288.

“the product and manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms” and “an instrument for the exploitation of the oppressed class.” Lenin wrote

The essence of Marx’s theory of the state has been mastered only by those who realize that the dictatorship of a *single* class is necessary not only for every class society in general, not only for the *proletariat* which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire historical period which separates capitalism from “classless society,” from communism. Bourgeois states are most varied in form, but their essence is the same: all these states, whatever their form, in the final analysis are inevitably the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. The transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

³⁰

According to Lenin, every state is necessarily the dictatorship of a *single* class. Sison’s joint dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, proletariat and peasantry was an anti-Marxist conception. What would Sison’s state do in the event of a massive labor struggle? Workers go on strike, the capitalist owners bring in scabs and look to the police to break up the picket lines. There is no possible harmonious response from a joint proletarian and capitalist dictatorship. Such a government would inevitably be the dictatorship of the capitalist class, in which representatives of the CPP cooperated in the suppression and exploitation of workers.

In his political report to the second plenum, Sison described *PSR* as “a basic textbook for mass political education as well as for basic ideological training in the party.” It “strives from the standpoint of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought to present the history, basic problems, character, motive forces, targets, strategy and tactics and perspective of the Philippine revolution.”³¹ *PSR* formed the core of the educational program of the party cadre as well as the party’s mass educational program.³² In August, with the party’s ideological centerpiece – *PSR* – now being published in Manila papers, the CPP politburo met and issued instructions to accelerate the recruitment of new members to the party.³³

³⁰LCW, 25, p. 418, emphasis in original.

³¹Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 282.

³²For cadre it was assigned along with “Guide for Party Cadres and Members of the CPP,” “On People’s War,” “Organs of Political Power,” and the current political report of the Central Committee. (ibid., 289) For mass educational work, *PSR* was assigned along with *Quotations from Mao Zedong* and three articles: “Serve the People,” “The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains,” and “In Memory of Norman Bethune.” (Sison, *Foundation for Resuming*, 290).

³³Jones, *Red Revolution*, 48.

— 29 —

Consolidation and Regrouping

The storm had passed on; the sky had turned a thick monotonous grey; a pale, dull, spectral twilight suddenly diffused itself over the landscape, so that it seemed as if the whole prospect were under a thick grey veil.

— Rosa Luxemburg, *Letter to Sophie Liebknecht, May 1917*

In its July 15 edition the *Collegian* began publishing a front page feature entitled “The Movement,” which summarized weekly developments in the protests, strikes and other work in which the КМ, СДК, and their sibling organizations were involved. The ability to combine these organizations and their activities into a single category – the movement – was an expression of the ongoing process of consolidation that was taking place in the ranks of the National Democratic organizations under the leadership of the CPP in the second half of 1970. The CPP effectively removed the last influences of the РКР from the МДР, strengthening its hold over the member organizations through a campaign to free Nilo Tayag. Having won leadership positions in a large number of university student councils, the front organizations of the CPP formed new organizations to expand their reach, and by the end of the year they had established bodies for coordinating the editorial policies of college newspapers and the legislative initiatives of student councils throughout the country. While calling for a boycott of the Constitutional Convention, the CPP front organizations actively campaigned for their allies who were running for delegate seats, and E. Voltaire Garcia received immense support on this basis. By December many of the students most active in the campaign for reforms at the schools had been effectively expelled; the МДР responded with protests against these expulsions and were violently suppressed.

Women and National Democracy

The crippling economic conditions encountered by the majority of the population, and the weight of the reactionary teachings of the Catholic church, made working class and peasant women a doubly exploited and oppressed population. Birth control was not available and divorce was illegal. A component of the

struggle for socialism is advancing the basic democratic rights of women to birth control and freely available abortion and divorce. The Communist Party of the Philippines opposed all of these measures, and in keeping with the mass line adapted themselves to the reactionary sacerdotal morality which the church had inculcated into the peasantry. In the middle of 1970 a number of women's organizations formed, with close ties to the CPP, but they neither fought for the democratic rights of working class women nor did they oppose the sexist culture prevalent within the party and its front groups. Rather they sought to rouse and mobilize the women of the upper classes whom they criticized as "pampered" and "passive," seeking to win their support for the National Democratic revolution. *Asia Philippines Leader* correctly summed up the perspective of these organizations when it wrote,

Women's Lib in the Philippines seeks to transform the traditionally apathetic and apolitical Filipina into an active participant in the struggle for national liberation. It is not really a struggle against male dominance. ...

The Filipina is a virtual prisoner in her own home. She is passive, conservative and supports the status quo. ... the Filipina is merely required to look pretty and act demurely.

Society has made her into a lapdog, pampered by her master, but at the same time fettered and immobile.¹

The Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan [Free Movement of New Women] (MAKIBAKA) was founded by Ma. Lorena Barros as an independent women's organization and by July it had begun issuing political statements. The group emerged out of the SDK and shared its political conceptions; it was launched by a circle of women in the SDK at UP as a means of politicizing wealthy young women attending Catholic girls' colleges.² The fledgling organization staged its first protest on the coronation night of Miss Philippines, where they denounced women for being more concerned with their appearance than with the semi-feudal condition of the country, and called upon them to wake up. The ranks of MAKIBAKA grew as they recruited women from St. Theresa's, St. Paul, Maryknoll, and Assumption, and by 1971, the organization had four hundred members.³ Bagong Pilipina [New Filipina], a second UP based women's organization tied to the SDK was formed in September under the leadership of Aimee Laurel. Where MAKIBAKA sought to reach elite young women in religious schools, Bagong Pilipina sought to organize sorority members on the

¹APL, 23 Apr 1971, 39

²When the SDK formally rectified its political line to that of the CPP, MAKIBAKA followed suit, changing its name to Makabayang Kilusan ng Kababaihan sa Pilipinas [Nationalist Movement of Women in the Philippines] and retaining the acronym MAKIBAKA.

³Lorna M. Kalaw, "And What Are the Women Up To?," APL, April 1971, [14-b.



Figure 29.1: MAKIBAKA protests a beauty pageant

UP campus. It put forward a similar perspective to that of MAKIBAKA, and both organizations along with the KM Women's Bureau formed a women's organization umbrella group, Katipunan ng Kababaihan para sa Kalayaan [Federation of Women for Freedom] (KATIPUNAN) in March 1971.

All of these organizations denounced "mainstream" feminism as "Western and bourgeois." In December 1971, Pat Dimagiba of MAKIBAKA wrote a letter to *Asia Philippines Leader* in which she described western feminism as "anti-male, anti-bra, anti-babies."⁴ In opposition to 'western feminism,' MAKIBAKA and its allied organizations did not articulate the interests of working class and peasant women. They opposed the distribution of contraceptives; they did not fight for the right to abortion or divorce. These organizations were not founded to either mobilize women against their treatment within the movement – which was routinely parochial, patriarchal, and downright misogynist – nor to lead a struggle against the class roots of women's exploitation. Rather, MAKIBAKA and its allied organizations primarily addressed themselves to upper class and petty bourgeois young women, effectively attempting to shame them for their 'passivity' as a means of motivating them to join the national democratic movement. They projected this 'passivity' of upper-class women onto 'the Filipina,' i.e., Filipino women without regard to class. Judy Taguiwalo captured the conception of these organizations when she wrote that "Within the anti-colonial and anti-feudal classes, it is the women sector which generally lags behind and is slowest to grasp the counter-consciousness that the national democratic cultural revolution is popularizing."⁵ MAKIBAKA and Bagong Pilipina rooted this slow development

⁴APL, 10 Dec 1971, 3.

⁵PC, 1 Apr 1971, 3.

of ‘counter-consciousness’ in the ‘pampered’ nature of women’s lives.

On October 7 1970, Bagong Pilipina staged what it termed a “love-in” with Fluellen Ortigas and Ericson Baculinao. Ortigas spoke on the coed [meaning woman] and love of the masses, while Baculinao spoke on social commitment in a sorority. The SDK singers performed songs composed by “girls from six affiliated sororities.”⁶ Bagong Pilipina and MAKIBAKA staged a symposium on “Women and Revolution” and invited Petronilo Daroy to be the keynote speaker. Daroy asked his audience, “How did [Filipino women] become neurotic, stupid and weak to the extent that MAKIBAKA had to be organized? ... women now are divided, some liberated ... intelligent, dignified, possessed of rectitude, while the rest are being exploited by a capitalist economy to advertise their legs and those bedroom voices before catapulting to intense organisms [*sic*], etc., to promote certain products, and therefore to help perpetuate the masses as consumers.”⁷ Women, Daroy argued, must take up the struggle for national liberation, for if MAKIBAKA were to limit itself to “arguing for the liberation of women” it would be “a booby trap.”

The various feminist organizations of the left thus did not to fight for an equal role for women within the left, but rather to rouse the ‘sleeping’ and ‘self-absorbed’ coeds. Zenaida Mariano, editor of *Bagong Pilipina*, opened her editorial “Women and National Democracy” in mid 1971 with the statement

The masses of UP coeds continue to wallow in a feudal, decadent and bourgeois sense of values. Still insensitive and unmoved to the immediate problems of the university and of the Philippine society, they have to be challenged to unshackle them from apathy, indifference and complacency. Being an integral part of supposedly one of the most enlightened sectors of society (UP), the mass of UP coeds are (quite) left behind in their development – of social, cultural, political and intellectual aspects of life. And this implies

⁶Petronilo Bn. Daroy, “Women in Revolution,” *Bagong Pilipina* 1, no. 2 (October 1970): 3, PRP 22/01. Bagong Pilipina first debuted by joining in a protest staged at Philippine General Hospital (PGH) on September 1 and 7. (*Bagong Pilipina, On PGH, 1970, PRP 02/16.01*). The PGH protest had been depicted as particularly an issue for “UP coeds” and women. (UP Woman’s Club, *Declaration of Concern*, September [1970], PRP 18/26.01). On the PGH protests see Arts and Sciences Student Council, *Huling Pakikibaka Na!*, September 1970, PRP 17/44.03; UP Student Council, *Mga Mag-aaral, Manggagamot, Narses, Manggagawa, Pasyente, at Mamamayang Pilipino: Magkaisa Upang Bigyan Lunas ang Sapin-Sapin na Hirap sa PGH!!*, September 1970, PRP 18/02.21; UP Student Council, *Mga Manggagawa, Manggagamot, Narses, Mag-Aaral, at Pasyente sa UP-PGH: Magkaisa Laban sa Kabuktutan ng Estado at Makibaka Para sa Ikabubuti ng Philippine General Hospital!*, September 1970, PRP 18/02.20; Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Pahayag ng Kabataang Makabayan ng Diliman Ukol sa Kasalukuyang Kalagayan ng Philippine General Hospital*, September 1970, PRP 08/19.10.

⁷Daroy, “Women in Revolution.”

the slow process of development of social awareness and political consciousness of the Filipino women in the society today.⁸

Far from fighting the subordinate and traditional role of women within the front organizations of the CPP, MAKIBAKA and Bagong Pilipina reinforced it. Within months of its founding, MAKIBAKA established itself as responsible for the child care of the national democratic movement. They set up a “national democratic nursery,” which opened in Leveriza in November 1970, where they cared for the children of activists while teaching the children “revolutionary songs and stories.”⁹ The orientation of MAKIBAKA and Bagong Pilipina was thus to upper class women with the intent of shaming them into joining the national democratic movement, and then relegating them to traditional gender roles within it.

Within the highest levels of the party women were only welcome if she were subordinate to her husband or other male authority figure. Mila Aguilar wrote, “I soon found out that a woman was only recognized and appointed if her husband was a higher-ranking member. Her husband’s credentials became her entrée into the [Central] Committee, although she was just as capable.”¹⁰

Sison explicitly affirmed this orientation. On March 11-12, 1972, MAKIBAKA held its first national congress at Sampaloc University, and Joma Sison sent greetings to the congress entitled, “Message to MAKIBAKA on the Women’s Liberation Movement.”¹¹ He stated that “the majority of the women in the Philippines are peasant women. Necessarily, the backbone of the women’s liberation movement here cannot be the peasant women. The revolutionary course that they take under the leadership of the proletarian revolutionary party determines the character of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the Philippines. If the MAKIBAKA has to have a correct revolutionary orientation, it has to keep this view in mind at all times.” MAKIBAKA was predominantly composed of petty bourgeois women, he claimed, whose task was to organize among workers. MAKIBAKA also, however, needed to win over women from other women’s organizations to the national democratic movement. Sison pointed to the need to work in religious sodalities, wives clubs, and even in the “small circles of ‘high society’ women as well as ‘social-climbers’ who always see it as their highest pride to be seen at some ‘exclusive’ gathering of the wealthy and powerful.” In everyone of these organizations, Sison called on MAKIBAKA to “distinguish allies and enemies from among them.”¹²

⁸ *Bagong Pilipina*, 2 no. 1 (July 1971), PRP 22/01.

⁹ PC, 3 Dec 1970, 2.

¹⁰ Mila De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos* (San Francisco: Carayan Press, 2016), 47.

¹¹ Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA), *Unang Pambansang Kongreso ng Makibaka*, March 1972, PRP 13/14.01.

¹² The CPP’s idea that women were passive and needed be shamed into activity did not alter. In 1977 the CPP published a pamphlet on the role of women in the revolution which opened with

In keeping with the mass line, which adapted the political line of the party to correspond to the existing consciousness of layers of the working class, peasantry, and petty bourgeoisie, the CPP adopted its attitude on sexual and reproductive relations largely from the prevailing conservative Catholic conceptions of the peasantry. The CPP's guide for building Organs of Political Power in the countryside, called for the creation of Revolutionary Barrio Committees by means of elections in which each *hepe de pamilya* would vote.¹³ This odd phrase, which can be roughly translated "head of household," only enfranchised one household head per family. Given existing gender relations, this would almost certainly have been a man. Rather than challenge existing gender relations in the countryside, the CPP reinforced them. When the CPP's medical front organizations of doctors and nurses set up health clinics in impoverished communities, they were given explicit guidelines not to carry contraceptives. The much vaunted community health projects run by the NPA in rural areas, likewise did not provide the population with birth control.¹⁴ In a similar manner, the party never addressed the basic democratic right of a woman to have access to abortion, or even to divorce her husband. The Catholic church opposed such things and the party therefore remained silent.

These sexist and reactionary policies accorded with Stalinism generally. The October Revolution made abortions legal and worked to make them freely available to all women. Trotsky wrote "the revolutionary power gave women the right to abortion, which in conditions of want and family distress, whatever may be said upon this subject by the eunuchs and old maids of both sexes, is one of her most important civil, political, and cultural rights." The bureaucracy under Stalin, looking to bring about population growth, made procuring an abortion an imprisonable offense. A woman "had no right to decline 'the joys of motherhood.'" Trotsky described this as "[t]he philosophy of a priest also endowed with the powers of a gendarme."¹⁵ The Revolution had likewise introduced free, no-fault divorce. The Stalinist bureaucracy reversed this, looking to make the family "under threat of extreme penalties, the sacred nucleus of triumphant socialism."¹⁶ They introduced taxes on divorce, with the financial penalty growing in the

the statement that "The Filipina cannot forever remain passive and apolitical, though the greater majority still do." (Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Filipino Women in the Struggle Against Martial Law*, 1977, PRP 18/35.01) These repeated declarations stand in stark contrast to the usual assertions of the CPP that the masses are aroused and taking up the revolutionary struggle.

¹³CPP, *Mga Kaukulang Probisyon sa Saligang Batas ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, 11.

¹⁴Patricio N. Abinales, *Love, Sex, and the Filipino Communist* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2004), 81.

¹⁵Trotsky, *Revolution Betrayed*, 127-28. Trotsky continued, writing that the Stalinist bureaucracy insisted "'We have need of people' ... 'Then have the kindness to bear them yourselves,' might be the answer to the high judge of millions of toiling women, if the bureaucracy had not sealed their lips with the seal of silence."

¹⁶Ibid., 129.

event of repeated divorces. The upper layers of society found this no hindrance to their lifestyles, but for the majority of the population divorce was no longer an option.

Within the CPP, sexual relations were regimented to conform to Catholic morality. Sex outside of marriage was a punishable offense, referred to as PMS, or pre-marital sex, and party members found guilty of PMS would be subject to Disciplinary Action (DA). Lualhati Abreu described how her party membership was suspended as a punishment for pre-marital sex. She was not informed of the specific charges against her, nor was the man with whom she was accused of having slept charged.¹⁷ Aida Santos recounted that a woman “who openly declared her feelings to a man was frowned upon, while a man having multiple sexual liaisons often was not reprimanded.”¹⁸ These same conceptions applied in the front organizations of the CPP. Ericson Baculinao stated in an interview regarding the KM that “the feudal-bourgeois view of sex is incompatible with the principles and requirements of our collective life, our almost puritanical morality.”¹⁹

In February 1974, Joma Sison wrote a party document entitled “On the Relation of the Sexes,” which he published under the name of the CPP Women’s Bureau.²⁰ The party, Sison wrote, only recognized the validity of the Party marriage ceremony.²¹ If comrades had been married outside the party, “these comrades are bound to contract a Party marriage.” Sison stated that “The policy of the Party has always been clear about this: there should be no husband-wife relations [i.e., sex] between comrades in the absence of a Party marriage contract. For comrades marrying non-Party members, there is likewise a revolutionary marriage contract.”²²

While Sison wrote that it was permissible for party members to divorce, this was only true if the divorce had “mutual consent.” He wrote that “[b]ecause of political considerations, therefore, the Party marriage can not be dissolved simply on either one of the partner’s wishes.”²³ Charges of infidelity would be investigated by the party and “the erring parties subjected to disciplinary action.” Infidelity, however, did not automatically entitle the aggrieved spouse to divorce, as the permissibility of divorce in the event of infidelity was to be determined by

¹⁷ Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 137.

¹⁸ De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos*, 77. She added that “Many instances of domestic violence perpetrated by male leaders went ignored.”

¹⁹ APL, 9 Apr 1971, 58-A

²⁰ Abinales, *Love, Sex, and the Filipino Communist*, 1. The document is reprinted in full in Appendix 1 of this volume, pp. 131–142. A copy of the document from 1974 can be found in Philippines Research Center, *Filipino Women in the National Liberation Struggle*, 1974, PRP 13/34.01, 5-11.

²¹ A party marriage ceremony was officiated with the exchange of bullets instead of wedding rings. (De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos*, 52).

²² Abinales, *Love, Sex, and the Filipino Communist*, 134.

²³ *Ibid.*, 135.

the party body administering discipline.²⁴ Sison also wrote that “[w]hen there is practically no news or communication between couples, a waiting period of five years is enough for either or both to remarry.”²⁵

Sison explicitly affirmed that these were male-headed households that the party was establishing. He patronizingly declared, “Generally, male comrades at this stage still play the dominant role in determining the development of a proletarian husband-wife relationship. Thus, male comrades have the good advantage of raising their wives’ ideological consciousness.”²⁶ Sex was to occur exclusively within a party marriage. Sex outside of party marriage was part of the “bourgeois notion of ‘unrestrained love and sex,’ which further cheats, dehumanizes and degrades women.”²⁷ In the event of sex outside of marriage, Sison instructed that “[d]isciplinary action should be strictly and uniformly applied to all comrades regardless of position.”

The Movement

MDP and the Free Nilo Tayag Movement

Nilo Tayag gave an interview with the *Collegian* shortly after his arrest, in which he stated, “The Movement for a Democratic Philippines is a development on a higher plane, an attempt of [*sic*] uniting the progressive elements of society.”²⁸ For the CPP this was the conception of the MDP, which had over the course of the First Quarter Storm developed from a temporary UP investigative committee to a broad umbrella organization of various protesting groups; they sought to unite all “progressive” groups within its ranks and through its apparatus to exercise effective control over a broad mass movement.

The MDP met on August 8 to re-arrange its secretariat, a body which had been set up in March but which it now claimed had not developed a clear set of goals.²⁹ The MDP elected a new ten member secretariat and appointed Julius Fortuna general secretary, and Chito Sta. Romana spokesperson.³⁰ The new secretariat set itself the goal of building a national united front on four bases: 1. strengthening the unity of the allied sectors within the MDP – this included the NSL, NUSP, and YCSP; 2. working to win over the middle elements [gitnang elemento] in society to national democracy and the united front; 3. exposing the confirmed

²⁴Ibid., 135, 140.

²⁵ibid., 135. Mila Aguilar recounts the opposition she faced from the party leadership when she attempted to divorce her husband. (De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos*, 49-50).

²⁶Abinales, *Love, Sex, and the Filipino Communist*, 136.

²⁷Ibid., 137.

²⁸PC, 8 Jul 1970, 7.

²⁹PC, 5 Aug, 2; 17 Sep 1970, 4.

³⁰The secretariat now consisted of Chito Sta. Romana, Crispin Aranda, Rodel Rodis, Rodolfo del Rosario, Antonio Robles, Antonio Hilario, Carlos del Rosario, Julius Fortuna, Rev. Cesar Taguba, and Ma. Lorena Barros. How the election was carried out is unclear.

reactionaries; and 4. awakening the consciousness of the people to imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.³¹ The secretariat “decided that its stand the [sic] coming constitutional convention will be to expose its uselessness and farcity. [sic]”³² The reorganization of the Secretariat and the decision to reject the Convention completed the removal of the MPKP and BRPF from the MDP, which by August claimed to comprise forty-five member organizations.³³

On August 15 the MDP held a press conference with “the victims of fascism,” during which the parents and siblings of those who had been killed during the FQS spoke, and at its conclusion the MDP announced that it was founding a new organization, the Free Nilo Tayag Movement.³⁴ The Free Nilo Tayag Movement published a manifesto on September 1 which read

Nilo S. Tayag, national chairman of the Kabataang Makabayan, has emerged as a rallying point for all organizations of students, youth, workers, peasants, businessmen, professionals and civic leaders belonging to the different shades of the Left. From the most “moderate” to the most “radical,” progressives of all political persuasions have taken a public stand in full support of the struggle against fascist suppression of civil liberties which *Nilo Tayag* has come to represent.³⁵

They argued that the attack on Tayag was intended to be an attack on the KM itself, as the charges filed against Tayag claimed that he was the chairman of a “subversive organization.”³⁶ Leoncio Co, former secretary general of the KM, had been in prison on charges of subversion for over a year at this point, yet the KM had mounted no campaign on his behalf. The KM saw in Tayag’s arrest an opportunity to rally support to their organization from across the political spectrum, for Tayag had public name recognition and could be made the face of state repression.³⁷ The Free Nilo Tayag Movement was scheduled to stage a mass demonstration at Plaza Miranda on September 11, but at the last moment canceled

³¹PC, 17 Sep 1970, 4.

³²PC, 13 Aug 1970, 2.

³³PC, 13 Aug 1970.

³⁴Rodel Rodis was elected general secretary, Fluellen Ortigas, spokesperson; and the steering committee comprised Mila Aguilar; Nelson Navarro, fresh from Japan; Fort Pascual; and Ramon Paterno. (PC, 20 Aug 1970, 2) Paterno was running for a seat in the Constitutional Convention, from one of two districts in Rizal. The participation of this leader of the MDP in the convention election exposes the disingenuous character of the MDP’s opposition to the convention. (PC, 27 Aug 1970, 3).

³⁵Free Nilo Tayag Movement, *Manifesto*; PC, 17 Sep 1970, 4. Emphasis in original.

³⁶PC, 17 Sep 1970, 4.

³⁷Rey Veja wrote on this point in the *Collegian*,

The state violence unleashed during student demonstrations, the arrest of Francisco Portem of KM, the hunt for Ramon Sanchez, Vice-Chairman of SDK, and Benjamin Gaffud, former chairman of SDK Los Baños, the side swiping involving

the rally. The organizers cited the growing protests at the PGH and claimed that they had postponed the rally to September 17 so as not to conflict with the demonstration at the hospital, but Boni Ilagan, chair of KM UP, stated a week later that the real reason the organization had delayed the Free Nilo Tayag protest, was in an attempt to avoid prejudicing the court's verdict.³⁸ On the eleventh, Judge Simeon Ferrer denied bail to Tayag on the grounds that the KM was "a subversive organization." There was immediate dispute in the press, and within the ranks of the KM itself, if Ferrer's declaration regarding the KM amounted to the outlawing of the KM, and the AFP was reported to be "studying how to apply the decision."³⁹ Eugene Grey, KM first national vice chair, dismissed the decision, saying that the KM was still an "open and legal organization." E. Voltaire Garcia wrote that the court could not legally ban the organization through a statement written in a denial of a motion for bail. Luzvimindo David, KM national spokesperson, stated that "only Congress can outlaw organizations."⁴⁰

Just as the KM routinely declared that *de facto* martial law already existed in the Philippines, so now it formed the habit of stating that its own organization had been outlawed, a claim which carried political cachet. The outlawing of the KM was a recurring topic in publications of the KM and its sister organizations over the course of the next two years. Later historians took this as good coin and reported that the KM was declared illegal in 1970. Joel Rocamora, for example – who knew better – wrote in 1994 that in 1970 the KM was outlawed.⁴¹ The truth is that the KM continued to function openly. It did not go underground; it held public meetings, met with leading legislators, and participated fully in public life until the declaration of martial law in 1972.

September 17: People's March Against Fascism

The protest rally of the Free Nilo Tayag Movement, originally scheduled for September 11 and then postponed to September 17, was transformed by the

Ericson Baculinao of KM-SCAUP, and the killing of Eddie Dasmariñas and Benilda Macalde, both of KM, constitute the case against the state.

Thus, the "Free Nilo Tayag Movement" is not for Tayag alone. It is for the millions of students, workers, fishermen, peasants, intellectuals, journalists, professionals, and other progressive elements in society who hold dear their civil liberties. (PC, 1 Jul 1970, 2).

The point regarding Baculinao was in reference to an event on August 4, when a car being driven by Baculinao was side-swiped by a Mustang at the corner of Ortigas and EDSA (de los Santos ave). Baculinao, Vic Clemente and Raquel Edralin were injured. (PC, 5 Aug 1970.).

³⁸PC, 11 Sep; 17 Sep 1970, 7.

³⁹PC, 17 Sep 1970.

⁴⁰PC, 17 Sep 1970, 7. The Free Nilo Tayag campaign continued into 1971 and was taken up by Filipino activists based in the United States. (Information Center on the Philippine Front, *Resolutely Campaign to Free Nilo Tayag, Filipino Revolutionary and Patriot*).

⁴¹Joel Rocamora, *Breaking Through: The Struggle within the Communist Party of the Philippines* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 1994), 23-24.

MDP into a “People’s March against Fascism.” The day before the march the MPKP and BRPF issued a joint leaflet which attempted to expand the demand for the release of Tayag to include the political prisoners who were members of the PKP. They expressed their support for the march, stating that “It must be borne in mind that the resort to fascist methods by the Marcos regime does not weaken the people’s national democratic movement but rather strengthens it a hundredfold.” This was a complete reversal of the earlier line of the MPKP, as they adopted, at least temporarily, the dangerous standpoint of the KM that the emergence of ‘fascism’ strengthened the masses.⁴² A new organization based at the Institute of Mass Communications (IMC) at UP, calling itself the Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists] (SPP), published the first issue of a paper, *Alab*, which declared, “Nilo Tayag’s fate is already decided. The formalities of court hearings only seek to justify his doom. History has already carved a place for Nilo Tayag as a martyr and patriot who heroically worked for the liberation of the masses.”⁴³ The demonstrators gathered at Welcome Rotonda at one-thirty in the afternoon and marched to Plaza Miranda, where they staged a “People’s Congress” at seven in the evening.⁴⁴ At the Congress, the SDK Singers sang “revolutionary songs”; the Kamanyang Players staged a “revolutionary drama;” and leaders of the KM and SDK gave revolutionary speeches.⁴⁵ The crowd chanted “Ibagsak si Marcos!” [Down with Marcos!]⁴⁶ When the “revolutionary” songs and dramas and speeches had finished, the keynote speaker of the event took the stage: Liberal Party Senator Gerry Roxas. This son of a leading collaborator during the Japanese occupation denounced, in strident tones, the “fascism” of Marcos. The “People’s March against Fascism” established the political pattern for the period leading up to the election of November 1971: the KM and SDK would rally the crowd – chanting, singing and haranguing Marcos – and then turn the rostrum over to the senators

⁴²The rest of the leaflet was dedicated to the listing of political prisoners: Federico Maclang, Casto Alejandrino, Agaton Bulaong, Silvestre Liwanag, Benjamin Cunanan, and Jesus Lava. All of these were associated with the PKP. For good measure the leaflet tacked on Nilo Tayag, “who is lucky to have been immediately arraigned.” The leaflet concluded with the demand “Free all Political Prisoners!” (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), *Combat Fascism on all Fronts!*, September 1970, PRP 10/29.03). The KM would claim in October that the MPKP-BRPF had extended “phlegmatic support” to this [People’s Congress] but “attacked the leadership of the mass action.” (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Bombard the Headquarters of the Proven Renegades, Traitors and Scabs,” *Kal*, October 1970, 2, PRP 32/01.03).

⁴³*Alab*, 1 no. 1 (1970): 2.

⁴⁴Arts and Sciences Student Council, *Uphold the Civil Liberties of the Filipino People!*, September 1970, PRP 17/44.06; KM, “Bombard the Headquarters of the Proven Renegades, Traitors and Scabs,” 2.

⁴⁵Ericson Baculinao, Sixto Carlos Jr, Portia Ilagan, Gary Olivar, Rodolfo del Rosario, and Chito Sta Romana all spoke.

⁴⁶PC, 24 Sep 1970, 7.

and congressmen of the Liberal Party.⁴⁷

ConCon

The various organizations of the PKP made preparations to actively participate in the constitutional convention. MASAKA proclaimed September 19 to be “MASAKA Day” in commemoration of the rally they had staged in Plaza Miranda in support of Marcos’ re-election the year before. They used this newly christened historic occasion to hold meetings in San Isidro and Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija; a symposium in Sen Fernando, Pampanga; and a lecture in Guiguinto, Bulacan.⁴⁸ Romerico Flores announced that he was stepping down as the national chair of the peasant organization so that he could run as a representative in the Constitutional Convention as one of fifteen candidates from Bulacan; Francisco Baltazar, he stated, would serve in his stead until the national council selected someone else. Baltazar, vice president and now acting chair of MASAKA and a central committee member of the PKP, delivered a speech in support of the convention, calling for “A constitution that will care for and protect the welfare, not of the few powerful people who grab the large share of our national wealth, but rather the good of the majority of the people.”⁴⁹ A new constitution, he claimed, could protect “Filipinos” from the predations of imperialism, of landlords, of politicians and phony labor leaders. Flores, now a political candidate, addressed the assembled crowd of peasants and farmers: “The peasants were given a Land Reform Code that was not only toothless but worthless [walang kapararakan],” and a “true land reform law,” he declared, was needed.⁵⁰ This was simple line was the substance of MASAKA’s campaign for the Constitutional Convention: the old land reform – the centerpiece of MASAKA’s founding and early political life – was worthless, a new law was needed and could be achieved through the reform of the constitution.

MASAKA circulated a manifesto at the gathering, entitled “Needed ... the strength of the people [Kailangan ... ang kapangyarihan ng taong bayan],” which expressed its “skepticism” [alinlangan] that the Convention would “solve the

⁴⁷The SDK issued a leaflet which cited three reasons for the march, the Yuyitung case, the Nilo Tayag case and the Alfonso Sabilano case, but focused its attentions entirely on Nilo Tayag. (Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), *Pahayag sa Martsa ng Bayan Laban sa Pasismo*, September 1970, PRP 15/22.07) SCAUP issued a leaflet which called for Tayag’s freedom, and denounced the growing ‘fascism’ of the UP ROTC, and the presence of “Malacañang boys” in the various campus fraternities who were promoting fraternity wars to overshadow the progressive campus movement. (Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP), *Ibunyang at Kalabanin ang Facismo sa Lipunan at sa Pamantasan*, September 1970, PRP 17/10.02).

⁴⁸This was the Flores-Santos section of MASAKA. Felixberto Olalia’s small group claiming the same name did not participate.

⁴⁹*Kilusan*, 3 no. 4 (1970): 6.

⁵⁰Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka (MASAKA) and Romerico Flores, *Ang Tagumpay ay Nasa Atin*, [1970], PRP 10/33.01.

problems of national democracy and the neo-colonial conditions of the Philippines.”⁵¹ In order for the convention to “improve the constitution which is the life and soul [buhay at kaluluwa] of our society” the “power of the people” was needed, expressed through “nationalist elected representatives who cannot be purchased by the money or power of foreigners and reactionary Filipinos.” *MASAKA* sought to use the Convention to change the country from a presidential to a parliamentary system of government. As Romerico Flores launched his campaign, the peasant organization began publishing a newspaper, entitled *MASAKA*, whose entire first issue was dedicated to the Constitutional Convention.⁵² The paper declared that the creation of a parliamentary government would free the nation politically, economically, culturally and militarily, “far from the domination of foreigners.” A parliamentary system, it proclaimed, would make the Philippines a country “free to engage in trade and diplomacy with any country in the world,” “an industrialized nation with a modern society and a joyful people,” and “a society ruled by national democracy where all power is for the people.” The change to a parliamentary form of government was precisely what Marcos was angling to secure from the convention, seeing it as a means of abolishing the separation of powers and effectively eliminating the legislature. *MASAKA* sought to give a progressive veneer to this power grab. The peasant front group of the PKP gave no explanation for how a change from presidential to parliamentary governance would transform the Philippines into a ‘land flowing with milk and honey,’ but they labored mightily to promote the illusion that it would.

The PKP used the convention to form an alliance with a section of the moderate student groups who had previously been calling for non-partisan convention, including the SCMP, the FFF and the leadership of the NUSP. Haydee Yorac, a central committee member of the PKP, wrote the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP) statement on the convention which announced that the SCMP, along with the “leadership of the NUSP,” saw the Convention as the “last hope of the Filipino people for a peaceful revolution.”⁵³ The phrase “leadership of the NUSP” referred to a division within the various moderate groupings. While the CPP had allied with a grassroots bloc in the NUSP which referred to itself as the NUSP-Progressive Bloc, the PKP had allied with the leadership of the NUSP and was not only cooperating with this group, but was actually writing their position papers and public statements. The various moderate groups allied with the PKP dropped the demand for a non-partisan convention, and now called for a “truly partisan” convention, in which the people, organized in a United Front,

⁵¹It was subsequently published in the *Collegian*. (PC, 13 Oct 1970, 2.).

⁵²The first issue carried greetings from the MPKP, which concluded “The MPKP has no fear that *MASAKA* will separate from the revolutionary classes.” Side-by-side with this statement were greetings from the mayor of Malolos, Bulacan, and the director of the Land Bank. (*Ang Masaka*, September 1970.)

⁵³PC, 13 Oct 1970, 5.

effected national democracy through the reform of the constitution.⁵⁴

As they had done in the 1969 election, the CPP's front organizations and their allies simultaneously campaigned for a boycott and for the election of individual candidates with whom they had ties. Writing in 2015, after the boycott campaign of the CPP had been long forgotten, Sison spoke proudly of the work of the KM for the "the election of anti-imperialist patriots like Ding Lichauco and Enrique Voltaire [*sic*] Garcia to the 1971 Constitutional Convention."⁵⁵

On October 13, NATU published a statement in the *Collegian* regarding the Constitutional Convention, which stated that "NATU will, in compliance with the resolution adopted by the Second Socialist Party Congress, boycott the proposed Constitutional Convention."⁵⁶ The CPP and its front organizations still maintained intimate ties with the Socialist Party of the Philippines and NATU, both of which remained under the control of Ignacio Lacsina. In the early part of 1971, Lacsina and the CPP would break publicly and violently with each other, but in the lead up to the convention election, Lacsina's groups adopted the stance of the CPP and its front organizations. *Ang Gabay*, the publication of the independently formed youth organization in Batangas City, Kabataang Gabay ng Bayan – which took the unusual acronym KGB⁵⁷ – quoted Agapito Santuray Jr, the newly installed head of the Lyceum branch of the KM, who criticized the convention, stating that until the oppressed classes had taken power into their own hands the constitutional convention was meaningless.⁵⁸

Sixto Carlos Jr., on the other hand, speaking as head of the SDK, released a list of candidates that the SDK considered nationalist and who would defend the interests of the masses in the convention. Thus, while the official stance of the MDP was to boycott, the SDK, a prominent member organization of the MDP was at the same time endorsing candidates for the convention, and at least one of the leading members of the MDP was running for election in the convention. The KM pursued a similar strategy. The most significant support given by the KM and SDK was for Voltaire Garcia, and Quimpo reported that "legal ND forces in the

⁵⁴Raul Manglapus at the head of the Christian Social Movement (CSM) continued to argue for a non-partisan convention.

⁵⁵Jose Ma. Sison, *Alejandro Lichauco: a Great Filipino Patriot, Advocate of Full National Independence and Genuine Economic Development*, May 2015.

⁵⁶PC, 13 Oct 1970, 5.

⁵⁷The KGB, while it seems to have formed independently, was moving toward joining the KM. It had been slated to hold its founding congress on October 12, but announced that it was delaying the congress owing to the large number of applicants that needed to be processed. The congress was rescheduled to take place on January 26 1971. The leaders of the KGB, among them Alfredo Tanyag and Gregorio Rosal, converted the organization into a branch of the KM. Rosal served as a radio commentator for the KM in Batangas City in 1971. Tanyag recruited Rosal into the CPP in 1972. Tanyag was later killed in a military encounter. Rosal went on to become the famed Ka Roger, spokesperson for the CPP-NPA in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

⁵⁸Kabataang Gabay ng Bayan KGB, *Ang Gabay* 2, no. 1 (October 1970): 1, 6, PRP 30/16.01. After the revelation that his girlfriend, Babette Estrada, was an agent, Antonio Tayco was removed from the post and replaced with Santuray.

national capital region were directed to campaign actively for a leftist candidate, Enrique Voltaire Garcia III, who won, nearly topping the Metro Manila vote.”⁵⁹ In an interview with *Insight* in September 1971, Garcia stated that thirty other candidates of the “left” also ran in the convention, but only he managed to secure a seat. “The rest,” he said, “got buried under the feudal vote.”⁶⁰ Garcia summed up his conception of the left’s participation in the Constitutional Convention, “There is a possibility that the delegates can be persuaded of the need for radical changes. I do not close my mind to that. If the delegates can be stampeded into action, if there is really mass action from the people, if unrest really threatens the lives of the members, then there is the possibility of real social change.”⁶¹

Mass Academic Expulsion

On October 5, the UP Student Council, now under the leadership of the SM, called on students to occupy Quezon Hall – the offices of the campus administration – to present a list of fifty-seven demands to University President Salvador Lopez. The occupation was scheduled to occur simultaneously with a mass walkout from all classes, and was supervised and coordinated by Fred Tirante, the military spy; Rey Veja; and someone identified simply as “Morales.” The Student Council stated that “the task before the studentry, faculty and non-academic personnel is to transform the University from an instrument of the ruling classes to an instrument of the people for revolutionary changes.”⁶² An examination of the fifty-seven demands reveals that they were either so vague as to be unenforceable, e.g. “revision of the bar exam;” or were subject to easy empty promises, e.g., “liberal attitude in the selection of professors and books;” or were outside the power of the University President, e.g., “increase of the UP budget by Congress.” The students staged a “Liberation March” to the Oblation and placed an Uncle Sam top hat on the famed statue; someone hurled a pillbox, which exploded while Baculinao was speaking. The protestors marched to Lopez office on the second floor of Quezon Hall and occupied it for three hours.⁶³ Baculinao asserted that the students would stage a permanent occupation [walang tigil na pagsakop] of Quezon Hall if Lopez did not grant their demands, and they were giving him until the beginning of the next semester to accomplish this task. There were simultaneous and similar protests in the University Belt, mobilized behind a similar set of demands. Students protested at UE, Mapua, FEU, San Sebastian, and Philippine School of Business Administration (PSBA). At Mapua, the *Collegian*

⁵⁹Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 87, 133.

⁶⁰Suman Dubey, “Listening to the Philippines,” *Insight for Decision Makers in Asia* September (1971).

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²*Kalatas*, (1970) 3, no. 1; UP Student Council, “Buhat sa suc - Tungkol sa Boycott sa Diliman,” *Kalatas*, October 1970, PRP 31/08.03.

⁶³PC, 8 Oct 1970.

claimed, security guards threw molotov cocktails at the students, wounding six, one critically.⁶⁴ At PSBA a student was killed when a molotov exploded near his head, and again the *Collegian* claimed it had been thrown by a “security guard.”⁶⁵ In December, Baculinao announced that the protestors would confront Lopez on the question of progress on the fifty-seven demands toward the latter part of January, after Congress had reconvened.⁶⁶

Having secured victories in the student council elections at the majority of leading universities in Manila, the KM sought to consolidate its political gains by creating two new organizations: the Student Alliance for National Democracy (STAND) and League of Editors for a Democratic Society (LEADS). STAND was created by the second national conference of the Nationalist Student Movement held on November 3-6 in Abelardo Hall on the Diliman campus.⁶⁷ Crispin Aranda, chair of the PCC Student Council and member of the MDP Secretariat, was made chair of STAND but this was regarded as an interim appointment until the official founding congress of the organization which was slated to be held in January.⁶⁸ STAND was to serve as a body for coordinating the decisions and activities of the various Student Councils over which the CPP exercised a good deal of control in the wake of the 1970-71 campus elections.⁶⁹ The CPP’s control over the organization was ill-disguised at best. Each delegate to the conference was provided with a book prepared for the gathering, which opened with 132 pages of quotations from Mao Zedong, continued with an article by Joma Sison,⁷⁰ and concluded with the statement from *Ang Bayan* on the First Quarter Storm, “Turn Grief into Revolutionary Courage.”⁷¹

⁶⁴PC, 8 Oct 1970, 7.

⁶⁵PC, 8 Oct 1970, 3 On December 18, *Kalatas* published the developments and progress with the students fifty-seven demands. “Only two have been implemented thus far ... the rest of the demands have been met with promises; the slow grind of legal and due processes of the bureaucracy; lack of funds, personnel and supplies; further study and it’s-not-within-our-sphere excuse.” (*Kalatas*, (1970) 3 no. 2.) All organizations were called upon to submit a list of their own “studied demands” to Rey Vea, national spokesperson of the SDK and an editor of the *Collegian*.

⁶⁶PC, 9 Dec 1970.

⁶⁷The conference was sponsored by the Student Councils of UP Diliman, UP College of Agriculture (UPCA), UP College of Forestry (UPCF), FEATI, PCC, Araneta University, Mapua, La Salle, and Lyceum. Speakers at the conference included Angel Baking, Nemesio Prudente, Zeus Salazar, Dante Simbulan, Tony Zumel, and Chito Sta. Romana. (University of the Philippines (Los Baños) College of Agriculture (UPCA), “Independent Status for UP Los Baños?,” AGG XLVI, no. 3 [December 1970], PRP 19/03). Jelly Nacino chaired the conference.

⁶⁸Sandigang Makabansa (SM), “Ang Maghimagsik ay Makatarungan,” *Ang Sandigang Makabansa*, January 1971, 4, PRP 40/08.01; PC, 3 Dec 1970, 3.

⁶⁹PC, 3 Dec 1970.

⁷⁰“The National Democratic Movement and the Political Activist” – a revised and abridged version of an article published in *Struggle for National Democracy*.

⁷¹*Second National Conference on the Nationalist Student Movement*, Quezon City, November 1970, PRP 12/05.01. David Ryan Quimpo, who was a member of STAND, wrote “the CPP actually had a secret Party group inside the leadership of STAND, which was determining the conduct and direction of the alliance. STAND, like almost all organizations known to be ‘national democratic’

In addition to organizing the work of the campus student councils, the CPP sought to shape student journalism in a similarly coordinated fashion. It established League of Editors for a Democratic Society (LEADS) to pool editorial and article writing in keeping with the political line of the party among all campus publications on a weekly basis. The organization was founded on January 10 1971 at San Sebastian College and an interim secretariat was elected headed by Jaime Florcruz, editor of *Ang Malaya* at PCC. LEADS stated that its twenty-five member publications would publish their first pooled issue on January 30 in commemoration of FQS, and estimated that their combined circulation was 200,000 copies.⁷² Alongside its articles and editorials published in all of the major campus papers, LEADS established its own independent publication, *Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win*, in early 1971. The first edition carried greetings to the newly founded organization from Joma Sison, who wrote, “Revolutionary students should firmly hold the campus newspapers . . . If all campus editors join up and fight for a revolutionary orientation, their newspapers can certainly become a formidable force in the making of public opinion for revolution . . . The practice of the League of Editors for a Democratic Society in publishing pooled editorials and articles in campus newspapers is excellent.”⁷³ Crispin Aranda, head of Molabe and STAND, wrote in the same issue, “If we control the campus publications – by which we mean that they are following the national democratic line – we should use every issue to publish revolutionary publications, literature, art, etc.” LEADS would not only promote the political line of the CPP, it would follow the party’s lead in attacking the PKP and its front organizations. Aranda wrote that campus newspapers must expose “the groups whose political line is taken from the co-conspirators of Imperialist America – the social-Imperialist Revisionist Soviet Union.”⁷⁴

By December 1970, the CPP exercised an unprecedented level of control over campus politics throughout the country. The outlines of the direction in which they were leading students at the time was becoming clear. Baculinao was threatening the seizure of campus facilities to secure the UP students fifty-seven demands and was encouraging other campuses to do likewise. On the first of the month, the KM wrote

In returning to school this semester, the militant students should
sum up their revolutionary experience during the first quarter storm

or NatDem, was CPP-led.” (Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 144). Just how “secret” its leadership was is disputable; what is certain is that the CPP controlled these organizations.

⁷²PC, 21 Jan 1971, 3; BP, 1 no. 1 (February 1971): 3, PRP 22/02. LEADS established the Inter-Campus News Service to pool article writing on a weekly basis.

⁷³Jose Ma. Sison, “Pierce the enemies with your pens,” *Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win*, January 1971, 6, PRP 30/03.01.

⁷⁴*Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win*, (1971) Jan, 8. Reflecting the consolidating ranks of the movement under either the direct control or strong influence of the CPP, the paper carried greetings from the KM, SDK, MAKIBAKA, NSL, KKD, STAND, MDP, and Nagkakaisang Progresibong Artista-Arkitecto [United Progressive Artists-Architects] (NPAA).

of 1970. The historical lessons they will gain should offer them renewed inspiration to avenge the deaths of their fellow students and the harassment of several others in the hands of the fascist puppet Marcos and his military hirelings. They should no longer rely on the old methods of struggle which highly depend on negotiations with the dispensers of economic and political power in society. New tactics should be developed and creatively applied.⁷⁵

There was not a word on the character of these new tactics, but the leaflet concluded with the slogans – “Make Revolution in the Colonial Universities and Colleges!!! ... Long Live the University Rebel Committees!!!” The preparations were being made for the erection of barricades on campus and for what would later be known as the Diliman Commune of February 1971.⁷⁶

The CPP was not alone in mustering forces for battle. The administrations of the private universities throughout the city met and elaborated a joint policy to quell student radicalism by expelling ‘undesirables’ and refusing to accept transfers, thus ensuring that those who were expelled were removed from higher education entirely. In late November, the private schools of the University Belt declared that students who would be re-enrolling for the second semester were required to sign statements that “they are satisfied with the facilities and personnel of the school, that they are not members of any progressive organization, and that their enrollment is good only for the current semester.” Students deemed undesirable at the end of a semester would be given non-readmission notices.⁷⁷ Employing this policy the universities expelled an initial three hundred students and this number grew to nearly eight hundred by early December.⁷⁸ Among

⁷⁵Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Resist the Fascist Suppression of Student Activists*, December 1970, PRP 08/13.26.

⁷⁶Tensions were also mounting at UP Los Baños (UPLB). On December 3 1970, the student organization, UP College of Agriculture Cultural Society (UPCACS), released a statement claiming that the University was deeply enmeshed in the project of US imperialism, both by conducting research funded by major US corporations and the US military, and by promoting illusions in scientific agriculture in the present semi-feudal system. The Los Baños complex would, they wrote, “prove to be another toothless paper tiger, which the national democratic revolution will finally sweep away to be replaced by a university which is truly of and for the long-suffering Filipino people.” (Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan UPCA Cultural Society (SDK-UPCACS), *Oppose the Independent UPLB Neo-Colonial Tactic! Struggle for a University of the Masses!*, December 1970, PRP 14/18.16). Part of the ferment which made the Los Baños campus so productive of radical organizations in December 1970, was the ongoing discussion in administrative circles of making UP Los Baños campus autonomous within the UP system. This caused much speculation, with some saying the move to autonomy would allow more dynamic local politics, and others arguing that it was an attempt by US imperialism to split Los Baños from the anti-imperialist movement. (UPCA, “Independent Status for UP Los Baños?,” 9).

⁷⁷KM, *Resist the Fascist Suppression of Student Activists*.

⁷⁸Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – PCC, *Pumupula ang Landas ng Pakikibaka*, December 1970, PRP 08/13.24; Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan UPCA Cultural Society (SDK-UPCACS), *Bombard the Headquarters of Fascist School Administrators*, December 1970, PRP 15/23.02.

those denied readmission were the leadership of the student councils who were charged with being “undesirable” on the grounds that they had “led riots” at the end of the previous semester. According to the *Collegian*,

To date, the following council officers, editors, and activists have been denied readmission to their respective schools: 100 from UST (including 16 Varsitarian staffers), 93 from FEATI, 76 from National University, 30 from Lyceum, 50 from San Sebastian, 21 from Mapua Institute of Technology (including the council president and all Avante-Garde staffers), 20 from FEU, 15 from UE, 8 from Adamson, 3 from PSBA ...⁷⁹

On December 2, the SDK put out a leaflet denouncing the “sinister plot to cripple student activism,” and singled out as primarily responsible the “fascist school administration of FEATI.” The leaflet ominously called on students to “Bombard the Headquarters of Fascist School Administrators.”⁸⁰ Two days later, the SDK followed this up with a leaflet denouncing the “fascism” of Dean Umali at UPLB. They attacked Umali’s “fascism” fifteen times in the single sided leaflet, which opened with the statement, “It is an iron law of history that the ruling classes resort to fascism and fascist suppression of democratic rights when they can no longer rule in their old ways. As much as it is an iron law that these fascist forces must finally crumble before the revolutionary power of the people.”⁸¹ Fascism was inevitable, the SDK argued, but so also was revolutionary victory. Fascism, however, must precede this victory. The logical conclusion to be drawn from this contention was that the advent of fascism should be welcomed, for it signified the approach of the victorious revolution.

The SDK circulated this leaflet at a march staged in Manila on December 4 which demanded that the Marcos’ administration Department of Education compel the re-enrollment of the hundreds of expelled students.⁸² As the march proceeded in front of FEATI, a pillbox was thrown which hit Francis Sontillano, a fifteen year old Philippine Science High School student, on the head and exploded.

⁷⁹PC, 3 Dec 1970, 8.

⁸⁰SDK-UPCACs, *Bombard the Headquarters of Fascist School Administrators*.

⁸¹Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan UPCA Cultural Society (SDK-UPCACs), *Smash Fascism in UP Los Banos*, December 1970, PRP 15/23.04.

⁸²The march was initiated by STAND and was intended to proceed through the University Belt and culminate in front of the Department of Education building. (UP Student Council, *Patibayin ang Lakas ng Nagkakaisang-Hanay na Siyang Nagtataguyod ng Pambansang Demokratikong Pangkulturang Rebolusyon Laban sa mga Mapang-Aping Kapitalist Administrador ng mga Paaralang Nagpipilit na Ituro ang Kolonyal na Uri ng Edukasyon!!!*, December 1970, PRP 18/02.34; PC, 3 Dec 1970; Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Avenge the Death of Sontillano!!! Crush Fascism!!!*, December 1970, PRP 15/22.01).

His skull was blown open and he died instantly.⁸³ Metrocom arrived and threw tear gas canisters to disperse the crowd; leaving Sontillano's body lying in the street, they cordoned off FEATI.⁸⁴ A number of Sontillano's classmates were members of chapters of KM and SDK at Philippine Science High School and had put out a statement for the march, denouncing the "the greedy capitalist Araneta clique" who owned FEATI – the "fiendish, monstrous, self-styled kempetai Araneta administration."⁸⁵

The KM put out a statement in the wake of the event referring to Sontillano as "Kasamang Francis Sontillano" – i.e., as comrade.⁸⁶ This was a new development in the recounting of the deaths of student protestors. While previously they had been hailed as "heroes" and "martyrs," now a fifteen year old high school student had been posthumously declared a comrade. With the death of Sontillano, the KM claimed, "the united front of revolutionary workers, peasants, nationalist bourgeoisie and militant students, once again proved that they are prepared to give their lives [nakahandang magbuwis ng buhay] for the progress and victory of the movement whose aim is to attain national democracy." The KM continued, "Death surely comes to the life of every creature, but death can have many different levels of importance. To die for the nation [mamatay para sa bayan] and the first steps toward a just society is a death that can never be equaled. [hindi kailanman mapapantayan.]" Sontillano's death, the KM claimed, was an "inspiration for our protracted struggle." The leaflet concluded, "It is time for us to develop our methods of struggle, methods that will show that we too are

⁸³Nine others were injured, among them Clarence Agara, head of the Malayang Katipunan ng Kabataan [Free Federation of Youth] (MKK). He had been carrying a placard which read "Crush Campus Fascism."

⁸⁴The demonstrators claimed that the pillbox had been thrown from the fourth floor of FEATI, but the Metrocom did not go upstairs in the building to attempt to determine who threw the explosive. The KM blamed FEATI's security guards and the newly created University Self-Defense Unit (USDU) for Sontillano's death. (PCC, *Pumupula ang Landas ng Pakikibaka*; Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Bakit Namatay sa Francis Sontillano?*, December 1970, PRP 08/19.01; Samahan ng Kababaihan ng UP (SKUP) and Bagong Pilipina, *We Must Not Forget Our Heroes*, December 1970, PRP 15/27.05; Samahan ng Progresibong Propagandista (SPP), [*Hinggil sa kamatayan ni Francis Sontillano*], December 1970, PRP 15/36.01; UP Student Council, *Ipaghiganti si Sontillano!*, December 1970, PRP 18/02.15) The Manila Police Department eventually arrested Arcadio de la Rosa, a FEATI security guard. The next day, a leaflet signed simply "Rod" was circulated claiming that some nameless leader of the demonstration had thrown an explosive at the guards, accidentally hit Sontillano, and then fled, leaving his followers to suffer the consequences. (Rod, *Bukas na Liham sa mga Namuno sa Demonstracion Kahapon*, December 1970, PRP 15/08.01).

⁸⁵Philippine Science High School Student Council et al., *Turn Grief into Revolutionary Courage and Militance!*, 1970, PRP 13/31.01. Sontillano himself had been a member of the MKK, a high school based organization, founded in late 1969 by Clarence Agara, which had originated in circles close to the MPKP, but over the course of the FQS had broken with these groups and allied with the KM. (PC, 9 Dec 1970). Agara and the MKK feature prominently in Alabado's account of the FQS. (Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*).

⁸⁶PCC, *Pumupula ang Landas ng Pakikibaka*.

prepared to kill if necessary for the success of our goal!!! [handang pumatay kung kinakailangan sa ikapapagtagumpay ng ating adhikain]” The UP Student Council published the allegation that “the Aranetas instructed their mercenary security guards” to throw eight to ten pillboxes at the march, and concluded with the call “Answer fascism with campus revolution! Avenge Comrade Francis!”⁸⁷ UP students staged a boycott of classes in protest of the killing of Sontillano from Monday December 7 to Wednesday December 9.⁸⁸ On Monday, the funeral of Francis Sontillano was turned into a protest march.⁸⁹ On Wednesday fifteen thousand protestors joined a demonstration at Plaza Lawton condemning the killing of Sontillano. Metrocom and MPD violently dispersed the crowd, injuring fourteen protestors, three of whom were shot, seven hit with truncheons, and four injured by pillbox explosions.⁹⁰

Third Congress of the KM

It was in this heated context that the KM staged its Third Congress on December 12-13.⁹¹ Three hundred delegates attended and an additional one hundred observers, predominately members of SDK. The congress passed a measure reducing the size of the national council from 120 members to twenty-nine, in order to “simplify and make more effective the operations of the organization.”⁹² The KM was growing and the reduced size of its leadership did not express a diminished overhead; the group now claimed twenty-five thousand members.⁹³ The shrinking of the National Council was a response to the revelations in the middle of the year that the KM’s leadership had been infiltrated by a network of military agents. Nilo Tayag, still imprisoned, was re-elected as chair of the KM;

⁸⁷UP Student Council, *Ipaghiganti si Sontillano!* On the same day as the death of Sontillano, there were protest marches staged on the Los Baños campus as well. The SDK-UPCACS and KM, who were leading the protest, claimed they were fired upon by police driving a red Volkswagen. (PC, 9 Dec 1970).

⁸⁸Sangguniang Mag-aaral ng Sining at Agham, *Durugin ang Pasismo ng mga Mapang-Aping Paaralan!!!*, December 1970, PRP 17/44.02.

⁸⁹Nonie Villanueva (KM), Gary Olivar (SDK), Chito Sta. Romana (MDP), Clarence Agarao (MKK), and Perry Canlas of the FEATI Student Council spoke. (PC, 9 Dec 1970).

⁹⁰PC, 17 Dec 1970.

⁹¹The congress had been scheduled to take place at the end of November but had been delayed by Typhoon Yoling which had knocked out the electricity at the venues for the gathering – both Bonifacio Center, which was the name the KM had given to their headquarters, and Abelardo Hall on the UP campus. (PC, 3 Dec 1970, 2). In their historical review published in 1984 the KM incorrectly claimed that the Third Congress had been held on November 30 1970. (KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 6). The KM’s 1981 Anniversary Statement correctly dated the Third Congress to December 12-13. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Anniversary Statement of Kabataang Makabayan (KM)*, November 1981, PRP 08/13.02, 1).

⁹²PC, 17 Dec 1970.

⁹³PC, 17 Dec 1970, 11.

Luzvimindo David was made General Secretary.⁹⁴ Joma Sison sent a speech to be delivered on his behalf, which concluded, “The Filipino people are rising up ... against American imperialism, Japanese militarism, Soviet social imperialism and all native reactionaries ... The Filipino people are fortunate that they can approach the iron fortress of socialism and world revolution, the hundreds of millions of Chinese people. [mamamayang Tsino]”⁹⁵

The keynote address of the Congress was a report written by Nilo Tayag which was read to the gathering.⁹⁶ He hailed Sison as the KM’s great example, writing “In our third congress we must remember the firm standpoint of our first chairman Jose Ma. Sison ... [under his leadership] we corrected many false conceptions in our movement... he gave direction to our movement in theory and practice.” Sison was now, Tayag claimed, “the living symbol of the outcry of the masses for a true freedom and democracy. ... Through his life and work as a revolutionary, he has provided an example to every Filipino youth who aspires to give himself on the altar of revolutionary change in our society.” The goal of the organization remained unchanged: the unity of all “progressive classes.” “Foremost in our minds,” Tayag stated, “ must be the building of political strength in the united front of all progressive classes in our society. Because the broadest unity is our goal, sectarianism must not stain the movement toward national democracy.” Tayag called for the KM to “enter into reactionary groups” and “embrace thousands of their members by destroying the illusions created by deceptive ideology.” A break with the leadership of these organizations could easily be effected, he claimed, by exposing their bankrupt ideology. The entry of KM members into “reactionary groups” served as a central component of the KM’s campaign for the Liberal Party in the 1971 elections. While the KM would expand the united front by entering “reactionary” organizations who were opposed to Marcos, they would continue to attack the PKP and its front groups. Tayag called on the membership to “crush modern revisionism” on the campuses.

As the KM and its sibling organizations were taking increasingly radical measures within Manila, a different tactic was called for in the countryside. Tayag stated that the KM would prove itself to the millions of peasants, by its diligence and perseverance and by avoiding taking abrupt actions. He called for the building of “firm chapters” among the peasant youth, but acknowledged that the growth of the movement in the countryside was slow, despite the centrality

⁹⁴Rosca, “View from the Left: Word War I,” 44; *Breakthrough*, 3, nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 4, PRP 29/11.02. The elected executive committee was composed of Cesar Baviera, first VP; Eugene Grey, second VP for information; Charlie Jacinto, second VP of finances; Vic Clemente, second VP of organization; and Raquel Edralin, auditor.

⁹⁵*Kalayaan*, 7 no. 13 (May 1971): 4, PRP 32/03.02. Rey Tiquia read Sison’s speech to the assembly and Angel Baking also addressed the gathering. (PC, 17 Dec 1970, 11; SM, “Ang Maghimagsik ay Makatarungan,” 4).

⁹⁶Nilo Tayag, “Pahayag sa Kongreso nina Tagapangulong Nilo Tayag at Kasamang Leoncio Co,” *Kal* 6, no. 12 (December 1970), PRP 32/03.01.

of the agrarian revolution to the program of the national democratic movement. Adaptation to existing peasant consciousness would remedy this delay, and Tayag called for the careful investigation of the primary concerns of the peasants in each locality, so that the KM could integrate itself in the most appropriate way.

Given that Tayag was imprisoned, he largely functioned as a figurehead and the mantle of leadership fell on Luzvimindo David. In an interview in late 1971, David stated, "I devoted my efforts to organizational work. During 1970-71 KM had a weak organizational structure so we tried to strengthen it by building up the national secretariat and 11 regional councils."⁹⁷ The KM would not hold another national congress until 1984.

Renewed Salvos

As the CPP secured its ideological grip on nearly the entire youth protest movement over the course of 1970, the PKP was becoming increasingly integrated with the Marcos administration which was continuing to deepen ties with Moscow and the Soviet bloc. At the end of July, the *Collegian* had quietly announced that Lumumba University in Moscow was offering three scholarships to Filipinos to attend classes there.⁹⁸ Celia Pomeroy, in her correspondence with Isabelle Auerbach, wrote enthusiastically about the attraction of Lumumba University in the Philippines, declaring that a great many Filipinos were applying and one had in fact begun attending.⁹⁹ What Pomeroy did not mention was that the attendee was Josefina Barbero, daughter of Congressman Carmelo Barbero, a key ally of Marcos.¹⁰⁰ When, in December 1970, Igor Podberesky, a Soviet linguist, traveled to study at UP, he stayed for the duration of the semester in the home of Barbero.¹⁰¹ Under Tagamolila, the *Collegian* denounced Podberesky's presence on the campus as the "prelude to a bigger onslaught of Russian financial and cultural influence" and warned that the "Russianization of the university" was occurring "in addition to and complementary with the existing Americanization."¹⁰²

The CPP and its front organizations aggressively accosted the PKP in their publications, openly denouncing them as tools of the Soviet Union. Its back pressed to the wall, the PKP responded, decrying the KM and its allies for "split-tism," "left-extremism," and "anarchism;" Moscow had nothing to do with the matter, they claimed. The initial salvos in the increasingly vicious war of words

⁹⁷*Breakthrough*, 3, nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 4, PRP 29/11.02.

⁹⁸PC, 29 Jul 1970, 2.

⁹⁹See the correspondence in JSAP, Box 9, Folder Auerbach, Isabelle re: Philippines 1951-1972.

¹⁰⁰PC, 3 Dec 1970. Barbero had sharply interrogated students intending to travel to China in 1966, and in 1972 he assisted Marcos in the implementation of martial law, and was made Undersecretary of Defense.

¹⁰¹PC, 3 Dec 1970.

¹⁰²The Russians, he wrote, would bring with them their "shoddy products." (PC, 9 Dec 1970, 8). On December 11, Dr. Nicolai Tsagolov, head of the Political Economics department of Moscow State University, spoke at UP on 'Life in the Soviet Union Today.'

were fired by the CPP. In May 1970, the New People's Army released a leaflet denouncing the "Monkees – Armeng Bayan – MASAKA (Lava) Gang."¹⁰³ The NPA claimed that Lava's group had "degenerated into a handful of out-and-out agents of the reactionary government," and then proceeded to name the lot of them.¹⁰⁴ From the perspective of the PKP, the CPP had just publicly named almost the entire membership of its central committee.¹⁰⁵ This was followed in July by the Diliman election statement of the KM which had attacked the PKP as "relics of the Old Left" who were now defending Marcos, and declared that there were no "democratic rights" to defend.¹⁰⁶

Unable to keep silent in the face of this onslaught, the MPKP responded to the KM in September with a statement entitled "The National Democratic Struggle and the Traitor Kabataang Makabayan."¹⁰⁷ The KM they claimed was headed by a shadow leadership who, "imagining they should be leaders," had split the national democratic movement in 1967 to pursue a "careerist trajectory." This was a political crime, the MPKP asserted, for differences within the movement should "never be brought into the open for everyone to learn of them." Even in the wake of the split, the MPKP stated, Sison and his cohort should have kept silent, for "The truth that the movement is split is not a positive image to present to those who wish to join it nor can it immediately frighten the reactionary and fascist state as it now should." The KM and its sister organizations were guilty of "left adventurism", their "anarchism" apparent in their "actions provoking [napagpagalit] the fascist state into chasing the demonstrators with clubs and guns." The MPKP argued that "The democratic rights enumerated in the bill of rights of the present constitution were not given on a silver platter [isang

¹⁰³New People's Army (NPA), *Expose and Oppose the Vicious Crimes of the Monkees-Armeng Bayan-MASAKA (Lava) Gang*, May 1970, 11/15.01 This leaflet was then reprinted in AB, 1 June 1970.

¹⁰⁴They published the names of four "bureaucrats:" Nemenzo, Yorac, Torres, and Francisco Lava Jr, three "surrenderers:" Domingo Castro, Felicisimo Macapagal and Danny Pascual; and two "intelligence agents:" Godofredo Mallari and Antonio Santos. The leaflet added that in response to the founding of the NPA the "Lava revisionist scoundrels adopted a bunch of robbers and Monkees as its Armeng Bayan and put at its head a notorious swindler by the alias of Diwa." [This was Mariano de Guzman.]

¹⁰⁵Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 108. A year later the PKP would reciprocate, naming Sison and others as members of the CPP, and Sison would denounce them for "red-baiting."

¹⁰⁶See page 491.

¹⁰⁷Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), "Ang Pambasang Demokratikong Pakikibaka at ang Taksil na Kabataang Makabayan," *Kilusan* 3 (4 1970): 7–8, 13–14, 19. This article was apparently originally published in English in the September 28 issue of *Struggle*, an issue which is no longer extant, as it was this text which the KM response on October 9 cited. I have relied on the Tagalog translation of the MPKP article in *Kilusan* which was published on October 4. The publication of the twenty-page edition of *Kilusan* marked the revival of the publication after two years of dormancy. The first issue of *Kilusan* came out in December 1967; the second January 1968; the third in the middle of 1968, entitled *Manifesto ng Paggawa*. The fourth issue was published in October 1970. It was listed as Volume 3 issue 4, but was in fact the resumption of publication – in its third year, but nonetheless only its fourth issue. This information can be ascertained from *Kilusan*, 3 no. 4 (1970): 2.

bandehadong pilak] but were fought for and won by the mass of workers and peasants.”

Several points stand out in the argument of the MPKP. First, the dispute should have been resolved within the party. This, of course, flies in the face of the fact that the PKP *expelled* Sison and his cohort. Second, the MPKP argued that “the truth that the movement is split is not a positive image to present to those who wish to join it,” for from the perspective of the PKP, it would have been preferable to lie to the working class. The truth, they stated, was not a “a positive image to present.” Finally, the PKP opposed the violent protests of the CPP as anarchism, which would precipitate state repression. They argued this while having secretly launched a bombing campaign throughout Manila to provoke precisely such repression. The MPKP continued to deny that Moscow and Beijing had anything to do with the split. In an interview with Frances Starner, of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nemenzo, whom Starner described as “undoubtedly the MPKP’s best-known founder-member” insisted that “his organization is not Moscow orientated, as the Maoists of the KM and SDK charge.”¹⁰⁸

On October 9 the Diliman chapter of KM responded with a special issue of *Kalayaan* dedicated to attacking the MPKP, entitled “Bombard the headquarters of the proven renegades, traitors and scabs.”¹⁰⁹ Where the MPKP accused them of ‘left adventurism,’ the KM responded that the MPKP was guilty of ‘right opportunism.’ The MPKP had charged that the KM had a shadow leadership, by which they meant Sison and the CPP; the KM responded that “behind the MPKP-BRPF reactionary outfit hovers the ubiquitous shadow of the Lava renegades.”¹¹⁰ (3) The MPKP had accused the KM of closely collaborating with a central Luzon Senator [Aquino] and congressman [Yap] and a millionaire publisher [Lopez], and the KM responded that the “Lava renegade clique soft-pedals its attacks or makes only token attacks on Marcos, while at the same time it gloats that ‘Marcos is veering towards our cause,’ it has in effect closed ranks with the reactionaries.” (5) Finally, the KM asserted that the split in the movement, far from a careerist machination of Sison, was the “necessary historical development dictated by the backsliding of former socialist countries.”

¹⁰⁸Frances Starner, “Whose Bullet, Whose Blood?,” *Far East Reporter* 90, no. 42 (October 1970): 29.

¹⁰⁹KM, “Bombard the Headquarters of the Proven Renegades, Traitors and Scabs.” A Tagalog translation was published in the December 1970 edition of *Kalayaan*. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Durugin ang himpilan ng mga napatunayang taksil, traydor at iskirol,” *Kal* 6, no. 12 [December 1970], 4, 7, 9, 11).

¹¹⁰While the PKP at this point kept silent on details, the CPP had no such compunction. The KM wrote that that Francisco Lava Jr. “calls the shots” through Romeo Dizon, the MPKP general secretary, who was also the son-in-law of Jose Lava, and Lava’s “principal pawn in this dirty game of betraying the national democratic movement” was Francisco Nemenzo. The KM compared the “work record” of Nilo Tayag and Ruben Torres, the chairs of KM and MPKP respectively, depicting Torres as a lawyer primarily concerned with his own career advancement. KM then in a similar fashion depicted the careers of Haydee Yorac, Merlin Magallona, and Francisco Lava Jr.

Where the *MPKP* accused the *KM* of being allied with Aquino, the *KM* accused the *MPKP* of being allied with Marcos. Both were telling the truth. The *KM*, however, repeatedly and directly stated that the root of the hostilities was the split between Moscow and Beijing, while the *MPKP* consistently attempted to cover this up.

In their international publications, however, neither the *CPP* nor the *PKP* were circumspect about their geopolitical loyalties. On November 2, *Hsinhua* published a statement by Joma Sison hailing the May 20 declaration of Mao, "People of the World, Unite and Defeat the US Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs!" Mao had written that "US imperialism, which looks like a huge monster, is in essence a paper tiger, now in throes of its death-bed struggle ... A weak nation can defeat a strong, a small nation can defeat a big. The people of a small country can certainly defeat aggression by a big country, if only they dare to rise in struggle, take up arms and grasp in their own hands the destiny of their country. This is a law of history."¹¹¹ Mao's statement was voluntarism distilled to a high level of purity: the small defeat the big because they dare, and this trite moralistic fable was somehow a law of history. In his November statement, Sison simply reiterated Mao's voluntarist, nationalist perspective,

The Filipino people, though they comprise a small nation and are still weak in their small country, can defeat the US aggressors and all their running dogs ...

Though it looks like a huge monster, US imperialism is in essence paper tiger that is already being ripped apart by the people. It is truly the people that are the gigantic and solid force. It is US imperialism that is puny and weak in the face of the revolutionary people ...

Long live Chairman Mao, great leader of the world proletarian revolution!

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the ever brilliant light that illumines the path of revolution!¹¹²

In December the Prague based *World Marxist Review* published an article entitled "Philippines: Results, Difficulties and Prospects," by Jorge Maraville, a pseudonym of William Pomeroy. Pomeroy immediately established the geopolitical allegiances of the *PKP* declaring that the party "fully subscribed to such unity declarations as those approved by the meetings of Communist and Workers

¹¹¹"Chairman of Communist Party of the Philippines Acclaims Chairman Mao's Solemn Statement," *Hsinhua Selected News Items* 44 (November 1970): 2. Mao's May 20 Statement had been printed in English and Tagalog by the *CPP*. (Mao Zedong, *People of the World, Unite and Defeat the US Aggressors and all their Running Dogs!*, May 1970, PRP 10/40.05). The mixed metaphor of the paper-tiger in its deathbed struggle was one which Sison would repeatedly quote.

¹¹²"Chairman of Communist Party of the Philippines Acclaims Chairman Mao's Solemn Statement," 1.

Parties in Moscow in 1957, 1960 and 1969.”¹¹³ He depicted Marcos as responding positively to mass pressure, claiming that Marcos had withdrawn PHILCAG from Vietnam in response to mass protests, and citing the success of the BRPF’s campaign to free political prisoners. Pomeroy decried the “anti-Party grouping” under the “careerist adventurer Jose Ma. Sison” which had usurped the party name, made use of a minority student group, Kabataang Makabayan, and linked up with an armed group in “a corner of Tarlac,” which it called the New People’s Army. (21) This grouping had engaged in “highly provocative behavior” during demonstrations, “precipitating violence,” and “alienating sectors of the population.”

Public rancor between the two groups was mounting but the PKP still labored to sweep the entire affair under the rug. Nixon’s ping-pong diplomacy in 1971 would produce a qualitative escalation of tensions; for it was then that the dam of the PKP’s fury broke, the public debate turned to histrionics, and both sides turned to assassination and murder to resolve their differences.

Raid on the PMA Armory

Nineteen seventy closed as it opened with a political explosion. Lt. Victor Corpus, an instructor at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), led a raid on school’s armory on December 29 and defected to the NPA.

Corpus was an intimate part of the military’s elite officer corps; the son of a Colonel, he had graduate from the PMA in 1967, where he had studied under Dante Simbulan. Simbulan maintained close ties to Sison and the KM, and as Corpus and Simbulan “developed a close relationship,”¹¹⁴ Corpus was brought into Sison’s ambit. He had been a student at the PMA in 1966 when Joma Sison delivered his talk on “The Correct Concept of National Security.”¹¹⁵ Corpus was drawn to Sison’s ideas of a nationalist military force and began meeting with Sison regularly.¹¹⁶ “Later, as a constabulary officer, Corpus stayed in touch with

¹¹³William J. Pomeroy [Jorge Maraville, pseud.], “Philippines: Results, Difficulties, Prospects,” *World Marxist Review* 13, no. 12 (December 1970): 18.

¹¹⁴McCoy, *Closer than Brothers*, 197.

¹¹⁵See page 278.

¹¹⁶By 1970, however, these concepts were no longer being promoted by the KM. The group now decried the military for its “fascism” and denounced the idea, which they had previously promoted, of mandatory ROTC service. In September 1970 MAKIBAKA launched a campaign against the ROTC calling on students to boycott of the mandatory training. (Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) – UP, *Boycott ROTC*, September 1970, PRP 10/27.01). The ROTC cadets they declared “were taught fascist crowd control riot squad methods and some cadet officers were armed with loaded .45 caliber pistols to use against a picket mostly [sic] UP coeds led by the MAKIBAKA.” Ray Altarejos, a member of SM recently elected to the Student Council, had burned a UP ROTC coat in protest and had been set upon by ROTC members who publicly beat him. (Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Expose Campus Terrorists and Counter-Revolutionaries*, [1972], PRP 16/10.04) Moreover, the leaflet continued, the Vanguard fraternity was making profits through “black capitalist sale of softdrinks (at the overprice of 35) and sandwiches (at 50). This

Sison, sometimes dropping by in uniform to visit the communist leader at his apartment in the Manila suburb of Quezon City.”¹¹⁷ Not only did Corpus regularly meet with Sison but he was frequently in the company of KM and SDK activists, where he met and married an SDK member, Germelinda Tanglao.¹¹⁸ Upon his graduation from the PMA, Corpus joined the KM.¹¹⁹

Corpus, now a KM member, spent the next three years in the Philippine Constabulary, the section of the military apparatus most commonly responsible for the physical suppression of dissent. By the middle of 1970, Corpus had returned to the Philippine Military Academy to work as an instructor in Political Science, teaching the course Government 411. McCoy writes that Corpus “junked the curriculum and substituted . . . questions on how to stage a coup d’état.”¹²⁰ At the same time, Corpus began organizing among the cadets. “In a clear breach of regulations, Corpus began meeting outside of class with the leaders of Class ’71, including their first captain, Gringo Honasan.”¹²¹ Corpus was upset by corruption within the ranks of the military and posted a statement at the PMA calling for the reform the AFP. Honasan and a number of Corpus’ students planned a mass walkout of the entire cadet corps to protest against PMA corruption, but the heightened security in the wake of the December raid prevented the student strike.¹²² Rosca stated that Corpus was “a member of a secret CPP cell within the government military,”¹²³ but the extent of CPP influence within the military is unclear. On a number of occasions the CPP would cite information supplied to it by informants within the military. It seems likely that, while there may not have been a cell of CPP members in the armed forces, the CPP did have ties to a

is a petty, mean black capitalist effort exploiting ROTC cadets during their exhausting Sunday drills.” The leaflet concluded “Down with Fascism!!!! . . . Boycott!!! Boycott!!!! Boycott!!!!!!” Beginning in December, the work around the ROTC took the form of a campaign to recruit ROTC members to the KM. On December 17, a new organization, calling itself the Cadets’ Protection Movement (CPM), issued a statement calling on students to boycott the ROTC and calling for the democratization of ROTC training. (Cadets’ Protection Movement (CPM), *Expose and Oppose ROTC as an Instrument of Counterrevolution!*, December 1970, PRP 02/32.01) The statement declared that the ROTC had become “the training ground of junior fascists.” The UP ROTC cadets, however, were “steadily forging strong links with national democratic activists,” and in response to these growing links, the UP ROTC bureaucracy was cracking down on dissent. No specific measures to “democratize” this “fascist training ground” were specified.

¹¹⁷Jones, *Red Revolution*, 46.

¹¹⁸PC, 7 Jan 1971, 8.

¹¹⁹McCoy, *Closer than Brothers*, 197.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹ibid. Honasan and the class of ’71, in alliance with Enrile, would play a leading role in the attempted military coup against Marcos in 1986 which led to his ouster under ‘People Power.’ Honasan went on to become the country’s leading coup plotter and then a Senator. Honasan later recalled that “Most of the radical thinking of our class was his [Corpus] influence.” (ibid.). The class of 1971 would be responsible for the murder of a number of CPP members and working class leaders, including Rolando Olalia, the son of Felixberto Olalia.

¹²²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 47; McCoy, *Closer than Brothers*, 198.

¹²³Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 22.

number of officers. These ties would doubtless have been reinforced by the coup plotting schemes of Osmeña, Manglapus, and the other bourgeois allies of the CPP, in which the party participated.

In October 1970, Corpus met with Sison, in a house owned by Faustino Dy, the mayor of Cauayan, Isabela, and close ally of the CPP. They spent hours plotting the raid on the PMA armory and Corpus defection to the NPA.¹²⁴ In late December Sison, staying in Manila at the home of Dick and Charito Malay, drafted the CPP statement on the Corpus raid, which the *Chronicle* published on the second of January.¹²⁵ Jones describes the raid

On the evening of December 30, 1970, while much of the PMA security force was guarding President Marcos as he vacationed in Baguio, where the academy was located, Corpus drove to the city's downtown Burnham Park. There he was met by 9 guerrillas. They returned to the academy, Corpus in his military jeep, the rebels in two cars, and they were waved through the gate. Inside, the rebels quickly tied up the armory guards and loaded 21 automatic rifles, 14 carbines, 6 machine guns, 1 bazooka, grenade launchers, and more than 5,000 rounds of ammunition into the cars. They drove all night to reach Cauayan, the entry point for the NPA base camp in the nearby Sierra Madre foothills. Corpus and the raiding team were escorted by Mayor Dy's police to a rendezvous point at the base of the mountains, where they were met by Dante and 10 guerrillas. After walking all day and all night, they reached the camp.¹²⁶

A point of historical contention has been what role, if any, Ninoy Aquino played in the raid. The government would later claim that Corpus carried out the raid with assistance from Juanito Rivera, Benjamin Sanguyo, and Ernesto Mayuyu, among others.¹²⁷ Juanito Rivera confirmed in an interview that he led the raid, and Lualhati Abreu confirmed that Benjamin Sanguyo participated.¹²⁸ Sanguyo arranged his surrender to the military through Danding Cojuangco in April 1973, turning state's evidence and accusing Ninoy Aquino of funding and supporting the PMA raid.¹²⁹ Sanguyo testified that on December 28 he traveled

¹²⁴Sison only informed Dante of the raid in late December after it had been launched. (Jones, *Red Revolution*, 61).

¹²⁵Malay, who worked for the *Chronicle* and thus for Lopez, brought Sison's article to the paper. (Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 205).

¹²⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 47. Jones errs here. Contemporary newspaper accounts report the raid took place on December 29.

¹²⁷Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 125. The others alleged to have been involved were Carlito Canlas, Cesario Diego, Ignacio Capegsan, Pepito Lopez, and Ernesto Miranda..

¹²⁸Castañeda, "Armed Struggle still Relevant – CPP Founding Member"; Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 61.

¹²⁹Primitivo Mijares, *The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos* (San Francisco: Union Square Publications, 1976), 356-7.

to Aquino's home on Times Street in Quezon City, where he informed Aquino of the plan and requested support for it, and Aquino responded by providing five hundred pesos for the rental of a vehicle to carry out the raid.¹³⁰ Sanguyo claimed that on the evening of the twenty-ninth, the owner of the rental vehicle and a paid driver accompanied two members of the raid in the drive to Baguio, but when they reached Capas they hogtied the owner and driver and left them by the road. After the raid, they used the car to drive the arms to Isabela.¹³¹ These are deeply problematic accounts, their politically and personally motivated character make them unreliable; at the same time they are borne out by multiple witnesses, are consistent with both the facts as we know them and the overall pattern of Aquino's behavior. A future scholar should dig further in these matters.

The successful raid was on the front page of every major paper. On January 3 *Taliba* published a statement in Tagalog from Corpus explaining his actions. Corpus wrote that serving the "oppressive and exploitative interests of American imperialism and the local ruling classes as a member of the reactionary and puppet Armed Forces of the Philippines" was "against my dignity, honor, and nationalism."¹³²

¹³⁰Sanguyo's testimony can be found in Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 496-508.

¹³¹Ernesto Mayuyu testified separately to the same details. (Simeon G. Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground Part II, Volume Two: The Involvements of Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., with 29 Perpetuated Testimonies Appended* [Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Company, 1977], 940-964) Sanguyo was subsequently assassinated by the NPA.

¹³²Sanggunian ng Mag-aaral ng UPCA, "Nabigong Pagsalakay," *Sanggunian* 1, no. 1 (January 1971), PRP 40/09.01.

Barikada



The Barricade Debacle

*What will this boaster produce in keeping with such mouthing?
Mountains will labour, to birth will come a laughter-rousing mouse!*
— Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 138-9 (Fairclough translation)

It was an election year. The ruling class opposition, which had since their devastating defeat in November 1969 invested heavily in the party's front organizations, expected results. Sison and the CPP responded with an adventurist policy calculated to destabilize the Marcos administration and provoke repression.

The First Quarter Storm of 1970 had taken the party by surprise. The KM and SDK, including CPP Central Committee member Carlos del Rosario, had entered into negotiations with Marcos in February 1970 because they had not yet received clear political directives from Sison regarding the storm. Sison hastily intervened and instructed them to call off the bargain with the President and to escalate the protests.

At the beginning of 1971 the leadership of the CPP and its front organizations, who recognized the usefulness of the mass outrage, labored to produce a second storm. Sison prepared a Political Report for the Second Plenum of the CPP which, drawing on the Stalinist Third Period policies of 1928, claimed that the militancy of the masses was in an uninterrupted upsurge and state repression would only increase it. Everyone readied for the explosion which was anticipated during the President's State of the Nation Address. Nothing happened. In the wake of the failure of January 25, the KM and the SDK strained to produce the desired effect.

They erected barricades in downtown Manila and occupied the Diliman campus. A number of students were killed in the protests by state forces, but the insurrectionary tactics of the front organizations of the CPP succeeded only in alienating a previously sympathetic studentry. The barricades were lifted after a week with nothing to show for the violence but a campus festooned with 'revolutionary' graffiti. The CPP attempted by subterfuge to seize control of the trade unions in which it was active, but its machinations only served to split them. They established 'red' unions in their stead, with a leadership loyal to the CPP but with very few actual workers in their membership.

Beijing meanwhile was reaching out to Washington. Pingpong diplomacy and Kissinger's secret visit to China unleashed the long restrained rage of the PCC and the summer of 1971 saw the pages of the mainstream press flooded with the allegations, counter-allegations, threats and insults of the rival Communist Parties.

The brief Third Period of 1971 weakened both the CPP, which lost the Diliman campus elections as a result of the barricades, and the working class, whose unions were split by the party. The Third Period of 1928 to 1933 made possible the election of Hitler, the Third Period of 1971 fragmented the working class as dictatorship was being readied. First as tragedy, second as farce; where the Stalinist KPD voted alongside the Nazis in 1931 for the removal of the SPD government, the CPP seized a campus radio station and used it to broadcast sex tapes mixed with the Internationale to the entire nation.

In August, however, three grenades thrown on the stage at the Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda at last provoked the desired political effect: Marcos suspended the writ of habeas corpus. Six days before the Miranda terror attack, the CPP abruptly reversed its adventurist policy, calling on its cadre and front groups to enter into conservative organizations and campaign for the Liberal Party. The wave of public sympathy in the wake of the Miranda bombing would carry the Liberal Party to victory.

— 30 —

Anticipation

*Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
‘That is not it at all,
That is not what I meant, at all.’*

— T.S. Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*

Nineteen seventy-one opened with a sense of political foreboding; another storm was expected. Nick Joaquin wrote

The mistake we all made about 1971 was expecting it to repeat, on a greater scale, the events of 1970. When the January 25-31 period brought on no upheaval this year, we sighed with either relief or regret. That was the week that wasn't, the revolution that never was. Those who had stocked up on food felt silly, but the ensuing feeling of safety was worth whatever panic had cost in canned goods. The sense of emergency passed. Pontificators announced that the youth movement had been discredited, the nation was weary of it. And despite the jeepney strike and the UP “commune,” it did look as if '71 would be – for us, too – a year of cooling.¹

Joaquin wrote these lines in May. His sense of relief was premature, for three months later Marcos suspended the writ of habeas corpus and carried out mass arrests; the political turmoil deepened. Joaquin's description of the opening of the year, however, was apt. The front organizations of the CPP strained to spark an explosion similar to that which had greeted the onset of the decade. They erected barricades in downtown Manila, in Los Baños, and on the Diliman campus, but the end result of their actions was the alienation of their leadership from the majority of the population and the smothering and fragmentation of

¹Manila, “Why did Ninoy throw that bomb?,” 11-12.

an emerging strike wave in the working class. The political beneficiary of the resulting confusion was the Liberal Party. “The Liberals now feel that they kept their heads when everyone else was over-reacting: the President with his marshaling of 20,000 troops; Manglapus with his stay-at-home directive; the activists with their UP commune.”²

Third Period

The CPP held the second plenum of its Central Committee in early 1971.³ Guevarra, who participated in the plenum, claimed that Sison presented the need for the party to intensify “the factional rivalry between opposing camps of the enemy so that the revolution will advance.”⁴ Art Garcia and Joe Buscayno, who were both dead, and Nilo Tayag and Leoncio Co, both arrested, needed to be replaced on the Central Committee. Their seats were given to Carlos del Rosario, Fidel Agcaoili, Juanito Canlas, and Rodolfo Salas. Jose Luneta was made the Secretary General of the party to replace Tayag.⁵

Sison had written the Political Report to the Second Plenum half a year earlier, in September 1970 and the report was published in *Ang Bayan* on October 15.⁶ Sison focused his political analysis on how the repression being carried out by the Marcos regime was beneficial to the revolution, writing

The revolutionary masses are now singly determined to strike against its rightist regime. They firmly shout to the face of Marcos that he deserves a beating because he is already vicious enough against the people. When he himself becomes more vicious or some other more vicious clique should replace his clique, then they would only intensify their revolutionary struggle and destroy anyone who stands to oppose them.⁷

²Ibid., 13.

³The dating of this plenum is somewhat problematic. Caouette reports at one point that it took place in mid-1971, and elsewhere that it was in April 1971. (Caouette, “Persevering Revolutionaries,” 129, 193) Kintanar claims that the Plenum was held between January and February 1971 in “the forest near Dipugo, between the towns of Jones and Echague in Isabela. As a sidelight to the plenum, Magtanggol Roque and Mila Aguilar had their Party wedding.” (Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 127). Guevarra confirms this date and location. (Ruben Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing* [Quezon City: Katotohanan at Katarungan Foundation Inc., 1998], 27). One of the documents to come out of the discussions of this plenum, “Patnubay sa pagtayo ng mga organo ng kapangyarihan pampulitika” [Guide to building organs of political power], was signed April 20 1971. (CPP, *Mga Kaukulang Probisyon sa Saligang Batas ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, 16).

⁴Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 28.

⁵The politburo was now composed of Sison, Dante, Luneta, Atienza, Collantes, and Agcaoili. (Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 130).

⁶The Political Report was then reprinted in the *Collegian* in December 1970. (PC, 9 Dec 1970, 4).

⁷AB, 15 Oct 1970, 7.

Sison's conception might best be characterized as "After Martial Law, us," a variation on the Stalinist slogan of the 1930s, "After Hitler, us." When dealing with the specific military atrocities of the Marcos government, Sison repeated his constant theme that it was building revolution.

As the enemy intensifies military operations, more massacres, assassinations, mass arrests, kidnappings and lootings are inflicted on the peasant masses. Peasants are being rounded up to be tortured and then misrepresented in the press as surrenderees from the New People's Army. Under the cover of large military campaigns, the reactionary troops and their gangster agents called the "Monkees" and BSDU's [Barrio Self-Defense Units, a paramilitary formation armed by the state] go on a rampage. The Marcos fascist puppet clique imagines that the brutality of its minions will terrify the people. The truth is that it is only hastening the advance of the revolutionary masses. (13)

In response to Marcos' threat to declare martial law, Sison wrote "The Marcos fascist puppet clique shamelessly boasts that it will use all the forces at its command to suppress the democratic rights of the people. It can only fan the flames of revolutionary war in the country." (14) The PKP meanwhile, Sison claimed, was defending Marcos against the CPP.

The counter-revolutionary revisionist renegades and clerico-fascists attack the revolutionary masses and single out the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army for the most vicious attacks. They vehemently denounce the masses whom they describe as "pressing Marcos to the wall" and making the "insignificant Marcos" the "sole culprit". They echo the threats of Marcos to attack the people even more viciously in a futile attempt to discourage the revolutionary mass movement. (7)

The PKP adopted this line because Marcos was establishing ties with the Soviet Union. Sison wrote

In line with the U.S. imperialist policy of employing Soviet social-imperialism against China, communism, revolution and the people, the Philippine reactionary government is steadily establishing relations with the revisionist countries headed by the Soviet social-imperialists. Several economic and cultural missions from the revisionist countries have already paved the way for diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social imperialism. (17)

Sison issued a call for the establishment of a National Democratic Front (NDF) to coordinate the work of the various front organizations of the party. In the report he outlined the ten point basis for the NDF. (27) The first task of the NDF was to build the “fight for national democracy” and the second to “mobilize the broad masses of the people for armed revolution.” On this basis the NDF would “campaign for the establishment of a united front government of all democratic classes, parties, groups and individuals.” Within the NDF the national bourgeoisie in particular would be expected to “give material and moral support to the people’s armed forces.” The NDF finally would “support the international united front” which would fight against both “US imperialism” and “Soviet social-imperialism.” A preparatory committee for the creation of the NDF was established by the plenum under Hermenigildo Garcia and Mila Astorga Garcia.

Sison’s Political Report provided the political framework for the activity of the party and its front organizations from the barricades of January to the bombing of Plaza Miranda. Hailing the uninterrupted upsurge of the masses, in which dictatorship hastened revolution and social democrats were social fascists, the party split the working class and labored to provoke repression. They intended to channel all of the outrage and sympathy of the masses behind the election platform of the Liberal Party later in the year.

January 13: The First Plaza Miranda Massacre

Strained by the spiraling price of oil, jeepney drivers, organized under several different unions, announced that they would be staging transit strikes in Manila in January. The first jeepney driver strike lasted eight days, from January 9 to 15; while a second staged in February lasted twelve.⁸ Attempting to build upon the unrest of the transit strike, the MDP and its member organizations declared that January 10-14 would be “Oil Protest Week.”⁹ On the tenth, Marcos addressed the Philippine Congress of Trade Unions (PCTU) in a gathering held at the Social Security System (SSS) building, denouncing the “oligarchs and pressure groups,” by which he meant Lopez and the KM, for inciting the jeepney drivers to strike.¹⁰ The next morning, the KM barricaded the streets, ostensibly in support of the striking drivers. Over three hundred students formed a human barricade on University Avenue, the main entrance to the Diliman campus, to prevent vehicles from entering.¹¹ They would repeat this tactic over the coming weeks, and its

⁸D.B. Mirasol, “Lagot na Tanikala sa Harap ng Manibela,” *APL*, May 1971, 35; Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 3.

⁹Mag-aaral at Guro ng Panitikan Para sa Kaunlaran ng Bansa, *Literature and Oil*, January 1971, PRP 10/17.01.

¹⁰Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 228.

¹¹Mong Palatino, “Pagbabalik-tanaw sa Diliman Commune,” in *Serve the People: Ang Kasaysayan ng Radikal na Kilusan sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas*, ed. Bienvenido Lumbe et al. (Quezon

use would culminate in the isolated stand-off at Diliman which became known as the “Commune.”

On January 13, jeepney drivers and students organized a protest rally and an estimated ten thousand people filled Plaza Miranda.¹² This was a joint rally staged by both the KM and SDK on the one hand, and the various Social Democratic groups on the other, including KASAPI. The CPP was working to form an alliance with a number of SocDem organizations and the elite clerical universities, above all Ateneo, served as the nexus for the creation of this alliance. The Liga Demokratiko ng Ateneo [Democratic League of Ateneo] (LDA), a joint venture of the KM and SDK on the campus, oversaw the formation of the Makabayang Katipunan ng Ateneo [Nationalist Federation of Ateneo] (MKA), a front organization which included both the LDA and the Ateneo student wing of KASAPI, and MKA joined the January 13 demonstration.¹³

Police attacked the protesters in Plaza Miranda with truncheons, and when they did not disperse, opened fire on the crowd. Over one hundred were injured and four killed in the ensuing violence: a pillbox blew up in the face of Arcangel Sioson, age twenty, of Sampaloc; Edgardo Bolanos, fifteen, of Quiapo, was shot in the head; Winifredo Enriquez, eighteen, of Quezon City, was shot in the chest; and Roman Flora, was likewise killed although no details were provided regarding him.¹⁴ Sixto Carlos Jr., the head of the SDK, fled from Miranda and sought refuge on the distant Ateneo campus, but Metrocom raided the university looking to arrest him.¹⁵ The police had fired on the crowd, but leading political figures sought to blame the demonstrators for the massacre. Manila Mayor Villegas filed criminal charges against Ericson Baculinao, Crispin Aranda and Vic Clemente – leaders of the KM and Molabe – for the violence that occurred during the January 13 demonstrations, claiming that they had plotted the outbreak of violence during a meeting in Baguio City.¹⁶

On the same day, students at UP Los Baños under the leadership primarily of the SDK, set up barricades on the provincial highway stopping all traffic, in

City: Ibon Books, 2008), 103.

¹²PC, 14 Jan 1971.

¹³Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 90.

¹⁴PC, 14 Jan 1971; SM, “Ang Maghimagisik ay Makatarungan.” In subsequent publications, Flora was no longer mentioned, although the KM and SDK continued to maintain that four had been killed on January 13. Nathan Quimpo wrote, “Later, I learned that four young demonstrators had been killed and over a hundred were injured.” (Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 90). The *Collegian* reported that fifty were wounded. (PC, 14 Jan 1971).

¹⁵KASAPI, *Bukas na Lihim sa mga Kawal ng Gobyerno*; PC, 21 Jan 1971, 2. Valencia claimed that Metrocom attempted to assassinate Sixto Carlos during this rally. (*Bandilang Pula*, Feb 1971, 3; Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 3.)

¹⁶SM, “Ang Maghimagisik ay Makatarungan.” The UP Student Council responded. Baculinao they claimed, was at the time specified attending the NUSP conference in Zamboanga. There had been students who were involved in the protest on January 13 in Baguio at the time Villegas mentioned, but they were there for vacation and not politics. (UP Student Council, *UP Student Council Statement*, January 1971, PRP 18/02.45).

support, they claimed, of the jeepney strike.¹⁷ They staged a march from the campus out to the crossing, where they met with picketing drivers and when the PC arrived from Camp Eldridge at two in the afternoon they found that the students had erected barricades at the crossing.¹⁸ The barricades not only impeded provincial transit but also the truckloads of sugar cane from the Yulo family estate in Canlubang. The PC called out a fire truck to break down the barricades, destroying at the same time the students' sound system. When the barricades were destroyed and the Yulo trucks able to pass through, the PC departed. That evening, the SDK staged a "people's congress" at the crossing, and members of the UPLB dramatic group, Tambuli, staged a "revolutionary play" while the SDK sang "revolutionary songs."¹⁹ The next morning the barricades were rebuilt and the PC returned. According to the *Collegian*, "No matter how the 'fascists' negotiated for the women and children to leave the picket line and abandon the men there they were unsuccessful." At two-thirty in the afternoon, three firetrucks arrived and again destroyed the barricades. Violence broke out; there were explosions, and the police began beating the barricaded students and workers. Forty-seven protesters were arrested and taken to Camp Vicente Lim, six of the wounded were taken to the UPLB infirmary and many more were brought to various private medical facilities.²⁰ That night the protesters again rebuilt the barricades. The *Collegian* reported that "Even the women prepared pillboxes and molotov cocktails." There was the expectation of greater violence on the morning of the fifteenth, but a further assault did not occur. Marcos declared a one week moratorium on the oil price hike and the students tore down the barricades.²¹

KASAPI, now in a public alliance with the KM and SDK, published an appeal to the military which pointed to the dead bodies in Plaza Miranda and the raid on Ateneo University and called for a coup d'état.²² Sixto Carlos wrote the press release of the SDK on the massacre, "The merciless shooting and killing carried out by the fascist tentacles [galamay] of the puppet Marcos administration should propel the united front to raise the level of its struggle, further unite and become unyielding!"²³ Tagamolila wrote, "unlike January 1970, Marcos today

¹⁷BP, Feb 1971, 3; Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Ika-4 ng Pebrero, 1971*, February 1971, PRP 15/18.15.

¹⁸The following account is based largely on PC, 21 Jan 1971, 4.

¹⁹PC, 27 Jan 1971, 2.

²⁰PC, 21 Jan 1971.

²¹Within a week the PC had filed charges before the Los Baños Municipal court against sixty-five protesters at the barricades for "grave coercion" and "disturbance of peace and order." (PC, 27 Jan 1971). In July 1971, Vic Ladlad, chair of the UPLB student council, was arrested on the charge of grave coercion as a result of the events of January 13-15 in Los Baños. (PC, 9 Jul 1971).

²²KASAPI, *Bukas na Liham sa mga Kawal ng Gobyerno*.

²³PC, 14 Jan 1971. A fifteen-year-old had been shot in the head by police and Carlos wrote of a puppet with fascist tentacles. One is compelled to revisit Orwell: "The sole aim of a metaphor is to call up a visual image. When these images clash ... it can be taken as certain that the writer is

convinces no one. Even his political allies are abandoning him; he has yet to purge the armed forces sufficiently to insure loyalty to him; and his threats of martial law and history of fascistic suppressions will make actual martial law pretty anti-climactic.”²⁴ Marcos was speaking widely of the possibility of military rule, but the KM, SDK and their allies already saw martial law everywhere.²⁵ Dictatorship was not a danger to be fought; it would be an anti-climax, the mere legal articulation of what in fact already existed.

The brutal police suppression of the January 13 protest was headlined as the “Plaza Miranda Massacre.” Seven months later it became known as the “*First* Plaza Miranda Massacre,” for three grenades exploded in the crowded plaza had become the “*Second*.” Within a year or two the violence of January 13 had been largely forgotten and the Plaza Miranda Massacre today refers exclusively to the events of August 1971.

As the Metrocom opened fire on the protesters in Plaza Miranda and as barricades went up in Los Baños, Marcos had been meeting with a delegation of labor leaders in Malacañang and during the meeting vowed to “crush the Lopez oligarchy.”²⁶ The next day, Vice President Fernando Lopez went to the presidential palace and resigned as Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Marcos had an acceptance letter already prepared and he handed it to Lopez. On the fifteenth, the *Chronicle* published Marcos’ letter with an accompanying point by point rebuttal, and the day after, famed political cartoonist Gat launched a series of front page cartoons in the paper which ran for three straight months, lampooning Marcos’ wealth and corruption. The newly established LEADS wrote that “The isolation of President Marcos was now complete. His rift with the Lopezes exposed his fading image even among his erstwhile colleagues.”²⁷

January 25: State of the Nation

For the cheap coin of a week long moratorium on oil price hikes, Marcos managed to secure an end to both the jeepney strike and the barricades. The apprehension of imminent violence lingered, however, as the state of the nation address, the anniversary of last year’s storm, loomed. The front organizations of the CPP

not seeing a mental image of the objects he is naming; in other words he is not really thinking.” (George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language,” in *Selected Essays* [Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1957], 151).

²⁴PC, 14 Jan 1971, 4.

²⁵When thirty-four protesters were detained in Baguio by the police for five hours, for example, the *Collegian* headlined this as “Martial Law” in Baguio, while Samahan ng mga Guro sa Pamantasan [Federation of University Teachers] (SAGUPA) referred to the events in Los Baños as a state of “undeclared martial law.” (PC, 27 Jan 1971; Samahan ng mga Guro sa Pamantasan (SAGUPA), *Manifesto on the January 25th Mass Action and People’s Congress*, January 1971, PRP 15/30.02).

²⁶Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 228.

²⁷Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 3.

planned to rally at Congress and they called upon their new SocDem allies to join them. They blamed the personal greed and corruption of Marcos – the bureaucrat capitalist – for the social ills of the country. On the twenty-first the Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists] (SPP) declared that “The Philippine crisis today is a direct result of the devaluation of the peso caused directly by massive election spending of government savings in a corrupt political system and, historically, caused by the unreversible [*sic*] accumulation of external debts of a colony in crisis.”²⁸ The MDP, in a well-printed four page leaflet published in both Tagalog and English and featuring a dramatic illustration re-imagining Juan Luna’s famous painting *Spoliarium*, likewise rooted the economic crisis in the policies of Ferdinand Marcos.²⁹ In the face of this crisis, the correct strategy, according to these groups, was to compel the state to engage in “fascist” measures and repression. The Philippine *Collegian*, under the full editorial control of the front organizations of the CPP, most clearly articulated this perspective in their January 21 issue.³⁰ Mario Taguiwalo wrote that

The irrepressable [*sic*] enthusiasm of the movement and its correct orientation is slowly forcing the state to shed off its democratic pretensions in order to more effectively combat the movement, but in the course the state reveals the repressive essence. Thus the masses are armed with the recognition of the violent nature of the state and can make the strategic preparations for the struggle against it.³¹

The only strategic preparation of which Taguiwalo wrote, however, was the need for “audacity, audacity, and more audacity” in the face of which the “reactionaries are paper tigers.” The *Collegian* hailed the Plaza Miranda massacre as the “return of the First Quarter Storm,” and then declared

First, it must be borne in mind that the Marcos regime could impose martial law *only at the risk of isolating itself completely from the masses*. Crisis after crisis have intensified the anti-Marcos feeling to its boiling point. The growing rift between the President and the Lopez bloc has magnified beyond controllable proportions the former’s fading image among his erstwhile supporters. . . .

²⁸Samahan ng Progresibong Propagandista (SPP), *Statement on the Crisis in Philippine Society and Fascist Reaction of the State*, January 1971, PRP 15/36.02.

²⁹Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Ang Tunay na Kalagayan ng Bansa*, January 1971, PRP 11/18.23; Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *The True State of the Nation*, January 1971, PRP 11/18.21.

³⁰By the beginning of 1971, every inch of column space in every issue of the eight page weekly UP student paper was given over to the perspective of the CPP. Its headlines denounced fascism and martial law while its editorial pages called for armed struggle in the countryside.

³¹PC, 21 Jan 1971, 2.

Second, nobody should lose sight of the fact that the national democratic struggle is basically *agrarian* in character. The immediate task in urban areas is the cultural revolution, not an armed struggle which could only be the result of left adventurist recklessness. Fascist power is concentrated in the city, and “encircling the city from the countryside” is the only logical maneuver of the people’s revolution.

The immediate task in the city is the prolongation of the legal struggle for as long as the political situation allows it. Now that there is a tangible split in the power elite, it is politically desirable to broaden the United Front by creating conditional alliances against the common fascist enemy.³²

On the eve of the January 25 protest, the *Collegian* succinctly articulated the perspective of the CPP: Marcos could not impose martial law without being isolated completely. The immediate task was to facilitate the armed struggle in the countryside by mobilizing the masses in an alliance with Lopez and the ruling class opponents of the president. This would provoke fascist repression, which would increase mass resistance, and when Marcos was finally compelled to declare martial law, he would topple from power.

On the twenty-third, the front organizations of the PKP issued a joint statement. This was not a hastily prepared and mimeographed leaflet, but a neatly laid out and carefully polished statement of the party.³³ It opened by announcing that

Our country is in the grip of a political and economic crisis qualitatively different from those that have been brought to bear upon the Filipino masses since the reimposition of US imperialism in 1946. Class contradictions, complexed with the rabid power struggle among the power blocs of the ruling classes, have developed to a degree approximating a revolutionary situation, as an increasingly larger number of people are drawn into the center of the political storm.

The effect of the deteriorating conditions of life for the Filipino masses, the statement argued, was that Marcos could no longer serve as an effective puppet for US imperialism. US imperialism had begun “to take a hard look at Marcos and saw that another puppet had lost its usefulness in the service of imperialist interests. One contradiction after another drove a wedge between the US policy-makers and the Marcos gang. As the CIA mounted its campaign to discredit the

³²PC, 8. Emphasis in original.

³³Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) et al., *US Imperialist Schemes in the Present Crisis*, January 1971, PRP 11/01.09; Pambansang Kilusan ng Paggawa (KILUSAN) et al., *Ang mga Pakana ng Imperyalismong Amerikano sa Kasalukuyang Krisis*, January 1971.

puppet Marcos regime, it looked askance in search for new puppets, new forces to be developed to manage the imperialist hegemony.”³⁴ The next section of the leaflet was headlined “The CIA vs. Marcos,” and stated,

In the process of discrediting Marcos, the CIA has employed various tactics. It has manipulated the contradictions among the political and economic groupings in the ruling classes, channeling these conflicts to a concerted anti-Marcos movement. But perhaps the height of CIA cunning expresses itself in redirecting the anti-Establishment, or even revolutionary, sentiments of the youth pointedly at Marcos, complete with anti-imperialist phrase-mongering. The pseudo-revolutionary groups which have thus been developed have served another purpose for imperialism, namely, as a vehicle for the divisive tactic employed to break up the unity of the anti-imperialist forces.

The leaflet continued, “As the CIA’s anti-Marcos forces gather strength, Marcos does not stand in passivity . . . He has announced his readiness to use the extraordinary presidential prerogative of declaring martial law and suspending the writ of habeas corpus. Can President Marcos afford to fight US imperialism openly or will the CIA succeed in assassinating him before he could deliver the first blow?” While the leaflet still referred to Marcos as a “puppet,” he was now a discredited puppet, who was being pushed by the CIA into fighting US imperialism and was preparing to use martial law as a weapon in this battle. It would take but one additional logical step for the PKP to call for support for military dictatorship as a necessary measure in the fight against imperialism. The PKP did not yet openly articulate this conclusion, but declared that two tasks confronted the Filipino masses. The first task was the struggle for “unity, unity, and greater unity of all anti-imperialist forces.” If Marcos was taking up the anti-imperialist struggle, regardless of his reasons, this logic would necessitate unity with him. Second, they stated, “We must continuously expose the role of the pseudo-revolutionaries in the imperialist-directed anti-Marcos campaign and progressively isolate them.”

While their public statements were now depicting a declaration of martial law as an anti-imperialist measure, their underground organizations were working to provide Marcos with a pretext for its imposition. In the days leading up to the January 25 rally, Soliman and the urban guerrillas of the PKP bombed the offices of Esso and Caltex oil companies, killing one worker and injuring three others in the blast. The PKP guerrillas left behind leaflets at the bombing signed by the “People’s Revolutionary Front,” but Marcos blamed the NPA.³⁵

³⁴Later in the statement, the PKP identified the CIA’s preferred new puppet, writing, that the agency sought the “possibility of accelerating the succession of Vice President Fernando Lopez to the presidency.”

³⁵PPF, 6 Feb 1971, 45.

The leadership of the SocDem allies of the CPP were alarmed by the violence of their rhetoric, and sought to break the newly formed union. On January 21, Raul Manglapus issued an appeal to students and youth to “stay at home,” warning them of the violence that could occur if they joined the protest on the twenty-fifth.³⁶ Manglapus’ stay-at-home directive was repeated by the Prente para sa Demokrasyang Sosyal [Front for Social Democracy] (PDS), an umbrella organization which had in the final weeks of January abruptly emerged onto the political landscape, led by Edgar Jopson and claiming the allegiance of LAKAS-DIWA, CSM, FFW, KASAPI, and NUSP.³⁷ The PDS called on its member groups to stage a separate rally on January 23.³⁸ Nathan Quimpo wrote that

A week before the scheduled January 25 commemorative rally, the moderate groups – NUSP, KASAPI, LAKASDIWA, the Federation of Free Farmers, and the Federation of Free Workers – changed their minds about joining and decided to hold an alternative rally two days ahead. They feared another outbreak of violence and the growing possibility that Marcos would use it as an excuse to declare martial law. NatDem radical groups stuck to their plans, scoffing at the moderates’ faint-heartedness. The Ateneo student council decided, by a close vote of 8-6 with one abstention, to join the January 23 rally and not to support the January 25 rally.³⁹

Looking to stem the possibility of a coup by strengthening the loyalty of his military brass, Marcos sent “helicopters to fetch certain officers and they came to him in Malacañang and he promoted them at three o’clock in the morning! [January 25] ... for the first time, in the Commission on Appointments, we confirmed 191 full colonels. Walang natira. [No one was left.] They were called in the morning and Imelda shook hands with all of them on the eve of the so-called-revolution-that-never-was.”⁴⁰ Having quelled any rumblings in the military, Marcos sought to secure the support of the streets as well and he arranged for sixty busloads of paid demonstrators to cheer his speech outside of Congress.⁴¹

Alongside the paid demonstrators, the forces of the MDP gathered. Buses carried students from UP at nine in the morning to the front of Congress. The Student Council wrote, “The nation challenges the UP studentry to join forces with all segments of society to effect meaningful changes in our motherland.

³⁶Mila D. Aguilar, “The Diliman ‘Commune’: Two Views,” *Graphic*, February 1971, 8.

³⁷BP, Feb 1971, 2.

³⁸*Asia-Philippines Leader* wrote that the PDS was “hastily assembled” for the purposes of the January 23 rally and existed “only on paper.” (APL, 9 Apr 1971, 15).

³⁹Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 90.

⁴⁰Manila, “Why did Ninoy throw that bomb?,” 53.

⁴¹Among the pro-Marcos demonstrators was Roberto Oca’s new labor union, Pinagbuklod ng Manggagawang Pilipino [Filipino Workers Movement] (PMP). (PC, 27 Jan 1971).

Your presence is an acceptance of that challenge.”⁴² The *Collegian* claimed that twelve thousand protesters from sixty-eight MDP member groups attended the Kongreso ng Bayan [People’s Congress] staged outside the House of Congress, and the MDP presented two demands: that Marcos resign on the grounds that he was a “fascist,” and “speedy justice” for the four victims of the January 13 violence. It was a light-minded slogan, appealing to a “fascist” to “resign.” For the CPP, however, the political slogans were secondary; their overriding political concern was the violent explosion and escalation of tensions. Baculinao had contacted Meralco, the Lopez-owned electric company, requesting that they install additional lights outside of Congress so that when the protesters clashed with police it would be well-lit.⁴³ To the surprise of everyone, however, the event passed peacefully.⁴⁴

The members of the SocDem groups instructed by Jopson and Manglapus, with warnings of violence, to stay away from the January 25 protests saw the peaceful events as a confirmation of the politics of the KM and SDK. The split within the SocDem organizations was growing. The KM and SDK themselves, however, greeted the results with consternation. Where was the anticipated storm? Antonio Tagamolila, who wrote the editorial in the *Collegian* in the wake of the quiet of January 25, voiced this frustration. He explained to his readers, “Peace has a way of beclouding the issues the way violence has . . . The issue to clarify it once more, is that the people are still at war, a war declared and imposed by the ruling classes led by their fascist puppet chieftain.”⁴⁵ Clearly additional measures were needed to produce the desired explosion.

⁴²UP Student Council, *January 25th is our Day*, January 1971, PRP 18/02.16.

⁴³PC, 21 Jan 1971.

⁴⁴So too did the rallies staged by the KM and SDK elsewhere. On the same day, the KM had staged a People’s Congress in Lucena, and the SDK staged a People’s Congress in San Pablo, both in Laguna. The *Collegian* estimated that three thousand people attended each rally. The SDK allowed the MPKP to “sing a revolutionary song,” but would not let them speak. Cesar Hicaro, the chair of SDK at UP Los Baños, denounced the MPKP for its “opportunism.” (PC, 27 Jan 1971, 2).

⁴⁵Antonio Tagamolila, “Peace was not the Issue,” PC, January 1971, 6.

The Diliman Commune

Revolution is rebellion, and rebellion is the soul of Mao Zedong's thought. ... Not to rebel is revisionism, pure and simple! ... We are going to make the air thick with the pungent smell of explosives. Toss them over, grenades and stick bombs together, and start a big fight. ... Revolutionaries are Monkey Kings, their golden rods far-reaching and their magic omnipotent, for they possess Mao Zedong's great invincible thought. We wield our golden rods, display our supernatural powers and use our magic to turn the old world upside down, smash it to pieces, pulverize it, create chaos and make a tremendous mess, the bigger the better!

— Red Guard of the Middle School attached to Tsinghua University, 24 June 1966

At the beginning of the year, Dioscoro Umali, the dean of UP Los Baños, announced that he had information that the SDK was intending to take over the Diliman and Los Baños campuses and occupy the administration buildings. The SDK denounced this as a “fairy-tale” and a “fantasy” from his “ever-recurring nightmares.”¹ Umali’s claim was not at all far-fetched. Ericson Baculinao, chair of the UP Student Council, had threatened to do precisely this when presenting the students’ fifty-seven demands to University President Salvador Lopez in October 1970. On January 25, the same day as the peaceful protest in front of Congress, the Sandigang Makabansa published an issue of its paper revisiting the fifty-seven demands which had first been articulated on October 5. The demands were not being fulfilled, but the final move, they stated, rested with the students. In language invoking the *Internationale* the article concluded, “the 57 demands have long been detained [nabibinbin] and the united action which we will carry out will be the final struggle [huling paglalaban].”² Preparations for the occupation of campus administration buildings were in place.

There are two myths that widely circulated regarding what became known as the Diliman Commune. The first is that it was limited to Diliman; it was

¹Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan UPCA Cultural Society (SDK-UPCACS), *Crush Puppet Umali's Reactionary Ploy! On with the Struggle for National Democracy!*, January 1971, PRP 15/23.03.

²SM, “Ang Maghimagsik ay Makatarungan.” The chorus of the Tagalog version of the *Internationale* opens with “ito’y huling paglalaban.”

not. Barricades went up at UST and Los Baños simultaneously and there were pitched battles waged at both locations. The second myth is that the Commune emerged spontaneously. A headline article of *Bagong Pilipina* in its February 1971 issue stated “The Diliman Commune was a spontaneous reaction to the needs of the Diliman Republic,” arguing that the Diliman Commune emerged without planning in response to the needs of the campus community.³ The barricades and the occupation of the campus were planned in advance, and while the course of events rapidly moved beyond the control of the initial planners, the erection of barricades and the occupation of the campus was not at all spontaneous.

The SDK was now firmly in the camp of the CPP, following the party’s orders and abiding by its discipline.⁴ The culmination of the process of its ‘rectification’ was the First National Congress of the SDK which was held on January 30–31 at the UP Asian Labor Education Center.⁵ *Militant but Groovy*, the anthology of accounts regarding the SDK written by a collection of its own members, stated that the process of “rectification and return to mainstream were consolidated at its First National Congress . . . The theme of the congress was ‘Unfurl the Great Red Banner of the National Democratic Cultural Revolution!’”⁶ Maximo Lim was made National Chair of the organization and Antonio Hilario, National Secretary. Hilario, known as Tonyhil, would be the moving force behind the SDK over the next three years. While the KM and the SDK now both strictly adhered to the political line and discipline of the CPP, there were still differences and occasional tensions between the organizations. The SDK still represented better-off layers of activists drawn above all to the Chinese Cultural Revolution and a significant residue of anarchism adhered to its ranks. Where the KM congress held a month prior had proclaimed the need for a national democratic revolution, the SDK congress stated that its task was the national democratic *cultural* revolution. During the two day event, Dulaang Sadeka staged a performance of Bertolt Brecht’s *Mother*, translated by Rolando Peña and Ma. Lorena Barros, and titled “Bandilang Pula,” after the red flag carried by Palagea at the end of the play.⁷ The title of the play became the inspiration of the paper which was published during

³*Bagong Pilipina*, 1 no. 4, (February 1971), PRP 22/01.

⁴As a marker of its rectification the organization now proclaimed itself a Democratic Federation of Youth and no longer a Federation of Democratic Youth; the change from *s ng DK* to *SD ng K* took place on the eve of the Diliman Commune.

⁵The meeting had been scheduled to be held at the National Library, but at the last moment they were denied access to the facility.

⁶Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 11. After lengthy debate, the SDK ratified its constitution, approved the addition of amendments, and elected a national council: Sixto Carlos, Chito Sta. Romana, Rey Vea, Mario Taguiwalo, Judy Taguiwalo, Maximo Lim, Tony Hilario, and Bebet Gillera. Nonie Villanueva, the firebrand speaker of the KM, spoke at the SDK congress as a representative of its sister organization, and Angel Baking delivered a speech, “State and Revolution Today”. (PC, 4 Feb 1971, 1, 3; BP, 1, no. 1 [February 1971]: 4, PRP 22/02).

⁷SM, “Ang Maghimagsik ay Makatarungan,” 4; Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 34.

the Diliman Commune and would subsequently become the main publication of the rectified SDK.⁸ Despite its differences with the KM, the SDK would never again play an independent role; Dick Grayson had moved into Bruce Wayne's mansion.

Barricades: Diliman, University Belt, Los Baños

“Amid the hubbub over the violence at the January 13 rally and the threats of violence at the FQS anniversary rally, the issue of the oil price hike got somewhat sidelined. Gasoline prices were not rolled back.”⁹ On the first of February, the morning after the SDK congress had concluded, the jeepney drivers launched a renewed strike and the KM and SDK launched a coordinated campaign of obstructing thoroughfares throughout the country, ostensibly in support of the strike. They erected barricades at UP Diliman and Los Baños, and in the University Belt. These were the primary barricade sites, but according to the *Collegian*, barricades were erected at least briefly by students in Laguna, Baguio, Rizal, Cavite and other locations.¹⁰ This was a coordinated and centrally directed campaign.¹¹

While they pointed to the jeepney drivers' strike as the reason for their construction of barricades, this was but a pretext for the KM and SDK. In the wake of the disappointment of January 25, they needed to foment street battles and provoke state repression. They began erecting the barricades before the resumption of the strike had even been announced, and they continued after the strike had fizzled. The KM shutdown traffic on Mendiola bridge on January 30, two days before the jeepney strike resumed, claiming they were commemorating the Battle of Mendiola from a year earlier.¹² The violence of the barricades provided the state with a pretext to break up the strike. On February 2, Lupiño Lazaro, general secretary of Pasang Masda, the primary jeepney driver union involved in the strike, was arrested without warrant near UST on the orders of Antonio Villegas on “suspicion of creating disorder in the city.”¹³ The barricades of the KM and SDK had provided the pretext for this arrest, and in its wake the strike fizzled. The students at the barricades continued their protests and campus

⁸Butch Dalisay recounted that this was “before Brecht had been set aside for being too bourgeois in favor of more overt Peking Opera-style tableaux.” Dalisay himself performed in this staging of Brecht, acting in whiteface. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 38). Wilma Austria played the lead.

⁹Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 90.

¹⁰PC, 10 Feb 1971, 2.

¹¹Because of the prominence given to the Diliman Commune, however, records of the barricades erected elsewhere are partial and sporadic.

¹²Eric S. Giron, “A Dialogue of Bullets, Tear Gas Versus Stones, Bombs,” *Mirror*, February 1971. My account of the barricades in the University Belt is based on Giron.

¹³PC, 4 Feb 1971, 2; Giron, “A Dialogue of Bullets,” 1; Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Sa mga kasamang tsuper mag-aaral at mamamayan*, February 1971, PRP 15/18.13.

occupations despite the fact that the strike which they claimed to be supporting had ended days earlier. There was in fact very little connection between the barricades and the strike, as the primary goal of the barricades was to stage a violent confrontation with ‘fascism.’

On February 1 the barricades went up in earnest. According to the account in the *Mirror*, “about 60 per cent of public vehicles, including jeepneys, buses and taxicabs continued operating that Monday in Manila and the rest of the Metropolitan area.” The students, however, “barricaded streets, solicited strike funds from drivers of passing vehicles, stoned buses and cars that did not stop when they directed them to turn back and who set up pickets in Manila and Quezon City for the jeepney drivers.” The students set up a bonfire at the junction of Azcarraga and Lepanto; traffic through the vicinity was shut down and all Divisoria bound vehicles were routed through Quiapo. “Passengers in the few buses operating pulled up the window shades to avoid stones.”¹⁴ The students maintained the barricades in the University Belt the next day. A street battle raged between protesters and the police in front of UST. Students threw rocks, pillboxes and molotov cocktails and the police fired on the students. By the end of the day, three people had been killed: Danilo Rabaja, nineteen, of PCC; Renato Abrenica, twenty-four, UST; and Roberto Tolosa, a twelve-year-old sweepstakes vendor, who died of a bullet in the back. Twenty-nine others were injured. Barricades and protests continued in the University Belt throughout the first week of February and by Friday, two more had been killed. Fernando Duque, nineteen, a UST student, “fleeing from police and drivers battling the students” was hit by a pillbox explosion on the head. A “battle took place on Dapitan street when students resorted to stoning the vehicles, hurting passengers and drivers. The drivers fought back with stones.” A noteworthy aspect of the barricades was the participation of UST, San Beda, Ateneo and the other elite clerical universities, an indication of the increasing unity of the KM and the membership of KASAPI and other SocDem groups.

On the Los Baños campus, we know that there were barricades sealing the main entrance to the University on February 4 and that two more sets of barricades were built on February 8, which completely isolated the campus.¹⁵ The SDK and KM claimed that the barricades were being erected in support of the striking drivers. Most of the drivers, however, ended their strike on February 6, while the students maintained and expanded the barricades, but “permitted [pinayagan] the drivers to operate up to the barricades.”¹⁶ They claimed that the drivers ended their strike because of the machinations of the mayor of Los Baños to separate the drivers from the students. At least one jeepney driver, after the majority ended the strike, attempted to drive his vehicle through the barricades

¹⁴Giron, “A Dialogue of Bullets.”

¹⁵SDK, *Ika-4 ng Pebrero, 1971*.

¹⁶PC, 10 Feb 1971, 3, 8.

and the students assaulted him, throwing pillboxes at his vehicle.¹⁷

On February 7 a large contingent of conservative civic groups – the Lions Club, UPSCA, and others – approached the barricades to request that they be taken down. The students were making life difficult, they said, for the residents of Los Baños. The students, led by Vic Ladlad, refused. By February 9, it was anticipated that the PC would assault the barricades and the students fortified themselves with pillboxes to “defend UP Los Baños.” The account of the barricades at Los Baños published in the *Collegian* ends here. A separate account reported that the intent of the barricades in Los Baños was to block the provincial bus route in order to “paralyze the transportation of scab transit companies.”¹⁸ Notice that the scabs, according to the KM and its cohort, were not workers who crossed picket lines, but were rather the companies themselves. The KM regarded the strike not as an action of the working class, but as something staged by companies in opposition to the oil price hikes, and companies that did not participate in the strike were denounced as scabs.¹⁹

The Diliman Commune

Monday, February 1

Simultaneous with the street battles of Azcarraga and the shutting down of provincial traffic in Los Baños, the KM and SDK erected barricades on the Diliman campus. The Physical Plant Office had installed loudspeakers in the Arts & Sciences (AS) building on the request of the UP Student Council and the council used these speakers to instruct students to boycott their classes and man the barricades, while “groups of activists made rounds of classes being held, interrupting proceedings in the classrooms.”²⁰ The campus at the time was still a public thoroughfare, you could drive its wide, acacia lined streets from Commonwealth to Katipunan, and a good deal of traffic passed through on a daily basis. The barricades were initially erected to “stop public utility vehicles from entering campus,”²¹ but *Bandilang Pula* wrote that all vehicles, public and private, were being stopped and asked to take another route, and anyone who wished to enter campus was instructed to get out and walk.²² The students manning

¹⁷PC, 10 Feb 1971, 8.

¹⁸PC, 10 Feb 1971, 4.

¹⁹A further piece of evidence of the Los Baños barricades comes from the crude right-wing propaganda denouncing the KM and SDK for maintaining the Los Baños barricades. (C.D. Fontanilla, [Circular], January 1971, PRP 07.13.01). [fig. 31.1]

²⁰*Report of the Committee of Inquiry On the Events and Occurences at the Diliman Commune from February 1 to 9, 1971*, 1971, 1.

²¹Mario Taguiwalo and Rey Veal, “II. The University as base for the Cultural Revolution,” PC, February 1971, 10, 9.

²²Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Pagsalakay Binigo!,” BP, February 1971, 2, PRP 22/03. Barricades were erected across the front entrance to the campus, as well as the rear-entrance at Lopez

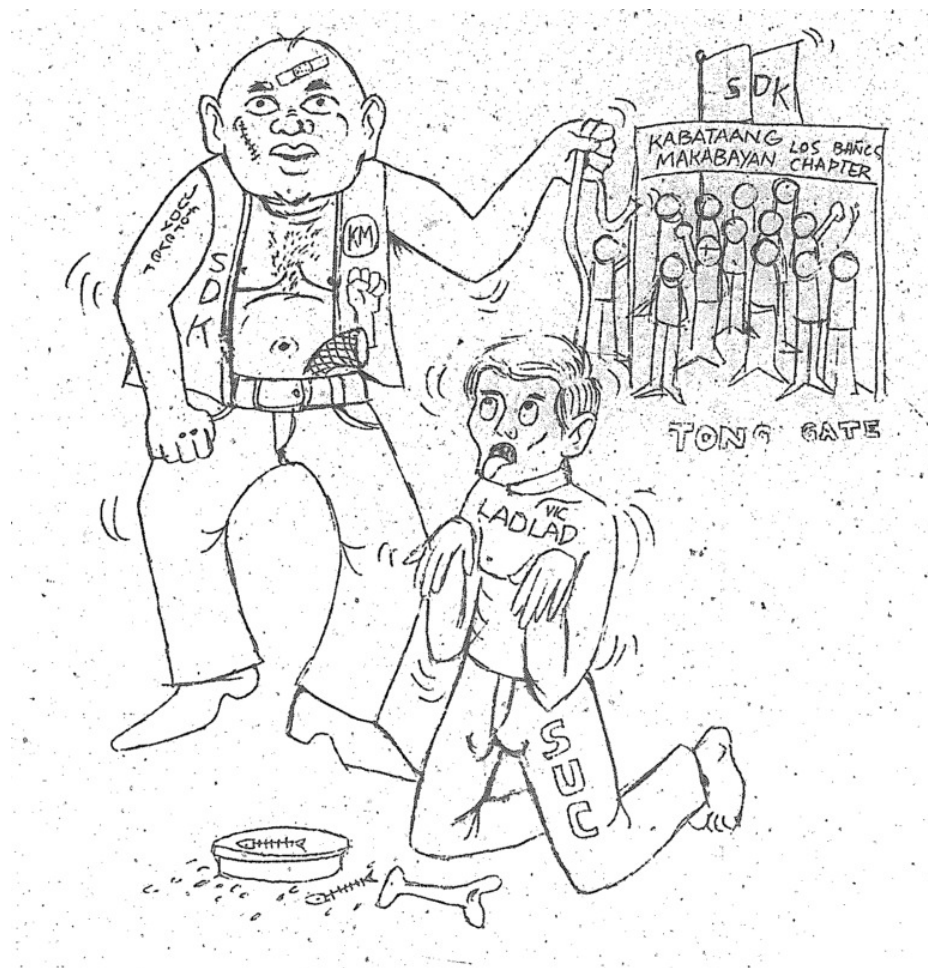


Figure 31.1: Crude anti-barricade propaganda from UP Los Baños. Fontanilla, *Circular* (1971) [PRP 07/13.01]

the barricades were armed with pillboxes and molotov cocktails and waved a red banner. While young men on the barricades were responsible for preventing vehicles from entering the campus, young women were assigned to solicit funds from those who had been turned away.²³

Hearing of the disruption to traffic on campus, Salvador Lopez instructed Colonel Oscar Alvarez, chief of UP Security Forces to request that faculty vehicles be allowed to pass. Alvarez inspected the barricades and returned to report to Lopez that “everything was in order.”²⁴ By mid-day, many of the students wished to go to lunch and there were not sufficient numbers to maintain the obstruction,

Jaena. (PC, 10 Feb 1971, 4).

²³The SDK put out a leaflet calling on the masses to “resolutely support the patriotic jeepney drivers,” which they distributed from the barricades. (Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Statement of the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan*, February 1971, PRP 15/18.22).

²⁴*Report of the Committee of Inquiry*, 1-2.

so they knocked over a tree and placed it in the road. The security forces returned and attempted to remove the tree that was blocking traffic.

A skirmish developed, during which pillbox bombs and gasoline bombs were thrown at the UP security guards. One guard drew his side-arm and fired warning shots. The students retaliated with bombs resulting in the injury to [*sic*] five security guards. More students arrived and reinforced the barricades. Their number was variously estimated at two to three hundred.²⁵

At twelve-thirty in the afternoon, UP mathematics professor Inocente Campos arrived in his car. Campos was a known figure on campus, having on several occasions threatened students with failing grades if they participated in demonstrations, and when students complained he had pulled out a gun in the classroom and threatened them with it. Campos' abusive and violent behavior had been reported by students and known to the campus administration for over a year, but nothing had been done against Campos by the university administration.²⁶ Campos accelerated and attempted to drive through the barricade. "Upon recognizing the professor, students on University avenue began throwing pillboxes at his car. The left rear tire exploded, forcing the car to a stop."²⁷ Dean of Students Armando Malay described the situation as "it looked to me that the car was disabled, because its rear was jutting out of line, like a woman with an enlarged derriere."²⁸ An account written by the barricaders themselves reported that when the students saw Campos, they shouted "It's Campos ... throw pb [pillboxes] at him ... he's a fascist!"²⁹ Campos emerged from his damaged vehicle wearing a bulletproof vest and a helmet and opened fire with a shotgun on the students. The students later claimed that he was laughing while he fired, describing him as "juramentado." [someone run amuck] Campos reloaded his shotgun and continued firing, shooting one of the students, Pastor 'Sonny' Mesina, in the forehead.

UP Security Forces, who had been standing nearby since their attempt to remove the tree barricade, arrested Campos and took him to the Quezon City Police Department. The students burned Campos vehicle.³⁰ Pastor Mesina was taken to the UP infirmary, and then transferred to Veterans Memorial Hospital,

²⁵Ibid., 2.

²⁶PC, 11 Sep 1970, 3.

²⁷*Report of the Committee of Inquiry*, 3.

²⁸Armando J. Malay, "The UP Barricades: In Retrospect," *We Forum*, 22 September–17 November 1982, 24 Sep 1982.

²⁹PC, 10 Feb 1971, 4.

³⁰Palatino, "Pagbabalik-tanaw sa Diliman Commune," 103; Malayang Purok ng Diliman, "Pagsalakay Binigo!," 2.

where he was unconscious for several days and died Thursday evening.³¹ Mesina was seventeen years old, a first year student at the university who had joined the SDK a week earlier and on the day of his death had opted to march with some of his friends rather than go to a movie with others. While Mesina was in the hospital, Tagamolila wrote an editorial stating, “The hero of the day is undoubtedly Pastor Mesina, a freshman activist, who was seriously wounded by an insane man we had allowed to roam in our midst.”³² Taguiwalo wrote that “Sonny was not an activist nor a revolutionary, but he tried.”³³ The Bantayog ng mga Bayani monument would inscribe that Mesina “earned the honor of being considered UP Diliman’s ‘first martyr’ ... he gave his life for academic freedom.”

Lopez had been watching events through binoculars. About fifty students angrily left the barricades and marched to the university administrative building of Quezon Hall, storming the offices of Lopez, tearing plaques off the wall, shattering windows and throwing rocks. One student threw a piece of wood at Lopez, hitting him in the chest.³⁴ Baculinao confronted Lopez, demanding to know why Lopez sent security forces to the barricade without first informing him. He blamed Lopez for the actions of Campos, claiming that if the security forces were not present he would not have been emboldened to shoot.³⁵ Tension mounted and it seemed increasingly likely that a student might physically assault Lopez. To defuse the tension, as was the KM’s standard practice, Baculinao led the group in a loud rendition of the national anthem, after which they left Lopez’ office.

Lopez later recounted that he was summoned that afternoon to the military headquarters of Camp Aguinaldo for a meeting of a shady cabal known as the ‘Peace and Order Council.’³⁶ Justice Secretary Vicente Abad Santos, the chair of the council; Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor; Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile; Col. Tomas Karingal, head of the Quezon City Police; and Gen. Eduardo Garcia, head of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) discussed how best to suppress the students at the flagship state university. The council called for the forced entry of the police onto the campus, but Lopez protested, citing a prior agreement with Quezon City Mayor Norberto Amoranto to keep the city police off of the campus, and to leave policing to campus security forces. The Council stated that the agreement was not legally binding. A decision was reached, over Lopez’ dissent, that the police would enter the university and clear out the barricades, and it was further decided that if the police could not successfully

³¹*Report of the Committee of Inquiry*, 3; Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Pagsalakay Binigo!”; Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 83.

³²PC, 4 Feb 1971, 6.

³³PC, 10 Feb 1971, 9.

³⁴*Report of the Committee of Inquiry*, 3.

³⁵Baculinao’s argument seems highly suspect. Campos drove to the barricades in body armor and armed with multiple weapons. His assault on the students was clearly premeditated.

³⁶*Report of the Committee of Inquiry*, 5-6.

carry out this action, the PC would be deployed. Enrile warned that if the mayor refused to allow the deployment of Karingal's forces on campus the Philippine Constabulary would take over City Hall. The council then went to Quezon City Hall, to inform Amoranto of the measures they were taking. Lopez' account of his meeting with this junta provides a rare insight into just how advanced were the preparations for military rule. If elected leaders or democratic norms interfered even slightly in the suppression of unrest and dissent, the military leadership was poised to strip their powers away.

Police deployed at every approach to the University; students set up new barricades on the west entrance guarding Commonwealth Avenue. Lopez continued to protest against police on the campus, but Karingal disregarded him and at three in the afternoon, the Quezon City Police Department (QCPD) broke down the barricades and arrested more than eighteen students.³⁷ The UP Student Council issued a leaflet on February 1 denouncing the shooting of Pastor Mesina, singling out Salvador Lopez for blame for having "abetted and encouraged" the UP Security Police, who "brutally attempted to disperse the students by firing indiscriminately at the crowd."³⁸ Congressman Ramon Mitra issued a statement in support of the students, "It is a healthy sign when the student citizenry is vocal and vibrant."³⁹ Palatino correctly noted that after the first day, "the issue was no longer the oil price hike but the interference of the military [panghihimasok ng militar] on campus."⁴⁰

Tuesday, February 2

Early Tuesday morning the students rebuilt their defenses, incorporating the burned out remains of Campos' car into the barricades.⁴¹ Leaflets for and against the barricades circulated on the campus that morning. A group calling itself the "decent elements of the UP Student Council" signed a document on behalf of the entire council, denouncing "student fascism." Their leaflet read, "UP vilent [*sic*] activist Sonny Mesina was shot in the head yesterday, when in self-defense Prof. Inocente Campos fired at fascistic students who want to reign supreme in UP."⁴² The Samahan ng Makabayan Siyentipiko [Federation of Scientific Nationalists]

³⁷The arrested students were released after four hours. (Malayang Purok ng Diliman, "Pagsalakay Binigo!," 2). This account states that Baculinao was among those arrested. The Committee of Inquiry's report however claimed that Baculinao was not arrested but went to Quezon City Hall to protest the arrests and that he found Lopez there. This version corresponds with Armando Malay's account.

³⁸UP Student Council and Samahan ng Kababaihan ng UP (SKUP), *Oppose Campus Fascism! Support Jeepney Strike!*, February 1971, PRP 18/02.29.

³⁹Giron, "A Dialogue of Bullets," 2.

⁴⁰Palatino, "Pagbabalik-tanaw sa Diliman Commune," 104.

⁴¹Malay, "The UP Barricades: In Retrospect," 29 Sep 1982, 6.

⁴²UP Student Council, *Oppose Student Fascism! Down with Violent Student Activism*, February 1971, PRP 18/02.30.

(sms) meanwhile issued an appeal to continue support for the jeepney strike and opposition to fascism on campus. They concluded by summoning everyone “to the barricades!” This was the last mention of the strike during the Diliman Commune; after the morning of February 2, the pretext was dropped entirely.⁴³

The police and the students tensely eyed one another over the barricades. According to the Collegian, the standoff broke when the MPKP drove a jeep past the barricades leading an assault by the police.⁴⁴ *Bandilang Pula* described the jeep as flying a flag with the image of a caret on it, and the students at the barricade expected that the jeep contained reinforcements. In their own version of events, the MPKP claimed that the KM-SDK hurled pillboxes at their jeep, which was bearing MPKP activists and striking drivers.⁴⁵ The MPKP carried a leaflet with them, which stated “the massing of hundreds of PC troopers and Quezon City policemen armed with high-powered firearms in the University is a naked act of fascist repression . . . However, we also see the necessity of criticizing certain elements within the student ranks who committed acts of unwarranted violence against UP personnel and property.”⁴⁶ They called on students to “sustain the struggle against American oil monopolies,” but also to “expose and oppose petty-bourgeois pseudo-revolutionary elements.” Behind their jeep came the police, who immediately began firing tear gas, and the students at the barricades retreated before the onslaught. The front organizations of the PKP had played no part in the barricades until now, for they were on the opposite side in this battle and as they entered Diliman they were accompanied by the military.⁴⁷

⁴³Samahan ng Makabayang Siyentipiko (sms), *Support the Strike and Oppose Campus Fascism*, February 1971, PRP 15/32.03. On February 3 the various front organizations of the PKP – the MPKP, BRPF, AKSIUN, Kilusan – issued a joint statement on the strike signed by a number of drivers and operators associations. They called for the continuation of the struggle against American oil monopolies and they called on “drivers, militant students, and the Filipino masses,” to “expose and oppose the phony revolutionaries and paid agents and provocateurs who are carrying out needless violence that confuses the masses and ruins the national democratic movement while covering up the true issue against imperialism.” (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Kabakahin ang Pasismo, Ipagpatuloy ang Pakikibaka Laban sa mga Monopolyong Kompanya ng Langis, at Isulong ang Pakikipaglaban sa Imperyalismo*, February 1971, PRP 13/28.01). These groups, however, were now operating entirely off campus, and no further mention of the strike was made in the “Commune.”

⁴⁴PC, 4 February 1971.

⁴⁵Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, *Who the Real Gangsters Are*, February 1971, PRP 10/31.08.

⁴⁶The leaflet cited the March 1970 MPKP statement, “People’s Violence Against State Violence” as the correct political line, a statement which denounced both the state and the KM. (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Oppose Militarization of the UP Campus*, February 1971, PRP 10/31.04; MPKP, *People’s Violence Against State Violence*). See page 474.

⁴⁷On February 1, as the KM and SDK erected barricades, the MPKP had published a brief leaflet calling for the nationalization of the oil industry, but did not make it clear if they were calling for the state control or the transfer of the corporations to private Filipino ownership. The only clearly expressed demand was that the oil industry needed to be taken out of American hands. (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) and Pambansang Kilusan ng Paggawa

By one in the afternoon, Salvador Lopez was engaged in an argument with QCPD chief Tomas Karingal demanding the removal of the police from the University campus, and after several skirmishes between police and students, the police appeared to withdraw.⁴⁸ At two in the afternoon the students declared that UP was a “liberated area.”⁴⁹ The upper floors of the AS building were seized by a group which called itself the AS Rooftop Junta and flew a red flag from its roof. The students used the rooftops of the AS and Engineering buildings to throw molotov cocktails and pillboxes at the police during subsequent encroachments.⁵⁰ Barricades were set up in front of the AS Building.

But police took the road behind the building, cutting off the students’ retreat and many of them were caught.

Students battled the militarists at Vinzons hall where activists held their meetings. Fourteen students were injured when Metrocom soldiers captured the area. At this point, Kabataang Makabayan members of Ateneo de Manila reinforced the UP students.

QC Mayor [*sic*] Elpidio Clemente ordered the attack on two girl dormitories where ten male students fighting the police with bombs sought refuge. In ten minutes the Sampaguita and Camia halls reeked of gas fumes and the cries of 200 occupants resounded. Girls trapped inside broke glass windows and squirmed through broken glass, lacerating or bruising themselves. They were in tears.⁵¹

The students poured water on the road to dampen the effect of the teargas, and shouted out to the Metrocom that it was gasoline. The Metrocom began to attack from the grass, as the pillbox bombs routinely did not explode on the soft impact.⁵² Low-flying helicopters flew over the campus dropping teargas bombs in addition to those being thrown by the Metrocom.⁵³ The students began streamlining the production of molotov cocktails, using Coke bottles taken from the cafeteria, two drums of crude oil that were available on campus, and the curtains from the AS building.⁵⁴ The exchanges between the Metrocom and the students continued until late in the night, and at some point the students set the

(KILUSAN), *Isabansa ang Industriya ng Langis*, February 1971, PRP 13/11.02).

⁴⁸Giron, “A Dialogue of Bullets,” 6.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” *BP*, February 1971, 5, PRP 22/03.

⁵¹Giron, “A Dialogue of Bullets,” 6. Giron errs here. Clemente was a police major; Amoranto was mayor.

⁵²Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” 5.

⁵³Petronilo Bn. Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” *Graphic*, March 1971, 9.

⁵⁴Over the course of the week, the chemistry and physics students began working on improved molotov production. At some point they claimed to have designed a self-igniting molotov cocktail. (Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” 5). How the self-igniting molotov worked was never specified. The most common method of such a design would be to

barricades on fire. The embers of the barricades were still smoldering the next morning.⁵⁵

Wednesday, February 3

The Lopez-owned DZMM radio station sent its Radyo Patrol truck to the campus on Wednesday morning, and Dean Malay issued an appeal to the nation to provide food and supplies to the barricaded students.⁵⁶ University President Salvador Lopez called on the entire university community to assemble in front of Palma Hall, where KM leader Boni Ilagan opened the assembly, recounting to the students the events of the past two days. Lopez addressed the students, stating that what was at stake in the struggle over the barricades was the militarization of the campus.⁵⁷ Mila Aguilar reported that at the end of Lopez speech “a band of white-helmeted fascists were sighted at the corner of the Engineering building 100 meters away from the Arts and Sciences steps, where the gathering was being held.” The students grabbed “chairs, tables, blackboards” and brought them down into the street.⁵⁸ The barricade rapidly extended down the length of the AS building, and Molotov cocktails and pillboxes were distributed up and down the line. The students occupying the rooftops were given kwitis – fireworks – to launch at helicopters flying overhead.

A negotiating team, including the dean of AS, some faculty members and student representatives, went to meet with the police.⁵⁹ The “white-helmeted fascists” were the Metrocom, under the command of QCPD Major Clemente, who was chiefly concerned with the removal of blockades from the main thoroughfares so that buses could pass. Marcos gave orders directly to Clemente to have his men stand down as long as Lopez and the university administration took responsibility for the situation. Clemente and the negotiating team reached an agreement that the buses would be rerouted down Commonwealth Avenue, skirting the north-side of the campus, but as Clemente pulled out his forces, he secretly arranged to leave behind snipers at various locations throughout the campus.⁶⁰

During one of the police assaults on Vinzons Hall – it is unclear on which

soak an external label in a chemical which when the glass shatters and the label comes in contact with the chemicals contained in the bottle causes an explosion. This, however, would have been incompatible with the thick-glassed coke bottles the students claim to have used.

⁵⁵Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 8.

⁵⁶Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 4 Oct 1982, 8.

⁵⁷Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 4 Oct 1982; Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 9.

⁵⁸Aguilar, “The Diliman ‘Commune’: Two Views.”

⁵⁹They were accompanied by Amelito Mutuc, former bagman of Harry Stonehill; Ambassador to the United States; and now a Constitutional Convention delegate. (Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 9).

⁶⁰Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 9; Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” B.

day – Danilo Delfin was critically wounded by a gunshot to the lung.⁶¹ Delfin was not a supporter of the commune guarding the barricades. He was a member of the Vanguard Fraternity, a right-wing organization opposed to the KМ and SДK. Delfin later stated that he was caught in the crossfire and that the trajectory of the bullet revealed that he was shot in the back by the KМ-SДK from behind Vinzons Hall.⁶² For a brief time after the events, Delfin was hailed by the KМ and SДK as a hero and a ‘martyr’ of the movement. When he revealed that he was a Vanguard member who had been shot in the back, he was denounced. In mid 1972 he wrote a bitter public letter.

A year and half after, I’m still confined to a wheel chair, unable to walk or stand by myself. The doctors say that in a year or two, I might finally be able to walk. I don’t know.

Last year, right after the barricades and during the early part of the campus campaign, some groups on campus, specifically those who set up the barricades, were praising me as Kumander Delfin, one of the heroes and martyrs of the barricades. Until I told the truth during the AS confrontation [in July 1971]. Since then I have been consistently denounced as a propagandist for Malacañang. In a wheel chair?⁶³

At five in the evening, Senators Aquino, Laurel, and Kalaw came and spoke on the Diliman campus, proclaiming “their concern over the military force under control of Pres. Marcos. They called upon the military units on the edges of campus to withdraw.”⁶⁴ The Senators then met with Salvador Lopez in his office to discuss the affair. While they were in conference, Marcos called Lopez and stated that he was ordering the withdrawal of all troops and that students would not be issued a deadline for the removal of the barricades.⁶⁵ Marcos, it seems, astutely decided to allow the students to tire of the barricades, which lasted for five more days.

Lopez issued a press statement calling for the resumption of classes, stating that he was “unalterably opposed” to police entering the campus, but called upon students to tear down the barricades so that classes could resume.⁶⁶ The students continued to man the barricades, however, tearing down the stage lights from the AS theater and installing them on the top of AS hall to serve as a searchlight. They began renaming the UP campus buildings; the campus itself they renamed the “Democratic Diliman Commune.” The accounts of the renaming are

⁶¹Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 9.

⁶²*Convocation Sabotaged*, August 1971, PRP 20/15.01.

⁶³Danilo Delfin, *An Open Letter from a Victim*, 1972, PRP 06/16.01.

⁶⁴PC, 4 February 1971, 5. An article on page five of the same issue stated that the Senators arrived on the campus at noon and that Sen. Gene Magsaysay accompanied them.

⁶⁵Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 6 Oct 1982, 7.

⁶⁶Salvador Lopez, *Press Statement*, February 1971, PRP 10/12.04.

contradictory. According to various sources UP was renamed Stalin University; Abelardo Hall became Dante Hall; the Faculty Center became Jose Ma. Sison Hall; Palma Hall became Dante Hall; Gonzales Hall became Amado Guerrero Hall.⁶⁷ The only renaming which I can independently verify is Jose Ma. Sison Hall, because the students scrawled Sison's name in large red letters on the walls. By Wednesday night, essentially all police and military incursions on the Diliman campus stopped, according to the commune's own publications. The KM and SDK occupied the campus exclusively until they took the barricades down.⁶⁸

Thursday, February 4

By Thursday morning, the University had a "lack of students," the streets were deserted, and the commune was "isolated."⁶⁹ Those who remained at Diliman were the members of the UP chapters of KM and SDK who had been joined by KM and SDK members from other universities.⁷⁰ The majority of the student body, however, had left. Those remaining on the campus elected a provisional directorate, of which Baculinao was made head, while Rey Vea and Fred Tirante occupied key positions.⁷¹

The occupying students, now styling themselves as 'communards,' broke into and seized the DZUP radio station, renaming it Malayang Tinig ng Demokratikong Komunidad ng Diliman [Free Voice of the Democratic Community of Diliman].⁷² Bagong Pilipina described the "liberation" of the station: "The university radio station which used to play and cater to well-educated bourgeoisie [sic] listeners (who else could afford to appreciate Beethoven's symphony, who else could find time to relax at night and listen to bourgeois' [sic] music?) was liberated and occupied by the progressive sector."⁷³ Having seized the radio station, The KM

⁶⁷Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution*, 2; Rosca, "View from the Left: Word War I," 10.

⁶⁸Malayang Purok ng Diliman, "Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan," 7.

⁶⁹Lopez, along with some of the faculty and administrative staff, marched to Congress to protest the military assault on the campus over the past days. (Giron, "A Dialogue of Bullets," 6). Manuel Ortega, long the head of the student opposition to the KM and SDK, began appearing on various television shows. Parroting Manglapus' warning on January 21, he urged students not to go to Diliman, and he urged parents not to allow them. (Aguilar, "The Diliman 'Commune': Two Views").

⁷⁰ibid. Aguilar's account was fiercely supportive of the commune, but still notes that by February 4 the commune did not have significant student support. Prominent among those who joined the barricades was the explicitly anarchist SDKM under Jerry Araos, who later stated that an SDKM member was present at every barricade. See page 344.

⁷¹Malay, "The UP Barricades: In Retrospect," 1 Oct 1982, 6. Different accounts say "elected", others "appointed". How exactly the directorate was constituted is unclear. What is clear is that one of its top leaders, Tirante, was a military agent.

⁷²PC, 4 February 1971, 3; Aguilar, "The Diliman 'Commune': Two Views," 8; Ericson M. Baculinao, Jeunne Pagaduan, and Herminio B. Coloma, *Resolution Commending the Revolutionary Courage of the Heroic Defenders of the Diliman Commune Against the Fascist State and its Campus Collaborators*, February 1971, PRP 18/02.36.

⁷³*Bagong Pilipina*, 1970-1971, 1, no. 4 (February 1971): 3, PRP 22/01, PRP 22/01.

and SDK began broadcasting receiving extraordinary assistance in this matter from the Lopez family. DZUP had a broadcast radius of five kilometers and according to Armando Malay, “nobody (but nobody) had been listening to it before.”⁷⁴ ABS-CBN, the national broadcast network owned by Lopez, announced that the station had been captured and that it was being broadcast at 1410 AM. Having made this announcement, Lopez then arranged the nationwide rebroadcast of the students programming. The five kilometer campus station now covered the entire archipelago.⁷⁵ The student operators managed to burn out the transmission tubes of the radio station, but these were promptly replaced by a wealthy anonymous outside donor.

The Lopez family did not merely supply the means of broadcast to the students, they also supplied the content. As part of Marcos’ presidential campaign in 1969 he had commissioned the production of a film depicting what were supposed to be his years as a guerrilla during the Second World War. The film, *Ang Mga Maharlika*, had starred Hollywood actors Paul Burke, as Marcos, and Farley Granger. B-grade movie actress Dovie Beams played Marcos’ love interest.⁷⁶ Throughout the course of 1969 and most of 1970 Beams and Marcos carried on a love affair and, without Marcos’ knowledge, Beams recorded the audio of each of their encounters. Imelda Marcos, stung by the scandal, arranged to have Beams deported as an undesirable alien in November 1970. Beams responded by threatening to release the recordings. Ferdinand Marcos made an offer of \$100,000 to Beams for the audio tapes, and the US Consul carried out the negotiations on his behalf. Beams refused and called a press conference during which she played a portion of her recording, featuring Marcos singing “Pamulinawen” – an Ilocano folk song – as well as the sounds of their love making. Seeing an opportunity to attack the president, the agents of the Lopez media conglomerate broke into Beams’ hotel room and stole the audio tapes. Much as they desired to humiliate Marcos, they could not broadcast the hours of recorded bedroom conversation and noises over their radio network. The Diliman Commune provided the ideal pretext for their broadcast and they supplied the students with the audio tapes. The KM and SDK cheerfully complied with Lopez’ request. They broadcast Beams’ audio tapes, punctuated at times by performances of the Internationale and the Lopez radio network carried the broadcast nationwide to the immense humiliation of Marcos.⁷⁷ The KM and SDK had been provided with a means of addressing the entire nation and they made no attempt to present a political

⁷⁴Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 11 Oct 1982.

⁷⁵Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 11 Oct 1982; Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” 6.

⁷⁶The story of the Marcos’ affair with Beams and the scandal that followed are detailed in Hermie Rotea, *Marcos’ Lovey Dovie* (Los Angeles: Liberty Publishing, 1984).

⁷⁷The KM and SDK routinely used Beams as a means of attacking Marcos. The AS Rooftop Junta, for example, released a statement denouncing “the chief of the bureaucrat capitalists, Dovie Beams’ Fred.” (AS Rooftop Junta, *Welga Bilang Pagtutol Sa Pagsasamantala*, February 1971, PRP 02/03.02) The SDK continued to try to make Dovie Beams into a political issue for the rest

perspective. They occupied their time broadcasting explicit sexual recordings in an attempt to embarrass Marcos on behalf of a rival section of the bourgeoisie.

By mid-Thursday afternoon, the students had broken the lock off the door of the University Press, intending to use it to print a newspaper for the Commune. Expressing concern that the students might break the press, Dean Malay offered to provide them with several regular press employees – “one or two linotypists, a makeup man, and others you might need”.⁷⁸ By the next morning the students had published a newspaper for the barricades, which they titled *Bandilang Pula*, the name taken from the Tagalog performance of Brecht’s *Mother* which had been staged by the SDK on the eve of the barricades. In the aftermath of the barricades, *Bandilang Pula* became the title of the SDK paper, and much later, the name of the official paper of the New People’s Army. In addition to the press and radio, the students took over the chemistry lab which they used for the production of molotov cocktails and other explosives. On the fourth, Tagamolila, at the head of the *Collegian*, published an editorial on the Commune, writing

The scholar turned street fighter becomes a truly wiser man. The political science professor hurling molotovs gets to know more about revolution than a lifetime of pedagogy. The engineering and science majors, preparing fuseless molotovs and operating radio stations, the medical student braving gunfire to aid his fellow-activist, the coed preparing battle-rations of food, pillboxes, and gasoline bombs, by their social practice realize that their skills are in themselves not enough – that the political education they get by using those skills against fascism is the correct summing up of all previous learning.⁷⁹

Friday, February 5, to Tuesday, February 9

As the threat of police invasion of the campus receded, the life on the Diliman campus settled into a routine.⁸⁰ On Friday morning, UPSCA issued a statement which hailed the student victory over the “fascist” invasion of campus, but stated that the threat had passed and called now for the removal of the barricades.⁸¹ At some point in the early stages of the barricades, the police had, for unspecified reasons, arrested the cafeteria workers. Food production on the campus thus fell to the students themselves. “The President of the UP Women’s Club undertook this task. Foodstuffs came in as donations; they were cooked up at the Kamia

of 1971. In September they published an issue of *Bandilang Pula* in which they denounced the “scandalous love story of Fred (Marcos) and Dovie Beams (a CIA agent) which put our nation to great shame.” (Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), “Sino Ang Subersibo?,” *BP*, September 1971).

⁷⁸Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 8 Oct 1982, 7.

⁷⁹PC, 4 Feb 1971, 6.

⁸⁰Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 10.

⁸¹UP Student Catholic Action (UPSCA) Law Chapter, *Panawagan*, February 1971, PRP 18/22.01.

Residence Hall and brought in ration to the various barricades.”⁸² A resident of Kamia, Babes Almario, wrote a sympathetic account of the Commune in which she claimed that an “agent . . . was caught in the act of sabotaging the molotov cocktails we had neatly laid out as if in preparation for a buffet, and he was dealt the revolutionary punishment of the communards.”⁸³ Almario did not specify what this “punishment” was. The number of students continued to dwindle. Kamia, which customarily housed two hundred students, by Friday only housed twenty.⁸⁴

The barricades were voluntarily taken down by the students remaining on campus on February 9 and life at the university returned to normal. In his history of Diliman, Sison wrote that the Diliman Commune ended “only after the administration accepted several significant demands of the students and the Marcos regime accepted the recommendation of the UP president to end the military and police siege, and declare assurances that state security forces should not be deployed against the university.”⁸⁵ Sison’s account is entirely false. The military siege had been lifted days before the commune ended; assurances that state forces would not be used against the campus existed before the Commune and the events of early February marked a significant step toward their rescinding; and while the commune did publish a set of eight demands, only two were eventually partially granted and none were granted prior to the lifting of the barricades. According to Jerry Araos, whose SDKM played a key role in the arming of the barricades, “the barricades ended only when a decision from the underground [i.e., the CPP] ordered their abandonment.”⁸⁶ The barricades in the University Belt and at UP Los Baños were lifted on the same day in a coordinated manner; they had all received instructions from the CPP leadership.⁸⁷

Major explosions and fires broke out on both the Los Baños and Diliman campuses as the barricades were being taken down. Whether this was carried out by provocateurs, students opposing the lifting of the barricades or a final action of the ‘communards’ before their removal is unclear. At three in the afternoon, thirteen drums of gasoline on the Diliman campus, “set aside by students at

⁸²Daroy, “Commune and Communards,” 10. The UP Women’s Club, like nearly every organization, was torn between members supporting the KM and those opposing it. In the wake of the Women Club’s support for the Diliman Commune the Secretary, Treasurer, first Vice President and President of the organization all resigned. (, 2 no. 1 [July 1971], PRP 22/01).

⁸³PC, 5 Aug 1971, 4.

⁸⁴Ronaldo Reyes, [Memorandum], February 1971, PRP 15/05.01. The production of literature likewise began to taper off. The AS Rooftop Junta issued a manifesto on February 7, a slight affair which stated that “the masses who suffer most under [Marcos] maladministration have reached a point of realization. . . *en masse* . . . As mass realization among the people gains momentum, so does American imperialism gain deceleration.” (AS Rooftop Junta, *Manifesto for a New Order*, February 1971, PRP 02/03.01).

⁸⁵Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 58.

⁸⁶Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 77.

⁸⁷“Barikada, ayaw pa ring alisin,” *Tinig ng Mamamayan*, no. 2 (February 1971), PRP 43/05.01.

the Sampaguita residence hall suddenly caught fire [biglang lumiyab],” while at ten at night a large explosion took place at the UPLB armory.⁸⁸ *Ang Tinig ng Mamamayan*, the publication of the Los Baños barricades, speculated that it might have been set off by the NPA, but a week later SDK UPLB chair Cesar Hicaro said that the idea that “activists” had carried out the bombing was “laughable [katawa-tawa].” He instead alleged that Dean Dioscoro Umali, in cahoots with PC, had carried out the bombing to frame the activists.⁸⁹

As the barricades were taken down, SDK leaders Antonio Tagamolila, Rey Veal and Mario Taguiwalo wrote a three part front-page editorial in the *Collegian* assessing the now finished commune. Tagamolila wrote,

The ever-growing recognition by the masses of the evils of imperialism and the fascism of its staunchest ally, bureaucrat-capitalism, has in fact been accelerated by the very violence with which the fascists sought to silence the masses. . . .

The more the imperialists need to exploit the masses, the more the masses protest. The more the masses protest, the more violent will be the suppression. The more violent the fascist state becomes, the more politicalized and *the stronger the masses become*.⁹⁰

Once again, the KM and SDK argued that the violence of ‘fascism,’ was serving a good purpose – it was accelerating the growth of revolutionary consciousness: fascist suppression made the masses stronger. This was the political line of the CPP generally, and it was political poison. Veal assessed what he perceived to be the errors of the Commune – which he described as the result of “the failure to concretely assess the concrete situation.” Among its errors he listed the “adoption of a purely military viewpoint,” which led to “unnecessary pillbox explosions, [illegible] of uneasiness in military inaction, were not few. Taxis were commandeered without much regard for the political significance.” This was “subsequently rectified in the following days . . . Taxis were all returned.”⁹¹

On February 12, three days after the removal of the barricades, the Malayang Komunidad ng Diliman published its second and final issue of *Bandilang Pula*. The paper announced that the commune was being normalized in order to “consolidate gains,” but did not specify a single one. It claimed that the removal of the barricades was undertaken in return for the “presenting of demands.” Not one of the demands had been granted, they had lifted the barricades in exchange for the privilege of presenting them.⁹² The demands were:

1. Rollback the price of gasoline.

⁸⁸PC, 10 Feb 1971, 9.

⁸⁹“Barikada, ayaw pa ring alisin”; PC, 18 Feb 1971, 2.

⁹⁰Antonio Tagamolila, “I. Victory will be ours,” PC, February 1971, Emphasis added.

⁹¹Taguiwalo and Veal, “II. The University as base for the Cultural Revolution,” 9.

⁹²Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan.”

2. Guarantee against any military or police invasion of campus.
3. Justice for Pastor Mesina [not specified what this was]
4. Free use of DZUP radio
5. Free use of UP Press
6. Prosecution and dismissal of Inocente Campos [apparently distinct from justice for Pastor Mesina]
7. Investigation of the UP Security Police; prosecution and dismissal of all officials and police who collaborated with the Military invasion.
8. All students with connections with military or intelligence must disclose their connections on registration on pain of expulsion.

They wrote

It is not out of fear that we lifted the barricades ... We decided to lift the barricades on the basis of national democratic and revolutionary principles and primarily on the basis of tactical considerations.

The conditions of the barricades which were those of an emergency and of actual resistance, cannot be maintained as a permanent condition. The fascist military – of course for its own purpose – has [*sic*] by and large withdrawn its own force by Thursday ... The constant exactions, limited resources, both human and material, and the necessity for consolidation were circumstances that also had to be considered ...

*The directorate has a primary duty of securing the best conditions possible for the deepening of the national democratic cultural revolution in the University of the Philippines ... Without the proper consolidation of gains and close review and criticism of events and shortcomings, the situation will certainly regress back to the conditions before the barricade mass actions to the detriment of the national democratic forces of the University.*⁹³

In response to their demands, students were eventually given unspecified “reduced rates” for use of the UP press, and were allocated airtime at DZUP in “accordance with the rules of the University.”⁹⁴ The initial allotment of airtime was two hours a day under some form of supervision. Fred Tirante, the military spy, was made responsible for programming.⁹⁵ The hours at DZUP controlled by the KM-SDK rapidly expanded until they had nearly complete control of the station

⁹³ibid., 7. Emphasis in original. The KM and SDK seized on the lifting of the barricades as another opportunity to denounce Damiana Eugenio and other female faculty members, describing them as “erudite scabs and bums” who “have kept their maidenhead for such relevant philosophers as Northwhitehead [*sic*], Newman, Gilson, and Thoreau.” This “spinster mafia” refused to return to work, they claimed, unless the trouble-makers were punished. (ibid., 2, 3).

⁹⁴Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 10 Nov 1982, 6.

⁹⁵PC, 18 Feb 1971, 9.

by the end of 1971. This was, however, the product of gradual expansion, and was not the result of a demand granted in the wake of the barricades. Lopez stations continued to rebroadcast DZUP throughout greater Manila and the surrounding provinces. Inocente Campos was not dismissed, and in the wake of the barricades, he resumed teaching math on the Diliman campus.

Aftermath

The police filed nine charges against Ericson Baculinao, including illegal detention, malicious mischief, arson, attempted murder, and five cases of theft. A taxi driver, Pedro Magpoy, filed charges against several students for detaining his Yellow Taxi for ten hours, and another taxi driver, Francisco Cadampog, complained that the students had set fire to his Mercury Taxi in the afternoon of February 5.⁹⁶ Malay, whose account is highly sympathetic to the students, wrote that the students had “commandeered” a motorcycle with a sidecar from a local driver, had detached the sidecar and incorporated it into the barricades, while the motorcycle was used by the student leaders on campus. The owner of the tricycle requested from Malay that the motorcycle and sidecar – his source of livelihood – be returned to him, and Malay instructed him to speak to Baculinao.⁹⁷ On February 8, UP Student Councilor Ronaldo Reyes wrote a memo enumerating acts of violence and theft which he alleged occurred behind the barricades, including the death by stabbing of an Esso security guard who lived on the UP campus.⁹⁸

Mila Aguilar, meanwhile, denounced the abandonment of the barricades, writing that “The Diliman Commune lasted eight days, more than one and half months short of its counterpart in the Paris Commune of 1871.”⁹⁹ She wrote that the “normalization” of the commune, was the work of “bourgeois liberals,” and the “gains” heralded by Baculinao were, she argued, “losses.” She concluded, “From here on we can be sure that the next commune, in comparison with the first one, will be more successful, more effective – and even more thorough.”¹⁰⁰

As the barricades came down, the walls of the buildings throughout campus were found to be festooned with ‘revolutionary’ graffiti. Mario Taguiwalo and Rey Vea wrote on February 10 that “the slogans and caricatures that decorate the buildings were the product” of the “revolutionary artists” of the NPAA and the SDK-Artists’ Group (AG).¹⁰¹ Across the facades of Palma and Melchor hall “revolutionary slogans were scrawled in red paint,” the Oblation had been doused with red paint, and the walls of the Faculty Center had “Jose Ma. Sison” painted

⁹⁶PC, 10 Feb 1971, 9.

⁹⁷Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 13 Oct 1982, 6.

⁹⁸Reyes, [*Memorandum*].

⁹⁹Aguilar, “The Diliman ‘Commune’: Two Views,” 8.

¹⁰⁰Aguilar, “The Diliman ‘Commune’: Two Views,” 40.

¹⁰¹Taguiwalo and Vea, “II. The University as base for the Cultural Revolution,” 10.



(a) Palma / Dante Hall

(b) Vinzons / Alcantara Hall

Figure 31.2: Examples of the graffiti festooned buildings in the wake of the Diliman Commune.

all over them.¹⁰² The graffiti left behind in the wake of the barricades would become a decisive factor in the campus election defeat of SM later in the year.

As students returned to the campus, the leaders of the barricades began to recognize just how unpopular the ‘commune’ was with the majority of the student body. They undertook a two part response, officially defending the barricades while denouncing ‘outsiders’ for any ‘excesses.’ The UP Student Council under Ericson Baculinao passed a resolution declaring that “barricades are fine ... the UP Student Council endorse barricades as a form of protest.” A second resolution was passed on the same day commending the “revolutionary heroism” of Pastor Mesina and others.¹⁰³ The Student Council resolution claimed that the barricades initially arose spontaneously, and that they were “employed on a larger scale, and in a more effective degree and in a conscious manner during the second wave of confrontation not only in UP but in greater Manila as well.”¹⁰⁴

The official endorsement of the barricades did little to make them popular with the student body. Seizing the opportunity, the MPKP began putting up posters

¹⁰²Malay, “The UP Barricades: In Retrospect,” 13 Oct 1982, 6; Palatino, “Pagbabalik-tanaw sa Diliman Commune,” 104; PC, 18 Feb 1971, 10.

¹⁰³Ericson M. Baculinao, Jeunne Pagaduan, and Rey Vea, “Barricades are Fine”: *Resolution Endorsing the Barricades as a Form of Protest*, February 1971, PRP 18/02.01; Baculinao, Pagaduan, and Coloma, *Resolution Commending the Revolutionary Courage* Twenty-four students voted for and five against the resolution endorsing the barricades, and Baculinao circulated a letter to the student body identifying the voters. (Ericson M. Baculinao, [Letter to Students on Barricade Resolution], February 1971, PRP 18/02.18).

¹⁰⁴Baculinao, Pagaduan, and Vea, *Barricades are Fine*.

on campus attacking the KM and SDK, some of which read “Wage revolution against American Imperialism, not against UP.”¹⁰⁵ On February 10, the MPKP issued a leaflet denouncing the Diliman Commune as “a well-planned sabotage of the national democratic movement . . . Under the pretext of sympathizing with the jeepney drivers’ struggle against US oil monopolies, the KM-SDK faction ‘occupied’ the UP for 2 weeks and indulged in anarchistic and vandalistic actions that greatly undermined the fundamental interests of the movement.” The MPKP continued

Instead of going out of the narrow confines of the university and joining the pickets set up by the striking drivers outside, the KM-SDK had chosen to barricade themselves inside UP under the illusion of securing a ‘liberated area’ . . .

. . . the KM-SDK infants however overacted in declaring UP a ‘liberated area,’ looting the AS cooperative store, robbing the BA college of typewriters, smashing chairs and burning tables, blackboards, wall clocks and bulletin boards, ransacking the UP Press, and renaming several buildings in honor of dubious characters from whom they apparently draw inspiration . . .

Because this gangster faction led by the opportunist traitor Jose Ma. Sison arrogantly label their actions as thos [sic] of the national democratic forces, the movement is forced to clean its tarnished image before the masses and repudiate the KM-SDK Sisonite faction as agents of opportunism and counter-revolution and enemies of the people!¹⁰⁶

The KM and SDK leadership, in the second and final issue of *Bandilang Pula*, admitted that “after the first wave of troops entering the campus, they lost many cadre, who left, and should have been managing the barricades. Many wasted their explosives that were paid for with money [na ginastusan ng salapi]. Because of this, the barricades were often run by outside forces . . . ” The theft and vandalism, they claimed, was the work of these outsiders, writing, “Also, because of a lack of organization, many suspicious infiltrators [maraming mga kahina-hinalang impiltrador] were able to enter and safely sabotage the property of UP breaking into and robbing many places [iba’t ibang lugal] on campus during periods of confusion.”¹⁰⁷ We know, however, from the students’ own accounts, that the ‘communards’ themselves had broken into many of the buildings on campus and taken ‘university property.’ The literature of February 1 to 9 is

¹⁰⁵Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Ang Pagbabarikada ay Makatarungan,” *Kal* 2, no. 2 (1971), 7, PRP 32/02.02.

¹⁰⁶Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, *On the KM-SDK “Occupation” of UP*, February 1971, PRP 10/31.03.

¹⁰⁷Malayang Purok ng Diliman, “Diliman: Pinto ng Bagong Lipunan,” A.

replete with accounts of breaking windows and crawling into labs to get acid and other chemicals for explosives, for example. Rather than defend these actions as necessary for the defense of the barricades, the leadership disavowed them, claiming that they were carried out by infiltrators. The SDK began directly blaming the MPKP for the vandalism and theft which had occurred during the Commune, arguing that if the MPKP had manned the barricades with them there would have been sufficient forces to prevent such crimes.¹⁰⁸

On February 16, the MPKP wrote that the KM-SDK “like gossiping village women ... fabricates [*sic*] poisonous lies” against the MPKP.¹⁰⁹ The MPKP accused Clarence Agarao, Chairman of Defense of the Provisional Directorate of the Diliman Commune, of having physically assaulted an MPKP member, and claimed that another MPKP member – a resident of Narra hall – had been kicked. They claimed that the MPKP bulletin board had been torn down, and that a “KM element in Olongapo tried to burn with a cigarette butt the face of a female MPKP organizer.” Because of all this, the MPKP stated, “the KM-SDK finds itself more and more alienated from the members of the UP community.” That the KM and SDK were losing support was true; the loss of support was more widespread than just the Diliman campus, however.

Adriel Meimban, President of UP Baguio Student Council, wrote to the *Collegian*, assessing the pickets and barricades at the various university campuses. The issue in every protest he stated was “fascism, fascism and fascism.”¹¹⁰ In Meimban’s assessment, far from winning over public sympathy, despite the brutality of the police, the methods of the students were alienating the public. He wrote, “What was ironical was that the students already suffered physically from pistol butts, karate chops and other manhandling tactics, yet the public opinion deplored and discredited the cause espoused by the students. ... [In the wake of the protests] our credibility with the Baguio populace has firmly registered a zero point.”

Salvador Lopez initiated a Committee of Inquiry into the causes of the barricades which issued its final report on March 17 based on interviews with seventy-eight participants, including students, faculty, police and university officials. Ericson Baculinao and many of the leaders of the Commune refused to be interviewed. The UP Student Council made Sonny Coloma, one of the spokesmen of the barricades, responsible for heading up a Diliman Historical Committee which was charged with commemorating the Commune. The Committee staged a Tagalog production of Three Penny Opera – *Operata Tatlong Kusing*. By the summer of 1971, the military spy Fred Tirante had graduated from UP, and his name disappears from the later records of the CPP and its front organizations.¹¹¹

On examination, the barricades, and particularly the affair known as the

¹⁰⁸BP, 1, no. 4 (July 1971): 10, PRP 22/02.

¹⁰⁹UP, *Who the Real Gangsters Are*.

¹¹⁰PC, 10 Feb 1971, 8.

¹¹¹PC, 13 Oct 1971, 11.

Diliman Commune, proved to be an unmitigated defeat for the KM and SDK. They lost almost all connection with the striking jeepney drivers, a great deal of support from the student body and, as a direct result of the barricades, the SM lost the 1971-72 campus elections. The barricades were taken down without being granted a single demand. They provided yet another pretext for Marcos' declaration of martial law. At the end of nine days, at least one student was dead, another paralyzed and many were wounded; if we include the University Belt barricades, the death toll grows to seven. The barricades were not a spontaneous expression of student anger, or a response to police encroachments. They were a calculated policy, planned in advance and implemented by the leadership of the KM and SDK, with the motive of service to a section of the bourgeoisie which was in early 1971 looking to topple Marcos.

In September 1971, less than a month after Marcos' suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, Gintong Silahis staged a drama, *Barikada*, at UP Theater. *Barikada* described itself as a play freely based on the events of February 1-9. The program for the event informs us that the make up for the *Barikada* performers was done by Beautifont, high fashion cosmetics, "distinctively formulated for the Filipina;" the next page was headlined "Destroy the state machinery of the ruling classes."¹¹² There was an anarchistic tone throughout the performance, calling for the destruction of the old culture and the smashing of the state, but never for the seizing of state power. Behn Cervantes staged the production, which was modeled on the style of Peking Opera, with choreography and songs entitled "Paper Tiger," and "The people are what matter." It concluded with fifty red flags waved throughout the auditorium and the singing of the Internationale. The event was sponsored by La Pacita Biscuits, and they staged repeat performances October 8-9.¹¹³ The Vice President of the Philippines, Fernando Lopez, arranged for the play to be staged at the prestigious Meralco Theater, owned by the Lopez family.¹¹⁴ The right-wing Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and an organization calling itself Concerned Families of Area Two put out a leaflet calling for a protest of the performance of *Barikada*, which asked "What have the barricades accomplished? Have they really lowered the price of oil? Has it banded the academics and students in one united community?" The leaflet referred to the "sufferings" of those who lived within the campus, speaking of "the sleepless nights children had to spend because of the sound of pillboxes indiscriminately thrown by outsiders manning the barricades."¹¹⁵

In September 1972, Inocente Campos was acquitted on all charges. The judge ruled that Campos "acted upon an impulse of an uncontrollable fear of an equal

¹¹²Gintong Silahis, *Barikada: Isang Makasaysayang Pagtatanghal*, September 1971, PRP 17/14.01.

¹¹³Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), "On the Style of Work of Malacañang's Most Loyal Agent in Vinzons," *The Partisan*, September 1971, 2, PRP 37/17.03.

¹¹⁴Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 119.

¹¹⁵Concerned Families of Area Two and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), *Down with Barricades*, September 1971, PRP 05/16.01.

or greater injury.”¹¹⁶ Campos shot Mesina, the judge argued, because he feared “a greater injury” than the death which he dealt to an unarmed seventeen-year-old. A week later, Marcos declared martial law.

¹¹⁶PC, 14 Sep 1972.

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The Dispute over Feudalism

*Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.*

— Matthew Arnold, *The Last Word*

‘Paglilinaw sa “Philippine Crisis”’

Several weeks after the *Collegian* published the first chapter of *Philippine Society and Revolution*, Jesus Lava wrote a twelve page response to Sison’s accusations, which he entitled “Paglilinaw sa Philippine Crisis,” [Clarifying “Philippine Crisis”] and the text was somehow brought out of the prison where Lava was held and disseminated in mimeographed form.¹ The article can be logically divided into two parts – the first responded to Sison’s claim that feudalism was the social base of imperialism and the second to several of the historical accusations leveled at the Lava leadership of the Party.

Lava’s basic contention in the first part was that US imperialism was actively working to liquidate feudalism and replace it with capitalism in its neo-colonies around the globe. He argued that US imperialism recognized that the national democratic revolution had two fundamental components: the liberation struggle of the anti-imperialist movement; and the agrarian revolution. During the period which Lava termed “old colonialism,” the imperialist-feudal alliance had predominated. This period was marked by exploitation carried out through the mining industry and large plantations, and was based on the production of raw materials and the importation of finished products from the United States. As US imperialism was increasingly imperiled by agrarian uprisings around the world, however, this arrangement was jeopardized and Washington responded with what Lava called “bagong kolonyalismo” [new colonialism, although perhaps best translated as neo-colonialism]. We all know, Lava wrote, that an ordinary

¹Lava, *Paglilinaw sa “Philippine Crisis”*.

peasant does not understand imperialism and it is difficult to explain it to him. He does not protest against imperialism, but rather against his exploitation by the hacenderos. As long as feudalism persists the peasant will fight for agrarian revolution, and this uprising will be the strongest and most reliable force in the national democratic movement. US imperialism recognized this, Lava argued, and, threatened by peasant uprisings and national democratic revolutions throughout the world, Washington began to carry out land reform in nations around the globe, as it did, for example, in Taiwan.² Reality thus contradicted Sison's thesis that feudalism is the social base of imperialism on two counts. First, US imperialism persists in countries where feudalism has been eliminated and second, the persistence of feudalism in the countryside, under neo-colonialism, is not the social base of imperialism but the fuse of its demise. Because of this, Lava argued, the imperialists, far from perpetuating feudalism, are working to eliminate it. Lava concluded on this point that Sison's theory had dangerous implications for the national democratic movement as it followed from Sison's theory that as soon as feudalism was removed imperialism would collapse, even if feudalism was not removed by the national democratic revolution.

Sison and Lava shared a common and incorrect understanding of feudalism and capitalism. For both of these men, capitalism meant industrialization. Lava characterized vast mining operations and cash-crop, export driven plantation agriculture owned by large corporations as "feudalism." These relations were not the result of feudalism but the product of global capitalism of which the Philippines was an inextricable part. For both of these Stalinist thinkers, however, the pre-eminent problem was the feudal character of the Philippine economy, and the tasks of the day were thus capitalist ones, not socialist. They shared the programmatic line of a two-stage revolution. They differed, however, over how 'feudalism' was to be eliminated. Sison maintained that it required an armed struggle in the countryside, while Lava was beginning to put forward the line, which was now being articulated by Moscow, of the "Non-capitalist road to socialism." In this conception, imperialism itself was "liquidating feudalism." The task for the PKP was thus to support the government through which the liquidation of feudalism was being carried out, to orient it toward Moscow and, through Moscow's assistance, facilitate the transition toward socialism. Lava did not entirely develop these ideas in *Paglilinaw*. They were however its ideological basis, and were fully articulated by the PKP in the first months of 1973 during its Sixth Congress.

In the second portion of *Paglilinaw*, Lava addressed a number of accusations raised by Sison. Sison had accused Lava of supporting Macapagal's land reform. Lava responded by quoting from four of his letters written to Macapagal in 1963, which revealed two points. First, Lava recognized that the land reform served the

²Lava thus referred indirectly to Taiwan as a "nation" [bansa]. Sison would castigate him for this characterization.

interests of US imperialism, and second, despite this recognition, Lava supported the land reform. He argued that the peasant masses wanted land reform and the party thus could not oppose the land reform without losing the support of the masses. The idea that the party could have warned the peasants, exposed the nature of the land reform deal, or could in any way *lead* the masses, was alien to Lava.

Why then, Lava asked, if it was supported by US imperialism, did Macapagal's land reform fail? Sison answered this with the argument that the government did not dedicate adequate resources to the land reform. Lava responded that this was simplistic, for if imperialism wanted the land reform to succeed it would dedicate the resources. He argued that the land reform failed because of contradictions within Philippine society and to a certain extent within the United States. In the Philippines, he claimed, manufacturers wanted land reform to increase their market of goods; "clerico-fascists" wanted land reform in order to undermine the national democratic movement; workers wanted land reform in order to expand the market for the companies which employed them, which, Lava argued, would create new jobs and increase workers wages;³ but landlords opposed the land reform. Within the United States, finance capital and manufacturing interests supported the land reform because it would secure new markets for them and protect them against the national democratic movement, but the military and the arms manufacturers opposed it because they were invested in the suppression of the peasant uprisings. These same class forces existed in every country of belated capitalist development, and yet Lava was arguing that land reform had been successfully implemented in many of these other countries. The logic of Lava's argument led to the conclusion that what was lacking was the authority and power of the executive to override the contradictions within Philippine society and carry out land reform. The PKP would mobilize the support of MASAKA behind martial law with precisely this claim: Marcos would use dictatorship to implement land reform.

What both Sison and Lava conspicuously ignored was that Macapagal's land reform was a success. Its goal was never to secure land ownership for the peasantry but to convert older forms of agricultural relations to a cash rent basis. MASAKA was founded to implement this program, and the PKP, and particularly Sison, gave it their wholehearted support.

Lava's article was followed in January 1971 by a piece written by William Pomeroy and published in the PKP's new journal, *World Outlook*, entitled "Lessons of the Liberation Struggle in the Philippines." Pomeroy argued that the ties which the Marcos government was opening with 'socialist countries' meant that the Philippines was embarking on the "non-Capitalist road of development." For this

³The party's complete isolation from the working class was here apparent. Lava argued that workers desired the expansion of corporate markets and profit margins as they knew that the benefits would trickle down to them. This is the voice of Henry Ford not Karl Marx.

to succeed, however, would require the support of the masses mobilized by the vanguard party. In other words, Marcos opening ties with Moscow and Eastern Europe meant that the PCKP should support his government.⁴

‘Against the Wishful Thinking...’

On January 27 *Ang Bayan* published a special issue in which Sison responded to Lava’s *Paglilinaw*, entitled “Against the Wishful Think of a Revisionist Puppet of US Imperialism.”⁵ Sison’s response contained a great deal more vitriol than Lava’s. Where Lava suggested that Sison might be lying, Sison denounced Lava’s *Paglilinaw* as a “brazen act of treason” and “unmitigated treason.”⁶ Lava’s response had been written in the latter half of 1970 and while it was not conciliatory in tone, it lacked the bile of Sison’s diatribes.

Sison defended the claim that feudalism was the social base of US imperialism by citing the authority of Mao. He wrote

Unwittingly, Lava exposes for everybody’s contempt his colossal ignorance of Marxism-Leninism. He does not know that the formulation to the effect that the landlord class forms the main social base for imperialist rule in a semicolonial and semifeudal country is already part of the great treasure of Marxism-Leninism and is verified by Philippine history, including current reality. This formulation was first made by Comrade Mao Zedong to reflect Old China that was dominated by imperialism and feudalism. (60)

In Sison’s conception, it was not necessary refer to any specific text or to develop an argument; citing Mao’s name sufficed to demonstrate the truth of his claim. He continued on this basis to assert that “Philippine society is still semicolonial and semifeudal and will remain so until the triumph of the new democratic revolution.”

Responding to the fact that Lava wrote letters of advice to Macapagal, Sison wrote “If Lava were truly revolutionary, as he was no less the general secretary of a communist party, he had no business in the very first place to write letters of advice for a puppet chieftain of US imperialism like Macapagal. No true Communist would ever cheapen himself this way before the enemy.” (65) Sison’s hypocrisy is staggering. He himself hailed Macapagal as carrying out the ‘unfinished revolution,’ and he wrote the handbook on Macapagal’s land reform which was dedicated “To President Macapagal, for his relentless struggle

⁴William J. Pomeroy, “Lessons of the Liberation Struggle in the Philippines,” *World Outlook* 1, no. 1 (1971): 44–51.

⁵Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 59–76. This edition of *Ang Bayan* is no longer extant. The text of Sison’s response can be reconstructed from PC, 18 Feb, 4–5; 25 Feb 1971, 4–5.

⁶Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 61, 62.

to emancipate the Filipino peasant.”⁷ What is more, if Lava “had no business” writing letters of advice to Macapagal, what are we to make of Sison’s writing a respectful letter of advice to Marcos in October 1967?⁸ Sison doubled down on his hypocrisy, writing “A true Communist is bound to oppose every sham land reform law passed by the enemy and to lead the revolutionary peasant movement – not to toady up to the imperialist landlord agent Macapagal!” (65) Sison wrote with the audacity of one who is certain that the political actions of but eight years prior had been effectively buried and that no one could call him to account for his past behavior.

Sison concluded his response to Lava with a denunciation. “As usual the Lava revisionist manifesto makes a call for ‘unity, unity and greater unity.’ To hell with the revisionist puppets of US imperialists; they can always unite with their fellow devils.” (76) Sison’s response, “Against the Wishful Thinking”, added essentially nothing to what had already been said. Both Sison and Lava, both the CPP and the PKP, were convinced that the tasks of the revolution were national and democratic in character, not socialist. On this basis, both worked to form an alliance with a section of the bourgeoisie. Lava and the PKP, however, argued on the basis of Moscow’s line of a “non-Capitalist road” that imperialism was liquidating feudalism, and that Marcos thus would carry out the tasks of the national democratic revolution, and that the party by allying with him could win him over to the autocratic construction of socialism. Sison and the CPP, meanwhile, claimed that only a protracted people’s war could effectively end the semifeudal character of the Philippine economy, carried out in alliance with sections of the bourgeoisie opposed to Marcos. Neither side acknowledged the capitalist character of the Philippine economy, or that its belated and uneven development was a necessary expression of capitalism, not feudalism.

On February 18 and 25 the *Collegian* published Sison’s response to Lava, but it never carried Lava’s *Paglilinaw*. The publication of Sison’s response became the center of campus debate in early March.

Diliman ‘konfrontasi’

On March 3, the MPKP-BRPF and KM-SDK staged a public debate at Palma Hall on the UP campus, which was referred to in posters and local publicity as a ‘konfrontasi.’ The debate had been provoked by the publication of Sison’s response to Lava in the *Collegian* and largely centered around whether imperialism was “liquidating feudalism.” The KM and SDK, following Sison, maintained that feudalism was the social base of imperialism, while the MPKP and BRPF followed the line of Lava.⁹ There was a packed house for the event and the groups were

⁷LM, *Handbook on the Land Reform Code*.

⁸See page 332.

⁹Rosca, “View from the Left: Word War I,” 44.

represented by Rey Veja (SDK) and Rey Tiquia (KM) on the one side and Ed Tadem (MPKP) and Lito Quiray (BRPF) on the other.¹⁰

Rey Veja argued that the MPKP claimed that “all of the ruling class should be attacked.” He responded “This is based on the wrong move of not making *tactical* use of the contradiction within the ruling class but of helping the ruling class consolidate itself against the masses. What could be more counter-revolutionary than this?”¹¹ Both sides in fact supported an alliance with a section of the ruling class and Veja knew this. He was needling his rivals to admit that this was their political line so that he could then ask what section of the ruling class currently deserved support. The answer for the MPKP, of course, was Marcos, but they could not admit this. The program of the Stalinists on both sides of the debate was predicated on the conception that opposition to the entire ruling class was “counter-revolutionary.”

Much of the debate was given over to name-calling. The MPKP denounced the KM and SDK as “shameless loudmouths” who “excrete fabricated charges.” They claimed that the Lavas successfully led the PKP in the 1950s; Veja denounced this claim as “blasphemous.” The MPKP stated that the KM and SDK “ride on the crest of the purely anti-Marcos wave together with the anti-Marcos bourgeoisie, landowners and compradors and never really lead the masses in struggle. This is sacrificing the long-range goals for short-term achievements.”¹² The MPKP concluded that “when pseudo-revolutionaries mouth lies and slanderous statements against other groups engaged in the struggle, this no longer constitutes revolutionary propaganda. This is rather a revival of Nazi propaganda camouflaged with revolutionary catchwords.” The SDK responded that the MPKP were “children joyously wallowing in their ignorance and confusion.” They reiterated their line that



Figure 32.1: The CPP – PKP split depicted in *APL*. Note that the root cause of the split is clearly the Sino-Soviet dispute. [Elmer Abustan. *APL*, 23 Apr 1971, 12]

¹⁰ *The Partisan*, March 1971, PRP 37/15.05.

¹¹ PC, 4 Mar 1971, 3.

¹² PC, 4 Mar 1971, 6.

the Philippines was semi-feudal, semi-colonial and the struggle of the masses – workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and nationalist bourgeoisie – was to achieve national democracy.

The essence of the dispute boiled down to two points: first, opposition to Marcos; and second, the question of feudalism. Both groups agreed on the bloc of four classes and the two stage theory of revolution, both concluded with calls for the masses to wage revolution for national democracy, but the MPKP stated that Marcos was ‘liquidating feudalism’ and the KM and SDK claimed that he was not. By mid March there was an ongoing “poster war in AS lobby,” as both the KM-SDK and the MPKP were producing posters denouncing each other. Some of the MPKP posters read “KM-Makaintsik” [KM-Pro-Chinese].¹³ The dispute between the Diliman front groups of the PKP and CPP received broad notice. Teddy Locsin covered it in the *Philippines Free Press* in an article entitled, “Red vs. Red.”¹⁴ Locsin surveyed the dispute over feudalism and the Marcos administration without taking sides and wrote,

In the middle of the 1920s, Leon Trotsky advised the Chinese Communists to break away from the Kuomintang and seize power. Soviet Russia was the dominant foreign influence in China and with more than enough power, with the aid of the Chinese people, to offset the influence of Imperial Britain. But Stalin felt that the Communists were too weak to seize power and preferred to pamper Chiang-Kai-shek in the hope of gaining time for the Communists to strengthen themselves. Instead, Chiang used the time to strengthen his hand at the expense of the Communists. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek struck a bargain with the Chinese bourgeoisie and the imperialist powers. Feeling himself strong enough, he attacked the Communists. The Communists waited for orders from Moscow to retaliate against Chiang; instead Stalin advised them to be patient. Chiang would soon get over his reactionary fit and reconcile with the Communists. At any rate, resistance was futile, Stalin argued, the masses in the city were not prepared. But they were. In April 1927, the workers of Shanghai captured the city from a Chiang warlord. The very day when the fighting ended, Chiang entered the city. Stalin advised the Communists to lay down their arms and turn the city over to Chiang and submit to his leadership. They ended up submitting to their execution. After they lay down their arms, Chiang massacred the Communists. Tens of thousands must have died in the mass purges.

(7)

Locsin drew the historical parallel in order to highlight that a great deal was

¹³PC, 11 Mar 1971, 10.

¹⁴PPF, 3 Apr 1971, 6-7.

riding on the political dispute between the PKP and the CPP. Being right in these matters could mean the difference between life and death for thousands, and in 1927 Trotsky was right and Stalin's policy led to the massacre of the CCP. Locsin drew no further conclusions from the dispute between the CPP and PKP; he did not present the fact that both the CPP and PKP were Stalinist parties and thus shared the political line that had led to the slaughter of 1927.

The Diliman debate over feudalism was bound up with the dispute between the KM-SDK and the MPKP-BRPF over the barricades. The KM (UP) argued in the pages of *Kalayaan* "our construction of barricades on the University of the Philippines" was a "firm symbol of our protest against the raising of the price of oil and gasoline. It was also an expression [pagpapahiwatig] of our unity with the the nationalist drivers [mga makabayang tsuper] who were then on strike."¹⁵ The KM continued, "Because the fascist state could not understand these principles for which we were fighting, it violently moved to tear down the barricades that we had built." The MPKP-BRPF, they argued, "are now emerging as the villains of history [mga kontrabida ng kasaysayan], a truth which it is very difficult for them to swallow." (4)

In order to more thoroughly expose the black history of the MPKP-BRPF, we will clarify the differences between their "principles" – if you can call them "principles" – and the principles of the true National Democratic movement.

The MPKP-BRPF follows the line, or thinking, of the Lavas ... The Lavas, first of all, do not believe that feudalism is a tool of American Imperialism. In their discussions, the MPKP spreads the idea that American imperialists will "allow" ["papayagan"] Filipinos to build their own industry [magtatag ng sariling industriya] ...

Because of this wrong belief of the Lava-faction, MPKP-BRPF, they accept the "land reform" program of the fascist-lapdog government [pasisintang-tutang pamahalaan]...¹⁶ (6-7)

The formulation "allow Filipinos to build their own industry" is revealing, for this was the heart of the dispute. Liquidating feudalism, according to both sides, meant the development of industry owned by Filipinos. Their disagreement centered on whether or not Marcos would carry this out. Both groups denied that the Philippine economy was capitalist and an integral component of global capitalism; until Filipino businessmen owned Filipino industry, the economy, they claimed, remained feudal.¹⁷

¹⁵KM, "Ang Pagbabarikada ay Makatarungan," 3.

¹⁶One is inclined to wonder what a fascist lapdog looks like.

¹⁷At the conclusion of the konfrontasi, Sonny Coloma, a student council member who had served as spokesperson for the Diliman Commune, launched an investigation of four student councilors for travel to 'socialist,' i.e., Soviet allied, countries: Victor Sumulong, Danny Dequito,

The Diliman 'konfrontasi' was not a particularly edifying affair. While the publications of the PKP and its front groups continued to use far more measured language than those of the CPP, the debate on the Diliman campus provided a glimpse of the political fury massing behind the self-restraint. The opening of pingpong diplomacy in April would pry away the last stones of political temperance and the party's ill-concealed rage would flood the pages of its broadsheets, leaflets and manifestos.

Reggie Velasco and Bill Lingad. (PC, 18 Feb 1971). By mid March he concluded from his investigation that these four had traveled to Eastern Europe "under highly mysterious circumstances," and Coloma led the SM in voting in the Student Council to have the four expelled from the council. (PC, 11 Mar 1971). It is noteworthy that these councilors who seem to have had ties to the MPKP were receiving government funding to travel to Eastern Europe.

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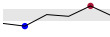
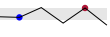
Fragmentation of Labor

*¿Dónde buscar tus rasgos y tu nombre?
Esas son cosas que el antiguo olvido
Guarda.*

— Jorge Luis Borges, *A un poeta sajón*

In February 1971, the CPP attempted with secret conspiracies and plots to seize hold of the labor movement, wresting it from Ignacio Lacsina's NATU and the jeepney drivers' unions. The attempt failed. Lacsina expelled the KM and SDK from NATU, and Carlos del Rosario, central committee member of the CPP responsible for its work among the labor unions, was murdered. The CCP founded its own breakaway union groups, organized almost entirely at small corporations owned by Chinese Filipinos whom the CPP targeted in an openly racist fashion.

One of the difficulties in writing this work was the sparsity of detail available on the labor struggles in which the CPP and PKP were involved in the early 1970s. While they produced copious printed material for protests and rallies, there is practically no residue of their involvement in strikes or in the working class more generally.

The early 1970s saw an explosion of labor struggles. In 1968, 584,498 man-days were reported lost due to strikes and work-stoppages. In 1969 this number nearly doubled  to 1,066,642 man-days lost, and by 1971, it had risen to 1,429,195.¹ There was likewise a growth in the number of workers going on strike, rising from 46,445 in 1968 to 62,138 in 1971.  The growth in the number of man-days lost, however, was grossly disproportionate to growth in the number of workers who went on strike. Where the number of workers who went on strike grew by 34% from 1968 to 1971, the number of man-days lost to strikes

¹Elias T Ramos, "Labor Conflict and Recent Trends in Philippine Industrial Relations," *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 15, no. 3 (1987): 181. The data for 1972 was cut off by the declaration of martial law in September, but by the end of August there had been over a million man-days lost.

grew 145%. This was an expression of the fact that the strikes were becoming significantly more protracted.

The dearth of material on the role of the CPP and PKP and their front organizations in these labor struggles is more than an accident of the archive. It reflects a fundamental fact about the class orientation of both Stalinist parties: these were not parties of the working class. Their membership was not drawn from its ranks and their orientation was elsewhere. This is not to say that the CPP and PKP did not intervene in labor struggles; they did, although not consistently. At times they entirely ignored workers struggles and strikes. If I had based my account of the 1963 port strike on the literature produced by the Communist Party and the Lapiang Manggagawa, I would not have been able to write a single line, for they did not intervene at the port; they pointedly ignored the life-and-death struggle of the arrastre workers. When the CPP or PKP did intervene it was to orient the workers' struggles to interests alien, and often antithetical, to those of the workers themselves. The CPP and PKP produced very little documentation of these betrayals. They did not produce material explaining capitalism to the working class on the basis of the workers' concrete experiences; they did not document the record of workers strikes or explore the lessons to be gained from these struggles.

Using the thin layer of material available, it is possible nonetheless to reconstruct, at least in outline form, the role of the CPP and its front organizations in the labor struggles of the period. The interventions of the CPP in the working class had a particular character. Young people in the KM and SDK would be sent to existing picket lines, where they would stage "revolutionary dramas" – street theater productions of a moralistic and motivational character. The youths would sing "revolutionary songs" and would conduct "criticism-self criticism" sessions among the workers. These interventions felt like nothing so much as a church outreach, inviting the workers to Sunday School. The other aspect of the KM and SDK interventions on the workers' picket lines was their deliberate escalation of tensions with the police, as they came armed with pillboxes and molotov cocktails and at times actively sought to provoke violence. State repression was educative, the CPP claimed, and would propel the workers to armed struggle, for this was the goal of the CPP's interventions in the working class: directing workers to leave the city and take up arms in the countryside.

In early 1971, the Central Committee wrote the CPP's *Guide to Building Organs of Political Power*. In this document the CPP stated that the task of the party in carrying out work among the working class was three-fold: first, to secretly control the actions of the union [pamunuan ng lihim ang kilos ng unyon]; second, to send to the countryside those workers who were ready to or needed to join the NPA [papuntahin sa kanayunan ang mga manggagawang handa or kinakailangan sumama sa Bagong Hukbong Bayan]; and third, to spread the overall mass movement of workers in alliance with the movement of other

democratic classes.² This was a codification of the work in which the party was already engaged and the three-fold orientation of the party outlined in the 1971 *Guide* had been the basis of the CPP's activities in the working class from the founding of the party. Sison in October 1970 described this work "of building organs of political power" as already underway.³

The impact of this policy was an immense boon to the bourgeoisie. The most politically advanced and militant workers were taken out of the workforce and sent to the hills. The CPP functioned as a social safety valve, overseeing a constant venting of steam from the system of capitalist exploitation which it diffused across the countryside. Those workers who remained in the factories were directed to ally with their exploiters, the capitalists, who were after all, one of the "other democratic classes." Strikes which came under the leadership of the CPP were thus treated as means of ensuring crackdowns by the state to hasten the deployment of advanced workers to the countryside. By the rationale of the Maoists, a defeat on the picket line would be far more politically effective in propelling the workers toward armed struggle than a victory and the CPP thus exercised no care or caution for the well-being of the striking workers. Of all the strikes in which the KM and SDK were involved which I have been able to document not a single one ended with the striking workers returning to work, let alone securing even a minor victory. The workers were uniformly arrested, thrown out of work, or killed. The only time the workers managed to retain their jobs was when they voted the KM-SDK union out of their workplace.

The patient political education of the working class, which Lenin detailed in his work *What is to be Done?*, involves the systematic and persistent explanation to workers of their objective conditions and of the tasks which history has posed before them. No police truncheon beating can fill the need for careful education in the political program of the party. Revolutionary leadership does not consist in provoking violence and relying on the state to 'educate' workers with its blows.

The CPP was thus, explicitly and programmatically, not engaged in a struggle against the capitalist class. When workers organized themselves, and courageously mounted the picket lines, they were entering into direct opposition to the capitalist owners. The role of the CPP was to dispel this confrontation and it fulfilled this quite effectively. The most articulate workers and the fiercest fighters were sent to the countryside; those who remained were eventually beaten back into submission or removed from the job.

The CPP's interventions among the working class served the interests of a section of the bourgeoisie in another way as well. The CPP would not call strikes at companies belonging to its bourgeois allies as these national capitalists were part of the progressive national united front and were, the CPP told the workers, their allies. The CPP would instruct workers in these companies not to strike,

²CPP, *Mga Kaukulang Probisyon sa Saligang Batas ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, 14.

³AB, 15 Oct 1970, 18.

but to focus their energy on the larger political struggle against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The CPP promoted strikes at companies owned by Chinese businessmen or occasionally, Americans – the business rivals of their capitalist allies. Every strike during this period that I have been able to trace in which the CPP intervened occurred in a business which they deemed to have foreign ownership. The overwhelming majority were owned by Chinese Filipinos.

The CPP's chief point of contact with NATU and Ignacio Lacsina, responsible for implementing the party's policies in the working class, was Central Committee member Carlos del Rosario. Carlos Del Rosario, known as Charlie, was born in 1945. His parents owned a dry goods store on Blumentritt St, and his father, Feliciano del Rosario, was the Vice President of the Vendors Association.⁴ Del Rosario attended the University of the Philippines for a year and then transferred to Lyceum so that he could work more closely with Sison. Del Rosario was a founding member of the KM, and was speaking at its rallies as early as March 1965.⁵ He became head of the KM at Lyceum and then General Secretary of the entire organization, replacing Prospero Palma.⁶ In 1970, Del Rosario became a member of the MDP secretariat.⁷ He met Frances de Lima, the sister of Juliet de Lima, in Joma and Juliet's home. Carlos and Frances married in October 1970, and del Rosario became Joma's brother-in-law. Nemesio Prudente made Del Rosario an instructor in the Political Science department at the Philippine College of Commerce (PCC) in 1969.⁸

Sison claimed that from the founding of the party, Carlos del Rosario served as its primary connection to the labor movement, working with NATU and the SPP.⁹ The CPP relationship to the working class was thus largely mediated through Ignacio Lacsina. Working closely with Lacsina was Rodolfo del Rosario, who had been the right-hand man of Lacsina since at least the early 1960s. He was listed as the Vice President of NATU in September 1963, when he wrote a letter to the *Chronicle* praising Macapagal.¹⁰ Rodolfo del Rosario was a member of the KM consultative council, but his primary allegiance had always been to Lacsina.¹¹ The relationship between the CPP and Lacsina became increasingly tense between 1969 and 1971. Lacsina and NATU backed Marcos in the 1969 election but the CPP ignored this and continued to work with him. In the latter half of 1970 the CPP

⁴Ninotchka Rosca, "Where's Charlie?," *APL*, May 1971, 47. Several sources list Del Rosario's birth year as 1943, but all affirm that he was 27 at the time of his death in March 1971.

⁵Damo-Santiago, *A Century of Activism*, 71.

⁶The KM would incorrectly claim in its obituaries for Del Rosario that he was the first Secretary General of the KM. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UE, "Supplementary Issue on the Philippine Crisis, Part III," *Anak-Pawis*, 1971, 2, PRP 19/09.01).

⁷PC, 18 Mar 1971, 7.

⁸Rosca, "Where's Charlie?"

⁹Sison, *Ka Felixberto 'Bert' Olalia*.

¹⁰MC, 20 Sep 1963.

¹¹APL, 25 Aug 1972, 17.



Figure 33.1: Carlos del Rosario. *APL*, 7 May 1971, 10.

began plotting to take over the NATU and SPP affiliated unions and in early 1971 they launched this attempt. Lacsina responded by ousting the KM members of NATU and allying with the PKP. In March 1971, Carlos del Rosario was murdered. The CPP founded its own labor union federation, Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng mga Manggagawa [Federation of Workers Associations] (KASAMA), but it was largely based among students and KM activists and lacked a significant base in the working class.

Northern Motors

A substantial part in the initial protests at the beginning of 1970 just prior to the outbreak of the First Quarter Storm had been played by workers. At the center of their participation was the Northern Motors Free Workers Union (NMFU) which had been on strike since October 21 1969. The leadership of these labor protests rested primarily with NATU, and Rodolfo del Rosario was responsible for coordinating them. A franchise operation owned by the Yutivo and Sycip families, Northern Motors was the largest GM plant outside the United States. The plant operated six days a week, running either two or three shifts a day. In August

1969, the three year labor contract of the workers at Northern Motors expired and the NMFwu advanced the demand for a ₱125 monthly living allowance in addition to base pay to compensate for mounting inflation. General Manager David Sycip responded with the offer of a ₱15 monthly increase. Talks stalled and, in October, 812 workers in the NMFwu went on strike. Students visited the picket lines and performed a Tagalog adaptation of Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*, translated as "Ang Paghihintay kay Andong."¹²

In the first week of January 1970, the NMFwu sent a representative to the UP Student Council, which issued a statement declaring that Northern Motors was a "good example of imperialist dominance of our economy ... the general manager David Sycip is an American citizen of Chinese extraction."¹³ Sycip wrote a response to the *Collegian* denying that he was an American citizen – "I am certain that they know that I am a Filipino" – and claiming that ninety percent of Northern Motors shareholders were Filipino as well.¹⁴ On January 10 the leaders of the NMFwu – Marcial de Leon, union president; Flor Sarmiento, secretary; and Virgilio San Pedro, director – were arrested on charges of "grave coercion."¹⁵ The strike ended on March 15.

Not a single leaflet of the KM, SDK, or any other front organization of the CPP is extant from this labor struggle. The leadership of the strike rested with NATU, Rodolfo del Rosario and Ignacio Lacsina. By early 1971, Virgilio San Pedro would break the NMFwu from NATU on instructions from the CPP and would become the president of the newly founded union umbrella organization, KASAMA.

US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union

The union organization campaign at US Tobacco Corporation seems to have been a central focus of the KM. Arthur Garcia, prior to the founding of the CPP, had engaged in work organizing the US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union (USTCLU). Leading members of the CPP emerged from this union, including Ruben Guevarra, Renato Casipe, Manuel Alabado, and Peter Mutuc.¹⁶ The impulse to organize at US Tobacco was an expression of the CPP's judgment that the corporation was a leading example of US imperialism in the Philippines. US Tobacco was, after all, Harry Stonehill's company, and while Stonehill was no longer in the Philippines, the US Tobacco Corporation (USTC) was managed by his partners Robert and John Brooks.

¹² *Molabe Monthly*, 1969, 1, no. 3, pp. 62-65. While this news item appeared in the September-October issue of *Molabe Monthly*, the article itself is dated November 15.

¹³PC, 5 Jan; 8 Jan 1970, 6.

¹⁴PC, 22 Jan 1970, 8.

¹⁵PC, 15 Jan 1970, 7.

¹⁶A number of other members of the party, some of whom were later killed in armed struggle, also came out of the USTCLU.

A lengthy struggle over union certification had been going on at USTC, as Roberto Oca's PTGWO and Ignacio Lacsina's NATU competed to represent the workers. Ceres Alabado described the struggle over union recognition at the US Tobacco Corporation.

Workers formed union after union. The eighth one, the USTCEA-PTGWO, led by Oca, went on strike only to end up in a return to work agreement. In 1967, a new union was formed, the USTC Labor Union, or USTCLU which however had a splinter affiliate group, called the FOITAF. The combined group, USTCLU-FOITAF, staged another strike, one that dragged on for months and years, for the Court would take five months to decide whether or not the strike was legal, the next four months to grant the certification of the election of the Union, two months to decide the date of the election and more than one year for the election to take place, and when the election was finally held, the American management was to withhold recognition of the winner, the USTCLU-FOITAF, and to urge the USTCEA-PTGWO to protest said election, a never-ending cycle that got the workers nowhere. In the meantime in 1969, they discovered that many in their ranks had been charged for various crimes in court and some of them, unable to bear the cost of a legal fight and knowing the futility of it all, just left their jobs or went into hiding. To top all of their miseries, they were to discover later on that their splinter-affiliate FOITAF had reneged on their partnership and was dealing directly with management. And so to the Court again the USTCLU went to press for its recognition, against the FOITAF this time. Once more the USTCLU won and once more management withheld recognition.¹⁷

The FOITAF was Pedro Castro's old union and was intimately tied to the PKP. Before the split in 1967 the USTCLU-FOITAF had been allied, but in the wake of the split between the CPP and the PKP, the FOITAF broke with Lacsina. By early 1970 the USTCLU had gone on strike to contest the endless certification elections. Popoy Valencia of the SDK wrote

The USTC strike was more than what the notice of the strike stated. To active followers of contemporary events, it was a concrete confrontation for the two tendencies in Philippine labor unionism. The USTC has two unions – one with Ignacio Lacsina's NATU and [one with] Roberto Oca's Philippine Transport and General Workers Organizations. The last USTC union certification election yielded 600 votes for Oca's group and 2000 plus for the NATU affiliate.¹⁸

¹⁷ Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle...*, 389-390.

¹⁸ PC, 4 Sep 1970, 6.

Valencia continued, “Ignacio Lacsina of NATU ... espouses a clear working class ideology with a strong Marxist flavor. He also heads the Socialist Party of the Philippines which declares an end goal of socializing ownership of factories under a State in the hands of the proletariat.” While socialism was the avowed “maximum program” of the SPP, they insisted, like every section of the Philippine left, that at present workers must unite with the national bourgeoisie to carry out the national democratic revolution. “The USTC strike,” Valencia concluded, “was therefore a symbolic joust between the two ideological tendencies in Philippine labor. Oca’s union soon declared willingness to work. The bloody and repeated picket-busting that soon occurred only tended to project Oca and his style of unionism in a bad light. In the meanwhile, Philippine labor observed labor day with fragmented mass actions all over the city.”

The strike rapidly turned bloody. On May 11 1970, armed men opened fire on the Tobacco workers picket line. Fred Tirante was quoted in *The Partisan*, “I was in the group conducting its self-criticism session for the day when suddenly a jeep with four men in it armed with pistolized carbines and sidearms and pillbox bombs appeared. This despite the presence of MPD men in the streets around the USTC compound. The men inside jumped out, lined themselves beside the jeep and started firing. I was hit in the lower left leg while trying to dive for cover.”¹⁹ Peter Mutuc, a Vice President of the USTCLU and a member of the CPP, wrote for the *Collegian* in September, “Our strike has dragged on for almost six months now. It has been characterized by the most brutal and indiscriminating violence against our workers and student activists by scabs and hired goons, protected and often actively aided by the Manila police, Metrocom, and even the PC. Management has always turned down our basic demands, and instead has systematically sought to maul, arrest, or kill our union leaders.”²⁰

In the first week of July 1970, the USTC workers were scheduled to hold a union certification vote, choosing between the PTGWO, FOITAF and USTCLU, but USTC management secured an injunction from the Court of Industrial Relations canceling the election. The police were deployed to seize the union election ballot boxes which the workers attempted to defend.²¹ The certification election would not be held until February 1971.

May Day 1970

There was one day each year when the Stalinist parties felt compelled to open the ideological *aparador*, shake the naphthalene from the banner of internationalism, spit-polish the trophies of 1917, and brush the dust off the phrasebooks of class struggle – May Day. The archives, otherwise bare of materials addressed to the working class, are replete with speeches, articles and leaflets signed the first day

¹⁹ *The Partisan*, (1970) Summer, PRP 37/15.01, 3.

²⁰PC, 30 Sep 1970, 6.

²¹PC, 15 Jul 1970.

of the fifth month. Each choked out the language of socialism and the proletariat before filling its mouth again with the comfortable, glutinous phrases of national democracy. The Central Committee of the CPP in 1970 issued a call for “world proletarian revolution” on this “glorious day for the world’s proletariat.” This ruse could not be sustained, however, and in the same opening paragraph they asserted that in the Philippines the workers struggled for “national democratic interests.”²² The CPP continued,

The powerful ideological weapon, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, is now in the hands of an ever increasing mass of workers. They are sure to smash the Lava revisionist renegades . . .

In the countryside of the Philippines, the Party and the New People’s Army are resolutely creating revolutionary mass bases. These are areas where proletarian leadership has emerged . . . [and] from where the Philippine revolution is rapidly advancing in concert with militant mass actions in the city . . .

The Party and the New People’s Army are engaged in the broadest national united front with all revolutionary patriots. A definite united front organization for waging revolutionary armed struggle is now being formed to further isolate the enemy. The working class is firmly uniting with all other patriotic classes and strata interested in the triumph of the people’s democratic revolution.

The MDP staged a “Workers Congress” where they circulated a leaflet which opened by describing the deepening social crisis and rising prices confronting workers.²³ “The broad Filipino masses whose pay is extremely meager are being freed from slavery [natitimawa]. And their present experience is the means capable of bringing them to the awareness that they desperately need. The Filipino masses are become conscious.” It was not wage-slavery from which the workers were being freed, but the “fascism” of Marcos; and it was not socialist consciousness they were developing, but nationalist. The garb of socialist revolution ill-clothed the gaunt political aspirations of class collaboration and national interest. Having made awkward rhetorical obeisance to the working class, the MDP sought out its familiar terrain. Marcos acts, the MDP wrote, “as if he were a demented and crazed man, intoxicated with drunkenness, who has lost his mind trying to frighten the Filipino masses with the threat of declaring martial law, in the false belief that this can stop the people from becoming aware that the only effective answer to the fascist-militarist suppression of their national democratic goals is only [sic] people’s war. The Filipino masses can no longer be frightened; the struggle for national democracy and freedom can no

²²Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *1970 May Day Statement*, May 1970, PRP 05/02.04.

²³Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Pahayag ng Movement for a Democratic Philippines*, May 1970, PRP 11/20.01.

longer be shackled.”²⁴ “Which force in the world,” the leaflet asked rhetorically, “is capable of defeating the truly insuppressible heroism of the united front of the masses of the people?”

The SDK also distributed a leaflet, which issued a strong appeal for the unity of the working class with the Filipino capitalists. “The SDK believes that the difficulties of the working class are not separate from the similar difficulties of the peasants, students, professionals, vendors, soldiers, local capitalists, etc.”²⁵ The difficulties of the working class were not separate, they insisted, from those of the capitalists. Which shared difficulty, one wonders, did they have in mind: poverty wages, dangerous working conditions, police repression? The difficulties they spoke of were national ones and were caused by “American Imperialists with the help of their accomplices the hacenderos, compradors or exporter-importer (the majority are Kuomintang Chinese [Intsik Kuomintang]), and their political lapdog politician bureaucrat capitalists.” The solution according to the SDK, of course, was for the working class to unite with the peasants, students, and nationalist Filipino capitalists [makabayang mamumuhunang Pilipino]. Unity with “Filipino capitalists” against the “Chinese comprador” would become a refrain of the appeals issued by the front organizations of the CPP over the next two years.

The MDP and NATU led a march to the port in support of the striking USTC workers, where they were violently dispersed by the police. The MDP issued a leaflet several days later, which asked “If this isn’t fascism, what is it?”²⁶

The PKP, closely tied to the Marcos administration, spoke in softer tones but also felt compelled to deliver a ritual address to the working class. Writing in *Kilusan*, the labor paper of the PKP, they produced a two page statement, denouncing US imperialism for preventing the industrial development of the Philippines, and singling out Harry Stonehill as evidence.²⁷ For both the PKP and the CPP the carpetbagger deported a decade earlier remained the stock image of imperialism.

²⁴“Tila haling na baliw at lango sa pagkalasing na nawalan ng sariling bait sa pananakot sa masang Pilipino sa pamamagitan ng bantang pagbababa ng *martial law*, sa hungkag na pananalig na mapipigil nito ang pagkamulat ng sambayanan sa katotohanang ang mabisang katagunan lamang sa pasista-militaristang panunupil sa kanilang pambansang demokratikong hangarin ay ang digmaang bayan lamang [sic]. . . .”

²⁵Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK), *Pahayag ng Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan*, May 1970, PRP 15/18.18.

²⁶MDP, *Justice for the Yuyitung Brothers!*; Gonzales, “A Chronicle of Protests,” 3. On the same day that the police were dispersing protesters at the port, the Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) held a May Day meeting at Abelardo Hall on the Diliman campus, where they gave out Bonifacio Awards, in honor of ‘militant nationalism,’ to Manuel Alabado and to the Nationalist Corps, which Judy Taguiwalo accepted on behalf of the organization. (Alabado, *I See Red in a Circle*. . . , 404).

²⁷Pambansang Kilusan ng Paggawa (KILUSAN), *Ang Uring Manggagawa at ang Kilusan sa Pambansang Demokrasiya*, May 1970, PRP 13/11.04.

May Day ended, its banners were folded up and tucked away, and the archive again falls silent.

Split with Lacsina

The machinations which took place leading up to the event are still largely unclear, but in the beginning of 1971 the CPP attempted to wrest control of all of the unions in which they were active from the existing leadership with which they had until then been allied.

The available evidence strongly suggests that the CPP had intended to launch a general strike through the affiliated unions of NATU to coincide with the jeepney strike and the erection of the barricades in January 1971.²⁸ They were thwarted in this move by Lacsina and in response they attempted to seize control of NATU. The *Philippines Free Press* reported that “some KM members allegedly tried to seize power at the National Association of Trade Unions. ... the KM succeeded in taking over the labor union in a cigarette firm which had been affiliated with NATU.”²⁹ This was the USTCLU; at the same time, the KM attempted to seize control of Northern Motors and a number of other NATU affiliates. Lacsina, at the head of the SPP, responded by kicking out “two KM members from the SPP executive board. (One KM member, Charlie del Rosario, representing Jose Maria Sison, was allowed to remain.) The SPP council upheld its policy of evolving its ‘own brand of socialism – a Philippine type of socialism.’”³⁰ The policy which the *Free Press* stated the executive board upheld of “Philippine type socialism” was the attempt by Lacsina and Lansang to plot a course independent of both Moscow and Beijing and to create an organization patterned after the People’s Action Party of Lee Kuan Yew, a figure whom they greatly admired.

The fact that Carlos del Rosario was “representing Jose Maria Sison” had been disclosed to the press by Lacsina on January 29. Unable it seems to kick del Rosario out of the SPP executive board, Lacsina began looking for other ways to get rid of him. Writing on May 30 1971, Sison claimed that on January 29 Lacsina had started issuing “press statements attacking what he called the ‘fanatical fringe’ of the national democratic mass movement and what he called ‘the cult of Mao.’”³¹ He had, Sison declared, instructed Rodolfo del Rosario to threaten Carlos del Rosario with murder. Carlos Del Rosario responded to Lacsina by putting out a press statement “exposing Lacsina’s fabrication and also the fact that the Socialist Party of the Philippines is an ‘organization’ that comes out only when bourgeois election time approaches and Lacsina tries to sell ‘labor votes’

²⁸The February 18 issue of *Ang Bayan* referred to these plans for a general strike, as we will see.

²⁹PPF, 6 Mar 1971, 6.

³⁰PPF, 6 Mar 1971, 6, 46.

³¹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 86.

to reactionary politicians.”³² In less than two months of the public exposure of his ties to the CPP, Carlos del Rosario was murdered.³³

The KM and SDK had been intimately tied to the SPP since its founding. Lacsina had used the SPP and NATU to back Marcos in 1969 but the CPP had done nothing, for Lacsina was a necessary ally. Now, as their grab for control of the organization was failing, they began to denounce Lacsina, NATU and the SPP as reactionary. On February 18, Sison published a statement in *Ang Bayan* denouncing Lacsina, entitled “Cast Away the Labor Aristocrats,” which stated

While great masses of workers are calling for general strikes against US imperialism and its running dogs, principally the Marcos fascist puppet clique, labor contractors like Oca and Co. openly offer their strike-breaking services to the reactionaries. The bourgeois trade union bosses like the labor lawyer Lacsina, despite their previous pretensions of being progressive, also openly show their outright opposition to the development of general strikes and persistently deprecate the propagation and implementation of the universal theory of the revolutionary proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.³⁴

Lacsina’s “previous pretensions of being progressive” had been propped up for years by Sison and the CPP. He had been a key ally of Sison’s since 1962 and Sison had given Lacsina credibility and support. Sison had provided the ideological underpinnings on which the SPP had been founded and had instructed the KM to work within NATU and SPP in support of Lacsina, a policy which they continued until the end of 1970. With the falling out of early 1971, Sison claimed to have always been aware of Lacsina’s political rottenness. He declared, “The labor aristocrats have played the role mainly of either being labor contractors and [*sic*] labor lawyers, represented mainly by Oca and Lacsina. These anti-proletarian scoundrels have gone too far in their counter-revolutionary and corrupt activities.” For reasons which Sison did not specify, Lacsina – that “anti-proletarian scoundrel” – had “gone too far” in his “counter-revolutionary and corrupt activities.” Just how far had Sison and the CPP been willing to tolerate this behavior before Lacsina went too far? What counter-revolutionary action was deemed to be too much? And what exactly was an acceptable amount of “anti-proletarian” “counter-revolutionary” activity? Sison detailed the crimes of Lacsina –

³²Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 87. I have not been able to locate this press statement.

³³Lacsina’s revelations to the press regarding del Rosario coincided with a campaign of personal exposure launched by the PKP, who in the pages of the BRPF journal, *Struggle*, published the names of members of Sison’s family, one of whom, Sison’s brother, Francisco, would be killed in May as a result of this revelation.

³⁴AB, 18 Feb 1971.

The conspicuous personal wealth of the labor aristocrats is derived from secret brokers' and retainers' fees from the big bourgeoisie; subsidies from US imperialist agencies, the puppet government and the anti-China lobby; overt and covert strike-breaking and strike-peddling; establishment of company unions; huge salaries from labor federations; collection of huge negotiation fees and lawyer's fees ranging from 10 to 25 per cent; manipulation of union funds under various pretexts; and so on and so forth.

Sison's characterization of Lacsina and Oca was largely apt, but until January 1971 the CPP had chosen to tolerate this behavior from Lacsina, deeming him a useful ally. They had not only remained silent in the face of Lacsina's conduct, they had hailed him as a defender of the interests of the working class. Sison now stated however that "The Party in the performance of its leading role is duty-bound to expose with ruthless zeal the various forms of betrayal of the proletariat perpetrated by the labor aristocrats." This was a damning indictment of the conduct of the CPP, for they had not acted in accordance with this self-proclaimed duty. They had tolerated and, through their support, assisted Lacsina in his betrayals of the working class. When they made his crimes public it was not out of a sense of duty to the working class, but because it had become politically expedient in January 1971 to break their long-standing ties with him.

The KM began putting up posters throughout Manila that read "Ibagsak si [Down with] Lacsina – PC informer", "Lacsina – huwad na labor leader [phony labor leader]". Lacsina responded by filing a libel suit against two KM leaders, writing in April 1971 that tensions with the KM had emerged "recently."³⁵ The KM had attempted to "split NATU", he claimed, adding that "the KM is recklessly pursuing its reactionary, if infantile, plot to replace the workers' cause as the true vanguards whose contributions so far to the workers' cause has [*sic*] consisted in providing striking workers with violent picket assistance that inevitably afforded the struck employers grounds to secure injunctions from the courts – with which to break the strikes."

On February 15, in the wake of KM's breaking the USTCLU away from NATU, Oca's PTGWO won the certification election at the US Tobacco Corporation by a large majority, roundly defeating the USTCLU. The KM claimed that Oca had engaged in mass cheating. The victory of the PTGWO revealed clearly, SDK leader Benito Tiamzon claimed, "the hopelessness of legal struggle. Even though one life had already been lost [isang buhay na ang binuwis] in ten months of strike here, the union of the conscious workers at USTC did not win."³⁶

Jess Rivera, Vice President of NATU, denounced the KM in a leaflet entitled "Mag-Ingat sa mga Itimang Propagandista ng mga Puwersang Laban sa Paggawa."

³⁵Ignacio P Lacsina, "The View from the Left: What is the KM's game?," *APL*, April 1971, 44; Lansang, "One More View from the Left," 46.

³⁶PC, 18 Feb 1971, 2.

[Beware of the Black Propagandists of the Anti-Labor Forces]³⁷ Rivera charged the “black tentacles” of the KM-SDK with having severed the USTCLU from NATU in the midst of a certification election, and having carried out this action with the support of only twenty-one people and without in any way involving the three thousand members of the union. The membership of the USTCLU was deeply confused by the machinations of the KM, Rivera claimed, and many called for a general meeting in order to learn the reason for the break, which the union leadership, now held by the KM-SDK, refused to convene. During the certification election, the KM-SDK called on workers to vote for the USTCLU which had now broken from NATU. Out of frustration, Rivera claimed, three thousand workers voted for the PTGWO, but the KM-SDK blamed Lacsina and NATU for the defeat, alleging that he had rigged the election against them. Rivera responded that Lacsina and NATU had never appeared at the election and there had been no cheating. He cited the fact that Voltaire Garcia, attorney for the KM-SDK, signed the minutes of the election certifying that they were clean as proof that there had been no cheating.

The machinations of the KM extended beyond the USTCLU, however. At Northern Motors, Rivera claimed, the KM-SDK broke the union away from NATU weeks after securing a Collective Bargaining Agreement, despite the fact that less than half of the union voted for disaffiliation. Rivera then listed the other unions now affiliated with the KM-SDK, revealing that they were based almost entirely in small, Chinese Filipino owned operations in Caloocan and Malabon.³⁸ He described the methods of the KM and SDK –

What is the benefit for workers of being made “sacrificial lambs” and after [the KM] makes a brief flare (throwing pill boxes while shouting “Revolution” and “Long live Mao Zedong”) and disappears, the striking workers are abruptly left to be picked up by the police and PC? Has KM secured any union victory? Why is the result always defeat for the workers while these youths are “heroes?” Why do all strikes to which they give “help” end in injunctions and are made illegal?

They have a modus operandi, they pretend that they are helping a picket and afterwards they are overseeing the workers strike. This is *against* the principle of “self-reliance” that should be maintained in the workers movement. Instead of teaching the workers “self-reliance” they themselves are teaching them to always be relying on the help of others. In this manner the workers who put their hope

³⁷Jess Rivera and National Association of Trade Unions (NATU), *Mag-ingat sa mga Itimang Propagandista ng mga Laban sa Paggawa*, PRP 15/06.01.

³⁸He listed L.K. Guarin, Gentex, Goya, Interwood Lumber, C. Valdez Accounting, J.S. Zulueta Accounting, Liberty Flour Mills, Union Pipes, Sulo Hotel and many other department store [bazar] unions.

in these youth develop a wrong conception of true class struggle. Who now emerges as the destroyer of the union? Why are these purveyors of black propaganda themselves the servants of capital? Is it because they are scabs?³⁹

The USTCLU staged a protest outside of the NATU offices in Ermita, denouncing the Lacsina-[Rodolfo] Del Rosario faction, to expose its “rottenness and opportunism.”⁴⁰ The grievances the protesters listed included failure to act on an unfair labor practices case in the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR), and collaboration with the Marcos administration to prevent a check-off dues system. In August 1971, a letter to the *Collegian* signed by a Jaime Constante, denounced Lacsina on a number of specific charges.⁴¹ Lacsina’s NATU was “fast disintegrating,” he claimed, having lost the USTCLU, Bee Guan Factory Workers Union, Bankers Labor Union, Northern Motors Free Workers Union and Manila Cordage Labor Union, which all had left because of Lacsina’s “betrayal of the working class.”⁴² Constante accused NATU VP Rodolfo del Rosario, and “messenger” Jess Rivera, of having “sold out the employees union of Willies Luncheonette at Avenida Rizal for ₱15,000.00 (an amount admitted by del Rosario) sometime in August last year,” and concluded

The reason why the USTC Labor Union disaffiliated from NATU is because of NATU’s failure (deliberate?) to file the Unfair Labor Practices (ULP) charges against the USTC Management. Imagine their astonishment to find out that they struck since April last year for NOTHING! The payload, according to reliable sources, is a cool amount of ₱200,000.00 from the USTC management for the sudden case of “amnesia.”

While Constante’s indictment of Lacsina for the betrayal of the USTCLU was likely based in fact, this was not the reason for the KM-SDK break with him. They were not responding to the workers of the USTCLU who had angrily decided to break with Lacsina and NATU. The KM and SDK did not even consult with the workers, but attempted to seize the union through secret machinations, pursuing a similar tack at all of the other NATU affiliates in which they were involved. What is more, the plot to seize control of the labor movement extended beyond the attempt to wrest power from NATU. In a synchronized, conspiratorial fashion the KM-SDK moved to take over the jeepney driver unions as well, but in this attempt they also failed.

³⁹Emphasis in original.

⁴⁰PC, 4 Mar 1971, 2.

⁴¹PC, 5 Aug 1971, 7.

⁴²These betrayals were carried out through: “1) union sell-outs; 2) under-the-table agreements with management; 3) non-filing of court cases like unfair labor practices; and 4) nonappearance in court cases when NATU has luckily filed the charges.”

The failed takeover of Pasang Masda

Within weeks of the KM-SDK being kicked out of the SPP for attempting to seize NATU's member unions, they were likewise ousted from Pasang Masda for attempting to take over the jeepney drivers union. The *Philippines Free Press* reported that the KM tried to seize power in Pasang Masda, “[b]ut Lazaro, a lawyer, was not to be caught napping. He started to consolidate his hold of the Pasang Masda and appealed to the student ‘moderates’ to support him. Having done so, he called for a meeting of Pasang Masda leaders, attended by officers of MAPAGSAT, NUSP, YCSP, SKIT and KASAPI. Lazaro told them that the radicals wanted a bloody revolution and even promised to supply striking jeepney drivers with guns to ‘overthrow’ the government. Lazaro claimed that Vic Clemente, KM secretary-general; Chito Sta. Romana, MDP spokesman; Julius Fortuna, another MDP official; and a certain Peter Mutuc of KM had been going around selling the idea of violent revolution. Because of that, Lazaro said, he would advise against the resumption of the jeepney strike on February 25.”⁴³ The KM responded, denouncing Lazaro's stand on the strike as “bakla.” [Homosexual. The KM used the word here as a vulgar synonym for weak.]⁴⁴

The KM announced that it would be holding a People's Congress on February 18 to launch a jeepney driver's strike on February 25, but the Congress was delayed until the twenty-sixth and the strike called off. The postponement was caused by the expulsion of the KM from Pasang Masda, the leading jeepney driver association.⁴⁵ The KM, SDK and MDP were expelled from their alliance with jeepney drivers by Glicerio Gervero, head of Malayang Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper [Free Unity of Driver Federations] (MAPAGSAT) and Lupiño Lazaro, head of Pasang Masda.⁴⁶ Gervero and MAPAGSAT published an open letter denouncing the student activists and announcing their expulsion from the drivers organizations, claiming that KM, SDK, and MDP had solicited funds ostensibly on behalf of the drivers but that they had given none of it to the drivers – “kahit isang sentimo.” [not even one cent] The activists had published statements in the names of the drivers organizations without the organization's permission or knowledge, he claimed. They had raised barricades at the University and distracted everyone's attention from the drivers struggles, and, “worst of all,” they had deliberately stoked up confusion and dissension among the strikers in the attempt to make the strike turn violent.⁴⁷ Gervero singled out as most responsible the same individuals blamed by Lazaro – Clemente and company. These men

⁴³ PFP, 6 Mar 1971, 6.

⁴⁴ PFP, 6 Mar 1971, 6.

⁴⁵ PC, 18 Feb 1971.

⁴⁶ Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Expose the Lazaro-Gervero Opportunist Gang and thoroughly crush the Lava Revisionist-Reformist Moderate Counter-Revolutionary Alliance!*, 1971, PRP 15/18.04.

⁴⁷ Malayang Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper (MAPAGSAT) and Glicerio G. Gervero, *[Open Letter]*, 1971, PRP 07/26.01.

were now attempting to establish their own drivers' union, he concluded. Colayco wrote

The uneasy coexistence of the radicals and “moderates” was shattered when the KM, the SDK and allied organizations were unilaterally expelled from the alliance of jeepney drivers and youth groups. By a strange coincidence, the expulsion of the radicals was followed by the indefinite postponement of a third jeepney strike scheduled to begin on February 25. The “moderates” and their allies among the drivers accused the radicals of, among other things, inciting the drivers to armed revolution and offering to supply them with rifles! It soon turned out, however, that the leaders of the drivers' federations which had expelled the “radicals” hadn't bothered to consult with their member organizations or with the lower-echelon officers of their federations. So the radicals simply formed a new alliance with drivers' organizations and officials who bolted their mother federations.⁴⁸

Lacsina wrote on this point. “During the recent jeepney ‘strikes’ the national president of the largest federation of jeepney drivers, the Pasang Masda, denounced the KM for attempting to instigate armed action among the striking drivers as the alleged correct way of resolving the gasoline price-hike controversy. When the jeepney drivers turned down the KM suggestion, splitting tactics were employed by the KM blackhands to undermine the leadership of the jeepney drivers' federation through intrigue and poison propaganda.”⁴⁹

The KM responded to Lacsina by denouncing Pasang Masda national president, Lupiño Lazaro, as a “dubious labor ‘leader.’”⁵⁰ They stated that “subsequently, the drivers, led by, among others, Pasang Masda executive officer Lito Villar, forged a more militant alliance with the KM and other national democratic organizations that launched the 25,000 strong February 26 demonstration.”⁵¹ When the KM and its associates did stage a People's Congress on February 26 they denounced the oil price hikes and a section of Pasang Masda participated, calling itself Makabagong Pasang Masda. [New Pasang Masda]⁵² Lito Villar, at the head of the Pasang Masda splinter, spoke and denounced the removal of the KM-SDK-MDP from the drivers union and Lazaro's calling off of the strike.

⁴⁸A.B. Colayco, “The Making of an Activist,” *APL*, April 1971, 15.

⁴⁹Lacsina, “The View from the Left: What is the KM's game?,” 10.

⁵⁰KM, “And what is Lacsina's racket?,” 11.

⁵¹ibid. Villar's first name is alternately spelled Lito and Leto throughout the available literature. Any piece to which Villar was himself a signatory spelled his name “Leto.”

⁵²Student Government University of the East, *Manifesto*, February 1971, PRP 17/37.01; PC, 25 Feb 1971. In the same article the group was referred to as the Makabayang [Nationalist] Pasang Masda.



Figure 33.2: Leto Villar. *APL*, 16 Jul 1971, 6.

In February two workers federations were formed, the first called itself the Demokratikong Pederasyon ng mga Tsuper [Democratic Federation of Drivers] (DPT) and the second the Workers' Federation. Both were breakaway organizations formed as a result of the work of the labor committees of the KM and SDK in response to their expulsion from Pasang Masda and NATU.⁵³ Two days after the People's Congress, on February 28, the group calling itself DPT participated in the creation of an umbrella organization of drivers affiliated with the KM. The new umbrella group called itself Pambasang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper [National Federation of Nationalist Drivers] (PSMT).⁵⁴ Leto Villar was made the spokesperson of the new organization and addressed the gathering, denouncing Lazaro, Gervero and Edgar Jopson for their claims that the students were just using the drivers to create social unrest and were providing the drivers with arms. Villar declared that if the students had truly been offering the drivers weapons they would have accepted them as they had long wished to be armed. PSMT held its founding congress in April at PCC; Dante Simbulan was the opening speaker and Leto Villar was elected president.⁵⁵ During the congress, the speakers stressed that PSMT must work to build "a national united front allied with the nationalist bourgeoisie."⁵⁶ The newly founded PSMT was not an independent organization

⁵³PC, 18 Feb 1971, 2.

⁵⁴BP, 1, no. 2 (March 1971): 3, PRP 22/02; PC, 18 Mar 1971, 2. The PSMT initially adopted the name PSMTF, including the Philippines in its name, but this was dropped in all subsequent documents.

⁵⁵Mirasol, "Lagot na Tanikala sa Harap ng Manibela."

⁵⁶"[i]sang pambasang nagkakaisang prente na kaalyado ang makabayang burgesiya." (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), "Sa Alaala ni Charlie del Rosario: Organisahin at Pakilusin ang Masa," *Kal* 7, no. 13 [May 1971], 2, PRP 32/03.02).

and it had few drivers in its ranks. The headquarters of the newly founded union of jeepney drivers was in Vinzons Hall on the Diliman campus, where it shared office space with the KM, SDK and other UP student organizations.⁵⁷

On February 26, the KM led the founding of a second labor federation, Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng mga Manggagawa [Federation of Workers Associations] (KASAMA), bringing together seven unions under its umbrella.⁵⁸ Virgilio San Pedro of Northern Motors was made president of KASAMA; E. Voltaire Garcia legal representative; and Josefina Cruz, wife of Rodolfo Salas, secretary treasurer.⁵⁹ KASAMA was founded to serve as a national democratic labor union federation, and within three months over twenty unions had joined, most representing workers in small corporations run by Chinese Filipinos in Caloocan and Malabon.⁶⁰ None of these enterprises belonged to the big ‘comprador’ bourgeoisie which the CPP was always denouncing. These were small scale factories and department stores, each employing fewer than one hundred workers, sometimes far fewer, but they were being targeted on the basis of the racial background of their owners, in keeping with the nationalism of the CPP.

The Murder of Carlos del Rosario

Carlos del Rosario was last seen at ten at night on March 19 1971. On the evening he disappeared, del Rosario was tacking up posters for the national congress of the MDP in the heart of the university belt shortly before ten, when a fraternity rumble broke out, injuring a number of PCC students. Del Rosario was expected

⁵⁷In late June PSMT attempted to revive the jeepney drivers strike but few details of are available. (Pambansang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper (PSMT), Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), and Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng mga Manggagawa (KASAMA), *Buong pagkakaisang itaguyod ang welga ng mga tsuper . . .*, June 1971, PRP 13/15.01). On June 24, PSMT issued a leaflet denouncing the rising price of oil, declaring that all of the “patriotic sectors” of society were protesting. (Pambansang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper (PSMT), *Isang bukas na liham sa mga kababayan*, June 1971, PRP 13/15.02, 2) They denounced the “traitor” Lupiño Lazaro of Pasang Masda and Glicerio Gervero of MAPAGSAT, both of whom had stated that it was not yet the right time to go on strike. On July 1, the price of oil was raised. MAPAGSAT announced that it was going on strike, but two days later the Supreme Court issued an injunction against the price hike and MAPAGSAT called it off; PSMT followed suit. (A.B. Colayco, “Fuel for the Next Time,” *APL*, July 1971, 58) Two SDK members were killed during the course of the strike – Leonie Macaraeg and Danny Beloa. (PC, 9 Jul 1971, 7) The *Collegian* claimed that at its peak the strike shut down transit in fifteen percent of Manila.

⁵⁸These were Northern Motors; US Tobacco; American Manufacturer and Parts; Bee Guan T-Shirt; Manila Cordage; PRTI and J.S. Zulueta and Co.; and CPAs and Bankers Club. (Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), “Paggunita sa Mayo Uno,” *BP*, May 1972, PRP 22/02). The group initially called itself the Workers’ Federation but by February 18 it had adopted the name KASAMA.

⁵⁹APL, 21 Jan 1972, 44; Lopez, “Running Revolution,” 30.

⁶⁰Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), “Ilantad at Durugin ang mga Huwad na Lider Obrero,” *Talang Ginto*, 1971, 2, PRP 43/01.01; Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng mga Manggagawa (KASAMA), *Unang Pambansang Kongreso*, February 1972, PRP 09/10.02.

in Cubao for a preparatory meeting of the National Congress of the MDP at eleven, but he never arrived.⁶¹

A number of sources in the KM and SDK promptly blamed Lacsina and the PKP for supplying information on del Rosario to the military. Antonio Tagamolila, writing in the *Collegian*, pointed out that the January issue of *Struggle* had identified del Rosario as a close relation of Sison, and that Lacsina had publicly declared that del Rosario was Sison's spokesperson.⁶² The KM (UE) issued a statement in their paper *Anak-Pawis*, "Avenge Charlie del Rosario!" which declared that "According to reliable reports from nationalist members of the reactionary armed forces, Ka Charlie was kidnapped by the group of Gen. Diaz." They claimed that del Rosario was not very well known in the movement, and blamed Lacsina for exposing him.⁶³ The SDK similarly blamed Lacsina for Del Rosario's death, writing "He betrayed [hinudas] comrade Charlie del Rosario."⁶⁴ On May 22, Victor Corpus and Crispin Tagamolila released a statement regarding the kidnapping and murder of Carlos del Rosario, in which they claimed that information supplied by the Lavaites had been central to his liquidation.⁶⁵ On the one year anniversary of Carlos del Rosario's death a commemoration predictably read, "For every Charlie who died thousands of new Charlies will appear. [Sa bawa't Charlie na namatay ay libu-libong bagong Charlie ang lilitaw.]"⁶⁶

Having expelled the KM and SDK from the ranks of NATU and the SPP, Lacsina entered an alliance with the PKP. He appointed Teodosio Lansang as Secretary General of the SPP, while Felixberto Olalia continued with the SPP as Deputy Chair. Lansang and Lacsina set up what they intended to be a weekly newspaper, *Ang Sosyalista*, [The Socialist] in late June 1971.⁶⁷ In mid-July, the SPP began holding basic courses on Socialism in the NATU offices, which were taught by Rodolfo del Rosario, Francisco Nemenzo, Teodosio Lansang, and Ignacio Lacsina.⁶⁸ These classes represented the completion of the alliance of Lacsina's forces with the PKP. On May 30, Sison wrote that Lacsina and the PKP were "recently brought together by cultural and trade union delegations of the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists". He stated that the "Lava-Nemenzo-Pomeroy

⁶¹Rosca, "Where's Charlie?," 10.

⁶²PC, 25 Mar 1971, 8.

⁶³UE, "Supplementary Issue on the Philippine Crisis, Part III."

⁶⁴SDK, "Ilantad at Durugin ang mga Huwad na Lider Obrero."

⁶⁵Victor N. Corpus and Crispin Tagamolila, *Expose the Criminal Hand of the Marcos Fascist Puppet Clique in the Kidnapping and Murder of Carlos B. del Rosario*, May 1971, PRP 06/09.01.

⁶⁶Mal, 17 Mar 1972, 12.

⁶⁷The paper was launched at the Ermita office of NATU and was to serve as the official organ of the SPP. Lacsina was head of the editorial board and Lansang Editor-in-Chief. Marcelo Buncio was business manager of paper; Rogelio Morales was a member of the editorial board. (APL, 2 Jul 1971, 16). *Ang Sosyalista* put out a single issue and then disappeared. I have not been able to locate a copy of the paper. (Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 95).

⁶⁸Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 114A. Bayani Alcala and Rogelio Morales also taught classes. Morales was the superintendent of the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA). Alcala was a Political Science professor at PCC.

apparat and the Lacsina-Lansang aparat of the Soviet modern revisionists have unhappy days ahead of them.”⁶⁹

Lacsina’s reunion with the PKP was not without difficulty. Having split with the front organizations of the CPP, Lacsina was immediately caught up in a dispute with the labor unions of the PKP to secure recognition from the the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the Moscow oriented international trade union federation. Lacsina sought recognition for the SPP, and the PKP sought to secure recognition for the Confederation of Trade Unions in the Philippines (CTUP), under Juan J. Cruz. The SDK denounced this as fighting to be “under the leadership of the revisionist social-imperialist Soviets.”⁷⁰ The exact resolution to this dispute is not clear, but certain facts are suggestive. The SPP largely disappears from the historical record at this point; and *Ang Sosyalista*, which had just begun publication, folded. By mid- 1972, the labor union alliance under the PKP encompassed both Kilusan and NATU. The grouping was known as the Kilusan-NATU-MPKP Alliance and Juan J. Cruz was co-chair. Lacsina’s NATU, in other words, was now working in an alliance under the leadership of the PKP’s CTUP.⁷¹ It seems clear that the dispute for supremacy within the PKP-NATU alliance was resolved in favor of the PKP and Lacsina accepted a subordinate role within the renewed relationship.

By October 1971, the CPP had formed a larger labor federation, Ugnayan ng Progresibong Manggagawa [Association of Progressive Workers] (UPM). Leto Villar brought the PSMT into the UPM alliance along with NAFLU and KASAMA.⁷² UPM began publishing an occasional paper, *Welga*, the first issue of which appeared on October 10.⁷³

Within a year of Carlos del Rosario’s disappearance, Rodolfo del Rosario had reunited with the CPP and KM. Sison had accused him of making threats of “murder” against Carlos del Rosario shortly before he was in fact murdered. The CPP and the KM had denounced him as corrupt, blamed him for sabotaging the workers’ movement and staged protests against him in 1971. In 1972, the KM wrote publicly that “Kasamang [Comrade] Rody, a member of the KM consultative council who was active in the nationalist labor movement, is noted for his devotion to the organization and politicalization of the working class in the mass movement.” This man who a year before had been denounced as a traitor and implicated in the murder of Carlos del Rosario was again embraced as a comrade.

⁶⁹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 87.

⁷⁰SDK, “Ilantad at Durugin ang mga Huwad na Lider Obrero.”

⁷¹APL, 21 Jul 1972, 4.

⁷²Among the other labor unions which joined the UPM were Pambansang Kilusan ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas [National Movement of Workers of the Philippines] (PAKMAP), a union of department store employees; and Filipino Civilian Employees Association (FCEA). NAFLU’s joining UPM strongly suggests that Felixberto Olalia, who headed NAFLU and had remained with the SPP in the middle of the year, broke with the SPP as it merged with the PKP.

⁷³Ugnayang ng mga Progresibong Manggagawa UPM, “Ibalik ang Writ!,” *Welga!* 1, no. 1 (October 1971), PRP 43/17.01.

No explanation was given to the working class, nor was any accounting made for who had been at fault or what political line had been altered, whether that of the party or that of Rodolfo del Rosario. The CPP buried the past and with it Carlos del Rosario.

First National Congress of KASAMA

On February 26-27 1972, KASAMA held its first national congress. The central document of the congress was a Tagalog translation of Joma Sison's speech "Nationalism and the Labor Movement," which he had written and delivered in February 1966. As in 1966, Sison's article stated, "As [workers] realize that other patriotic classes, groups, and elements are involved in the anti-imperialist struggle, they are learning in practice how to move with them and how to mass themselves [translated as 'ihahanay ang kanilang sarili'] against the chief enemy, monopoly-capitalism or imperialism."⁷⁴ Sison's article was followed by a translation of Yao Wenyuan's "The Working Class Must Exercise Leadership in Everything," which had been published in English in the Peking Review in 1968.⁷⁵ The piece called for workers to lead the cultural revolution, particularly among students, and to send propaganda teams to universities and other schools. In this way, Yao argued, they could combat the "counter-revolutionary revisionist line of China's Khrushchev and his agents in various places." Yao cited Mao who stated that office workers must be sent "to the grass-roots level," which in this context meant to factory workers. KASAMA translated "grass-roots" as "bukirin," i.e., the countryside.

The remainder of the forty page document dealt with the building of unions, how to get workers to break from "yellow" unions, and how to lead a strike. A few points are worth noting. The program of education pursued by KASAMA for its membership had three basic readings: the first was a manual on how to form a union, the second selections from Sison's *PSR*, and the third was Sison's "Nationalism and the Labor Movement." The manual stated that KASAMA should particularly target "key sectors," singling out Oca's PTGWO which controlled the piers. It instructed workers to imagine what would happen "if there was a mass strike at the pier . . . the economy would certainly be brought to its knees." (28) KASAMA made no mention of the fact that just such a mass strike had been waged on the pier but nine years prior, nor the fact that the Lapiang Manggagawa, the avowed predecessor of KASAMA, had supported the government's violent crackdown and break up of the strike. KASAMA called for focus to be given to organizing at American owned firms, (29) and it warned workers against making demands that were beyond the financial capacity of a corporation to grant. It called on organizers to carry out research regarding the financial well-being of

⁷⁴KASAMA, *Unang Pambansang Kongreso*, 14.

⁷⁵Yao was a leading figure in the Cultural Revolution and a member of the Gang of Four.

the company at the SEC in order to determine what could be considered “just” demands. (33, 37)

Finally, KASAMA warned its members that it was important that *workers* actually be involved in the strikes. It wrote that there were many occasions when “the only people picketing are youths and students. Often *we* are the only ones producing manifestos, placards, slogans, letters, etc. Workers should play this role in accordance with *our* leadership of their movement. [Ang mga manggagawa ang dapat kumatawan dito ayon sa pamamanutbay natin sa kanilang kilusan.]”⁷⁶ The pronouns are noteworthy. The CPP’s labor union federation, KASAMA, did not identify itself with workers, but rather with the students and youth who were “leading” the workers and picketing on their behalf, (38) and was warning the students that at least some workers needed to be part of the strike. This statement inadvertently but aptly encapsulated the class basis of the CPP’s involvement in the working class. Their union federation, the product of a series of provocations and secretive machinations, was not composed of workers at all, but of activists. In 1971, the party had attempted to seize control of the labor movement but not on the basis of an open and principled appeal to the workers themselves. The CPP never sought to clarify the political issues at stake. It did not explain why Lacsina, whom they had supported for years, they now denounced as “reactionary.” They engaged in conspiracies and backroom plots. As the preparations in the ruling class for dictatorship reached a fever pitch, the CPP fragmented the working class movement without any explanation. They were not interested in educating the working class but in controlling it. On a programmatic and fundamental basis, the party opposed the political independence of the working class and sought either to subordinate workers to a section of the capitalists or, failing that, to send them to the hills to take up the armed struggle for national democracy.

⁷⁶Emphasis added.

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May Day Massacre

Moments like these make one hate for a whole decade, seek revenge all one's life. Woe to those who forgive such moments!

— Alexander Herzen, *From the Other Shore*

Three months after the Corpus raid on the PMA armory, Army Lt. Crispin Tagamolila defected to the NPA. On graduating with a degree in business administration and marketing at UP Diliman in 1966, Tagamolila had enrolled at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). He had been sympathetic to the October 24 Movement in 1966 but had joined the military, while his younger brother, Antonio Tagamolila, became a leading member of the SDK and was editor of the *Collegian* from 1970-71. Upon graduation Crispin Tagamolila was made a finance officer, responsible for “delivering huge sums of payroll money to the different camps in central Luzon.”¹ Tagamolila was then transferred to Panopio compound, “a small PC camp not far from Camp Crame along EDSA,” where he worked as a member of the faculty teaching “nationalism and history.” He defected to the NPA on March 29 1971, an event timed to coincide with the second anniversary of the founding of the NPA.² Tagamolila left behind a four page letter detailing fifteen examples of corruption and theft within the military, and stating that this was his primary motive for defection. Corruption throughout the military, he claimed, was turning the AFP into a “reactionary military of the establishment.”³ Tagamolila promised that a detailed study of “rottenness, corruption and puppetry” in the AFP would be prepared by a committee of the NPA which would include Victor Corpus – whom Tagamolila termed his “friend

¹APL, 16 April 1971, 58.

²The AFP initially claimed that Tagamolila had been kidnapped by “armed men.” (Vizmanos, *A Matter of Conviction*, 180; Antonio Tagamolila, “My Brother, The Defector,” *APL*, May 1971, 16; Simeon G. Del Rosario, *An Integrated Course on Communism and Democracy: A Self-Study Reader* [Quezon City: SGR Research & Publishing, 1973], 2).

³KM, “Sa Alaala ni Charlie del Rosario: Organisahin at Pakilusin ang Masa,” 12. The letter was published on April 1 1971. (Crispin Tagamolila, *Statement on the Corruption and Thievery in the Mercenary Puppet Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)*, April 1971, PRP 17/23.01).



Figure 34.1: Crispin Tagamolila, second from left, with fellow members of his PMA class. *APL*, 14 May 1971.

and comrade” – and himself. Tagamolila was not defecting because he had come to realize that the armed forces of the state are always the armed forces of the ruling class, but rather because he had a frustrated desire for the *reform* of the military.

In the days surrounding the defection of Tagamolila a number of organizations tied to the CPP held congresses – LEADS, KAGUMA, and the MDP.⁴ On March 29 and 30, the MDP held its first national congress, expanding its secretariat.⁵ They removed both Carlos del Rosario, whom they believed had been murdered, and Rodolfo del Rosario, whom they suspected was guilty of it.⁶ Sison sent greetings to the congress:

We extent [*sic*] to the Movement for a Democratic Philippines [*sic*] our most happy, warmest, and most militant revolutionary greetings on the occasion of its two day conference to consolidate its ranks, heighten politicat [*sic*] unity and clarify its tasks in accordance with a clear programme of struggle for national democracy against US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism.⁷

⁴On March 26-28, LEADS held its founding Congress, with speakers including Amando Doronila, Renato Constantino, Antonio Zumel, E. Voltaire Garcia, and Angel Baking. (BP, 1, no. 2 [March 1971]: 4, PRP 22/02) On March 28, the Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan [Federation of Nationalist Teachers] (KAGUMA) held its founding congress at Philippine Normal College.

⁵BP, 1, no. 2 (March 1971), PRP 22/02.

⁶Nizam Abubakar was added to the secretariat, along with Carlos Tayag, and Leto Villar. These reflected the incorporation of the United Islamic Forces and Organizations (UIFO), the SCMP, and the newly founded PSMT into the leadership of the MDP. The alliance with the UIFO brought the MDP into close ties with Macapanton and Firdausi Abbas, the spokesmen of the organization, whom the MDP had but one year prior denounced as puppets of Marcos and supporters of fascism. (PC, 20 Aug 1971).

⁷Jose Ma. Sison, “Greetings to the Movement for a Democratic Philippines,” *Anak-Pawis*,

Sison continued, “Where the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism has miserably failed, the Movement for a Democratic Philippines has brilliantly succeeded,” and urged the MDP to “exert the most arduos [*sic*] efforts to increase worker participation and raise a worker-student unity in revolutionary mass actions.” To do this “it is necessary to overthrow all yellow trade unionists, whether they are agents of US imperialism or of Soviet modern revisionism.”

The speeches and printed material for each of the congresses of late March 1971 echoed a single theme: fascism already held power, but the movement was invincible and repression brought the revolution nearer. Nemesio Prudente delivered the keynote address to the MDP congress, in which he stated that “The clearest proof of the imminent collapse of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial order and the triumph of national democracy is the fascism of the state.” They were nearing a “qualitative leap where the masses finally understand the verity of the slogan, ‘Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun,’ and make history.”⁸ On April 2, the newly founded KAGUMA issued a statement on the kidnapping of Charlie del Rosario by a “moronic bunch of murderers” under Gen. Diaz. They wrote that “not all the officers and men of the AFP are avid bootlickers of the fascist puppet Marcos. Thus, certain sympathetic elements in the AFP got wind of the ‘secret’ kidnapping and have, as a matter of course, informed the leaders of the progressive organizations.” These elements, they wrote, have “realized the invincibility of the National Democratic Movement.”⁹ Why was the National Democratic Movement invincible? The answer of KAGUMA was the stock answer of the CPP – repression breeds resistance.

In the ultimate analysis, the US imperialists and its [*sic*] local puppets cannot kill all the Filipino people. They certainly need us in their exploitative scheme ...

Therefore, the broad masses of the people, are in the ultimate analysis, invincible. Consequently, the National Democratic Movement is invincible ... all the killings, kidnappings and fascist brutality instituted by that hangman Marcos will only hasten the day when he will have to pay for his blood debts.

Marcos’ fascism strengthened the armed struggle they claimed. The front organizations of the CPP made no attempt to hide their support for the NPA. Tagamolila’s defection was announced at the first national congress of the MDP, which hailed the event; the KM likewise celebrated it in their official publications.¹⁰ One year later, on April 16 1972, Crispin Tagamolila was killed in an

1971, PRP 19/09.01.

⁸PC, 25 Mar; 1 Apr 1971, 7.

⁹Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan (KAGUMA), *On the Kidnapping of Carlos del Rosario*, April 1971, PRP 09/09.02.

¹⁰KM, “Sa Alaala ni Charlie del Rosario: Organisahin at Pakilusin ang Masa,” 12.

encounter with the AFP in Echague, Isabela, and his body identified by his dental records.¹¹ At the beginning of May, the KM honored Tagamolila with what they called a “twenty-one pillbox salute” in Plaza Miranda.¹²

Attacks on Chinese Filipinos

Ang Bayan had written of the anti-Chinese riots in Malaysia in 1969,

The anti-Chinese racial terror in Malaya, like that in Indonesia, provides a lesson to the Filipinos of Chinese descent and Chinese nationals in the Philippines. It is important for them to prepare themselves for the eventuality that the local reactionaries choose to divert the rising movement against US imperialism and local reaction by rousing up anti-Chinese, anti-China, anti-Communist and anti-people hysteria. It is necessary for them to unite and side with the forces of national liberation and people’s democracy against US imperialism, modern revisionism and reaction.¹³

In the first half of 1971, however, it was the forces of the CPP itself that roused up an anti-Chinese hysteria. The party’s failed grab for NATU had left it in control of a number of unions established at small retail and manufacturing businesses operated in Caloocan, Navotas and Malabon by Filipinos of Chinese descent. The CPP sought to consolidate its hold over these workers by supplanting class struggle with a racist nationalism, identifying the workers’ enemies not as capitalists but as intsik. The literature that the party’s labor federation, KASAMA, produced in 1971 and 1972 repeatedly singled out ‘the Chinese’ as responsible for the economic plight of workers. A lecture for newly founded unions was published in *Ang Masa*, which was by this point under the direct editorial control of the CPP, deliberately targeting Chinese Filipinos. A passage reads “In Bee Guan Shirt Factory, owned by the Kuomintang Chinese [Intsik] ... the Chinese [Intsik] pays on the basis of piece-work.”¹⁴ The CPP and KASAMA only used the word “intsik” with negative connotations. When they wrote of Mao or the Chinese revolution or the Chinese Communist Party, they never used the word “intsik.” It was a racial slur, they knew it, and they used it as such. A picture taken by the *Asia Philippines Leader* from a strike run by the KM and SDK in 1972 is revealing of the political character of these struggles. [Figure 34.2] Scrawled on the wall are graffiti denouncing the “Kumintang Intsik”, below the banner is a slogan denouncing Marcos as “Hitler” and “Diktador,” to the upper right can

¹¹Zumel, *Radical Prose*, 50-52; Del Rosario, *An Integrated Course on Communism and Democracy*, 2.

¹²APL, 12 May 1972, 51.

¹³AB, July 1969, 18.

¹⁴AM, 15 Jun 1971, 5. Notice that intsik is no longer qualified by kumintang.

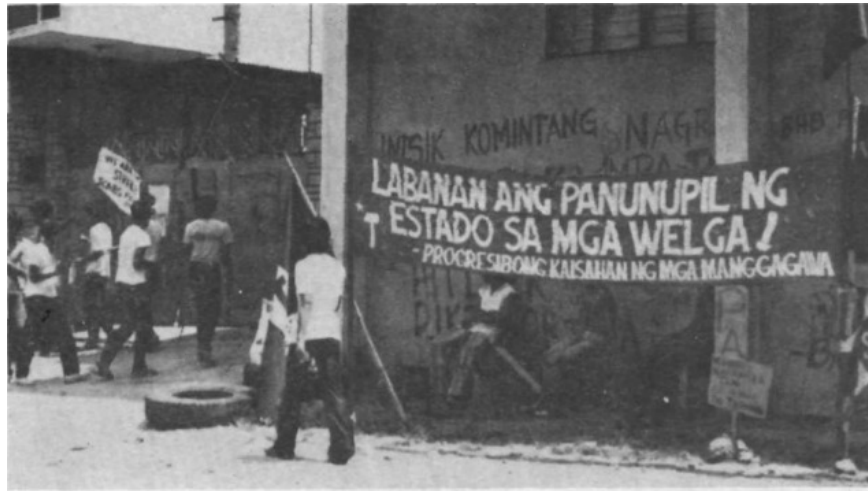


Figure 34.2: Anti-Chinese graffiti from a picket line. *APL*, 26 May 1972.

be seen “BHB,” i.e., the NPA, and in the far right can be made out the star of the SDK. While the graffiti denounced the ‘intsik,’ not a word about capitalism or capitalists is to be found.

One of the initial forays in this attack was an article published in March in the *The Partisan* entitled, “The Chinese Kumintang in the Philippines and US Imperialism.”¹⁵ The article denounced “big-time Chinese middle-men, the comprador bureaucrats who lie behind the curtain of anonymity, who are ultimately responsible for the vise-like grip of aliens over our national economy ... The Chinese control of our internal economy extends beyond mere middlemanship into banking, insurance, industry and export.” The article proceeded to list Chinese banks, insurance firms and industries, and concluded “The Chinese specter looming over our local economy is thus both complete and solid.” This ‘solid specter’ served the interest of the Kuomintang Party of Taiwan. “The time has come for the middleman to be evaluated and judged by the people.” Accompanying the article was a caricature of a scowling slant-eyed Chinese man with a queue side by side with a snarling Uncle Sam.¹⁶

These ideas were extensively developed in July by the SDK. In a historical analysis of the category ‘comprador bourgeoisie,’ the SDK established clearly that what they meant by the category was Chinese businessman. They wrote, “Any study of the comprador bourgeoisie must begin in China during the time of the Manchu regime (dynasty of the Chings),” and went on to claim that the cause of rising prices was the Chinese monopoly on trade which allowed them to dictate prices.¹⁷ The SDK continued, “So that their profit can flow and so

¹⁵ *The Partisan*, March 1971, 6, PRP 37/15.05.

¹⁶ This issue of *The Partisan* specifically mentioned the ongoing labor struggle at Rossini’s under the “Kumintang” Chua Ongchin..

¹⁷ BP, 1, no. 4 (July 1971): 2, PRP 22/02.

that their big bellies can continue to swell [tuluyang mabundat ang kanilang malalaking tiyan], the comprador bourgeoisie employ tactics that are beyond cruel. Their only desire is to raise the price of all commodities so most of the time they keep them hidden in their warehouses.” (5) As an example of this behavior the article cited Robina Farms, where, they stated, Filipinos raise the chickens, but the Chinese dictate the prices because they have a monopoly over distribution. The “Kuomintang” establish their own elitist schools in order to spread their chauvinist culture [kanilang sobinistang kultura]. The Kuomintang Chinese, the SDK argued, do not merely strangle the Filipino people with rising prices, they also push “evil vices” [masasamang bisyo], “examples include opium, their running of brothels, and peddling of pornography [nataguriang bedtime stories] in the streets, not only to poison the Filipino masses but also to grow their profits even more.” (13) The article made the point that Filipinos should make a distinction between Chinese workers in the Philippines and Chinese businessmen, but the tenor of the piece was a filthy racist diatribe. It was an opening salvo in a concerted campaign of national chauvinism through the calculated whipping up of anti-Chinese resentments, which had a long and violent history in the country.

The idea of a campaign attacking the Chinese as a means of adapting to the spontaneous consciousness of sections of the peasantry in particular was articulated at least as early as March 1970, when Fr. Edicio de la Torre wrote in *Breakthrough*, “The foreign element that is most exploitative for farmers in the provinces is the Chinese middleman. Of course you can tell them that the national picture is not this, but I think that it is both Maoist and Christian to start from their actual awareness, consciousness and also from the actual realities of the place.”¹⁸ When de la Torre stated that it was “both Maoist and Christian” to proceed from the most reactionary spontaneous conceptions of workers and peasants, he did not mean in order to correct these ideas, but rather to build upon them. The attacks on Chinese Filipinos which the CPP began in 1971 were thus rooted in Mao’s Mass Line policy. This tactical proposal, however, was not the sole impulse here. The anti-Chinese campaign served the interest of a section of the Filipino bourgeoisie which was looking to get its hands on businesses owned by Chinese Filipinos. In November one of the eleven demands being put forward by the MDP was a call to “Filipinize the wholesale trade dominated by the Kuomintang Chinese” – that is to say, to transfer ownership to another section of capitalists on the basis of their race.¹⁹

¹⁸Edicio de la Torre, “On the current unrest,” *Breakthrough* 2, no. 1 (March 1970): 6, PRP 29/11.01.

¹⁹*Breakthrough*, 1970–1972, 3, nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 16, PRP 29/11.02, PRP 29/11.

May 1 1971

Nineteen seventy-one was an election year and the rhetoric of May Day bore its stamp. The CPP rallied its new constituency of workers from the factories and retail shops of Caloocan to Congress to denounce the “fascism” of Marcos. The military opened fire on the protesters, and the CPP exploited the social anger at the massacre to promote the Liberal Party.

The KM, SDK, MDP and the newly founded KASAMA rallied on May Day in front of the Congressional building. The SDK distributed a leaflet hailing the founding of KASAMA, which was established “to build true unionism.” They stated that “The youth can learn many things from strikes. Here the fascism of the Marcos government will be exposed.”²⁰ At five in the afternoon, Jimmy Lacsamana, president of a union currently on strike, addressed the crowd. A contingent of the KM from Tondo arrived, and someone attempted to lower and reverse the congressional flag. A member of the armed forces in civilian clothing struck the person touching the flag, and threatened to kill him if he took the flag down. Peter Mutuc took the microphone and attempted to calm the crowd, but some of them began throwing pillboxes at the troops in front of the congressional building.²¹ Members of the 55th PC company, fresh from ‘anti-Huk’ campaigns, had been incorporated into the Metrocom the day before, and some of the military troops had been stationed on the top of the congressional building as snipers armed with machine guns.²² These troops began to spray the crowd with machine gun fire. As the crowd scattered the troops continued to fire, preventing Red Cross ambulances from assisting the wounded. An Air Force helicopter which had followed the march from España, and was now hovering overhead, dropped tear gas on the fleeing protesters.²³

When the firing stopped nearly a quarter of an hour later, three demonstrators lay dead in front of Congress. Liza Balandó was a member of Rossini’s Knitwear Workers’ Union and worked as a cap seamer at Rossini’s Knitwear in Caloocan, where she was paid three pesos a day. She had moved to Manila from Samar in 1969.²⁴ Richard Escarta, shot in the head, was a secretarial student at Rodriguez Vocational School; he had been married for one year and had a four month old baby. Ferdinand Oaing, was a sixteen-year-old sidewalk vendor, and an

²⁰Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Pahayag ng Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan: Araw ng Paggawa*, May 1971, PRP 15/18.17.

²¹Ricardo Lee, “Dugo sa Agua de Mayo,” *APL*, May 1971, 55–58.

²²Ninotchka Rosca, “May Day Grief,” *APL*, May 1971, 52; Commission on the Churches’ Participation in Development (CCPD), World Council of Churches, and Philippine Ecumenical Writing Group, *Moving Heaven and Earth: An Account of Filipinos Struggling to Change their Lives and Society* (Manila: Commission on the Churches’ Participation in Development (CCPD), 1982), 74.

²³APL, 7 May 1971, 4.

²⁴Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 155; Lee, “Dugo sa Agua de Mayo”; Friends of the Philippines, *Makibaka, Join Us in Struggle!* (London: Friends of the Philippines, 1978), 35.

active member of the KM in Quiapo.²⁵ Eighteen protesters were hospitalized for gunshot wounds. The next day, the MDP held a press conference at which Chito Sta. Romana spoke, denouncing Marcos for the violence of May Day and announced that the MDP would be staging an indignation rally on May 8.²⁶

While KASAMA, KM and the SDK were rallying in front of congress, Ignacio Lacsina's NATU, now closely allied to the PKP, held its tenth Biennial Convention at the D&E Restaurant. Lacsina spoke, accusing the KM of carrying out the interests of the CIA.²⁷ Lacsina left the NATU event and went to Selecta Restaurant where Roberto Oca's PTGWO was hosting a gathering of union leadership, including Cipriano Cid and Johnny Tan, with Ferdinand Marcos as their guest of honor.²⁸ The PKP was looking to promote Marcos and the ruling Nacionalista Party, and it doubled down on its appeal for unity with the national bourgeoisie, honoring the day of workers with a publication from the Makati chapter of MAN entitled *Dissent and the Proletariat*.

For a nation reeling under imperialism, no effort should be spared in winning over the nationalist bourgeoisie, fostering a United Front, and pushing through the national democratic revolution. Every nation must first obtain the right to self-determination for that will make the self-determination of the proletariat easier. In the struggle for national self-determination, the nationalist bourgeoisie plays a critical role ...

The first and direct result of the struggle can be nothing but a national democratic society which is but a transitional society ...

Socialization can only be achieved via the stage of National Democracy – the establishment of a united national democratic state and a Coalition Government with functional representation from all the classes allied within the Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Feudal United Front...²⁹

Through this coalition government with the bourgeoisie, national democracy would implement “capitalist development” which, MAN argued, “benefits the proletariat as well as the nationalist bourgeoisie, the former perhaps more.” (31) Capitalism, they assured the working class, was even better for them than it was

²⁵Some accounts have Dick Escarte and Ferdinand Owing; but Escarta and Oaing show up in the majority of the accounts. (SDK, “Ilantad at Durugin ang mga Huwad na Lider Obrero”; Rosca, “May Day Grief,” 51; Students’ Alliance for National Democracy (STAND), “Ang Mayo Uno sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas,” *Ang Estudyante* 1, no. 2 [May 1972]: 2, PRP 30/08.01; Lee, “Dugo sa Agua de Mayo”).

²⁶Lee, “Dugo sa Agua de Mayo”; Rosca, “May Day Grief,” 52.

²⁷Lansang, “One More View from the Left,” 46.

²⁸SDK, “Ilantad at Durugin ang mga Huwad na Lider Obrero”; STAND, “Ang Mayo Uno sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas,” 2.

²⁹Tony Paris, “Dissent and the Proletariat,” *Ang Kaadhika*, May 1971, 29-30.

for the bourgeoisie, and it could be achieved by “sparing no effort” in winning over the “nationalist bourgeoisie.” All measures needed to be taken to win the capitalist class, and this included voting for them.

The KM, SDK and MDP rallied the social outrage at the massacre in front of Congress and brought it before the rostrum of the Liberal Party, whose politicians were becoming increasingly adept at mouthing the slogans of the front organizations of the CPP. Particularly skilled at this was LP congressman John Osmeña, who was in his mid thirties but looked eighteen. The KM and SDK gave him pride of place in their demonstrations, and he played along, cursing beside Nonie Villanueva the evils of imperialism and fascism. Osmeña was a member of an elite political dynasty, the nephew of Sergio Osmeña Jr. – whom the KM had denounced as a fascist during the 1969 presidential election and for whom the NPA had campaigned. In 1971, John Osmeña was running for Senate.

Two examples from rallies staged in the summer of 1971 will give a sense for the interaction of the front organizations of the CPP and the Liberal Party. On May 22, the KM, SDK and MDP staged a rally at Plaza Miranda to denounce Marcos. John Osmeña addressed the crowd, alongside Baculinao and Sta. Romana. Osmeña waved a book before the audience, a copy of the penal code. He cursed the ‘fascism’ of Marcos and then set the book on fire, burning it on-stage while the crowd cheered.³⁰ In Cebu City, Osmeña’s home turf, the political ties of the KM and the LP took on even more grotesque form. On June 12, the KM and SDK staged a rally for Osmeña, marching to the city center. Voltaire Garcia spoke and SDK leader Jun Alcover introduced Osmeña.³¹ Osmeña came on stage as the Cebu City Band played the Internationale, and the Philippine Constabulary and local Boy Scout troop stood at attention. Mojares wrote on the event, “Rep. Osmeña struck a responsive chord in the crowds as he repeatedly rapped the *fascist* administration of President Marcos, the *imperialist* control of the economy, the excesses of the *feudal landlords* and *big compradors*, leading one to wonder, as he went on with his speech, whether we have here the beginnings of a Liberal Party design to ride back into power by representing itself as *progressive* through a *co-optation* of the vocabulary of the radicals.”³² This is precisely what was occurring, and it was a co-optation gladly facilitated by the front organizations of the CPP. Mojares stated that “The Cebu celebration was, from the activists’ standpoint, an exercise in the ‘united front’ for National Democracy. It was, from the standpoint of City Hall, ‘a chance given for the activists to prove themselves,’ and perhaps, too, an occasion for the officials of ‘Osmeña city’ to win students support for City Hall’s own election-oriented plans.”³³

³⁰ APL, 4 June 1971, 58.

³¹ Alcover would later become a violent anti-communist.

³² Resil B. Mojares, “Letter from Cebu,” APL, July 1971, 16, emphasis in original.

³³ Ibid., 16.

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Mudslinging and Obloquy

... *full of sound and fury*

Signifying nothing.

— William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

From the stifling days of early April to the sodden remains of late July, the CPP and PKP waged a pitched battle in the glossy pages of mainstream magazines and the manila newsprint of their own broadsheets and leaflets. Prior political struggles were but pale foreshadowings of this immense explosion of anger. Denunciations and imprecations commingled; character assassination was followed by assassination of a more literal sort. The entire unseemly affair was rooted in geopolitics. Mao was seeking rapprochement with Nixon, and on April 10 the US table tennis team traveled to Beijing, opening what became known as pingpong diplomacy; the secret visit of Henry Kissinger followed in July. Around the globe, parties loyal to Moscow responded by unleashing their long pent-up fury.

Asia Philippines Leader

The launching by the Jacinto family of a news weekly, the *Asia Philippines Leader*, with the intent of defending their interests in the steel industry against Marcos, provided a timely outlet for the sharply heightened dispute between the CPP and the PKP. Looking to strengthen its anti-Marcos position, the *Leader* opened its pages to articles by the various front organizations of the rival parties. Although it published the statements of both sides, the Jacinto's opposition to Marcos meant that the paper's editorial predilection strongly inclined to the CPP. By remarkable coincidence, the news weekly published its maiden issue on April 9, the day before the US table tennis team arrived in Beijing. It was thus in this very public forum that the immense accumulated vitriol of the rival Communist parties finally exploded into the open and by the second issue, April 16, they were hysterically denouncing each other in the pages of the *Leader*.

Ninotchka Rosca, who had been made a staff writer for the *Leader*, fired the opening shot with an article entitled, “View from the Left: Word War I,” which exposed the dispute, with its campus knife fights and vicious denunciations, to the public.¹ In a flagrant conflict of interest, Rosca failed to mention the fact that she was a founding member of the SDK.² Unsurprisingly, the MPKP and BRPF came out quite poorly in her version of events, while the SDK was given the final word on the matter. Rosca followed this piece in the next week’s issue with an article entitled, “Word War II: Lava versus Guerrero,” which rooted the acrimony between the various front organizations in the dispute between the rival communist parties, and this dispute in turn in the Sino-Soviet split.³ She opened her article,

The 1956 ideological split between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Russia) and the People’s Republic of China, a consequence of former Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev’s “de-Stalinization” of Soviet society, erupted into a savage verbal war in the Philippine only in 1971, though it had been a-simmer since the younger revolutionaries came of age in the late ’60s. The Sino-Soviet split, though it seems to have come about because of the Chinese refusal to treat Joseph Stalin as the bogeyman that the Khrushchevites painted him does not involve merely the relations between the two countries but the entire international workers’ movement – its tactics, strategy and assumptions. The split was thus felt all over the world in the form of splintered Communist Parties, much much earlier than in the Philippines.⁴

Rosca proceeded to detail the debate between Lava and Sison in *PSR, Paglilina* and “Against Wishful Thinking.” Her article marked a turning point in the long-standing dispute, unleashing a wave of vicious name-calling and bile. While this rhetoric had no doubt been in private circulation among the front organizations of the PKP, they had largely held their tongues until this point. Until April 1971, both sides had maintained the pretense that their front organizations were independent of any Communist Party and they denounced anyone who made such a connection for “red-baiting.” In the case of the KM and the SDK, their ties to the CPP were perhaps the worst-kept secret in Philippine history; they boasted of this connection constantly. Nonetheless, they would, when pressed by the state, feign political independence. In April, both sides dropped the act. They were front organizations of rival communist parties and they published as

¹Rosca wrote of several knife fights between the MPKP and the SDK on the Diliman campus around the debate over feudalism in February. (45)

²Rosca, “View from the Left: Word War I”

³Ninotchka Rosca, “Word War II: Lava versus Guerrero,” *APL*, April 1971, 12, 42, 44–45.

⁴*Ibid.*, 12.

such. The PKP had repeatedly denied that the political war with the CPP had any roots in geopolitics, but with the opening of pingpong diplomacy, this pretense disappeared as well. The CPP was a tool of Beijing, they charged, and Mao was an agent of imperialism seeking to establish ties with Nixon. The cat was at last out of the bag. It was now openly acknowledged, in the pages of the mainstream press, that the KM and SDK on the one hand, and the MPKP and BRPF on the other, followed the line of rival communist parties which were oriented either to Beijing or to Moscow.

Denunciations and mutual recriminations followed in rapid succession. While Rosca's piece had established the roots of the split, the majority of salvos in this bitter war of words never rose above vicious personal attack. The next week, April 30, saw a response from Ignacio Lacsina, entitled "The View from the Left: What is the KM's Game?", and a rebuttal from the KM, "And What is Lacsina's Racket?"⁵ Lacsina declared that the KM was working for the CIA and the KM denounced Lacsina for allying with the Soviet social-imperialists and with Marcos. On May 14, Teodosio Lansang joined the chorus of denunciations, with an article entitled "One More View from the Left," in which he denounced Sison for being a "Trotskyite."⁶ The next week, Vicente Wenceslao, head of Samahang Molabe, wrote an article that stated that his organization had just expelled Lansang for his arrogance and "counter-revolutionary attitude." Lansang was closely allied with Lacsina, Wenceslao wrote, and both were tied to Marcos.⁷ On June 11 Trinidad P. Calma, former secretary of Samahang Molabe, responded in the *Leader* to Lansang's May 14 piece, quoting from an MDP memo written by Liwayway T. Reyes, and revealed in the pages of the mainstream press the names of the Central Committee members of the PKP.⁸

On seeing Lansang's May 14 article, Reyes had written a memo to the MDP denouncing the various PKP groups for being "anti-communist," and claimed that Nemenzo had informed her of the composition of the entire central committee.⁹

⁵Lacsina, "The View from the Left: What is the KM's game?"; KM, "And what is Lacsina's racket?"

⁶Lansang, "One More View from the Left."

⁷Wenceslao, "On the KM-Lacsina Feud."

⁸Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, 64.

⁹She claimed that he stated that the central committee was composed of "Antonio Santos, Francisco Lava, Jr., Romeo Dizon, Aida Lava, Godofredo Mallari, Domingo Castro, Danny Pascual, Bartolome Pasion, Felicisimo Macapagal, Alejandro Briones, Haydee Yorac, Ching Maramag, Maximo Lacanilao, Merlin Magallona, Ruben Torres, Francisco Baltazar, Leonor Magtolis, Connie (a pseudonym), Egmidio of UIF, Ana Maria Nemenzo, and Nemenzo himself." (Trinidad P Calma, "What is Lansang (and his likes) up to?," *APL*, June 1971, 14). Reyes memo was later published in full in the *Collegian* on July 2. (Liwayway T. Reyes, "Memorandum to the Movement for a Democratic Philippines and Its Allied Organizations: Facts that should be known by the leaders and organizations of the National Democratic Movement," *PC*, July 1971, 6). An original circulating copy of the memo, to which the *Collegian* article corresponds exactly, is available at Hoover. (Liwayway T. Reyes, *Memorandum to the Movement for a Democratic Philippines and Its Allied Organizations: Facts that should be known by the leaders and organizations of the National*

Reyes declared that she had been a member of the BRPF throughout 1970 and that she had raised concerns within the organization over the fact that it was attacking the KM and SDK during the First Quarter Storm.¹⁰ In February 1970 she and several other “questioning members” were brought to Nemenzo’s residence to speak with Nemenzo and Ruben Torres, and during the course of conversation, Nemenzo claimed that the MDP, the KM and the SDK were “adventurist” and “cultists of Mao.” Nemenzo then went on to discuss how he was a member of the Politburo and the Central Committee of the PKP, and according to Reyes, he went on to name the entire Central Committee, a list which she now included in her memo.¹¹ Her memo contained additional details about Lacsina and Lansang. Nemenzo had declared that “Lacsina was expelled from the ‘Party’ on the principled ground that he was trying to establish a Lee Kuan Yew type of Socialist Party in the Philippines and was trying to organize a faction with that nervous wreck Teodosio Lansang, who had the grand illusion of mediating the ideological conflict between the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.” Nemenzo, she continued, “however, expressed the hope that Lacsina would return to the fold like a prodigal son.” According to Reyes, Nemenzo revealed that the PKP expected that “a few killings would silence the ‘Sison group’ and would teach Lacsina and the others to toe the line. . . . Also cockily, Nemenzo pointed out that Marcos would not run after the ‘Party’ because there was some other group to run after. And the ‘Party’ would also make full use of the ‘support’ of the Soviet Union which was already starting relations with the Philippine Government.”

Was Reyes’ account truthful? Every claim that Reyes makes can be supported by external evidence, from the composition of the central committee, to the plots of the leadership against the CPP. The only uncertainty is if Nemenzo was so voluble and careless as to reveal all of this to a “questioning” BRPF member in his home. Regardless of how Reyes came by the information, her memo exposed the composition of the leadership of the PKP and the schemes they were hatching. Nemenzo responded to Reyes in the *Collegian* on July 9. He claimed that Liwayway Reyes was a “fictitious person,” stating “I never knew anybody named ‘Liwayway T. Reyes’ and there was no such meeting ‘she’ claims to have attended.” Nemenzo did not address any of the specific claims made by Reyes other than to dismiss them as “red-baiting and slander” and “McCarthyite

Democratic Movement, May 1971, JHP).

¹⁰This was a questionable concern. The MPKP and BRPF had weathered the attacks of the KM in relative silence during the first months of 1970. The war of words at that time was largely one-sided.

¹¹Reyes claimed that Nemenzo narrated how the party in 1964 was composed of a five man group “which was appointed by Jesus Lava in his capacity as General Secretary and which was composed of two Lava kinsmen, Francisco Jr. and Vicente, Ignacio Lacsina, Pedro Taruc, and one name, a pseudonym, that I find it difficult to recall now.” Reyes’ pretense is laughable; the fifth name was Sison.



Figure 35.1: Caricature of Nemenzo accompanying Reyes' memo in the *Collegian*.

tactics.”¹²

Calma’s publication of the details of Reyes’ memo in the pages of the *Leader* was a significant escalation of tensions. The entire central committee had been exposed to the nation; many of their names were closely tied to the Marcos administration, some in salaried government positions. Lansang attempted to dismiss Calma with a sexist wave of the hand. He wrote in the *Leader* on July 2 that “Trining was never known to write, much less write sophisticatedly ... I believe that the *real* authors of the concoction, hiding behind a slip of a girl, are the newly found ‘friends’ and ‘allies’ of the same group that has refused to see my point in every discussion.”¹³ He also stated that Liwayway Reyes was “one more of those skirts behind which these poseurs hide.”¹⁴ Lansang’s misogynistic little diatribe depicted the entire international movement as disoriented by the Sino-Soviet rift and the CIA was exploiting this disorientation, he claimed. Lansang advocated that the Communist Party in the Philippines pursue “self-reliance” and break from its ‘colonial mentality’ to either China or Russia. Rather than addressing Stalinist nationalism as the root of the rift between the parties, Lansang sought to accentuate nationalism as the ostensible solution to

¹²PC, 9 Jul 1971, 6.

¹³Teodosio A. Lansang, “Lansang is (and his likes are) out to unmask poseurs,” *APL*, July 1971, 12.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 47.

this rift.¹⁵ Calma responded in the *Leader* on July 23, insisting that she had in fact written the earlier article, despite “Mr. Lansang’s aversion to skirts,” and stated that “[i]f Lansang still doubts the authenticity of my John Hancock (that’s a male chauvinist expression for signature) you can always invite him to your office to poke his nose into my previous letter and this one.” Calma claimed that Lansang viewed himself as the “grand arbiter between the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of China and the revisionist renegade Communist Party of the Soviet Union.”¹⁶

The barbs being exchanged in the pages of various publications including the *Leader* reveled in personal attack and never transcended it. This was an expression of the fact that there were no programmatic differences between the political positions of the two groups. Neither side could articulate in a calm and reasoned manner its differences with its rivals, for their political dispute was entirely the result of the geopolitical split between Moscow and Beijing and, flowing from this, an orientation to rival sections of the Filipino ruling class. The mudslinging in the pages of the *Leader* went on until the August 6 issue, in which the editor announced “With this issue the *Leader* declares the debate on the Left officially closed. (3)”

The Murder of Francisco Sison

Violent suppression was intrinsic to the DNA of the PKP and the CPP. The political program of Stalinism was predicated upon securing hold over a constituency, the working class, whose objective interests it did not articulate, in order to subordinate it to a hostile class, capitalists, and by these means extract concessions on behalf of a privileged bureaucratic caste. This control over the working class could not be achieved by honest discussion; the political ends of Stalinism required deception and subterfuge. When the manhandling of the truth would not suffice, the well-worn alternative was suppression – not reason but an icepick. As the histrionics continued, and with their machinations increasingly exposed, both sides began to reach for their guns. In late May – as Liwayway Reyes was writing her memo publicly identifying the entire Central Committee of the PKP and declaring that they were plotting “a few killings” to “silence” the CPP – Francisco Sison, the brother of Joma, was murdered.

In January 1971, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) had published a special issue of *Struggle*, entitled “Petty Bourgeois Revolutionism of the Renegade Opportunist KM-Sison Gang,” in which they stated that one of Sison’s brothers worked as an agent for the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and another of his brothers worked with the Presidential Economic Staff (PES). These revelations were followed on February 15 by MAN’s announcement in its publication, *Sang-*

¹⁵Lansang, “Lansang is (and his likes are) out to unmask poseurs,” 47.

¹⁶Calma, “Lansang the Poseur Further Exposes Himself,” 43.

Ayon sa MAN, [According to *MAN*] that Sison's father "Vicente Sison" had been a Makapili agent of the Japanese occupation and had been killed by the Huks.¹⁷ These were, for the most part, lies. Sison's father was not Vicente, but Salustiano; he was not killed during the Japanese occupation by the Huks, but died in 1957; Sison did not have a brother in the NBI. His older brother, Francisco Sison, however, was the assistant deputy director of the Presidential Economic Staff as the BRPF had claimed. Sison held a masters degree from Georgetown University and worked as the personal assistant of Placido Mapa, head of the PES, having held this position since at least 1967. The prominence of Francisco Sison's position in the Marcos administration can be ascertained in the 1967 Government Official Directory, where Sison's name is listed, alongside Alejandro Melchor and Cesar Virata, as one of the three heads of the PES. Mapa, Melchor and Virata, with whom Sison worked, were Marcos' key economic advisers.¹⁸

Having been warned that his life might be in danger because of the January issue publicly associating him with his brother, Francisco Sison applied for and was granted a fellowship to study in Germany for two years.¹⁹ He was en route to Goethe-Haus "to take a proficiency examination in German," in the early morning of May 24, when both he and his driver, Elpidio Morales, "properly armed ... with weapons issued by virtue of [his] position" in the PES, disappeared.²⁰ Their bodies were never found. Joma Sison later claimed that the PKP and the AFP Counterintelligence Unit (CIU) were responsible for his brother's murder, specifically accusing "Lavaite CIU double agents" Danilo Pascual and Sid Robielos.²¹ Francisco Sison's disappearance did not become publicly known until June 12. On June 11, the *Leader* published a letter from Joma Sison responding to the BRPF claims regarding his alleged brothers, in which he wrote "I have observed with no little amusement the petty-minded attacks that certain persons have been making against my inconspicuous and unobtrusive person," and denied the claims regarding his family members.²²

My most maddened attackers should not try to change my father's
name, status, time and cause of demise – as done by the official organ

¹⁷I have been unable to locate a copy of either of these documents, which became the subject of dispute in July 1971. The front page of the January 1971 issue of *Struggle* was reproduced in PFP, 6, 3 Apr 1971. That the BRPF and *MAN* issued publications making these claims is attested in numerous sources, including the articles by Lansang in *APL* and by the KM in *PC*. The BRPF did not dispute the fact that they published this issue or that it named Sison's brother.

¹⁸*Republic of the Philippines Official Directory 1967* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1967), 52.

¹⁹MT, 12 Jun 1971.

²⁰PC, 13 Aug 1971, 6.

²¹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 63. We know from Jesus Lava's own account that Sid Robielos, a party member and brother of Central Committee member Cipriano Robielos, was closely tied to the military and was sufficiently integrated into its upper ranks that he was in personal contact with Macario Peralta, the head of the Armed Forces under Macapagal. (Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 289).

²²Jose Ma. Sison, "A Brief Comment to my Detractors," *APL*, June 1971, 3.

of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism. And they should not give me one brother more only to appoint him to some functions distasteful to any of my unfabricated brothers – as done by the official organ of the BRPF (Philippines), Inc. Such antics only make comics out of my critics. (56)

Sison concluded by calling the various front organizations of the PKP “cheap informers of the enemy.” Sison’s response was deliberately unclear at one point – “one brother more only to appoint him to some functions distasteful to any of my unfabricated brothers” – in an attempt to shield his older brother, Francisco. The day after Sison’s letter was published, the *Manila Times* announced the disappearance of Francisco Sison.

On July 9 the *Collegian* published a letter from Joma Sison regarding the disappearance of his brother which stated that he had learned of the disappearance of his brother “through newspaper reports.”²³ His brother’s disappearance, he declared, was “obviously another handiwork of the same evil forces responsible for the disappearance of Carlos B. del Rosario.” Sison stated that Francisco – known in the Sison family as Paquito – is a typical “technocrat” in an economic policy-making body of the reactionary puppet government, the Presidential Economic Staff (PES), but added that it was “an honor for my brother to share the same sacrifices suffered by so many in the revolutionary mass movement. His life has assumed new meaning, its loss can be heavier than a mountain. . . . I hope that the disappearance of Paquito will arouse all my kinsmen for the revolution. Let the loss of one man multiply the revolutionaries among you.”

July Daze

The murderous intrigue and bitter exchanges of April, May and June were but a foretaste of the frenzied month of July. On July 9, Henry Kissinger traveled to Beijing and met with Zhou Enlai and on the sixteenth his travels were disclosed and Nixon’s intention to visit Beijing in the coming year announced.

Ang Komunista on Pingpong Diplomacy

While open conflict had been launched by the front organizations of the pro-Moscow party, the leadership itself had not yet publicly entered the fray. On July 21, less than a week after the announcement of the growing rapprochement between Nixon and Mao, the PKP published *Ang Komunista* attacking Mao and the CPP for Beijing’s secret diplomacy with Washington.²⁴ The issue was

²³Jose Ma. Sison, “Jose Ma. Sison’s Statement on his Brother’s Disappearance,” *PC*, July 1971, 6.

²⁴AK, Jul 1971, PRP 33/13.01. This attack was soon repeated by the MPKP in a leaflet dated August 9. (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Will the Parrots of Peking Also Change their Tune?*, August 1971, PRP 10/29.21).

headlined “Pingpong Diplomacy” and it was a declaration of war by the leadership of the P K P on the pro-Beijing party. The front-page editorial announced that the P K P had decided to convert the journal into “a widely circulated bulletin on current affairs. A journal bearing a different name will take over its original function as the Party’s theoretical organ.”²⁵ It proclaimed that *Ang Komunista*, as the paper of the P K P, would serve

to defend its political line from distortions, misrepresentations and malicious attacks. We frankly admit that we had failed to effectively counter the dirty propaganda tactics of our enemies because of an earlier policy which unduly stressed the clandestine nature of Party work, to such an extent that we hesitated to make a public clarification of our views. This gave the propagandists of the reactionary state as well as the Maoist rascals a chance to ascribe to us positions we did not hold and condemn us for crimes we have not committed. We have been silent. It’s time for counter-attack. (2)

Maoism, the P K P declared, was “like an apple, red outside and yellow inside.” The yellow pulp of this oddly-colored political fruit manifested itself in the foreign policy of Beijing, which was the immediate and sole target of the P K P’s counter-attack.

Since its open break with the International Communist movement, Maoist China has been pursuing a double-faced foreign policy. On the one hand there is the ultra revolutionary phrase-mongering aimed not so much to rally the oppressed peoples against imperialism as to isolate the Soviet Union and impose Maoist Chinese hegemony. On the other hand, there is the opportunist line of stealthily making contacts and developing trade with imperialist powers.²⁶

“On the Lavaite Misrepresentation of the Proletarian Foreign Policy of China”

Ang Komunista had written that “It would be interesting now to watch how these local-bred parrots of Beijing will twist their avowed position to accommodate the latest turn in their master’s foreign policy.” They did not have to wait long to find out. Within a week of the P K P the C P P and its front organizations had hailed Nixon’s statement that he intended to travel to China as a victory for Beijing. *Ang Masa*, for example, headlined the Sino-US talks “Nixon, Surrenders

²⁵ AK, Jul 1971, 1; PRP 33/13.01.

²⁶ On this last point, the P K P added that “while the Filipino Maoists came out in opposition to Philippine-Soviet trade, their masters were busy negotiating the establishment of diplomatic and trade relations with Canada.” (3)

to Mao!”²⁷. On July 30 the CPP Central Committee published a statement in *Ang Bayan*, entitled “On the Lavaite Misrepresentation of the Proletarian Foreign Policy of China,” responding to the July 21 issue of *Ang Komunista*.²⁸ The article declared that it would take up the *Ang Komunista* piece as “the starting point for a discussion and clarification of the proletarian foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China,” and argued that the foreign policy of China “has consistently embraced three aspects:”

(1) to develop relations of friendship, mutual assistance and cooperation with socialist countries on the principle of proletarian internationalism; (2) to support and assist the revolutionary struggles of all oppressed people and nations; and (3) to strive for peaceful coexistence with countries having different social systems on the basis of the Five Principles of (a) mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, (b) mutual nonaggression, (c) noninterference in each other’s internal affairs, (d) equality and mutual benefit, and (e) peaceful coexistence, and to oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war.²⁹

The CPP argued that pursuing diplomatic and economic ties with Washington was not incompatible with “providing assistance to the revolutionary struggles of all the oppressed people and nations.” In truth, it drastically altered China’s geopolitical stance. When Nixon ordered the mining of Haiphong harbor and launched the Linebacker I and II bombing campaigns in North Vietnam in 1972, Beijing tolerated Washington’s aggression and refused a request from Hanoi to

²⁷AM, Jul 1971.

²⁸I have not been able to locate a copy of this issue of *Ang Bayan*. The text of the statement was reprinted in Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 273-287. The statement was reprinted in October 1971 in the *Collegian*. I have checked the 2013 reprint against this contemporary edition. (PC, 8 Oct, 4; 13 Oct 1971, 6-7). A Tagalog version of the text was published in Mal, 4 Nov 1971, 4-5, 7 under the title “Ang Proletaryong Patakarang Panlabas ng Republikang Bayan ng Tsina” [The Proletarian Foreign Policy of People’s Republic of China]. In January 1972, the PKP would allege that this response had been written later and then backdated, declaring that “the local Maoists under the traitor Amado Guerrero were forced to take a very long, embarrassed pause before coming out with a position on ping-pong diplomacy. After months of silence, the ‘Central Committee’ of the Mao Thought Party has finally come up with a miserable piece of apologetic blabber entitled ‘On the Lavaite (sic) Misrepresentation of the Proletarian (sic) Foreign Policy of China.’ In this *backdated* reply to a stinging attack from the official organ of Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (‘Ping-pong diplomacy,’ *Ang Komunista*, July 26 1971) the Filipino Maoists could hardly conceal their consternation at the invitation China extended to Nixon and the implicit repudiation of what they had been taught to regard as ‘the correct line’ in international affairs.” (Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “Ideological Dispute Between Maoism and the International Communist Movement,” AK 3, no. 1 [January 1972], Sics and emphasis in original, PRP 33/13.03). The PKP did not go on to specify or substantiate when the “backdated” CPP article had actually been written, but it could not have been later than the beginning of October.

²⁹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 273-274.

use Southern Chinese ports to circumvent Haiphong. Latent within the third principle – non-interference – was a fundamental shift in Beijing’s foreign policy. As China initiated ties with dictatorships around the globe, including the Shah, Pinochet, and Marcos, they agreed that they would not interfere in the suppression of the population, nor would they arm or support local revolutionaries. The Yan’an of world revolution closed its borders, and Mao opened the economic and diplomatic ties which led to the restoration of capitalism in China.

The CPP defended Beijing’s ties with Washington, but at the same time they attacked the international relations of Moscow. They wrote, “We are against Philippine relations with Soviet social-imperialism because this monster gives counterrevolutionary support to the reactionary government and the Lava revisionist renegades and helps and competes with US imperialism and Japanese militarism in doing the same thing, in keeping the Philippines a mere appendage of imperialism.” (286) When Beijing gave support to the Marcos regime in 1975, recognizing its legitimacy and promising not to interfere as he cracked down on the CPP, the CPP defended Beijing, asserting that this was part of the correct policy of ‘Peaceful Coexistence.’

These two statements from the leadership of the PKP and the CPP attacking and defending the foreign policy of Beijing established the political terrain on which the rapid-fire attacks staged by the two parties’ various front organizations were launched.

‘... a proven warrior of counter-revolution’

The BRPF published a new edition of *Struggle*, entitled “Facts which ought to be known about a proven warrior of counter-revolution.”³⁰ The rhetoric of the BRPF closely resembled that of the Maoists, inflammatory but political vague. They wrote, for example, “Never have the bloated few who benefit from exploitation and oppression ever gone down from their gilded thrones to gracefully hand over their power to the raging many on a silver platter. They will always wrack their rabid brains to come up with devious schemes to manipulate terrorize and ultimately destroy the movement which will never hesitate to give them the death blow.” (1) This was acid prose without content; the BRPF lobbed a caustic bubble at the CPP.

[The CPP] manipulate and build up pseudo-revolutionary groups whose rank-and-file are deceived into mouthing revolutionary phrases while openly projecting a political line that is blatantly erroneous, adventurist, revisionist, and counter-revolutionary. The black leaders of these yellow groups [!] find it more convenient to attack the

³⁰ *Struggle*, 3 no. 2 (1971), PRP 42/03.02. They published a Tagalog version as well, “Mga bagay-bagay na dapat malaman hinggil sa isang subok na kawal ng kontra-rebolusyon.” (PRP 42/04)

genuine National Liberation Movement than the real enemies of the people: American imperialism, local feudalism, monopoly-capitalism and intensifying fascism. (2)

There was only one substantive political difference which the leaflet raised between the CPP and the PKP: the CPP backed a rival section of the bourgeoisie. “They have declared Marcos as the principal enemy (in fact, their anti-imperialist propaganda pale in comparison to their vitriolic anti-Marcos attacks), while shamelessly colluding with oligarchs led by the Lopezes, Aquino, Roces, the Liberal Party, etc., as well as with the clerico-fascist Jesuits and La Salle brothers.” The BRPF proceeded to engaged in an extended personal attack against Joma Sison, denouncing him repeatedly as “Judas” and as a “congenital liar,” (3) a man who was a “stubborn,” “infantile,” “obsessive,” “hypocritical” “boot-licker,” but whose followers had been “brainwashed to fanatically regard him as a demi-god whose word is their gospel truth.”³¹ Sison, they continued, had been kicked out of the PKP in 1967 because he was “found guilty of careerism, splittism, and the forcible imposition of his infantile theories”. The BRPF provided no further explication of political differences or of Sison’s “theories,” but stated that he “did nothing to rectify his errors.” The BRPF did not argue that this was a result of the class orientation of Sison, but rather claimed it was “due to a basic character defect – the conceited belief that one like him can never make a mistake.” They continued, “Sison’s blackest crime, however, is the feeding of names of real revolutionaries to the fascist State for arrest and liquidation which is exactly what is perpetrated in Central Luzon by the NPA roving band whose habitual asylum is the Hacienda Luisita of Aquino-Cojuangco.” (6) The NPA, the BRPF declared, should be renamed the “New People’s Assassins.”³² (3)

‘... ahente ng reaksiyon sa hanay ng kabataan’

The SDK responded to the BRPF and MPKP in the pages of its publication, *Bandilang Pula*, which was then under the editorship of Chito Sta. Romana. In an article entitled “Ibunyag at Tuluyang Itakwil ang Kontra Rebolusyonyong MPKP – Ahente ng Reaksiyon sa Hanay ng Kabataan” [Expose and Continue to Renounce the Counter-Revolutionary MPKP – Agent of Reaction in the Youth Front] the SDK defended Sison against charges leveled against him by the PKP that split between the SDK and KM in late 1967 was “proof” of his “bankrupt” leadership.³³ The SDK responded by blaming the split entirely on their own

³¹The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation wrote in a similar vein of Liwayway Reyes’ and her memo – that “non-existent female,” behind whose “skirt” the KM-SDK were hiding, and whose allegations were “empty blabberings.”

³²The piece concluded by describing the KM-SDK activists on the barricades as “long-haired extortionists.”

³³Among other publications, the January issue of *Struggle* had raised this charge.

former leadership – Perfecto Tera and Vivencio Jose – whom they had now purged from their ranks.

Some members [ilang kasapi] of the KM left the organization under the leadership of Vivencio Jose and Perfecto Tera Jr. because of the difficulties in implementing democratic centralism. Tera and Jose said that too much centralism was prevailing. The two did not give value to the truth that centralism was then needed for the good of the heightened struggle against the capitulationist and opportunist line that the Lava gang wanted the entire movement to follow. But in truth, Jose and Tera turned out to both have an opportunist line that was afraid to carry forward the struggle. The Jose-Tera tendency was bankrupt and without principle; simply because they had problems following the leadership of the organization, they both separated from it along with others from KM.³⁴

“The history of the SDK in the two years of 1968-1969,” the article continued, “is concrete proof of the leadership of Jose and Tera. During these years no program for the movement was put forward or followed by the SDK. The SDK, like the Lava gang, was in these years left behind by the flow of the Philippine revolution. In January 1970, the bad experiences of the SDK had become sufficient to kick out Jose and Tera and the SDK determined to follow the revolutionary line of struggle that had been diligently supported by the KM.”³⁵ Having defended Sison by blaming their own former leaders, SDK attacked the MPKP, writing that “Truly anything that imperialism desires, such as having an opportunist line, the MPKP and the whole Lava gang desires as well.”³⁶

Palisin lahat ng Pesteng Maka-Lava!

On July 23, the KM published an issue of *Kalayaan* entitled “Palisin lahat ng Pesteng Maka-Lava!” [Brush away the Lavaite Pests!] which attacked the MPKP and the other front organizations of the PKP.³⁷ The cover of the issue featured a drawing of students holding an assault rifle, a copy of *PSR* and swinging a fountain pen like a massive sword to knock down the figures of Lansang, Lava,

³⁴BP, 1 no. 4 (July 1971): 9, PRP 22/02.

³⁵On this disciplining of the previously anarchistic organization, we can find hints of expulsions and purges within the ranks of the SDK. In August 1971, for example, the SDK wrote a letter to *Sinag* stating that SDK member Reynaldo Guioguo, who was slated to run for UP AS Council president, had been expelled from the SDK for “careerism and right opportunism.” Guioguo, they claimed, had been given adequate time by the leadership to rectify himself appropriately [naaayong pagwawasto ... mawasto ang kanyang sarili] but he did not do so. (*Sinag*, 1, no. 1 [August 1971], 12, PRP 42/02.01).

³⁶BP, 1, no. 4, (July 1971): 10, PRP 22/02.

³⁷Kabataang Makabayan (KM), “Palisin ang Lahat ng Pesteng Maka-Lava!,” *Kal* 7, no. 6 (July 1971), PRP 32/01.04 [Tagalog 32/03.03].



Figure 35.2: KM attacks the Lava group

Nemenzo and Torres, sending copies of *Ang Sosyalista*, *Political Review*, *Sang-Ayon sa MAN*, and *Struggle* flying. *Palisin* added nothing new to the discussion. It denounced the PKP front organizations for naming Francisco Sison as Joma's brother, and it denied the claims regarding his father and his NBI agent brother. The KM concluded "Sison's detractors only expose their utter bankruptcy with every ridiculous attack they make on him in their puny attempt to deny his role in the present upsurge in the revolutionary mass movement."

On Lavaite Propaganda for Revisionism and Fascism

On July 20 Sison submitted a report entitled "On Lavaite Propaganda for Revisionism and Fascism" to the Central Committee of the CPP, which was then printed and distributed by the CPP later in the year.³⁸ The final document was 193 pages long and yet said very little that was new, as Sison simply summarized and repeated the positions which had been articulated in previous publications

³⁸Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Report to the Central Committee on Lavaite Propaganda for Revisionism and Fascism*, November 1971. The report was reprinted in Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 145-272.

and documents. This compilation of the arguments of the party was presented because

The Executive Committee of the Central Committee has deemed it necessary and appropriate in the interest of truth and in compliance with the demand of the masses to show comprehensively the degeneration of the Lava revisionist renegades into fascist criminals and special agents of the US-Marcos clique against the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the revolutionary movement in general.³⁹

The report did not explain this degeneration, or give a political definition of what a "fascist criminal" was, or how the PKP had become such a political entity. It compiled a list of the alleged crimes and intrigues of the PKP, of most of which the PKP was actually guilty. It did not politically account for them, however, beyond the usual imprecations and denunciations. Sison opened by condemning the "fascist action" of "specifying to the reactionary state particular persons to attack physically even as these are engaged in legal activities." (146) By this Sison was in reference to the publications of the PKP which had named leading members of the CPP and their relatives. Sison had himself on a number of occasions publicly named Nemenzo, Magallona, Yorac and Torres as members of the PKP, but when the PKP wrote that Sison was Amado Guerrero he deemed this a "fascist action."

Sison documented in detail each publication of the PKP which had engaged in the dispute in 1971. He gave no explanation for why the PKP had escalated hostilities in 1971, but the answer is clear: Beijing's rapprochement with Washington had set off a frenzy in Moscow and it dropped its long-standing call for unity; the pro-Beijing parties needed to be crushed. Sison accused the PKP of carrying out "cheap Trotskyite tricks" (169) and denounced the leadership of the PKP as "little Trotskys." (207) At another point Sison accused the PKP of "fascist trickery." He used the words fascist and 'Trotskyite' interchangeably, like an angry child attempting to curse.

Among the alleged cheap tricks of the PKP was the method in which Jesus Lava chose "the five-man 'executive committee'" in 1963. Sison claimed that this was "sheer nepotism and a clear disregard for a number of other capable comrades of the old merger party." This may be true, but Sison carefully avoided mentioning the fact that he had been one of the five appointed by Lava. (171) Sison claimed that the July issue of *Struggle* had gloated over the killing of his brother. (216) This was false. The July issue of *Struggle* was a vile little diatribe, as full of name-calling as it was empty of analysis, but it did not include any such "gloating." Sison attempted to maintain the illusion that Guerrero was not Sison, and thus wrote about Sison as a separate person, praising him.

³⁹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 145.

It is undeniable to the toiling masses and to the youth that Jose Ma. Sison's *Struggle for National Democracy* and founding efforts in several mass organizations have contributed greatly to the brilliant transition from the 1960s to the 1970s of the revolutionary mass movement. . . . We hold Jose Ma. Sison in high regard as an outstanding figure in the national united front and among the revolutionary youth and for his indefatigable efforts to push forward the national democratic movement. (254)

Despite its length, Sison's report added nothing of substance to the political discussion in 1971.

'Deception and Murder is the meaning ...'

In late July the CPP produced an unsigned leaflet entitled "Deception and Murder is the meaning of the Lavaite 'Theory of Physical Affinity' and 'Armed Struggle as a Secondary Form.'"⁴⁰ The pamphlet repeated Sison's claim that the BRPF "gloated" over Francisco Sison's death. The leaflet then, without any substantiation, claimed that the 'Lavaites' held to a "theory of physical affinity." This theory was not explained, but the pamphlet implied that it meant that the PKP held family members of revolutionaries to be fair targets for harassment and assassination. The pamphlet wrote that the "Lavaites are old experts in unprincipled assassinations, which they call 'liquidation' in their Mafia parlance." The response of the CPP to this campaign of political murder being waged by the PKP was not the defense of principled politics, but an escalation of the violence. The CPP threatened the PKP Central Committee members with assassination, identifying each of members of the Central Committee named in the memo of Liwayway Reyes, listing their places of employment and their relation to the party. (3)

The exchanges died down at the end of July. Jacinto cut both parties off from access to his magazine in the first week of August and the attention of the rival organizations was for a time focused elsewhere. In late July the KM and SDK were unexpectedly and roundly defeated in the Diliman campus elections; August followed with the bombing of Plaza Miranda and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus; the November election loomed after and the front organizations of the CPP strained every nerve and sinew to secure victory for the Liberal Party. It was not until late November that the diatribes and assassinations resumed. For the historian, and one has to imagine for the contemporary reading public, the truncation of the summer salvos of 1971 is a welcome respite. Reading through the material of April to July is a wearying affair, one strains through page after page of inarticulate anger and murderous threats to sift out the stray lines of

⁴⁰*Deception and Murder is the Meaning of the Lavaite 'Theory of Physical Affinity' and 'Armed Struggle as Secondary Form'.*

political coherence. The CPP and the PKP were given open access to the pages of the mainstream press and they had nothing to say, but they said it very loudly.

— 36 —

Campus Elections

... ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded

— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

The Election

When the *Collegian* resumed publication at the end of the summer break, it was under the editorship of leading SDK member Rey Vea. He began printing weekly press releases from the CPP, and by the middle of the month, the articles of the Communist Party were running in the campus paper under the prominent masthead of *Ang Bayan*, featuring the hammer, sickle and armalite. [Figure 21.1] A similar radicalization of *Ang Malaya* at the PCC had taken place, but in its case the adoption of the imagery of the Communist Party was on masthead of the student paper itself. [Figure 36.1] The front organizations of the CPP controlled campus politics in 1971 in an unprecedented fashion. At the center of student political life throughout the country were the front organizations of the CPP on the flagship Diliman campus. They received university funding to provide mandatory nationalist orientation to every enrolling freshman; published the statements of the Communist Party in the campus paper; broadcast its statements on campus radio – which was then rebroadcast throughout the nation by Lopez; their unions, youth groups, and sectoral organizations controlled the entire sprawling fourth floor of Vinzons Hall, with office space to spare. Their influence was poised to expand further. On July 23, Kaunlaran, the Los Baños student party of the KM and SDK won by a landslide, securing twenty-eight of thirty seats on the student council.¹

Then came the election debacle of July 1971. The SM was roundly defeated in the Diliman campus election, losing not only the chairmanship of the Student

¹PC, 30 Jul 1971. The KM-SDK student party at Ateneo, LDA, also saw its candidate, Alex Aquino, elected president of the the Ateneo Student Council in a landslide. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 102; Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 92).



Figure 36.1: Masthead of *Ang Malaya*.

Council but a majority of seats as well. The CPP seized upon the election outcome to reorient its front organizations in the week before the Plaza Miranda bombing, initiating a sharply rightward political lurch. They instructed the membership of the KM and SDK to join traditional, conservative organizations, particularly religious sodalities and community organizations, and “broaden the united front,” by which they meant to form an alliance with layers which the front groups had previously denounced as reactionary. This policy served the interests of the Liberal Party and the elite anti-Marcos opposition, for in the wake of the bombing their paramount concern was no longer the destabilization of Marcos – who having suspended the writ of habeas corpus was perilously close to implementing military dictatorship – but the consolidation of public sympathy and support behind their election campaign.

Campaigning opened on July 26 and elections were staged on the sixth of August. Sandigan Makabansa [Patriotic Pillars] (SM) held a convention on July 17 to select its candidates, choosing Rey Vea to run for chair of the UP Student Council, against Manny Ortega, of the Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa [Federation of Free Unity] (KMP)² The 1971 Diliman Campus elections were a bloody, dirty affair. Seventy students competed for forty-four seats, and both sides engaged in mudslinging, malicious propaganda and physical violence.³ Over the past year the KM and SDK had worked to win the support of a number of campus fraternities. Willie Nepomuceno, a spokesman for SM, wrote that the majority of campus fraternities had now “adopted the mass line” and had become national democratic organizations in the forefront of the people’s democratic struggle.⁴ The move effectively politicized the traditional fraternity rivalries on campus and turned the 1971-72 campus election into a bloody frat rumble.

²PC, 16 Jul 1971, 3. Angel Baking addressed the SM convention. The KM and SDK in their literature routinely referred to the KMP as KAMP attempting to associate the student group with Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. The former campus chair of MPKP (UP), Aurelio Quiray, ran on the KMP slate, but the MPKP disavowed his actions, declaring that he did not represent them. (PC, 13 Aug 1971).

³PC, 23 Jul 1971. The SM, for example, spread the rumor that Manny Ortega was the illegitimate son of Marcos. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 83).

⁴PC, 30 Jul 1971, 7.

On August 2, violence broke out during the campus election convocation and several students were injured. Both sides immediately accused the other. The SDK issued a leaflet within hours of the altercation, claiming that the KMP, unable to answer the questions and positions of the SM, had resorted to “vulgar cursing,” brandishing guns and weapons and throwing bottles at the students. The KMP, they claimed, came to the debate wearing bandages, and carrying sticks, rocks, guns, and smoke bombs which they “mercilessly threw at the students who were quietly watching.” Two SM members were injured, Irma and Herman [Apostol], who were cut in the head by bottles thrown at the students.⁵ The reference to bandages worn by the KMP was expanded in an August 9 leaflet published by SM which claimed that “KAMP members sported band-aid strips on their noses as an identification mark among themselves.”⁶ The SM singled out fraternity leader Joeboy Aliling as wielding a truncheon and heading up the violence of the KMP.⁷ The SM then lamely concluded “If the SM really provoked the trouble at the convocation, it was certainly KAMP which eagerly capitalized on the incident to sway the more gullible and soft-hearted among our fellow students, up to the last campaign day.”⁸

The KMP meanwhile claimed that SM members came to the convocation wearing “conspicuous red armbands” as “very convenient identifying marks;” this was the KMP equivalent of the SM’s band-aid allegations.⁹ The speakers were allotted twenty minutes, the KMP claimed, but Veja spoke for thirty. When Ortega was given the microphone, the students wearing red armbands moved to leave *en masse*.¹⁰ Ortega challenged Veja to denounce him – “Why don’t you say it, that we are tuta ni Marcos? [Marcos’ lapdog]” Veja, they claimed, did not know how to respond and “stayed rooted in his seat, a blank stare on his face.”¹¹ The audience began to boo, and Ed Araullo frantically attempted to coach Veja. At this point a pillbox was thrown from the KM-SDK group at the Ladies Auxiliary Corps of the KMP, and two young women were injured. According to the KMP, while the KM-SDK later claimed that the injured belonged to their side, they were in fact members of the KMP. Within thirty minutes of the ‘rumble’ the SM had published a statement denouncing the KMP as responsible, clearly indicating,

⁵Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Tuluyang Itakwil ang Mga Napatunayang Ahente sa Campus at Mapangahas na Ibandila ang Watawat ng Pambansang Demokrasya*, August 1971, PRP 15/22.11; PC, 5 Aug 1971.

⁶Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *All Lies and Intrigues of Reactionaries Fail in the Face of Reality!! Trust the Masses!! Onward with the National Democratic Struggle!!*, August 1971, PRP 16/10.01, 2.

⁷Samahan ng Progresibong Propagandista (SPP), “On the Serious Manhandling of Several Members of the Samahan ng Progresibong Propagandista (SPP) by the Vanguard-SDS Fascist Thugs,” *Alab*, September 1971, PRP 19/05.03; SM, *All Lies and Intrigues*.

⁸SM, *All Lies and Intrigues*, 2.

⁹*Convocation Sabotaged*.

¹⁰The *Collegian* confirmed that the violence broke out while Ortega was speaking.

¹¹Why this rather silly challenge flummoxed Veja was not explained.

the KMP argued, that the violence had been planned by the SM in advance.¹²

Neither the account of the KMP nor that of SM is satisfying; neither side presented a coherent or consistent version of events. Who started the violence is a point which cannot be resolved. It is clear, however, that both sides entered the University theater armed with pillboxes, bottles, and truncheons and engaged in the equivalent of a street battle. Armando Malay, Dean of Student Affairs and chair of the University Election Board, issued a call for students to submit evidence regarding the violence during the convocation with a deadline of August 19.¹³ Both sides had engaged in violence and were alarmed that Malay would rule against them and the SM and the KMP thus united in denouncing the Dean. On August 4 another debate was staged, held on the AS steps under the sponsorship of UPSCA, and both SM and KMP used the forum to take turns denouncing Armando Malay for serving the interests of the rival party.¹⁴ On August 5, the KMP published a paper entitled the *Free Collegian*, in which they described Malay, “What a man! Tall. Strong. But weak in spirit and lacking in principles. If he refuses to be the SDK-KM tuta that he now so brilliantly performs, we recommend him another office which is just right for his qualifications – Dean of Homosexuals.”¹⁵ While the KMP vulgarly derided Malay as a tool of the SM, the SM denounced Malay as an ally of Marcos, Salvador Lopez and Manuel Ortega.¹⁶ On September 3 the *Collegian* declared that Malay’s investigation had yielded no results, as those who testified were ruled as biased either in favor of SM or KMP. For unspecified reasons, Malay claimed that neither the University Security division nor the Health Division had given any information, and students who had taken pictures of the event did not come forward to turn in the photographs. The incident was unresolved.¹⁷

On August 5, the eve of the election, SM published its summing up statement.

The first week of the campaign witnessed a style of campaigning that was, more or less, respectful of the voters’ intelligence and the principles of high-level and honest appeals for support. Both campus parties prepared campaigns of action for the coming year that vigorously represented opposing ideological and political views.

¹² *Convocation Sabotaged*.

¹³ PC, 13 Aug 1971.

¹⁴ SM, *All Lies and Intrigues*, 2; Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *From Sandigang Makabansa: A Summing-Up of the Campaign, a Final Word of Warning!*, August 1971, PRP 16/10.07; PC, 13 Aug 1971, 5.

¹⁵ *Convocation Sabotaged*. A group supporting KMP put out a leaflet calling for the removal of Malay from the electoral board because of his alleged close ties to the SM. (The Independents, *Expose and Depose Dean Armando Malay*, August [1971], PRP 08/03.01).

¹⁶ PC, 13 Aug 1971, 5. Over a year later SCAUP was still repeating the claim that Malay was a tool of KMP and the “frat brod of Manuel Ortega.” (Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP), *Vigilance Against Fascist Terrorism*, [1972], PRP 17/10.06).

¹⁷ PC, 3 Sep 1971, 3.

On one hand, Sandigang Makabansa stood on its national democratic record and commitment; on the other, the KAMP sought a “return to liberalism” and an end to “the tyranny of a powerful few” within the leadership of the UP studentry.¹⁸

However, the leaflet continued, violence broke out at the beginning of the second week at the convocation in the UP theater. “Up to now, it is the position of Sandigang Makabansa that it refused to be provoked at what appears to be a well planned attempt at provocation; that it restrained its member groups and fraternities from retaliation during subsequent provocations, e.g., the slapping of Pi Omicron and SDK member Bobby Coronado.”¹⁹ The references to ‘member fraternities’ and to Coronado’s membership in both SDK and Pi Omicron provide further evidence for the KM and SDK politicization the campus greek organizations. Over the course of the next school year the rumbles between what the KM called “progressive fraternities” and “reactionary fraternities” worsened, as the political maneuvers of the KM and SDK produced a fraternity war on the Diliman campus. Beginning in October 1971, a series of fraternity ‘rumbles’ were staged on campus, each increasingly violent.²⁰ The rumbles were politically motivated events, staged between SM affiliated fraternities and their rivals. By February and March the SM fraternities were holding bare-fisted brawls against the “reactionary” fraternities.²¹ The SM itself stated that the “progressive” fraternities agreed to fights, because the “provocations had reached its saturation point.”²² A number of students were severely injured in the violent altercations as the brawls continued and grew. Weapons were being brought to the fights, and at least one student was shot.²³ The fraternity violence provided a pretext to finally end the ban on outside police forces entering the campus. Salvador Lopez and Manny Ortega met with Col. Tomas Karingal, and Mayor Amoranto to arrange unlimited access for the police, granting them authorization to station men, carry out searches and make arrests on campus.²⁴ In the 1972 campus election the MPKP formed an alliance with the fraternities who were the bloody opponents of the fraternities allied with the KM.

¹⁸SM, *From Sandigang Makabansa: A Summing-Up of the Campaign, a Final Word of Warning!*

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰PC, 15 Oct 1971.

²¹Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Ituloy ang Boykoteo*, February 1972, PRP 36/01.02.

²²Ibid., 2.

²³Among the SM affiliated fraternities were Alpha Sigma, Tau Rho Xi, and Scintilla Juris, which claimed they were provoked into the brawls by Alpha Phi Beta, and Tau Alpha, of which Joeboy Aliling was a leading member. The Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists] (SPP) documented this as well, claiming that the fights had been provoked by Aliling in particular. Ten Scintilla “fratmen” – one of the SM allied fraternities – were arrested as a result. (Samahan ng Progresibong Propagandista (SPP), *What is behind the Fraternity Rumbles?*, [1972], PRP 15/37.02).

²⁴Diego Geronimo et al., *Declaration of Grave Concern*, 1972, PRP 07/25.01; SM, *Ituloy ang Boykoteo*.

In the final week of the 1971 campus election, a group calling itself the Secret Victor Corpus Movement issued a leaflet on the UP campus, which opened with the question “Was last Monday’s incident at the University Convocation the start of Operation Good Friday?”²⁵ It went on to explain that Operation Good Friday was the “code-name of a highly confidential project being undertaken by Malacañang and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and being executed under the command of top psy-war expert and undersecretary of home defense Jose Crisol.” The “immediate goal” of this scheme was to “muzzle the militancy of UP as a preparatory step for the silencing of the national student movement,” and named the campus figures responsible for implementing this scheme: fraternity kingpin Joeboy Aliling and his cronies. Having raised claims of a secret plot, the leaflet failed to give any substance to the plot. It was not clear what was being plotted; the only concrete claim that the leaflet made was that the plotters had started the violence at the convocation in “a last ditch attempt to solidify their ranks of fratmen who are divided between fraternity feudal discipline and nationalist sympathies,” and following this to blame the SM for the violence. On August 6, the day of the election, the Secret Victor Corpus Movement issued a second leaflet, identifying itself as a group working within the AFP. It announced that Operation Good Friday was a military plot on the UP campus, in which “burly men” in “Volkswagen cars” were deployed to the campus to provoke violence, blame the radicals, prevent the elections, and pave the way for the military occupation of campus.²⁶

The election was not only marred by violence and conspiracy, it was the subject of forgeries and allegations of forgery as well. The day before the election a letter appeared over the name of Jeunne Pagaduan, accusing the SM of blackmailing her and, indirectly, her sister Carol.²⁷ She detailed a list of their intrigues, including plotting the violence of the August 2 election gathering. Pagaduan was an UPSCA member who had been somewhat radicalized by the Commune experience, and in March she had called for the politicization of UPSCA and other conservative organizations, while at the same time calling for the KM and SDK to tone down their radicalism to avoid alienating these organizations.²⁸ In a letter to the *Collegian* published after the election, Pagaduan claimed that on learning of

²⁵Secret Victor Corpus Movement, *What is Operation Good Friday?*, August [1971], PRP 16/17.02.

²⁶Secret Victor Corpus Movement, *More on Operation Good Friday: City Monkees and Fratmen Malacañang Agents out to Provoke Violence, Prevent Elections and Militarize the UP Campus*, August 1971, PRP 16/17.01.

²⁷The letter claimed that the group in the SM responsible for the blackmail was led by Gary Olivar, Ericson Baculinao, and Ed Araullo, with Sonny Coloma playing a secondary role. (Jeunne Pagaduan, *Sandigang Makabansa Must be Stopped*, 1971, PRP 13/05.01). Ed Araullo would later marry Carol and become Jeunne Pagaduan’s brother-in-law. Carol Pagaduan would run on the SM slate for Vice Chair of the Student Council in the 1972 campus election. Decades later she would become the head of the CPP’s new umbrella front organization, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan [New Nationalist Alliance] (BAYAN).

²⁸PC, 4 Mar 1971, 6.

the accusations against the SM which had appeared over her signature, she had immediately gone “on a room-to-room campaign denouncing the manifesto” as a forgery. The KMP meanwhile, stung by her linking them to the forgery, went on a campaign claiming that the letter was “a well-planned counter-gimmick of the SM to make KAMP appear dirty.”²⁹

Sandigan Makabansa lost the election. Ortega received 5358 votes; Veal 4978. KMP took a majority of the council seats.³⁰ KM and SDK members, who had gathered from as far as Tondo to support the campus election, were stunned by the defeat. An SDK member later recounted, “That was when I learned how significant the campus election was to national politics.”³¹ The initial response published by the KM was short on details, stating simply, “reactionary diehards resorted to underhanded tactics such as sowing intrigues and dissension in the ranks of the national democratic movement and fear in the hearts of the masses of the students.”³²

By August 9, the SM was attempting to spin their defeat, claiming that while they lost, they won an “actual majority of politically conscious students.”³³ The logic of the statement seems to be that those who voted for KMP were not politically conscious, and those who voted for SM were. This was nothing but rhetorical sleight-of-hand. At the same time, the SM depicted their defeat as the result of various machinations carried out by the KMP which succeeded in deceiving the student body. They gave no accounting for why the student body, after over a year of political control by the SM in the Student Council, was deceived. What is more, SM fared particularly poorly in what should have been their stronghold: the College of Arts and Sciences. They wrote “Ironically [!] it was at the College of Arts and Sciences where Sandigan Makabansa fell victim to the unprincipled, albeit programmed and voluminous, black propaganda assaults of the ideologically bankrupt KAMP.”³⁴ The August 9 leaflet of the SM made passing reference to “bright red slogans, wrongly formulated, [which] appeared on the morning of elections on the walls, blackboards and bulletin boards of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors of the Arts and Sciences building.” (1) In a separate leaflet

²⁹PC, 13 Aug 1971, 6. Pagaduan continued to work with the KM and SDK, and in October 1971 she issued a letter to businessmen as Finance Director of the MDP, appealing for funds for the Anti-Poverty and Anti-Fascist March. (Jeunne Pagaduan and Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), [*Funds Appeal For Anti-Poverty and Anti-Fascist March*], October 1971, PRP 11/18.08). In a similar manner to the Pagaduan allegations, the *Collegian* published a letter on August 5, carrying the name of Benny Cruz, which denounced a letter he claimed had been forged in his name and which blamed the KM-SDK for the convocation violence. (PC, 5 Aug 1971, 7).

³⁰A.B. Colayco, “Good Friday at State U,” *APL*, August 1971, 10.

³¹Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 84.

³²Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Sharpen Vigilance Against Persistent Fifth Column Tactics of Reactionary Die-Hards!!*, August 1971, PRP 08/19.16.

³³SM, *All Lies and Intrigues*, 4.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 1.

published on the same day, SM addressed itself to the question of this graffiti. They claimed that they were clearly not responsible for the red painted graffiti because the slogans painted were incorrect. “The national democratic movement has always made it a point to be precise and clear-cut in its pronouncements, never attempting to confuse the masses. Thus, if the tactical slogan is COMBAT LIBERALISM! it is written as COMBAT LIBERALISM! An investigation of the slogans painted in the upper floors revealed that the slogan on liberalism was FIGHT LIBERALISM!”³⁵

The SM cobbled together the bits and pieces put forward in these initial leaflets into a public accounting for their defeat which it published in the *Collegian* on the thirteenth. The KMP, the SM claimed, had won by means of “deceit” and “black propaganda”, for which it presented three pieces of evidence.³⁶ The first was the allegedly forged letters, which they claimed “were maliciously and malevolently plagiarized both to sow intrigue and to destroy the students’ belief in SM.”³⁷ The second was the emergence of “unheard of groups like the Freshman Unity Corps, The Independents and Concerned UP Students” which were cowardly [*sic*] used to camouflage lies and to expound on vague generalities totally divorced from present reality. This was a decidedly weak piece of evidence as the creation of new student groups was something that the KM and SDK excelled at, and did not in itself represent anything underhanded. And third, “the walls of the Arts and Sciences second, third and fourth floors were un-KM-SDK’ly [!] painted with such meaningless scribblings as ‘Mao’ and such wrongly-worded phrases as ‘Fight Liberalism’ and ‘Destroy Book Worship.’” Everyone knows, the SM insisted, the correct slogan is “Oppose Book Worship.” This final piece of evidence was even weaker than the second as the memory of the graffiti festooned walls of the Diliman Commune was still fresh. It was this last explanation, however, that the KMP had painted graffiti on the walls of the campus buildings and blamed the SM for it, that stuck. Later historical accounts provided by the KM and Joma Sison claimed that the ‘black propaganda’ of vandalism attributed to the KM and SDK was the decisive factor in the election.³⁸

Situated in the historical context of 1971, this explanation makes no sense. The Diliman Commune had left the campus covered in graffiti and the oblation doused in red paint; Joma Sison’s name was scrawled on the walls. A regular assignment for KM members was OP [Operation Pinta] work, i.e., scrawling slogans in paint on the walls of buildings both on and off campus. What is more, despite the claims of the SM that the slogans on the walls were ‘incorrectly’ –

³⁵Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Who is the Clever Culprit?*, August 1971, PRP 16/10.20.

³⁶PC, 13 Aug 1971, 3.

³⁷Plagiarized does not seem quite the appropriate term here.

³⁸One can see that this assessment had already become the official account in the historical retrospective published in the *Collegian* in September 1972, which declared that the defeat was caused by malicious forces from Malacañang who “painted Moist [*sic*] slogans at the AS building.” (PC, 21 Sep 1972, 11).

‘un-KM-SDK’lly’ – written, the slogans left behind by the Diliman Commune show no such scholastic care in their formulation. “Destroy Liberalism,” for example, was painted across the walls of Palma Hall.³⁹ If the student body chose to vote against vandalism, then it was not because of any ‘black propaganda’ work carried out by the KMP.

What conclusion did the SM draw from these pieces of evidence? They wrote that the “Malacañang think-tank must have admitted (if grudgingly) the strength of the national democrats’ political line when they resorted to blatant chicanery and distortions as were manifested during the elections.” SM released a second statement, which wrote of their defeat that “wine must have flowed freely from the ruling classes’ tables,” and concluded “Put daring above everything else and boldly arouse the masses! All reactionaries are paper tigers!”⁴⁰ The initial response of the SM was thus to see the defeat as the confirmation of their political line. They would drastically revise this perspective within days.

The truth was that, more than anything else, the UP students in 1971 were *voting against the Diliman Commune* and the conduct of the KM leadership of the Student Council. The SM recognized this fact when they attempted to defend themselves by arguing that even “the KMP standard bearer himself at one time, before Molave Hall residents, admitted to his approval of the barricades.” Rather than attempting to defend the barricades as the policy of the SM, they sought to spread the responsibility for the barricades onto both parties. Over the preceding year, the UP Student Council under the leadership of Ericson Baculinao, had been repeatedly accused of forcing the views of the KM and SDK on UP students and on their fellow council members. Disagreement with KM policy was not tolerated. On December 7, 1970, when the UP Student Council called for a boycott of classes in response to the killing of Francis Sontillano, the Engineering Student Council expressed a growing sentiment when it wrote,

We, members of the Engineering Student Council of the Philippines, are in wholehearted agreement and support of the move to boycott classes in protest of the bomb-slaying of student demonstrator Francis Sontillano.

However, we decry the actions of the activist movement in the forced manner in which the engineering students were made to stay away from their classes. In the morning of December 7, 1970, the doors of classrooms and offices at Melchor Hall could not be opened on account of bits of paper and wood plugged into the keyholes.

We consider this kind of action an infringement on the freedom of the individual student. As it was, the individual had been deprived of his right of choice between going for or against the boycott ...⁴¹

³⁹See fig. 31.2.

⁴⁰PC, 13 Aug 1971, 5.

⁴¹Quoted in Ramon V. Puno, *The Suppression of Individual Rights and the Right to Dissent* –

The election defeat entailed the immediate loss of political sway on the campus. Having won the student council, the KMP, under Ortega, announced that the offices in Vinzons Hall belonging to SCAUP, MAKIBAKA, SDK and other organizations affiliated with the KM were being reallocated to other student organizations.⁴² The KM burned Manny Ortega's effigy in a campus bonfire and SDK member Butch Dalisay denounced Ortega and the KMP as "fascist lice."⁴³ Far worse setbacks loomed for the SM, including the loss of the Nationalist Corps and editorial control of the *Collegian*.⁴⁴

Lurch to the Right

Within days, the KM and SDK held meetings re-examining their tactics and reaching the conclusion that "it was necessary to enter moderate groups and transform them into nationalist groups."⁴⁵ They would carry this out through community service work, a tactic which would allow them to integrate more closely with the SocDems and to whip up support for the Liberal Party in the election. The task was no longer primarily to destabilize Marcos but to integrate with "moderate" forces. Every statement produced by the front organizations of the CPP from mid-August to mid-September carried a similar theme. Anticipating an electoral victory for the Liberal Party in the wake of the August 21 bombing of Plaza Miranda, the front organizations of the CPP prepared to ride upon its coattails.

On August 15, the Executive Committee of the SDK under the leadership of Antonio Hilario issued a lengthy re-examination of the policies, strategies and tactics of the SDK in light of the defeat on the UP campus, which was published in September in the SDK's internal paper, *Talang Ginto*.⁴⁶ It called on the organization to begin its activism with the small, everyday needs of the masses, citing the example of concerns over trash disposal. By focusing on these things the SDK would win the confidence of the masses and gain the opportunity to raise their subjective consciousness to the level of strategic needs.

The Emerging Fascism of the Baculiniao-Sta. Romana Clique, December 1970, PRP 14/24.02, 2.

⁴²Under the KMP leadership, the fourth floor was overhauled, a vending machine was installed and the facility was renamed "Pastor Mesina Hall." (PC, 16 Mar 1972, 8).

⁴³PC, 24 Sep, 2; 13 Oct 1971, 12; SDK, "On the Style of Work of Malacañang's Most Loyal Agent in Vinzons."

⁴⁴The MPKP was delighted with the KM-SDK defeat, and its UP chapter published a paper, *Siklab*, hailing the election results. "The students have decided! The Sison-KM-SDK was defeated. An analysis of this debacle would show that their infantile and adventurist actions led to their downfall." The KM-SDK "following of the Beijing line" led to their defeat, according to the MPKP, which accused the KM-SDK of "social fascism," and called on "all anti-imperialist elements to combat Maoist splittism." (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, "Why the Maoists Lost in 'Liberated Diliman'," *Siklab*, August 1971, 2, PRP 42/06.01).

⁴⁵"Kinakailangang mapasok ang mga samahang moderato at matransporma ang mga ito sa makabayang samahan." Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 84.

⁴⁶*Talang Ginto*, 1, no. 5 (September 1971), PRP 43/01.02.

This approach should not be regarded as reformism, they argued. In fact, the SDK claimed, the clerico-fascists, by taking precisely this approach have been able to win the masses and mislead them. It was politically necessary, therefore, for the SDK to provide services and aid to the masses. (2) This approach would allow the SDK to unite with the “broadest possible masses,” and was the only means to combat the anti-communist hysteria which, the SDK argued, had led to the UP election defeat. Opposition to this new line, the SDK argued, was “left opportunism” a deviation which did not recognize the need to expand the United Front.

This abrupt shift in political line required the suppression of possible dissent. The SDK outlined how it would carry out this campaign, declaring that there was a need first to build regional councils, termed Sectoral Organization Bureau (SOB), to enforce proper democratic centralism, and second to exercise renewed diligence in building the women’s section under the leadership of the Women’s Organizational Committee (WOC). The SOB would make it easier to correct both right and left opportunist tendencies, and in this way the leadership would be able to “gradually pull out the roots of excess democracy that are deeply buried in the history of the SDK.”⁴⁷ This uprooting of excess democracy was necessary in order to correct what “might be called a ‘UG’ [underground] style” [na kung tawagin ay “UG” na estilo] of its chapters i.e., work which was carried out in a manner that was not disclosed to the leadership and was out of keeping with the instructions being given. (3) On the question of organizing women, the SDK pointed to the growth of MAKIBAKA, which it contrasted to the poor growth of the WOC within the SDK. It stated that within six months the SDK would enforce a policy that one-third of the leadership from the level of the branch to that of the executive committee be composed of women.⁴⁸ (6) Under this pretext, new leaders would not be elected but installed.

These machinations were necessary in order to suppress the outlook which the CPP itself had cultivated over the past year and half. Hilario wrote, “A large portion of our membership and even of our leading members were captured by the temptation of ‘leftism.’ For example, some have a mindset that we could call ‘gunpowder brain.’ [utak pulbura] These are the ones with the mindset that it is only with combat and barricades that we will be able to arouse and bring together [mabuo] the masses.” (12) All of these “dogmatic errors,” the SDK leadership claimed, were the result of disregarding the fact that the struggle in the Philippines was still in the stage of “strategic defense involving [kinapapalooban] tactical advances.” The document concluded by calling on every chapter of the SDK to study the *Quotations of Mao Zedong*.

A key component of the rightward reorientation of the SDK was the trans-

⁴⁷Sa ganitong paraan, anti-unting mabubunot ang mga ugat ng labis na demokrasya na malalim na nakabaon sa kasaysayan ng SDK.

⁴⁸The uprooting of ‘excess democracy’ and the enforced composition of leadership represented the suppression of the last vestiges of the old s ng DK.

formation of its interventions among the working class. The document dealt with the Labor Committee of the SDK, which it admitted had seen very little success over the past year – “for all our work we have earned but a crumb of success.” [kakarampot ang aning tagumpay]⁴⁹ It attributed this to the difficulty of factory level union work and called for the campaign among workers to be carried out at the level of the community and not the factory, declaring that the Labor Committee was to be made a part of the new SOB. This turn from the factory to the community was part of the overall turn of the SDK toward basic community service work as the new center of political strategy. The SDK, in other words, would no longer focus on building within the working class in their workplaces, but rather on campaigns built around issues like trash disposal in communities that contained a large number of workers. The campaign of the SDK among the working class was to be organizationally and politically subordinate to the United Front activity of the SOB.

Hilario thus re-oriented the entire work of the SDK to reform driven community organizing and this served as the center of its political activity from the bombing of Plaza Miranda until the declaration of martial law. It subordinated all work in the working class to this struggle, and it sought to eliminate any dissent or alternate patterns of action within the organization as “excess democracy.” The turn away from workers as a class in factories and workplaces to a sector within a neighborhood was in part an attempt to win over forces in shantytowns who were otherwise organized under KASAPI and the SocDems. Through this campaign the KM and SDK secured control of the organization of squatters, Zone One Tondo (ZOTO), from the SocDem forces, and invested itself heavily in community outreach programs such as Operation Tulong in the wake of the August 1972 flood. Jaime Regalario recounted that, as a result of this policy, by the beginning of 1972, “because we had focused too much on the basic sectors, the number of lumpen members grew, so our expansion contracted. [dumami ang mga lumpen members kaya nag-contract ang expansion] The quality of activists retrogressed such that they could not even draw the correct political line any more.”⁵⁰ Smaller community outreach projects included Operation Tambak Lubak – filling potholes in the roads with stones – and Operation Linis, cleaning the canals.

Having lost the campus elections, the KM-SDK-SM again lost control of the Nationalist Corps, as they had previously in 1967-8. As in the previous occurrence they responded by launching a separate organization, this time called the Serve the People Brigade, the founding document of which stated “In embarking upon a program geared towards progressive social changes, one must not employ canned solutions for the people’s problems. ... The Serve the People Brigade

⁴⁹It is noteworthy that Hilario used this formulation in the same year that the KM and SDK had founded several labor federations, including KASAMA, which they had publicly hailed as great victories. When writing privately, however, they admitted these were but crumbs.

⁵⁰Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 67.

seeks to awaken the masses of students out of their smugness.”⁵¹ This awakening would be achieved above all “through learn from the people drives and serve the people projects,” as the students would “thereby apprehend the material realities of the oppressed masses.”⁵² The projects of the Serve the People Brigade would be a integral component of the community organizing work of the KM and SDK over the coming year.

The elite character of what were essentially community service projects flying banners denouncing imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism while tidying up the neighborhood, was made particularly clear in San Juan. Some community women reportedly complained that their husbands were engaged in cock fighting, so the SDK staged a “lie-in” “to prevent it from operating and demanded from then Mayor Joseph Estrada that he shut down the cockpit.”⁵³ There seems to have been more of Carrie Nation and the temperance movement than of Mao to these efforts.

The first *public* re-assessment of the Diliman election debacle was written by Sonny Coloma in the pages of the *Collegian*, and he put forward the same political line as Hilario. Coloma wrote that the defeat meant that it was necessary to “rectify errors and resolutely struggle to raise the cultural revolution to new heights.”⁵⁴ What was needed, he argued, was “intensive political work in order to win over the middle and backwards elements who are most susceptible to counter-revolutionary enticement.” Coloma argued that many activists had been “lulled into complacency by the empirical cognition of the strength of the movement on campus” and as a result

[M]any comrades subjectively jumped to the rather premature conclusion that the University had already been transformed into an “advanced area of the cultural revolution.” Such an attitude in turn gave rise to the mechanical view that integration with students could already be foregone in favor of integration with peasants and workers – ignoring the reality that at the present stage of the struggle, the mobilization of students as vanguard of the cultural revolution is still of prime necessity.

While he hailed the successful founding of STAND and the “consolidation of the NSL and the NUSP Progressive Bloc,” he claimed that “the pace of recruiting a great number of activists and strengthening the member-organizations of the alliance was still deplorably lackadaisical.” Finally, he wrote of a “recklessness in the style of work” that was “betrayed by the elitist attitude of stigmatizing not-too-sympathetic students as ‘burgis’ or ‘reactionary’ without taking into

⁵¹Serve the People Brigade, *Nature of the Serve the People Brigade*, [1971], PRP 16/18.05.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 68.

⁵⁴PC, 20 Aug 1971, 6.

account their class origin and their being victims of neo-colonial education.” Thus, publicly purveying the line of Hilario and the leadership of the SDK, Coloma argued that the SM had lost because it had not won over the “middle and backwards elements.” To win over these elements by engaging in conservative community organizing was thus the new political imperative.

Carrying out this line, the SM declared its “tactical unity with all groups, which *through their deeds* manifest genuine anti-fascist sentiments . . . we may give benefit of the doubt to other hitherto opposing groups for the support they may manifest.”⁵⁵ Romeo Candazo of the SDK, recounted that “the next day [after the SDK reassessment] I applied to UP Aletheia,” a moderate religious organization.⁵⁶ By September 13, the assessment that the SM was publicly putting forward as the explanation for the UP election defeat was “Our underestimation of the enemy, our overestimation of the political consciousness of the students, our sectarian and elitist attitudes – all of these stem from our loose grasp of the mass line.”⁵⁷ The front organizations of the CPP would adapt its political line to the “backwards elements” of society in keeping with the strategy of the mass line.

From October 1970, when Sison’s Political Report to the Second Plenum was published, until August 1971, the political orientation of the KM and SDK, in keeping with the instructions of the CPP, had been to seize control – of student groups, of unions, even of the university itself. Now they were being instructed to join conservative organizations and gradually win them over. This fundamental alteration of political line required explanation, or at least a theoretical dressing up in political language. In answer to this requirement the SDK coined the concept of the “university within the university,” in a significant political statement published in the October 13 issue of the *Collegian*.⁵⁸ The statement opened with familiar language: “The national democratic revolution is a protracted political struggle that aims to smash the state machinery presently controlled by imperialist-feudal interests and install in its place a state that belongs to a coalition of progressive classes.” This would take place, they assured their readers, “over a prolonged period of time.” This conception of smashing state power and replacing it with a coalition of classes was based on Mao’s *New Democracy*, and was fundamentally opposed to Lenin’s *State and Revolution* in which the dictatorship of the proletariat was need in order to smash the organs of ruling class state power. The SDK argued that this movement was based on “the masses” and for the masses to smash state power, they must first be “enlightened.” The enlightening of the masses required “the destruction of the old culture . . . The

⁵⁵Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Statement of Sandigang Makabansa*, August 1971, PRP 16/10.19 Emphasis in original.

⁵⁶Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 84.

⁵⁷Sandigang Makabansa (SM), “The Anti-Fascist United Front,” *Ang Sandigan*, September 1971, 2, PRP 40/07.01.

⁵⁸PC, 13 Oct 1971, 9.

old culture must be destroyed in order that the superstructure of the old society be broken thus facilitating changes in the material base of society.” This fundamentally idealist approach – that an old culture could be “destroyed,” while the political superstructure and economic base from which this culture emerged was still intact – was a key component of the voluntarism of Maoism. The task of carrying out this destruction of the old culture fell predominately to the students.

Historically the universities and colleges of Manila serve as the cradles of the cultural revolution. ...

From the academic institutions, the national democratic cultural revolution eventually farmed out into factories and into rural and urban communities, even as the content of the new culture was being continuously enriched by unrelenting practice in the course of the struggle. ...

Because it is the most mobile sector of society, has the capacity to grasp theory more easily and is the sector most enthusiastic about change, the youth, particularly the students, will continue to be the vanguards of the national democratic cultural revolution.

Thus, “we speak of universities as bases for the cultural revolution. They have been instrumental in developing the theory and practice of the cultural revolution more than any other institution up to the present.” Thus far all of this was old hat. However, and here the justification of the political re-orientation began, “Just as in society in general where forces are being fast polarized into camps of reaction and progress, so within the university one finds two camps. ... That part of the university that will relentlessly opt for basic changes in our society may be called the university within the university ... as yet it has to play the role of a counter-institution.” The university within the university “aims to serve the national democratic revolution by propagating the new culture (or counter-consciousness) and by turning out political activists for national democracy.” Thus, “although holding strategic administrative positions may be of help, what is primary is to expand and consolidate the university within the university. ... After all, the university within the university is what one really means when he speaks of the *university* as a base for the cultural revolution.”⁵⁹ To carry out this expansion and consolidation, “fraternities and religious groups, for example, need not be forcibly broken up structurally. ... They may even be turned into fraternities and organizations of a new type, actively engaged in political activities.” Seizing the university and controlling its administration as a “base of cultural revolution,” whether by barricades or election, these were not fundamentally what was needed. The university “within the university” needed to be influenced, persuaded, won over to the ranks of nationalism, through the molecular force of the individual partisans of national democracy who gradually

⁵⁹Emphasis in original.

merged into the ranks of religious sodalities and campus fraternities and other conservative organizations.

The re-orientation of the KM and SDK was implemented simultaneously throughout the country and throughout their allied organizations. On August 23, a new group calling itself “The August 23 Movement” was founded in Tarlac. Featuring a picture of the SDK leading workers, peasants and the armed movement, the leaflet identified the August 23 Movement as “a united front of all citizens struggling against the chief exploiter in our semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, which is American imperialism and its lackeys.”⁶⁰ On August 23 Marcos had not yet announced the suspension of the writ despite its having gone into effect on the twenty-first. The August 23 Movement was thus not formed in opposition to its suspension and its founding statement focused almost exclusively on rising prices. The signatories to the founding of the August 23 Movement were the SDK, KM, Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang Pilipino [The Tagalog name of SCMP] (KKKP) and UPSCA. The KM and SDK entered into an public alliance with conservative Christian organizations as part of their re-orientation. The movement which had initially emerged out of opposition to UPSCA was now officially allied with it. The alliance with UPSCA would deepen over the coming year.

Thus, six days before Plaza Miranda was bombed, the CPP ended its Third Period policy and sought to broaden its united front by entering into conservative organizations and giving full-throated public support for the Liberal Party. In the mouth of a Stalinist, the call for the broadening of the united front invariably meant increased opportunism and adaptation to the social layers with which the party was uniting. New groups needed to be joined, additional layers of the ruling class labeled progressive. The party lurched to the right. The bulk of the new united front was formed of conservative religious students, bound to the front organizations of the party by the thin threads of anti-Marcos nationalism. The reorientation of the front groups of the CPP in August 1971 was a question of organizational practice and strategy, but not of rhetoric. Despite their merger with sodalities and catechists the KM and SDK did not drop the language of armed struggle in their internal documents; they doubled down on it. Their rightward trajectory required radical posturing, and drawings of M-14s adorned leaflets calling for unity with UPSCA.

The party could not remain unaffected by this alliance. The social ends of Marxism were alien to the Catholic Church; violence, however, was not. “Political power flows from the barrel of a gun” was a formulation that suited Ignatius de Loyola as well as it did Mao Zedong, while materialism suited neither. The limited but nonetheless sincere secular humanism of SCAUP, the single healthy impulse of the founders of the CPP, was buried beneath the church militant. A

⁶⁰ August 23rd Movement, *Long Live the Anti-Imperialist United Front of Tarlac Citizens!*, August 1971, PRP 02/11.01.

range of religious groups, many tied to the bourgeois opposition, had already begun mouthing the phrases of the Communist Party. On July 4 1971 the SCMP called on worshipers to

Let our wrath bring us out of the cover of our religious buildings and join the “People’s Anti-Imperialist Congress to Oppose the Oil Price Hike and the Transport Fare Increase.” In just anger. This red afternoon. In a United Front against US imperialism.

We call on our fellow Christians to turn the churches from whited sepulchres into red barricades against US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. In God’s glory and honor.⁶¹

The party hastened to adapt to these layers. Gary Olivar, imprisoned in early 1972, wrote a letter for the Sunday bulletin of the Church of the Risen Lord and his quotations from Mao Zedong’s tribute to Norman Bethune ran next to an announcement that a new mezzanine had just been christened.⁶² By 1972, the party had formed its own religious front organization, Christians for National Liberation (CNL). Less than a month before martial law was declared, the CNL staged a mass which culminated in a candle-lit religious procession to the church of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo. The CNL termed this a Prusisyon ng Bayan laban sa Militarisasyon, [The People’s Procession against Militarization] and called on “all Christians” to join this “religio-political act.”⁶³ The party would continue to speak of the “unfinished revolution” of Bonifacio but they had stripped it of its anti-clerical content. Damaso was a useful ally and the crucifix a facile tool for recruitment.

The party’s lurch to the right was presented as a response to the defeat on the Diliman campus, but this was only partly true. The movement had been stunned by the defeat and a reassessment was required. The careful national coordination of the shift reveals, however, that more was at stake. The reorientation was launched with just enough of a window – six days – to allow the party’s various front groups to alter their practice prior to the bombing of Plaza Miranda. In the wake of the terrorist bombing the CPP and all of its front groups strained to muster every manifestation of social opposition and sympathy from the voting public and bring it to the November ballot box on behalf of the Liberal Party. That this policy was launched six days before the bombing strongly suggests that the party leadership knew what was about to take place.

⁶¹Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang Pilipino (KKKP), *July 4th Message to Filipino Christians*, July 1971, PRP 17/09.01.

⁶²Olivar, Gary, “An Open Letter to the Congregation,” *The Herald* 1, no. 1 (January 1972), PRP 30/19.01.

⁶³Garcia, Ma. Socorro S., “Protest by Candlelight,” *NOW*, September 1972, 36–38, PRP 44/36.01; , 4 no. 4 (August 1972): 7, PRP 29/11.04.

Miranda



Three Grenades in August

Then, making a salutation as to the ship herself, "And good-bye to you too, old Rights-of-Man."

— Herman Melville, *Billy Budd*

Three grenades thrown on the stage of the Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda in August 1971 killed nine people and wounded over one hundred. They provided the pretext for Marcos' suspending the writ of habeas corpus, and for the CPP rallying support behind the election of the Liberal Party candidates. Marcos accused the CPP of carrying out the bombing; the CPP accused Marcos. While Marcos, of course, never mentioned it, his allies in the PKP were carrying out a bombing campaign of their own, which Marcos used as a pretext for martial law a year later.

With the writ of habeas corpus suspended, Marcos arrested several of leaders of the KM and a number of their allies. Those arrested in 1971 were still in prison a year later, when martial law was declared.

The bourgeois opposition, behind Sen. Jose Diokno, formed the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL), which staged rallies demanding the restoration of the writ. The front organizations of the CPP were the primary moving forces behind the MCCCL, and used it as a vehicle to endorse the Liberal Party in the November 1971 election. The KM and SDK fiercely campaigned for the Liberal Party in late 1971. They used the sympathy for the LP in the wake of the Miranda bombing, as well as denunciations of the 'fascist' Marcos, to whip up support for its senatorial and congressional candidates. During this campaign, armed thugs assaulted protesters in Caloocan, killing several of them in October.

The Liberal Party won a majority of the contested seats and, with the writ of habeas corpus still suspended, the front organizations of the CPP hailed the election results as a "victory" for the "aroused masses," and the "repudiation of fascism."

The Bombing of Plaza Miranda

Simoun opened it and uncovered, on a red, flat-bottomed tray, a lamp with a very original shape. It looked like a pomegranate, as big as a man's head, with a few cracks in it so you could see the grains inside, shaped like enormous cornalinas. The exterior was made of tarnished gold, a perfect imitation of the folds of a fruit. Simoun carefully lifted it out and, removing the wick, opened up the interior of the repository. The case was made of steel, about two centimeters thick, with a capacity of about a liter. Basilio had a questioning look. He didn't understand.

— Jose Rizal, *El Filibusterismo*

The Bombing

Among the most contentious events in the history of the Philippines is the bombing of Plaza Miranda on August 21 1971. While Marcos blamed the CPP, and the CPP blamed Marcos, no one has ever been prosecuted for the crime. The bombing took place during the rally staged in Plaza Miranda to launch the Liberal Party campaign for the November election. Contemporary accounts estimate that ten thousand people were in attendance. Between 9:05 and 9:10 pm three fragmentation grenades were thrown from the audience onto the stage and two exploded and the third did not. “The crowd stampeded and dispersed.” Nine people in the audience, including a five-year-old boy, were killed, and over one hundred were wounded, including eight of the LP candidates who were on stage at the time.¹ Aquino was notably absent from the rally, and as the most important event of the LP's entire election campaign was bombed, the leading representative of the Liberal Party was nowhere to be seen. Writing on September 3, Ninotchka Rosca recounted, “After the headcount, through the numbness, the question that immediately pops up is where in god's name is Benigno Aquino Jr., the so-called Wonder Boy? Ninoy appears later, unscathed, by virtue of what, he recounts later, is an amazing series of coincidences and the closest of calls. He

¹APL, 3 Sep 1971, 6, 7; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 59.

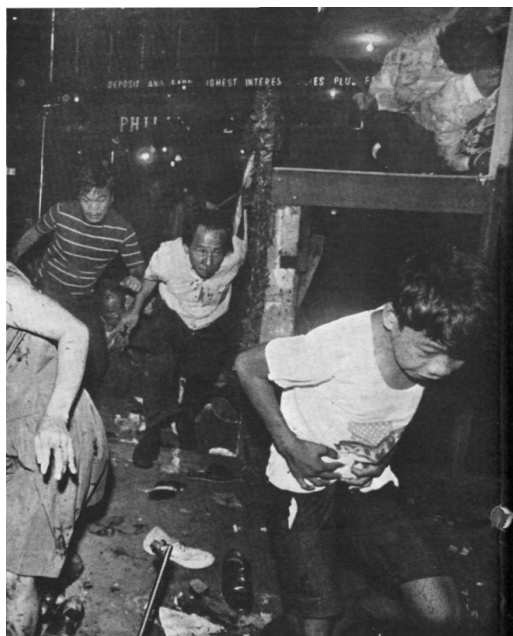


Figure 37.1: The bombing of Plaza Miranda. [APL, 3 Sep 1971] Photo Abril & Sakdalan.

was not there, he says, but was on the way when Plaza Miranda cracked up in that violent explosion.”² Within two and half hours, Marcos had secretly issued presidential order 889, suspending the writ of habeas corpus, and Enrile issued a press statement that he would “bag the culprits” within forty-eight hours.³

In the months leading up to the Plaza Miranda massacre, a string of bombings and terror attacks had taken place throughout the city, and they continued in the wake of August 21, targeting government facilities: NAWASA, City Hall, and COMELEC. This sequence of attacks from June through September was quite different in character from the Miranda bombing, however. They took place at night, targeted key infrastructure, and produced very few casualties. We know from the PKP’s own publications that they were responsible for at least some of these bombings.⁴ There is also strong evidence that Marcos had military forces stage bombings both in 1971 and 1972 in order to provide a pretext for the declaration of martial law. We know, based on Enrile’s own testimony in 1986, that Marcos and Enrile staged an ambush on Enrile’s motorcade in September 1972 as the final pretext for the declaration. The PKP members directly responsible for the bombing campaign, particularly Commander Soliman and Ruben Torres, had intimate ties to the Marcos government. Their travel, as we have seen, was facilitated by Marcos, and Torres was employed in Enrile’s office at the time of the

² APL, 3 Sep 1971, 5.

³ APL, 25 Aug 1972, 6.

⁴ *Ang Mandirigma*, Apr-May 1972, 36/06.04.

1971 terror campaign. It seems likely that the PKP and the military coordinated with each other in carrying out this campaign from June to September 1971. Miranda, however, did not fit their modus operandi at all. Who was responsible for the bombing of Plaza Miranda?

Accusations

As he suspended the writ of habeas corpus, Marcos blamed communist “subversives” for the bombing, and the Liberal Party blamed Marcos. The majority of the population seem to have been convinced by the latter argument. It was widely known that the KM and its allies were in a close alliance with the Liberal Party and it was also common knowledge that the KM was closely tied to the Communist Party. Why would the CPP bomb its allies? Within a few months, the official target of investigation was not the CPP, but Antonio Villegas. The Liberal Party had selected Ramon Bagatsing as its Manila mayoral candidate, replacing Villegas, and Villegas in an act of revenge, the story went, had hired men, whose release from prison he arranged, in order to carry out the bombing. This became the central focus of the government investigation by 1972. With the declaration of martial law in September the question of Plaza Miranda largely disappeared, reemerging briefly at the trial of Ninoy Aquino in the form of the accusation that he had been informed in advance of the bombing by his Communist allies.

The possible involvement of the CPP in the bombing came up in government and military circles on a number of occasions before exploding into public view in 1989. As we will see, in 1972, the government captured the minutes of a CPP military tribunal which documented the claim made by one of the members of the party that he had carried out the bombing on instructions from Joma Sison. Rolando Abadilla, head of Marcos military intelligence, would later claim that Central Committee member Noli Collantes upon surrender to the government in late 1972 had testified that the party was responsible for the bombing and that Aquino was complicit.⁵ Jones recounts that when Central Committee member Ruben Guevarra was captured, or surrendered, in 1981, he made “a voluminous statement” detailing how Sison gave orders for the bombing.⁶

In August 1986, Victor Corpus wrote a letter to Jose Lacaba claiming that he had been present when Sison and a few other members of the Central Committee had plotted the Plaza Miranda bombing. Lacaba was in the process of writing the screenplay for a film entitled “Operation: Get Victor Corpus.”⁷ Lacaba had depicted Corpus as being captured in 1976, which was the official story, but Corpus wrote to Lacaba that he had in fact surrendered to the military on January 13 of that year. Corpus claimed that he had been troubled by criticisms which he

⁵Jones, *Red Revolution*, 321 fn 21.

⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 320 fn 11. Jones based this on interviews with Guevarra himself and with a senior military officer who claimed to have read Guevarra’s statement.

⁷Victor N. Corpus, *Silent War* (Quezon City: VNC Enterprises, 1989), 11.

had failed to voice during the plenum of the Central Committee held in Bataan in December 1975, and had contacted a former PMA classmate to arrange his surrender.⁸ In his letter, Corpus claimed that he was present “when some leaders of the Party headed by Joma plotted the bombing of the Liberal Party (LP) rally at Plaza Miranda. Corpus did not give a date for this meeting in his letter to Lacaba.”⁹ In November, during the ‘God Save the Queen’ coup, which was part of a string of military coups during the Corazon Aquino presidency, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile leaked Corpus’ letter to the press, with the calculated political intention of driving a wedge between Aquino and the CPP and ex-CPP members around her administration. Corpus held a press conference on November 8 confirming the authenticity of his letter.¹⁰ The allegations received very little press coverage, and were largely written off as either part of a promotion campaign for the new movie, or part of the machinations of Enrile, or both. Aquino herself had little desire to see this matter investigated. Her husband, the myth of whose political sainthood was the bedrock of her administration, was possibly implicated in the affair.

It was in the middle of 1989 that the possibility of the CPP having orchestrated the bombing came to public prominence. Gregg Jones, an American journalist, had just completed a book on the history of the party based on interviews with the leadership and former leadership of the CPP. In a chapter entitled “The Ghosts of Plaza Miranda” he claimed, on the basis of anonymous interviews with four former central committee members of the party and several other leading members, that Sison had ordered the bombing and the party had carried it out. He developed his argument in considerable detail on the basis of these interviews.¹¹ From August 3–6 1989, Amando Doronila serialized in his column in the *Chronicle* Jones’ chapter on Plaza Miranda based on the galley proofs of the book which had not yet been published. On August 23 1989, the NPA northern command published a letter in Tagalog in the *Inquirer* which denounced Ariel Almendral, Victor Corpus, Pablo Araneta, and Ruben Guevarra “and other traitors who are being vaunted as witnesses to the role of the CPP/NPA in the Plaza Miranda bombing.” It claimed they were all on the payroll of the “US-Aquino regime.”¹² It was striking that while Almendral, Araneta and Guevarra’s names had not yet been mentioned as sources in the press, the NPA was aware that they were privy to information regarding the bombing. On August 24 1989, the *Chronicle* published a letter from someone identifying himself as Emilio Ricarte, the spokesman of an unknown organization which he called the “CPP Reformist Underground Cell.” Ricarte claimed that Ninoy Aquino had known of

⁸Ibid., 12.

⁹Ibid., 13.

¹⁰Jones, *Red Revolution*, 66.

¹¹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 59-70.

¹²Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 17.

the bombing in advance because Ruben Tuazon had informed him.¹³ Tuazon had been a member of the Central Committee of the Party and, at the same time, an employee of Ninoy Aquino.

Sison responded to the charges in an article entitled, “Communist Party and Plaza Miranda,” which was serialized in the *Chronicle* from September 9-11, 1989, and then published in full in the *Inquirer* on September 25.¹⁴ Sison accused Jones of being a CIA agent and identified Jones’ sources as Corpus, Almendral, Guevarra, Ricardo Malay, and Ibarra Tubianosa. All of these he dismissed as renegades from the party, several of whom he accused correctly of now being either military or intelligence operatives.

Evidence

What evidence was presented that the party had carried out the Plaza Miranda bombing?¹⁵

While Jones account of the Plaza Miranda bombing was based on anonymous sources, a careful examination of his footnotes – cross referencing when the interviews were conducted and how Jones identified the party rank of the interviewee – makes it possible to identify his sources.¹⁶ Jones account was based on interviews with Victor Corpus, Ruben Guevarra, Ariel Almendral, Ricardo Malay, Ibarra Tubianosa, and Julius Fortuna. The motives of many of these sources were deeply problematic. Corpus had been restored to the military and given the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, “three ranks above the one he held before defecting to the rebels.”¹⁷ His account of the party’s involvement in the Miranda bombing was published in the introduction to his book, *Silent War*, which was a detailed military handbook proposing strategies and tactics for suppressing the communist insurgency.¹⁸ Ruben Guevarra had become a ranking military intelligence officer.

¹³*ibid.*, 13. Guevarra, who had become a ranking member of military intelligence under Corazon Aquino, was eager to blame the party but not Ninoy Aquino. He dismissed Ricarte’s letter on two grounds. First he claimed that Tuazon was not a “original member of the Central Committee.” This was a trivial matter. Tuazon became a member of the CC by May 1969 during the first Plenum. Second, Guevarra claimed that Tuazon had been stripped of his position during the Second Plenum in February 1971 and thus would not have known of the Miranda plans. Tuazon was in fact still in the leadership of the party at least as late as June 1971. He performed the party wedding ceremony of Rodolfo Salas.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵I will not examine in this work the deeply problematic evidence, presented during Aquino’s trial, that he was aware of the bombing in advance. It is a fraught question, worthy of investigation, but in this work I will reserve judgment on the matter.

¹⁶Victor Corpus was a named source. Jones next source was a “former NPA officer in Isabela, January 28 and February 3, 1988”. Elsewhere Jones (318 fn 13; 317 fn 3) claimed that he interviewed Ariel Almendral on those dates. Almendral fits Jones’ description exactly. In a similar fashion it was possible to identify each of Jones other sources.

¹⁷Jones, *Red Revolution*, 67.

¹⁸Corpus, *Silent War*.

The rest of those giving evidence were, at the very least, disgruntled with the party. Like those of Jones and Corpus, Guevarra's account was initially published in 1989, in a book entitled "The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing."¹⁹ Corpus and Guevarra certainly brought forward their evidence with ulterior political motives, as their testimonies were a coordinated part of the endless coup plotting of the late 1980s.

This fact does not, however, invalidate their claims, or those of the other CPP members who all stated that Sison had ordered the bombing. An examination of the evidence is necessary. What follows is a reconstruction based on all of the available sources of the narrative of CPP responsibility for the bombing. I document the evidence given for each claim, and then assess the credibility of the account after its reconstruction.

Plotting

In early February 1971, Sison, Tubianosa, Jose Luneta and the party's Chief Finance Officer met in Manila, and "laid out a plan for Party operatives to attack an opposition Liberal party rally."²⁰ Sison traveled to Isabela where he met with Corpus, who had defected to the party but months prior, and Dante, and where they were joined by Luneta. "The Party had a dilemma, Sison told his comrades. Hundreds of rifles and other weapons would be arriving from China in the months ahead, yet the NPA had only about 90 fighters in Isabela at the time."²¹ The source for Sison's meetings in Isabela was Corpus. The idea of weapons arriving in "the months ahead" is a bit of an overstatement, as the arms shipment from China on Karagatan did not arrive until July 1972. Jones claims that Sison never explicitly spelled out the Miranda plan in Isabela, but Corpus in his book claimed that "it was in a jungle camp of Commander Dante, then the Commander in Chief of the New People's Army, in the Isabela portion of Sierra Madre Mountains that the plan to bomb the Liberal Party rally at Plaza Miranda was first hatched."²²

Sison returned to Manila in June 1971, and Danny Cordero was selected to lead the bombing team. Jones cites three "former party veterans" as the source for this claim.²³ We know that Cordero was at this time the chair of KM Caloocan, and was a relative of Caloocan mayor Macario Asistio, whom the KM would denounce as a fascist in October 1971.²⁴ Cordero would have been a credible

¹⁹Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*. I am citing from the 1998 edition. Guevarra's book was printed by a publishing firm known for producing pro-Marcos, anti-Communist literature.

²⁰Jones, *Red Revolution*, 61. Jones source for this claim was Ricardo Malay, who he claimed had been briefed on the plot by Tubianosa.

²¹Ibid., 62.

²²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 62; Corpus, *Silent War*, 15.

²³Jones, *Red Revolution*, 320 fn 10.

²⁴APL, 21 May 1971, 55.

choice to carry out a terrorist act as he had in the past been assigned to raise money for the KM and CPP by robbing gambling joints at gun point.²⁵

In mid August, Ruben Guevarra arrived in Manila from Isabela and on the evening of August 21, Magtanggol Roque and Noli Collantes drove Guevarra to a safe house in Parañaque, where Sison, Hermenigildo Garcia, and Monico Atienza were present. Sison was meeting with Danny Cordero, Cecilio Apostol, and Danilo Valero, when Guevarra entered the room. Cordero and his two companions left to carry out their mission, and Sison instructed Atienza to inform Guevarra of the plan. Ruben Guevarra himself is the source for this meeting in Parañaque, while both Garcia and Atienza later denied that such a meeting ever took place. Cordero, as we will see, would later publicly claim that it had.²⁶

Cecilio Apostol died in an encounter with the military in late 1971. Danilo Valero, who joined the NPA in 1971, had been an activist from Sta. Ana, Pandacan, Manila and was a student at the Philippine College of Criminology. He was present at Cordero's trial and execution and died in an encounter with the military in 1977. All three men who are claimed to have thrown grenades at Plaza Miranda were leading members of the KM in the months before they received orders from Sison. Senator Jovito Salonga, who was permanently injured in the blast, would claim in 2001, that the man, whom Salonga did not name, who drove Cordero and his companions to Miranda had confessed to Salonga his part in the bombing.

The next day, Ruben Guevarra returned to Isabela. Cordero, Apostol and Valero also traveled to Isabela on August 22, but they traveled separately from Guevarra.²⁷ Rolando Abadilla, head of Marcos military intelligence, claimed that Noli Collantes informed him that Aquino had Cordero and his companions transported to Isabela in his helicopter.²⁸

²⁵Conrado de Quiros, *Dead Aim: How Marcos Ambushed Philippine Democracy* (Pasig City: Foundation for Worldwide People's Power, 1997), 99.

²⁶I have reconstructed Guevarra's account using Jones, *Red Revolution*, 63; Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 33, 34; Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 144; Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 166. As for the identity of Cordero's two companions, this is again based on Guevarra's testimony. These details can be reconstructed using Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 45; Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 154. Guevarra identifies the second accomplice as Ka Daniel. This can be identified as Danilo Valero, who was present at Cordero's trial, using the account of Ruth Firmeza. (Ruth Firmeza, *Gera* [Manila: Linang at Mainstream, People's Art, Literature, / Education Resource Center, 1991]).

²⁷The source for this claim is again Guevarra, but the fact that Guevarra and Cordero were in Isabela in the second half of 1971 through mid-1972 is not disputed by anyone.

²⁸Jones, *Red Revolution*, 321 fn 21 Although Aquino did on occasion offer Sison and his companions use of his helicopter, Abadilla's claim is highly suspect and adds nothing substantive to the narrative of Miranda.

The Execution of Danny Cordero

Between September 1971 and June 1972, Cordero and Guevarra had a disagreement which culminated in the execution of Cordero. This fact is not disputed.

The Isabela forces of the NPA began preparing for the arrival of a shipment of arms from China, which would arrive in early July off Digoyo Point on the party's boat, the MV Karagatan.²⁹ In preparation for the delivery of arms, the NPA under the leadership of Corpus and Guevarra, began to minimize their encounters with the military as much as possible, with the goal of securing as small a military presence in Isabela as possible at the time of the delivery of arms. The majority of the NPA members, including the leadership, were not informed of the reason for the sudden quiescence and hiding in which the NPA was engaged, and Cordero and a number of forces around him were angered by it, seeing it as a political retreat. Cordero began to discuss secretly and then to plot actively to depose Guevarra from leadership, and to this end he obstructed Guevarra's orders and issued counter-orders in an attempt to generate armed encounters between the NPA and the military. Among Cordero's companions in this were Pablo Araneta and Herminio Espiritu.³⁰ Guevarra claimed that Cordero issued orders to Crispin Tagamolila to attack a military squadron in April, and the encounter resulted in Tagamolila's death. Whether or not Cordero was responsible for this, Tagamolila's attack was decidedly out of keeping with the NPA's policy in Isabela at the time, and it did result in his death.³¹ In an effort to strengthen his position against Guevarra, Cordero began to brag about how important he was to the party. In this context, it seems, he began to mention his role in the Miranda bombing and that he had been ordered by Sison to carry it out.

In late June, as the Karagatan arms were already en route from China, Guevarra convened a meeting of the Isabela forces. When Cordero and his companions arrived, Guevarra announced that the meeting was a military tribunal. He charged Cordero, Araneta, and Espiritu with "inciting [their] command to rebel against the CPP leadership" and attempting to sabotage NPA operations.³² Cordero was also charged with slandering the party, by claiming it had been responsible for Miranda. Pablo Araneta, who stood accused alongside Cordero, had graduated from seminary in Iloilo intending to be a priest, but had thought better of it and took up engineering and then political science at UP Iloilo. He joined the SDK there and then the CPP. Araneta had participated in the Diliman Commune after attending the SDK congress on the Diliman campus and in

²⁹I detail the Karagatan debacle in chapter 41.

³⁰Guevarra is the main source for these details and his account is decidedly self-serving. However, the trial of Cordero on the basic charges which Guevarra mentions is beyond dispute, so in its broad outlines – that there was a dispute over the lie-low policy of the NPA which Cordero opposed – this account is correct.

³¹Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 169.

³²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 64.

late 1971 the party sent Araneta to Isabela.³³ Araneta later claimed that among the roots of the disgruntlement which he, Cordero and Espiritu felt were the privileges of Guevarra and others in the leadership. Even such trivialities as the leaders getting Marlboros while the rank-and-file made do with local tobacco stung Cordero and Araneta and contributed to their rancor.³⁴

Nine members sat on the tribunal to hear the case against Cordero, Araneta and Espiritu. Guevarra identifies them: Magtanggol Abreu; Elizabeth Principe; Marcelino Cadiz; Hermogenes Pagsulingan; Mario de la Cruz; Daniel Gallardo; Rene Espinas; and Fortunato Camus. Guevarra chaired the tribunal and another thirty members of the NPA observed the affair.³⁵ Ariel Almendral was assigned by Guevarra to serve as the defense for the three accused. The trial began on July 2 and ended on the evening of the same day.³⁶ Almendral had been a student at UP who had joined KM. He had relocated to Baguio in late 1970, where he headed the Baguio chapter of KM. After Plaza Miranda he joined the NPA in Isabela, and he had thus been in the NPA for less than a year when he was assigned to defend Cordero.³⁷

Danny Cordero, charged with slandering the party, insisted that he had in fact been ordered to carry out the bombing and he called on Danilo Valero who was present at the trial to confirm this. Guevarra states that he had warned Valero of the consequences if he divulged the Miranda mission. Thus, at the trial, only two others knew that Cordero was telling the truth: Valero, who kept silent, and Guevarra who chaired the tribunal.³⁸ At the end of the presentation of evidence, the tribunal met separately. They voted to demote Araneta and compel him to engage in “self-criticism in front of comrades;” they voted to expel Espiritu for one year, also compelling him to public self-criticism; and they voted to execute Danny Cordero.³⁹ The final verdict was a split vote, with four voting to execute, and four voting for a more lenient punishment. Ruben Guevarra cast

³³Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 150.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 162. Corpus later claimed that a significant reason for his disillusionment with the party was a similar complaint. He wrote that ordinary cadre were starved of resources and going hungry in the countryside, while Joma and the entire central committee used party funds to buy cars and were living in the city in air-conditioned Underground (UG) houses. (Corpus, *Silent War*, 13).

³⁵Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 46; Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 170. The participation of Principe, who carried out the sentence of execution, can be independently confirmed in a number of sources. Among the many sources documenting the Cordero execution, was an interview in the the Philippine *Daily Globe* on August 25 1989, in which Rodolfo Salas, head of the CPP from 1977 to 1986, confirmed that Cordero had accused Sison of ordering the bombing of Plaza Miranda.

³⁶The details of the trial can be reconstructed from the accounts of Guevarra; Almendral, who detailed them to both Jones and Jovito Salonga; and Pablo Araneta. These separate accounts are in complete agreement on the details of what transpired.

³⁷Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 150.

³⁸Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 48.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 49.

the deciding vote to execute Danny Cordero, and, on the morning of July 3, after the tribunal sang the Internationale, Elizabeth Principe shot Cordero in the back of the head.⁴⁰

The Karagatan arrived the next day. In the debacle that ensued, the military entered the camp where Cordero had been executed and seized the notes of the trial which had been held two days prior.⁴¹ Pablo Araneta surrendered to Romy Eugenio, a mayor of Isabela, in April 1973, and would in the 1980s provide corroborating evidence regarding the trial of Danny Cordero.⁴²

China delegation

A second body of evidence pertaining to the Miranda bombing comes from the large delegation of party leaders sent to Beijing in July 1971, just prior to the bombing.

This delegation may have been in part responsible for negotiating an arms shipment from China to the Philippines, but this does not seem to have been its primary task, as the principal negotiator of the shipment was Fidel Agcaoili, who arrived Beijing in September. Jose Luneta had been the party's representative to Beijing since 1968, but he had returned to the Philippines in mid-1970 to report to Sison. With the capture of Nilo Tayag, Luneta was made general secretary of the CPP and Carlos del Rosario was sent to China in Luneta's stead, arriving in December 1970 to finalize arrangements for the CPP delegation to travel to China.⁴³ It was on del Rosario's return to the Philippines that Sison and others are alleged to have begun plotting the Miranda bombing. Del Rosario was intended to lead the delegation in July to China but he was killed in April and Ibarra Tubianosa was made the new head of the delegation.

By late July, Ricardo and Charito Malay; Ibarra and Calay Tubianosa; Mario and Alma Miclat; and Roger Arcilla had all journeyed to China.⁴⁴ It is striking that they traveled as couples, almost as if they expected not to return for some time. On August 20, the day before the bombing, Sison sent his children to China with a delegation led by Ericson Baculinao, which included Chito Sta Romana, Jaime Florcruz, and Rey Tiquia.⁴⁵ Malay reported to Jones that Tubianosa told several members of the group "about the plan to bomb Plaza Miranda – *a few weeks before the attack took place.*"⁴⁶ Mario Miclat, who was part of this delegation,

⁴⁰Jones, *Red Revolution*, 64. Principe had been a UP student of nursing before joining the NPA. (ibid., 53).

⁴¹Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 52.

⁴²Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 171.

⁴³Guevarra, *The Story Behind the Plaza Miranda Bombing*, 30; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 72.

⁴⁴Jones, *Red Revolution*, 322, fn 6.

⁴⁵APL, 24 Dec 1971, 5.

⁴⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 73. Emphasis in original.

wrote a book in 2010, in which he too claimed that Tubianosa had told them of the bombing in advance.⁴⁷

The delegation did not depart China until the mid 1980s. That it was a coincidence that Sison sent his children to China a day before the bombing, where they stayed in safety through the duration of martial law, strains credulity.

Assessment

Certain facts are irrefutable: Four former central committee members of the party accused Sison of plotting the bombing of Miranda; Danny Cordero raised the same charge and was executed for it; and at least two members of the delegation to China claimed they were told in advance of the bombing.

The narrative of the bombing plot and its aftermath that emerges out of these accounts is surprisingly coherent. If the CPP did not in fact carry out the bombing then we have to assume that Cordero was lying during his trial and we have to assume that Guevarra, Corpus, Malay, Fortuna, and Miclat were lying in a coordinated fashion.⁴⁸

Sison, Hermenigildo Garcia and Monico Atienza all denied the charges. Sison argued that the majority of the evidence being presented against him was hearsay and therefore inadmissible. Were the task of the historian that of the prosecutor I would be compelled to agree, as there is certainly insufficient evidence to convict Sison of the bombing in a court of law. The task of the historian, however, is not to establish guilt beyond reasonable doubt; it is to demonstrate what the preponderance of evidence suggests and to establish on this basis what likely happened. Additional evidence may further substantiate this conclusion or compel its revision.

Sison argued that the party did not carry out the bombing on the grounds that it did not engage in putschist or anarchistic acts. This is demonstrably false. Sison used precisely the same argument when stating that the PKI had nothing to do with the September 30 Movement, a claim we now know to be false. The CPP regularly instigated violence during protests in an attempt to provoke state repression, claiming that this would hasten the revolution. Mauro Samonte, who was a leading CPP member in KASAMA, the CPP labor umbrella organization, wrote in 2014 that he been given a fragmentation grenade and instructed to throw it during a protest rally in front of the US embassy in July 1972.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Mario Miclat, *Secrets of the Eighteen Mansions* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2010). Miclat wrote the book as a novel, but the claim is nonetheless clear.

⁴⁸One could alternatively assume that Jones fabricated the interviews with the four former central committee members. The problem with this hypothesis is that they were alive long after his publication, yet they made no effort to gainsay the accounts attributed to them even after their testimony in Jones account was on the front page of the major dailies in the Philippines.

⁴⁹Mauro Gia Samonte, "In the Eye of the Storm," 2014, accessed 7 May 2016, <http://maoblooms.blogspot.com/2014/02/normal-o-false-false-false-en-us-x-none.html>. I base the date for the

Sison repeatedly claimed that on February 22, 1986 among Enrile's confessions was that Marcos was responsible for the 1971 bombing.⁵⁰ This is not true. Enrile announced that he and Marcos had staged the ambush on his motorcade in September 1972 as a pretext for martial law but he made no mention of Miranda.⁵¹

Sison also claimed that US intelligence knew that the party was not responsible for the bombing and cited as evidence Raymond Bonner's 1987 book on the Marcos dictatorship, in which Bonner claimed that US intelligence was convinced that the Communists were not responsible. Bonner's evidence for this claim is a single unnamed CIA officer who stated that the CPP was a "fledgling organization with fewer than 100 members, and they were very disorganized. Moreover, their efforts were concentrated in rural areas, building for a peasant revolution along the lines of Mao's in China. They had no urban capacity."⁵² These claims are absurdly off-base. The figure of one hundred members is off by an order of magnitude, as by the end of 1971, the party had approximately one thousand members, many of whom were operating in urban areas. It had the leadership of nearly all of the radical protest organizations of the day and directly gave them instructions. Its members and loyal supporters controlled the majority of university student councils, and determined editorial policy in every major campus paper. It was intimately allied with one of the two major bourgeois political parties, and it was receiving regular funding and support from some of the wealthiest and most influential sections of the elite.

What motive would the CPP have had in carrying out the bombing?

According to Jones, Sison's underlying motives were two-fold: first, the Liberal Party would blame Marcos and ally more closely with the CPP; and second, Marcos would crack down on the population, and the CPP anticipated that the increased repression would breed increased resistance. Both of these points correspond closely to the outlook of Sison and the CPP. The CPP was forever striving to use "contradictions" within the ruling class in order to win over the "middle forces," in other words, to ally with a section of the bourgeoisie. On August 15, six days before the bombing, the CPP issued instructions through the KM and SDK reorienting its front organizations to a policy of heightened integration with these middle forces. I have documented in detail how the CPP repeatedly argued that repression was good for revolution, that it spontaneously bred resistance. The parallel with the PKI is here instructive. We now know that the PKI plotted and staged the September 30 Movement, but at the time both the PKI and Sison in the Philippines denied any involvement saying that they

event on the fact that this was the rally in which Barbers was injured with a pillbox to the face.

⁵⁰Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 71; Rosca, "Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World," 28-29.

⁵¹*New York Times*, 23 Feb 1986.

⁵²Raymond Bonner, *Waltzing with a Dictator: The Marcoses and the Making of American Policy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987), 80.

were not “putschists.”⁵³ When Suharto and his forces slaughtered the PKI, Sison saw this as the opening of a revolutionary period for two reasons: it would drive the middle forces, the bourgeoisie, to join the revolutionary struggle, and the murder of Communists would generate even more revolutionaries.

The preponderance of available evidence strongly indicates that Sison and leading members of the CPP carried out the Plaza Miranda bombing. I suspect that smoking gun evidence for the CPP’s role in carrying out the Plaza Miranda bombing exists in the archives of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Just as it has now emerged that Mao and the CCP leadership approved of the September 30 Movement in Indonesia in advance, the balance of probability suggests that Carlos del Rosario in December 1970 and members of the CPP delegation in July 1971 discussed the plot with the CCP as part of their negotiations over the shipment of arms.

In the end the political argument of this work that the CPP made possible the declaration of martial law, is not tied to whether or not the CPP executed the Miranda bombing. Marcos was preparing to declare martial Law without the Miranda bombing and his military operatives and leading members of the PKP were engaged in a joint bombing campaign to provide a pretext for military dictatorship. Miranda accelerated the process but did not determine its outcome. The CPP facilitated the declaration of martial law above all, not through the Miranda bombing, but by subordinating the opposition to military dictatorship in the working class and youth to a rival section of the ruling class.

Aftermath

The delegation sent by the CPP to China wound up stranded there. The delegation arrived but a few weeks after Henry Kissinger’s secret negotiations in China to establish relations between Washington and Beijing. Mao was moving down a path that would lead to the restoration of capitalism in China. Multiple attempts to smuggle arms to the Philippines failed from 1972 to 1974, and when the Doña Andrea arms shipment foundered, Beijing no longer had any interest in fomenting armed struggle in the Philippines, it had made its peace with Washington and it was opening up ties with Marcos’ martial law regime.

Isolated in China, the CPP delegation began fighting within its ranks. Tubianosa resigned from the party in 1975, and Ericson Baculinao and Chito Sta. Romana became heads of the CPP delegation in China. Guevarra claims that Tubianosa’s resignation letter to Sison cited the Miranda bombing as one of the reasons for his resignation. The CCP in late 1975, now embarrassed to have a contingent in China associated with an armed struggle against their ally, Marcos, moved the CPP delegation to Hunan province for re-education among the peasantry. Jones writes, “The Chinese had built a special compound for the Filipinos,

⁵³See page 258.

surrounded by a high wall and guard house, in a village 90 minutes southeast of the provincial capital of Changsha.” The infighting increased, at times coming to blows. In 1977, two members of the CPP delegation had a knife fight, which was then broken up.⁵⁴

By 1979, they returned to Beijing and in 1981 some were able to depart China for the Netherlands.⁵⁵ Ericson Baculinao wound up marrying Sison’s eldest daughter Barbara, while Sison’s son Janos studied photography in China in the latter part of the 1970s. Baculinao, Sta. Romana, and Florcruz all took up journalism in the 1980s and became known as the ‘gang of three,’ serving as Beijing bureau chiefs for CNN, NBC and ABC news. The majority of American news coverage on China coursed through the editorial oversight of these three former members of the CPP and its front organizations.

⁵⁴Jones, *Red Revolution*, 80, 82.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 83.

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The Writ Suspended and the 1971 Election

I think we just won the elections.

— John Osmeña, in the hospital after the bombing of Plaza Miranda,
September 1971

On August 21, within three hours of the bombing, Ferdinand Marcos issued proclamation number 889 suspending the writ of habeas corpus. He did not announce that the writ had been suspended for another thirty-six hours, however, using the opportunity afforded by this window to carry out a series of quiet arrests.¹ His purposes achieved, Marcos held a press conference at noon on August 23, announcing the suspension, and again in the evening of the twenty-fourth, outlining the “legality, desirability and acceptability of his decision.”² The proclamation, only half a page long, was predicated entirely on the claim that “lawless elements,” “whose political, social and economic precepts are based on the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist teachings and beliefs,” “acting in concert through front organizations that are seemingly innocent and harmless . . . have succeeded in infiltrating almost every segment of our society.”³

The KM had a new headquarters building on Kamias, and the day after the bombing the leadership met to discuss naming it after Charlie del Rosario.⁴ At two in the afternoon a group of men claiming to be reporters from the *Herald* arrived and requested to speak with Secretary General Luzvimindo David. When he emerged from the meeting to speak with them, they revealed that they were armed, forced him into their jeep and drove off.⁵ Similar arrests took place throughout Manila. A list of sixty-three students and activists wanted for arrest

¹The legal architecture for the suspension of the writ had already been outlined by Enrile as early as 1952. (Juan Ponce Enrile, “The Effect of the Suspension of Habeas Corpus on the Right to Bail in Cases of Rebellion, Insurrection and Sedition,” *Philippine Law Journal* 27 [1952]: 48–61).

²APL, 3 Sep 1971, 6; Members of the Faculty University of the Philippines (UP) Tarlac, *A Message to President Marcos*, August 1971, PRP 18/08.01.

³APL, 3 Sep 1971, 7.

⁴APL, 25 Aug 1972, 17; *Breakthrough*, 3, nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 4, PRP 29/11.02.

⁵PC, 25 Aug, 2; 3 Sep 1971.

was published in newspapers and in late August, the *Manila Times* reported that one hundred twenty people had been arrested under proclamation 889.⁶ The arrests ordered by Marcos primarily targeted the front organizations of the CPP.

While the president doubtless aspired to arrest his bourgeois rivals, who were, he knew, plotting either his assassination or his ouster in a military coup, he was not yet prepared to do so. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was a dry run for military dictatorship; Marcos was testing out its implementation. While he would not yet arrest Aquino, he readied the pretexts for 1972. Marcos accused the CPP of a July–August plan to seize power by destabilizing the government through a bombing spree of which Miranda was but a component part. Marcos himself had ordered the majority of these bombings, which were carried out by military operatives in conjunction with the armed wing of the PKP. Marcos went further and attempted to associate Aquino with this plot, publicly accusing his rival of ties to the Maoist CPP and claiming that Aquino had introduced Joma Sison to Commander Dante and had thus facilitated the creation of the NPA. Aquino denounced these claims as political slander. The mutual hypocrisy of Marcos and Aquino is extraordinary. Marcos was funding and aiding the PKP as they carried out a bombing campaign on his behalf; Aquino was intimately tied to the CPP, was facilitating their armed struggle, and it is likely that he had been aware of the Miranda bombing plot.

Needing to defend his leading bourgeois ally, Joma Sison wrote a letter to the Manila press denying that he had any ties to Benigno Aquino or the Miranda bombing. On August 30, the *Collegian* published his statement, which was signed on the twenty-fifth and had been published in Tagalog translation in *Taliba* on the twenty-eighth.⁷ Sison wrote that

I deny the allegation made publicly by Mr. Marcos in his Tuesday radio-TV hook-up interview that I met Sen. Benigno Aquino together with Commander Dante in 1968 and again in 1969. I can only describe his allegation as a brazen lie. . . .

I state categorically that Commander Dante, Senator Aquino and I have never met together in all our lives. . . .

It is true, however, that I have warm regards for a number of LP leaders who were victims of the Plaza Miranda carnage and it is simply malicious, incoherent and mad for anyone to make groundless insinuations contrary to the fact. . . . Marxism-Leninism-Mao

⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 49. Among those arrested were radio commentator Roger Arienda; KM Secretary General Luzvimindo David; PCC President Nemesio Prudente; and Teodosio Lansang. (Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 43; Citizens Movement for the Protection of our Democratic Rights CMPDR, *An Open Letter*, August 1971, PRP 03/10.01). On September 1, E. Voltaire Garcia filed a petition before the Supreme Court on behalf of Luzvimindo David for habeas corpus. (E. Voltaire Garcia, *In Defense of Personal Liberty*, September 1971, PRP 07/24.01) The Supreme Court eventually denied the petition, upholding the legality of Marcos' proclamation.

⁷Jose Ma. Sison, "Clarifying Tales," *PC*, August 1971, 2.

Zedong Thought condemns terrorism and anarchist bombing. ...
I agree with the Liberal Party that the Marcos clique itself has been responsible for the "climate of violence" now prevailing in the country.

Aquino did arrange the meeting of Sison and Dante; Sison lied categorically on this point. Sison spoke the truth, however, when declared his "warm regards" for the LP leadership. The leadership of the CPP continued to denounce claims by the Marcos administration that they were behind any plot to immediately overthrow the government. On September 17 the *Collegian* published a statement from Nilo Tayag under the pseudonym Pio Labrador, which stated that "The Communist Party of the Philippine considers the so-called July-August plan as a silly fabrication of the US-Marcos regime."⁸ The party would not, he said, engage in an insurrection, because it "has always stood on the theory of protracted people's war and the strategic principle of surrounding the cities from the countryside." He concluded by celebrating the suspension of habeas corpus, writing "Like all fools, Mr. Marcos has lifted a big rock only to drop it on his own feet. ... Thanks to him, his suspension of the writ of habeas corpus has made the people's awakening to the necessity of armed revolution more sharp and more widespread."

The majority of those arrested were members of the front organizations of the CPP, but it would have been politically unseemly and damaging to their reputation if Marcos did not arrest some members of the front organizations of the PKP as well. While I have not been able to confirm that a single member of the front organizations of the PKP was in fact arrested, they loudly proclaimed in their publications that they were. Pablo Santos, the President of MASAKA, wrote to the *Asia Philippines Leader* that contrary to the popular conception, it was not only Maoists who were being arrested, as the forces of Commander Diwa, or peasants branded as such, were being targeted as well. He claimed that ten known leaders had been confirmed as having been arrested.⁹ The MPKP circulated a leaflet on September 6 declaring that Marcos had arrested a number of their members under the pretense that they were members of Commander Diwa's People's Liberation Army.¹⁰ Teodosio Lansang was arrested but unlike the members of the CPP he was released within two months. While Lansang was not directly tied to the PKP, he was loyal to the camp of Marcos and his interests thus aligned with theirs.

Lansang and the PKP did not endorse the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, but they softened it. The Moscow-oriented party would not fully embrace military dictatorship under Marcos until early 1973, for now it sufficed to blame

⁸Nilo Tayag [Pio Labrador, pseud.], "July-August Plan – A Farce," *PC*, September 1971, 6.

⁹APL, 17 Dec 1971, 2.

¹⁰Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP), *Ibayong Katatagan Laban sa Ibayong Karahasan!*, September 1971, PRP 10/29.05.

CPP and the CIA for the Plaza Miranda bombing and to downplay the impact of the Proclamation 889. Lansang, writing as the secretary general of the SPP and editor-in-chief of *Ang Sosyalista*, issued a public letter from Stockade One, in which he declared

It is the general belief that what was visited upon us is attributable to CIA machinations which not even President Marcos himself could avoid. . . .

Being innocent and so sure of justice prevailing over falsehood, of the people winning over their real enemies, we have looked at our incarceration as a picnic, a chance to rest and meet fellow nationalists and progressives.¹¹

MAN repeated the same general line in its journal *Political Review*, where it declared that the Plaza Miranda bombing was the work of the CIA, which was looking to manufacture a pretext to murder Communists and those alleged to be communists as had been done in Indonesia. In this sense, MAN argued, the CPP was responsible for making this possible, for the CPP's "exclusively anti-Marcos politics" had created a situation where "all the anti-Marcos factions of the ruling classes seem to have taken a free ride in the 'Maoist' movement. Of course it would be convenient for them to support the 'Maoist' or 'communist' movement with money and arms to achieve the elimination of President Marcos rather than do the job themselves."¹²

The bombing had been the work of the CIA, which was opposed to Marcos; the CPP had made this possible; and the arrests carried out by Marcos were "a picnic." This was as close as the PKP could come to the endorsement of dictatorial methods in 1971. Marcos' grip on power was not yet fully secure, and it was necessary to maintain the appearance of at least some independence. The logic of their formulations, however, clearly implied support. If destabilization was the work of US imperialism and the response of Marcos was not harsh but a picnic, then surely the suspension of the writ should be welcomed.

The CPP and its front organizations, meanwhile denounced Marcos for the bombing of Miranda, hailed the suspension of the writ as hastening the advent of revolution, and threw themselves into the Liberal Party election campaign. Federico Angel, writing in *Eastern Horizon*, described the attitude of the KM and SDK to the suspension of the writ and the threat of martial law: "Both the KM and the SDK, however, refused to be cowed; they instead advanced the thesis that martial law would merely hasten the politicization of the masses and the waging of an all-out people's war."¹³ On August 22, the day after the bombing, the

¹¹ APL, 24 Sep 1971, 6. Lansang spent his time in the Stockade playing Mahjong with Commander Sumulong, and was released on November 13. (APL, 10 Dec 1971, 52; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 43).

¹² *Political Review*, 1 nos. 6-7 (September 1971):1, PRP 38/07.02.

¹³ Angel, "The Philippine Crisis," 58.

Manila-Rizal Regional Committee of the CPP issued a statement, which declared,

We call on the broad masses of the people, including the Liberal Party and the democratic elements or sections of the Nacionalista Party, to build a broad united front to defend national and democratic rights against the criminal plots of the enemy. In struggling against the enemy, we will not use grenades, or throwing bombs or molotov bombs, [hindi tayo gagamit ng mga granada, o paghahagis ng bomba o molotov bomb] methods which are used by the Marcos terrorists with the intention of falsely accusing their own victims.¹⁴

This was a remarkably direct, open articulation of the political ties of the party; the CPP painted the Stalinist line-drawing of the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie by the numbers of the Liberal Party. On August 30 LEADS and the CEGP published a joint editorial statement on the suspension of the writ, which put forward the perspective of the CPP.

The best laid of plots often fail. In the face of widespread opposition from the people: progressive senators, congressmen, and con-con delegates, from the press people, from civil-liberties group [*sic*] and from the broad masses whom he cannot effectively silence much less fool. [*sic*] The naked truth of Marcos fascist puppetry to imperialist interests will only lead to wider and more massive mobilization of the people behind the national democratic banner.¹⁵

Dictatorship, they claimed, roused ‘the people’ and united them – capitalists and workers, senators and peasants alike – behind the banner of national democracy, which the CPP waved for the election campaign of the Liberal Party. A new organization was founded to house this expanded united front: the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL).

MCCCL

The MCCCL formed over the course of the politically fraught week that stretched from the announcement of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus to the end of August. The group was the broadest united front the CPP ever built; its ranks consolidated barrio catechists and Communist Party cadre behind a common platform of opposition to the president. The party strained to bring every conceivable organization, other than those directly loyal to Marcos and the PKP, into its fold. It instructed its members to enter each of these groups and

¹⁴This statement appeared in a special issue of *Ang Bayan* on August 22, which is no longer extant. It was reprinted in UPM, “Ibalik ang Writ!,” 3.

¹⁵PC, 30 Aug 1971.

influence and win them over, adapting as necessary to their conceptions in order to secure their support for the MCCCL, whose program was so limited it could be scribbled on a napkin. While its awkward acronym implied the defense of constitutional rights, its leadership was comprised of retired military intelligence men, coup plotters and CIA agents; these were not democratic forces. At the head of the MCCCL was Jose Diokno, personal friend of Edward Lansdale; he had at least once in the past decade directly implemented the instructions of the CIA in Philippine political life.

The class character of the organization found expression in the moniker ‘Concerned Citizens,’ a name which historically has smacked far more of right-wing populism than opposition to the danger of fascism. This assessment is born out by developments. In the first week of October, armed gangs of lumpen elements in Caloocan, adopting the name ‘concerned citizens,’ assaulted demonstrators, killing several, including children. Rather than denounce the usurpation of the name, the CPP publicly appealed to these ‘concerned citizens’ to join the broader movement. The MCCCL called for the formation of “vigilante groups” and “neighborhood watch” organizations, clearly revealing that it was not drawing its language from the historical phrasebook of democracy.¹⁶ For all its talk of civil liberties, the MCCCL was as an organ for opposition to Ferdinand Marcos, and not to martial law. The leaders of the MCCCL did not oppose military dictatorship, they sought to secure its reins. With the suspension of the writ, the frenzied tempo of musical chairs accelerated.

The language of “neighborhoods” and not classes as the base of organizational work had been adopted by the party in its rightward lurch initiated on August 15 with the resolution of the SDK executive committee. Thus, a week before the Miranda bombing supplied it with the public pretext, the CPP had covertly launched organizational measures in preparation for full integration with the bourgeois opposition. Under the oversight of the SOB, the SDK rapidly worked to form community organizations, and the KM did likewise. Out of this effort was founded Malayang Kapulungan ng Makabayang Samahan [Free Assembly of Nationalist Federations] (MAKAMASA), which was the “Quezon City alliance of Progressive groups;” the Ugnayan ng Kilusang Progresibo [Progressive Movement Association] (UKP) was formed to play a similar role in Caloocan.¹⁷ In each city and region, the CPP worked to establish a comparable organization and to throw it into support for the MCCCL and the election of the Liberal Party.

The MCCCL cohered out of protests against the suspension of the writ which were staged from the twenty-fourth to the thirty-first. On August 24, five thousand students rallied at Liwasang Bustillos to protest the suspension of the writ, and the KM and SDK issued a leaflet accusing Marcos of bombing Plaza Miranda,

¹⁶College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), *Labanan Ang Pasismong EU-Marcos!!*, September 1971, PRP 03/17.02.

¹⁷*Sinag*, 1, no. 2 (September 1971): 10, PRP 42/02.02.

City Hall, Congress, and COMELEC.¹⁸ The next day the KM and SDK staged a rally at one in the afternoon at Liwasang Bonifacio, where Tañada and Diokno, addressed the crowd.¹⁹ On August 26, a group calling itself Citizens Movement for the Protection of our Democratic Rights (CMPDR) issued a statement, claiming that they had strong reasons to believe that the Plaza Miranda bombing was “part of an organized plot to annihilate the growing opposition to the Marcos regime” and directly accusing Marcos of ordering the bombing.²⁰ Marcos carried out the bombing, they claimed, with the goal of cracking down on “the most formidable critics of his corrupt and violent administration,” that is, “the Liberal Party, the progressive mass media men, the youth, the militant workers, rural dissenters, and the intellectuals.” On the same day, a group of KM affiliated organizations of which SAGUPA was the leading signatory issued a statement denouncing Marcos’ claims that the National Democratic Movement was behind the Plaza Miranda bombing. With a seeming lack of all self-awareness, the leaflet stated “The National Democratic movement and all its militants have always condemned anarchist violence and terrorism . . . The anarchist, bomb-throwing radical is a pure product of the counter-revolutionary propaganda dished out by the piteous intellectual hacks of Malacañang and the CIA.”²¹ They called for the formation of the broadest possible united front in “your respective neighborhoods.” On Monday, August 30, the MDP staged a rally at Malacañang; on Tuesday, there was a rally on the UP campus; Wednesday saw a CMPDR rally; MAKAMASA staged a ‘mass action’ in Quezon City on Thursday; and on Friday, STAND staged a rally.²²

On August 31, Senator Jose Diokno resigned from the NP in protest over the suspension of the writ. He immediately moved to found a new umbrella organization, the MCCCL, with the full support of the MDP, and was made its chair.²³ The class composition of the MCCCL expressed itself clearly in the description in the *Asia Philippines Leader* that it was “a broad front of organizations ranging from the Kabataang Makabayan to the Adoracion Nocturna, with Senator Jose

¹⁸Kabataang Makabayan (KM) et al., *Sasalakayin ang Pamantasan ng Pilipinas!!!*, August 1971, PRP 08/19.14; PC, 30 Aug 1971.

¹⁹Among the other speakers were Jose Mari Velez, and Voltaire Garcia. The *Collegian* wrote that again five thousand participated in this protest. (PC, 30 Aug 1971).

²⁰CMPDR, *An Open Letter*. The statement was then published in the *Collegian*. (PC, 30 Aug 1971, 5).

²¹Samahan ng mga Guro sa Pamantasan (SAGUPA) et al., *Fearlessly Expose the Facts about the Fascist-Marcos US-Imperialist Plot of Counter-Revolution*, August 1971, PRP 15/30.01, 2.

²²Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Militantly Oppose Fascist Suppression of Democratic Rights!*, August 1971, PRP 16/10.16. MAKAMASA published a statement during its Thursday protest. (Malayang Kapulungan ng Makabayang Samahan (MAKAMASA), *Pagsuspendi sa Writ: Desperadong Kilos na papatay sa kalayaan ng Bawat Isa*, 1971, PRP 10/25.02).

²³Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 23; CEGP, *Labanan Ang Pasismong EU-Marcos!!*; Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Suporta ng MDP sa MCCCL: Tungo sa Isang Malawak ng Nagkakaisang Hanay Laban sa Teroristang Sabwatan Ng Rehimeng Estados Unidos-Marcos*, August 1971, PRP 11/18.24.

Diokno . . . as Chairman.”²⁴ The MCCCL brought together the front organizations of the CPP with conservative Catholic groups, with the entire political machinery of the LP, and with Raul Manglapus and his Third Force. The only significant political actors excluded from the MCCCL, were Marcos and his immediate allies, and the PKP, as not a single PKP organization signed on with the MCCCL.²⁵

Organizations loyal to Marcos sought to defuse opposition. The new UP student council under Manny Ortega and the KMP did everything it could to diminish the protests against Marcos and the suspension of the writ. When the MDP began staging protests, the newly elected UP Student Council issued instructions to the students, which included a call for the holding of ‘protest classes,’ stating that “ordinary classes shall be held in each class, but a roving group of students will go from room to room to explain the issues to the students, inform them of developments, ask them to sign petitions, and get their opinions and ideas on the matter.”²⁶ These so-called protest classes were clearly calculated to maintain routine and order on campus.²⁷ In opposition to the council, the SM pushed for a boycott of classes, and armed with megaphones they went from classroom to classroom instructing students to leave.²⁸

²⁴APL, 25 Aug 1972, 26.

²⁵Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL), *People’s Demands*, September 1971, PRP 11/26.03. The consolidation within the ranks of the MCCCL provided an opportunity to tie off loose ends and strengthen bonds between the various front groups of the CPP. On September 22, the Samahan ng Progresibong Kabataan [Federation of Progressive Youth] (SPK) and Samahang Molabe held a joint national conference at the PCC and united their organizations in Molabe-SPK, stating that this merger was a response to the suspension of the writ, as the uniting of these two forces for democratic cultural revolution would hasten the downfall of the US-Marcos regime. (*Pondo ng PCC, ayaw palabasin*, September 1971, PRP 36/04.03). They further claimed that they had been working together for a long time and that the union brought together ten thousand activists organized into eighty-eight chapters. (*ibid.*, 9) A key factor facilitating this merger was the expulsion of Teodosio Lansang from the leadership of Molabe in the summer of 1971. In the coming days, the report concluded, the Molabe-SPK would be holding a theoretical and organizational conference, but I have been unable to find any evidence of this conference.

²⁶UP Student Council, *A Guideline for Actions from August 30-September 4*, August 1971, PRP 18/02.10.

²⁷The UP Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) – a bitterly right-wing organization whom the Sandigang Makabansa described with a painfully mixed metaphor as “a transparent smokescreen of the [reactionary fraternity] Vanguard Inc” – issued a leaflet stating that the radicals “do not really want the suspension to be lifted. They do not really want normalization. They want the suspension to go on or even martial law to be declared – for it is in this atmosphere that dissenters are bred by the thousands.” It glibly stated that “we are not affected by the suspension of the writ so why should we miss our classes?” (Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Expose, Isolate and Overthrow the Marcos Die-Hards on Campus! Long Live the Spirit of the September 25th Anti-Fascist Mass Action*, September 1971, PRP 16/10.05; UP Students for a Democratic Society, *Don’t Be a Radical Stupe!*, 1971, PRP 18/25.01).

²⁸Sonny Coloma was suspended for a week for disrupting classes in this manner and he filed an appeal. When his appeal was rejected in early October, he announced that the University’s decision to suspend him for a week revealed that Lopez was “implementing fascism on campus, behind the mask of liberalism.” (PC, 9 Sep; 13 Oct 1971, 2).

Seeking to direct anger away from Marcos and the suspension of the writ, Ortega led the Student Council to proclaim ‘sugar awareness weeks,’ during which the UP student body was to focus on the plight of the grossly exploited sacada workers of Negros.²⁹ Ortega and the Student Council claimed that they were organizing in support of the 1,780 striking sugar workers at Victoria Milling Co (Vicmico), where according to the UP Student Council and its allies, pressure was being brought to bear on workers to join the company union. In opposition to this the council called for recognition of the FFF as the union genuinely upholding the interests of the workers, and they urged a consumer boycott of Vicmico sugar to this end.³⁰ There was a great deal wrong with this campaign, whose core motive was to target Lopez and the sugar bloc and divert attention away from Marcos. The CPP and its front organizations denounced the initiative as a distraction from the struggle against the suspension of the writ, and expressed no solidarity with the striking workers. The SDK wrote

we should guard against the tendency of channeling our propaganda initiatives into such cases of exploitation under the imperialist-feudal conspiracy, *conscious of the reality that the central and primary issue of the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus remains unresolved.* This means that diffusing our propaganda efforts or launching political actions at a magnitude that would deflect public indignation from the aforementioned central issue would in effect be of service to Marcos’ interests.³¹

In response to the growing boycott of classes, the UP Faculty in Arts and Sciences passed a resolution calling for a shift from normal classes to faculty-student tutorial and consultative work as a means of dealing with the academic problems created by the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. Students were missing so many classes for protests that the semester had become otherwise untenable.³² On September 16, the KMP issued a call to students, urging them to “meet with their respective instructors for a mutual formulation of the most practicable arrangement for meeting the minimum requirements of the semester’s academic work.”³³ The KM and SDK called for an indefinite boycott of classes in opposition to the suspension of the writ and the KMP responded that it viewed

²⁹A portion of the support for this campaign came from the UPSCA who issued a leaflet denouncing the sugar bloc for the inhuman conditions of the sugar workers. (UP Student Catholic Action (UPSCA), *Makibaka para sa Sakada!*, [1971], PRP 18/19.04).

³⁰UP Student Council, *The Victorias Strike and the Boycott of Victorias Sugar*, [1971], PRP 18/02.46.

³¹SDK, “On the Style of Work of Malacañang’s Most Loyal Agent in Vinzons.” Emphasis in original

³²Ester Albano et al., *Faculty Position on some Academic Problems Caused by the Suspension of the Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus*, September 1971, PRP 10/03.01.

³³Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa (KMP), [*Circular*], September 1971, PRP 09/05.06.

“with disgust the brazen attempts of some sectors in hare-brained maneuvers to agitate for an indefinite boycott which will lead to the scrapping of the semester.”³⁴

On September 7, six thousand protesters rallied in front of Malacañang, and the *Collegian* wrote that “the march and rally held Tuesday [Sep 7] far exceeds previous participations of UP in all past mass actions.”³⁵ On Monday, September 13, the newly formed MCCCL staged its first demonstration to protest the suspension of the writ, marching from Welcome Rotonda to Plaza Miranda. An October publication, *Welga!*, estimated over fifty thousand people attended the rally, whose speakers included Diokno, Doronila, Voltaire Garcia, and Bal Pinguel.³⁶ The MCCCL made three demands: immediate restoration of the writ; freedom to all genuine political prisoners; and expose and oppose militarization. It is unclear how the last item was a demand. The insertion of “genuine” before political prisoners was a weasel word designed to exclude the imprisoned members of the PKP.³⁷ These became known as the “Three People’s Demands” and they constituted the entire platform of the MCCCL. The KM, SDK, and MDP repeated these demands at every rally they staged for the rest of 1971.

Seeking to remove fuel from the fire of protest, Marcos announced a partial restoration of the writ on September 17, lifting the suspension in some regions, while continuing to enforce it in others. The Nationalist Businessmen’s Association (NBA) – an affiliate organization of the SDK – articulated the most conservative possible grounds for criticizing the partial restoration: it was bad for business. “Commerce and industry continue to suffer from the suspension of the writ. The economy continues to collapse because business establishments are situated in areas where the writ is still suspended. Businessmen have adopted a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude. Firms have limited their production and many business transactions have been suspended due to the cloud of uncertainty. Normal activities have been interrupted.”³⁸

³⁴Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa (KMP), *KMP Position Paper on the September 13 Rally*, September 1971, PRP 09/05.03.

³⁵PC, 9 Sep 1971.

³⁶UPM, “Ibalik ang Writ!” The *Collegian* also reported that fifty thousand participated.

³⁷SM, “The Anti-Fascist United Front.”

³⁸Nationalist Businessmen’s Association (NBA) – UP et al., *B.A. Student’s Demands*, September 1971, PRP 18/15.01 The NBA had been founded in July 1970, but, by its own account, was not fully incorporated into the national democratic movement until the summer of 1971. In the first semester of 1970 it was engaged in the creation of cooperative unions – a “rightist deviation,” while in the second semester it was “anarchistic” – a “leftist deviation,” but with the advent of the 1971 school year, it had “rectified” these errors and established a national democratic program. The NBA, which was originally founded at UP and which spread to UE and PSBA and from there developed chapters at a number of universities, began in October 1971 publishing an irregular paper, *Ang Kalakal* [Business]. The NBA was “a sectoral organization in the field of business” founded to carry out the primary task of spreading “nationalist aspirations and goals in the field of business (in order to change the perspective of selfishness) to the service of the people and the support of National Industrialization.” (Nationalist Businessmen’s Association (NBA), “Ipaglaban ang Pambansang Industrialisasyon!” *Ang Kalakal*, October 1971, 2, PRP 31/07.02).

The MCCCL deepened and expanded the alliance of the front organizations of the CPP with the Liberal Party, bringing them into close contact with thoroughly reactionary figures. Senator Soc Rodrigo was the former head of Catholic Action and in the 1950s he had been the central political figure in the campaign of the Catholic church against Claro M. Recto and the Rizal bill. The SM now sponsored him to speak on the UP campus where he told his audience that only revolution could save the Constitutional Convention.³⁹ They also sponsored Bonifacio Gillego, a man who was known to have worked for the CIA as a leading agent of Philippine military intelligence. Along with Ramon Alcaraz and others in the Workshop Group, Gillego spent 1971 plotting to assassinate Marcos, and he thus became an intimate ally of the CPP. Gillego told the assembled students that “without revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary party. And without a revolutionary party, there is no revolution.”⁴⁰ Gillego continued, telling the students that it was necessary to “destroy the present oppressive and exploitative system in the Philippines in order to truly free the Filipino masses, and such destruction requires violence.”

The dizzying rightward lurch of the CPP, its sordid new allies, and its conciliatory vocabulary were disorienting to the members of its front organizations. Oyie Javate, MDP representative in the leadership of the MCCCL, recounted that she faced the challenge of reassuring members that “we were not giving unnecessary concessions to the more conservative forces.”⁴¹ At the same time, the front organizations of the CPP worked mightily to restrain their members to the conservative boundaries established by the new alliance. The SM published a leaflet for the September 13 rally of the MCCCL telling protesters to “*Avoid Slogans that Tend to Alienate Others*. Always remember that this is a united front. Cries of ‘Rebolusyon!’ , ‘Sigaw ng Bayan – Himagsikan!’ [The People’s Cry – Revolution!], ‘Sagot sa “martial law” – Digmaang bayan!’ [The Answer to ‘martial law’ – People’s War!], ‘Amado Guerrero’ and the like should be temporarily avoided.”⁴² To allay concerns among students and youth about the openly conciliatory politics which the KM and its allies were promoting, they wrote “We are not in the united front to compromise, much less to yield our correct political line.” The remedy was to

grasp the two essential points in our work in the current situation:

1 – GIVE FULL PLAY TO CREATIVITY AND INITIATIVE.

2 – PUT DARING ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE!⁴³

The screaming capital letters could not mask the vapid rhetoric. Revolution

³⁹PC, 24 Sep 1971, 2.

⁴⁰PC, 29 Sep 1971, 2.

⁴¹De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos*, 9.

⁴²SM, “The Anti-Fascist United Front,” 2. Emphasis in original.

⁴³ibid. All caps in original.

was gone, leaving in its stead the one word: “daring.” The CPP would direct workers and youths to DARE to cast their ballots for the Liberal Party slate.

The Election

The PKP generally kept silent in the election of 1971. The period of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was for them an unpleasant and politically perilous time. They could endorse neither Marcos nor the opposition, and they would not call for the political independence of the working class. When pressed they declared that they were calling for a boycott, but they did not actively campaign for one; it was a rhetorical cover for the fact that they were biding their time through a pained political interlude. Everyone seemed to be aware of this and targeted the party’s weakness. On September 13, as fifty thousand rallied behind the MCCCL in Plaza Miranda, the BRPF denounced the Vanguard Fraternity for distributing three days earlier a phony BRPF leaflet entitled “Parliamentary Struggle is the Answer.”⁴⁴ The disputed leaflet hailed Marcos for suspending the writ in order to suppress the Maoists. The strength of the forgery lay in its open articulation of what everyone suspected the PKP was privately longing to declare. In opposition to the stance of the fake leaflet the BRPF sought to distance itself from Marcos, stating “In fact, the BRPF is now actively campaigning for the *total boycott* of the 1971 elections.”⁴⁵ They concluded “The only recourse is to forge a broad, united front . . . At no other time in our history is the word UNITY most sacred, and treachery most vile.” The largest united front in decades had in fact been formed and the PKP was not a member, precisely because the MCCCL was opposed to Marcos. Class independence was alien to the Stalinist PKP and unity with Marcos unspeakable; it was thus compelled to call out the verb “unite” while choking upon the predicate.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) – UP, *UP Students! Expose, Oppose, and Isolate the Fascist Agents Within our Ranks!*, September 1971, PRP 02/25.03. The disputed leaflet is Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) – UP, *Parliamentary Struggle is the Answer*, September 1971, PRP 02/25.01. On September 15, the Vanguard fraternity responded with a threatening letter demanding that the BRPF publicly apologize for the “libelous implications” of its accusations. The BRPF refused. The Vanguard were actively targeting members of the front organizations of both the CPP and PKP for violent harassment. Twenty-five Vanguard members beat up ten members of the Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists] (SPP) on September 24. (PC, 29 Sep 1971).

⁴⁵Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) – UP, *The Tyranny of the Vanguard Fraternity*, September 1971, PRP 02/25.02. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁶The PKP kept silent for the rest of the campaign. They reemerged during the week of the election just long enough to issue an obligatory final statement, instructing their readers not to “become a tool of the stingy [hidhid] candidates – NP, LP, or independents who have been leashed by the imperialists . . . We must unite and shout our *complete and universal boycott* in the coming elections!” (Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), *Itakwil ang Panloloko – Huwag Bumoto!*, November 1971, PRP 10/29.07, Emphasis in original).

Caloocan Massacre

The community organization created by the KM and SDK in Caloocan was known as Ugnayan ng Kilusang Progresibo [Progressive Movement Association] (UKP), which Sonny Melencio described as “the coalition of all the radical organizations in the clustered areas of Caloocan, Malabon, and Navotas or Camana. It had its headquarters in Tonsuya, Malabon, which served as a hub where representatives from many radical organizations in Camana would go for backing and advice on political matters. In reality, the UKP also housed the district communist party, which was the underground formation leading the radical movement in Camana.”⁴⁷ On October 1, the UKP with a range of allied organizations including KM, staged a rally in Caloocan in support of MCCC and in protest against the suspension of the writ.⁴⁸ Hundreds of armed men organized in gangs, acting on instructions from Mayor Macario Asistio, a retired military colonel and a key ally of Marcos, attacked the marchers under the pretense that they did not have a permit to rally in Caloocan.⁴⁹

On October 4, the KM and its allies called for a rally to be staged the next day in Caloocan, this time to protest the “fascism” of Asistio, whom they began calling “Pasistio,” and five thousand protesters gathered on the fifth.⁵⁰ Asistio’s armed thugs, styling themselves as “concerned citizens” organized in the Pederasyon ng mga Organisasyon sa Kalookan [Federation of Organizations in Caloocan] (POKA), gathered to again attack the marchers. As the UKP marchers approached La Loma Cemetery, POKA assaulted them. At least four people were killed in the ensuing violence: Ernesto de Lara, age ten [!], Romeo Antonio, age twelve [!], Ricardo Barrientos, twenty-one, a member of KM-Santa Ana; and Onofre Tibar, twenty-eight, president of Rossini’s Knitwear Worker’s Union.⁵¹ A nineteen year old KM member had part of his face blown off by a pillbox explosion.⁵² The *Collegian* reported that in the first five days of October, specifically on the

⁴⁷Cesar ‘Sonny’ Melencio, *Full Quarter Storms: Memoirs and Writings on the Philippine Left (1970-2010)* (Quezon City: Transform Asia, Inc., 2010), 30-31.

⁴⁸SDK, “On the Style of Work of Malacañang’s Most Loyal Agent in Vinzons,” 2.

⁴⁹PC, 8 Oct 1971, 3. Asistio used the verdict reached in *Villegas v. Navarro* which had denied a permit for the use of Plaza Miranda, and citing this decision denied a permit for Caloocan. The UKP forces claimed that the *Villegas v. Navarro* decision only pertained to Miranda and marched in Caloocan without a permit. (PC, 8 Oct 1971). The Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP) published a leaflet on the October 1 violence in Caloocan. (Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *Caloocan, October First*, October 1971, PRP 07/37.02; Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *Asistio, et al.*, Caloocan, October 1971, PRP 07/37.01). On *Villegas v. Navarro*, see page 473.

⁵⁰SDK, “On the Style of Work of Malacañang’s Most Loyal Agent in Vinzons,” 2; Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Crush the Warlord-Bureaucrat Asistio, Fascist Puppet of the US-Marcos Regime!!*, October 1971, PRP 11/18.03.

⁵¹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 155. According to the *Collegian*, the dead included Ernesto Santos (ten years old) and Romeo Antonio (ten years old). In addition to the four listed above, two more were “confirmed dead but their bodies could not be seen [hindi makita ang bangkay]” because they “were carried away by policemen.” (PC, 8 Oct 1971, 8).

⁵²MDP, *Crush the Warlord-Bureaucrat Asistio, Fascist Puppet of the US-Marcos Regime!!*

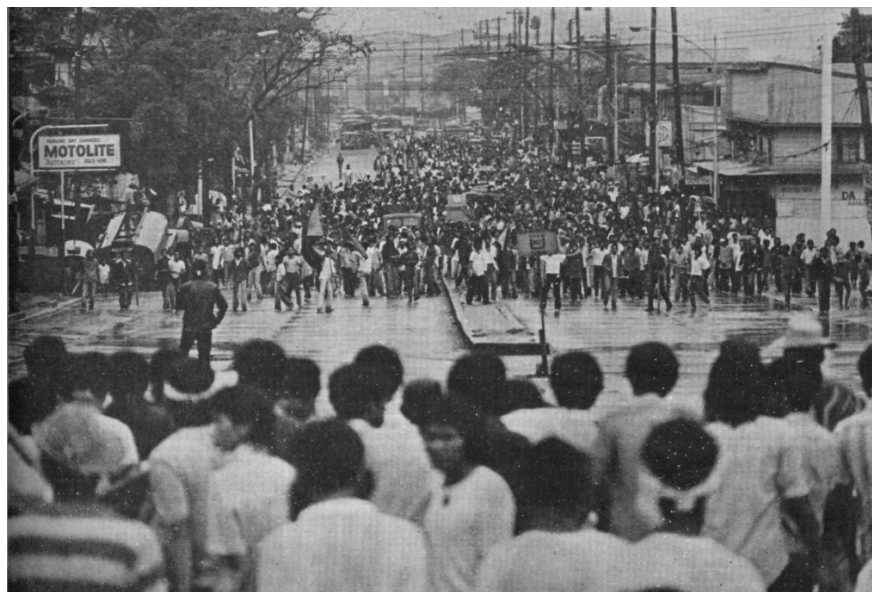


Figure 38.1: The confrontation, moments before violence breaks out in Caloocan.
APL, 15 Oct 1971.

first and the fifth, ten people were confirmed killed, fifty-one critically injured [agaw buhay at malubhang nasugatan], and 155 arrested.⁵³ Onofre Tibar was murdered. His death was not a direct result of the violent altercation in Caloocan, but was timed, it seems, to coincide with the deaths of the protesters, perhaps so that it would be buried in the day's news. Tibar, the president of Rossini's Knitwear Worker's Union, was shot nine times as he was leaving the workplace and was subsequently taken to a hospital where he died.⁵⁴ Asistio's political rule in Caloocan was associated with his close ties to Chinese businessmen, and the *KM* and its allies furiously denounced not capitalists, but the "kumintang intsik," for the deaths of October 5.⁵⁵

The slogan for the rallies on both the first and the fifth of October was the Three People's Demands of the *MCCCL*.⁵⁶ The *MCCCL*, under Diokno and Joaquin Roces, led a rally of about eight thousand in Caloocan against Asistio and the violence of October 5, which was staged at Caloocan City College on October 12.⁵⁷ Diokno told the press that the October 12 march "showed Asistio ... that the Filipino race [lahing Pilipino] is not afraid of the threats and suppression of

⁵³PC, 8 Oct 1971.

⁵⁴MDP, *Crush the Warlord-Bureaucrat Asistio, Fascist Puppet of the US-Marcos Regime!!*; PC, 15 Oct 1971, 7.

⁵⁵See for example the denunciation of the Chinese in Nationalist Businessmen's Association (NBA), "Ilantad ang Sabwatang Asistio at Kumintang na Intsik!" *Ang Kalakal*, October 1971, PRP 31/07.01.

⁵⁶Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), "People Reject US-Marcos Rule," *National Liberation Fortnightly* 1, no. 1 (November 1971): 3, PRP 37/01.01.

⁵⁷*Kalayaan International*, 1 no. 4 (1971): 10, TLBNP, Box 32, Folder Kalayaan; Serve the People

the state.” Diokno’s reference to the “Filipino race” was part of the campaign to blame the “intsik” for the violence in Caloocan.⁵⁸ During the October 12 rally, Bal Pinguel, the national spokesperson of KMP, issued a direct appeal to the “ruffians [maton] and goons” of Asistio to “join the national democratic movement.”⁵⁹ Pinguel was publicly soliciting the support of the forces who but a week prior had murdered the protesters, including young children. The rotten, rightward elasticity of the label ‘concerned citizens’ was here manifest; the only prerequisite for membership in the MCCCL was opposition to Marcos and his allies. In Caloocan, the UKP, KMP and company were backing the LP candidate for mayor against Asistio’s re-election, and thus sought to secure every vote in the city, bringing them under the umbrella of the MCCCL; it was this interest that Pinguel was articulating in his appeal. This was not an unfortunate stray phrase in a speech, but the central thrust of the organization. It was repeated on October 19, when the UKP staged another rally in Caloocan in which they again called on the ‘concerned citizens’ of Caloocan to “purge themselves” of the Marcos puppet, Asistio, and back his LP rival, Marcial Samson, for mayor.⁶⁰

People’s Long March

The economic crisis continued to worsen, a majority of the population could not afford basic necessities, and the writ of habeas corpus had been suspended. In this charged atmosphere, Marcos recognized that the principal political danger he faced in the 1971 election was not the Liberal Party itself, but the mass outrage which was being mobilized behind it by the front organizations of the CPP. It was necessary above all to attack the youth, who were after all at the center of the LP campaign. In early October, a series of television advertisements began broadcasting which claimed that Communism was behind the current unrest and called on viewers to “rally against Mao.”⁶¹ They depicted young people as adherents of Mao, drug addicts and disrespectful. One spot had a young person refusing to kiss his elderly parent’s hand in respect; another had a young person throwing a molotov cocktail at the statues of Mary and Jesus in the Quiapo church.⁶² It was widely known that Marcos was behind the advertisements.

Looking to build on anti-Chinese animosities, subordinate social unrest to the

Brigade, “Caloocan Masaker – Tanda ng Pasismo at Burukrata-Kapitalismo,” *Ang Pamantasan* 1, no. 2 (October 1971), PRP 37/13.01. The Serve the People Brigade, the 1971 replacement for the Nationalist Corps, was among the organizations supporting the rally.

⁵⁸PC, 13 Oct 1971. This article in the *Collegian* was the first to carry the byline of Filemon ‘Popoy’ Lagman. Lagman would later become a central figure in the leadership of the CPP based in Manila.

⁵⁹PC, 13 Oct 1971.

⁶⁰They succeeded in securing an upset election victory for Samson who ousted Asistio in November. (APL, 19 Nov 1971, 49).

⁶¹Alejandro R. Roces, *A Stupid TV Ad*, October 1971, PRP 15/07.01.

⁶²*Breakthrough*, 3 nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 3, PRP 29/11.02.

Liberal Party, and deny allegations that they were promoting communism, the MDP staged the “People’s Long March against Poverty and Fascism,” from October 20 to 24. The planning group of the MDP met on the UP campus on October 10 and chose the slogan for the march: “Strengthen the United Front against the Fascist Puppet Dictatorship of Marcos.”⁶³ [Patatagin ang Nagkakaisang Hanay Laban sa Papet Pasistang Diktadura ni Marcos] The MDP staged a kick-off rally on the twentieth at Plaza Miranda, and then commenced the march from two starting points: Los Baños, Laguna in the south, and Angeles City, Pampanga in the north. Two jeeps drove in front of each group of marchers, one carried the baggage and sound system of the marchers, and the other, the marchers’ food and medical supplies. The marchers would leaflet and perform in each of the towns that they passed through on their way to Manila, appealing to each community to support the united front against Marcos by voting for the Liberal Party.

The leaflets which the MDP distributed throughout the four day march denounced the Marcos government as the chief puppet of the enemies of the people, who were identified as American imperialists, hacenderos, Kumintang Chinese middlemen [kumintang na intsik middlemen (*sic*)], and “our rotten politicians” allied with Marcos.⁶⁴ What was needed, the leaflet continued, was a national democratic revolution to build a new society [bagong lipunan], but reassured its readers, “This new society will not be communist, because instead of killing capitalism, it will strengthen and spread it in order to put an end to foreign imperialism and to develop our economy toward the growth of industry and the broadening of trade.”⁶⁵ Imperialism would be ended, the front organizations of the Communist Party of the Philippines proclaimed, by strengthening capitalism. The Chinese middlemen and Marcos corrupt cronies were thwarting this healthy growth of capitalism. A vote for the Liberal Party would ensure the healthy development of capitalism, freeing the country from imperialism and the clutches of the intsik, and setting it on the path to prosperity.

The Nationalist Businessmen’s Association also released a leaflet for the march denouncing the “kumintang intsik” business owner – “that devil! [lintik!] he won’t even pay enough money to buy rice [pambigas lang].”⁶⁶ The NBA stated that the “progressive youth” will “in every town explain the need for National

⁶³PC, 8 Oct 1971, 2; APL, 19 Nov 1971, 16. The SDK Women’s Organizing Committee [Lupon sa Pag-oorganisa ng Kababaihan] issued a statement during the meeting calling on women to “Crush Fascism, end poverty.” (SDK Lupon sa Pag-oorganisa ng Kababaihan, *Panawagan sa mga Kababaihan: Durugin ang Pasismo, Tapusin ang Kahirapan*, October 1971, PRP 10/14.01).

⁶⁴Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Wakasan ang Pagdarahop at Pasismo, Ibukod at Durugin ang mga Kaaway ng Bayan, Magkaisa at Makibaka Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya!*, October 1971, PRP 11/18.26.

⁶⁵“Ang bagong lipunang ito ay hindi komunismo, sapagaka’t sa halip na patayin ang kapitalismo, ito’y lalo pang palalakasin at palalaganapin upang lansagin ang dayuhang imperiyalismo at paunlarin at ating ekonomiya tungo sa pagpaparami ng industriya at pagpapalawak ng kalakalan.”

⁶⁶NBA, “Ipaglaban ang Pambansang Industrialisasyon!”

Democracy and National Industrialization. This has not been dictated by the supreme chairman Mao Zedong. [Hindi ito idinikta ng kataas-taasang tagapangulong Mao Zedong]. This is only based on a scientific investigation of the development of any society.”⁶⁷ On October 24, the two marches, now numbering thirty thousand, converged on Plaza Miranda where the front organizations of the CPP turned over its microphones to Liberal Party stalwart and Aquino relative, Alejandro Lichauco, to deliver the final political appeal to the assembled ‘People’s Congress.’⁶⁸

The Election

Gary Olivar, spokesman for the MDP, spent the day of the election, November 8, at the Lopez-owned ABS-CBN studios where he appeared alongside Ninoy Aquino on the nationwide election day broadcast “Bilang ng Bayan,” [Count of the Nation] calling on viewers to vote for the Liberal Party.⁶⁹ As he was departing the studio, he and two companions were intercepted and arrested by five men; his two companions were subsequently freed, but Olivar remained imprisoned.⁷⁰

The 1971 senatorial elections were a great victory of the Liberal Party. Six of the eight candidates endorsed by Marcos lost, including Enrile and Blas Ople, who were quickly re-appointed as Defense and Labor ministers. The MDP hailed the election victories of the Liberal Party as a “victory of the people,” writing that “the Filipino masses intelligently saw thru the transparent democratic mask of the fascist administration and fully repudiated the fascist regime of Marcos.” One is inclined to wonder what “intelligence” is required to “see through” a mask which is already “transparent,” but what is clear is that the front organizations of the Communist Party depicted the outcome of the election as the ‘full repudiation of fascism.’ Having headlined the election as “People Reject US-Marcos Rule,” the article concluded lamely “It remains to be seen whether the opposition party which rode to victory over the crest of the wave of popular protest against the fascist and puppet administration will decide to collaborate with a regime which

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸APL, 19 Nov 1971, 34; MDP, “People Reject US-Marcos Rule.” Sison had established close ties with Lichauco in the early 1960s. In his glowing obituary for Lichauco, written in 2015, Sison spoke repeatedly of their “close friendship,” their work together in founding MAN and meeting with Marcos, as well as the funds which Lichauco raised for rallies staged by the front organizations of the CPP. (Sison, *Alejandro Lichauco*).

⁶⁹APL, 19 Nov 1971, 6.

⁷⁰He had just married SDK member Vicky Manasan three days earlier. (Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK) and Rey Vea, [*Letter regarding the arrest of Gary Olivar*], November 1971, PRP 15/21.01; 4 *Breakthrough*, 3 nos. 3-4 (November 1971): 3, PRP 29/11.02). Marcos’ right-hand man, Juan Ponce Enrile, who was defeated in his senatorial bid, apparently offered to defend Olivar in court. Astonishingly the MDP hailed this, writing that Enrile’s offer was a “clear indication of the unpopularity and the injustice of the arrest of the MDP spokesman.” (MDP, “People Reject US-Marcos Rule,” 3). Enrile never followed up on his offer.

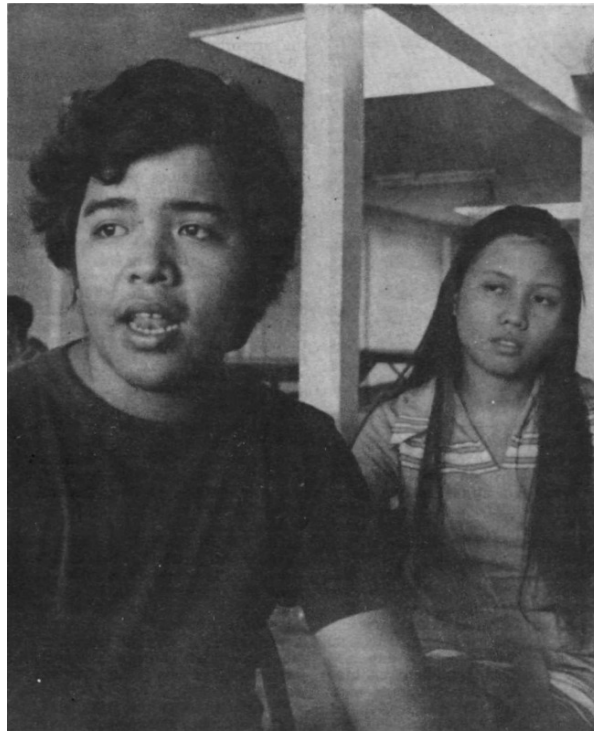


Figure 38.2: Gary Olivar with his wife, Vicky Manasan, shortly after his arrest. *APL*, 26 Nov 1971.

had been [*sic*] decisively repudiated by the people.”⁷¹

Not content to depict this shift in the tides of elite power as the repudiation of fascism, the MDP characterized the election of the Liberal Party as a “preference for Communist leadership.” They wrote that Marcos’ “tirades against Senator Aquino, supported by affidavits from dead persons and ‘revelations’ by gangster Commander Melody, had but charged the Liberal Party as a Communist Front . . . By his own logic, the people then have expressed preference for Communist leadership and have resoundingly rejected the Marcos type of misleadership.”⁷² On December 3, the MCCCL hailed the November 8 election victory of the LP, stating that “an aroused people spoke on November 8 and repudiated the undemocratic policies of the Marcos regime.”⁷³

In the analysis of the CPP, the issue was not the danger of dictatorship, for which both parties were secretly positioning, but that hazy yet unpleasant abstraction – “fascism,” a policy choice which the electorate had seen fit to repudiate, rejecting it, with a wave of the hand, from the proffered political bill of

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., 5.

⁷³Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL), *Laban sa Paniniil at Militarismo*, December 1971, PRP 11/26.02; Kaisahan ng mga Makabayang Manggagagawa sa Pamahalaan (KAMMAPA), [*Leaflet on Suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus*], 1971, PRP 08/22.02.

fare. The writ of habeas corpus was still suspended, but six Liberal Party senators had been elected; the front organizations of the CPP hailed the “victory” of the “aroused masses.” For all its rhetoric that people’s war was the answer to martial law, during the closest approach to military rule before its full implementation, the CPP had mobilized every bit of its strength behind a rival section of the ruling class. The people’s war but added heft to the endorsement it weighed on the scales of bourgeois politics.

The election of 1971, staged under the lengthening shadow of dictatorship, publicly exposed the strategy of the CPP. The party would provoke repression, anticipating resistance, and then channel the entire force of this resistance behind its ruling class allies, looking to them to lead the struggle against Marcos. What conclusions did the working class draw from the experience of 1971? The bankruptcy of the program of the CPP was palpable. While the Stalinist roots of this bankruptcy were far from apparent, nonetheless all could see that these ‘communards,’ these molotov-throwing criers of revolution, first welcomed the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and then served as the local campaign managers for the political representatives of the sugar barons.

Martial Law



The Music Stops

*Naákay ng gútom at gawing manilà
nag-ulî sa gánid at nawalâ'ng awà,
handâ na ang ngípi't kukóng bágong hasà
at pagsasabayán ang gapós ng iwà.*

— Francisco Balagtas, *Florante at Laura*

On Valentine's Day 1972, Suharto visited Manila, where he delivered an address before the joint house of Congress and met privately with Ferdinand Marcos, who sought his advice on how best to implement military rule in the country. The conventional scholarly argument about Marcos' declaration of martial law is that his success was predicated upon the ties which he cultivated with military leadership and the legal and political groundwork which he prepared for dictatorship. Franco, for example, writes

It was also during his first term as president that Marcos began to prepare the national transition to an authoritarian regime. He began cultivating loyal followers among high-level military officers by selectively extending the tenure of retirable generals and promoting officers from lower echelons. At the same time he took steps to centralize control over the military by combining the offices of Secretary of Justice and National Defense. Exaggerating the national security threat posed by the still weak and divided Communist movement, Marcos also substantially increased both the size and budget of the military.⁷⁴

While this is true, the conventional argument overlooks the history of multiple prior presidents who likewise developed an extensive network of military ties and who deployed the threat of martial law at various junctures during their terms in office. Situated historically, there was nothing particularly remarkable

⁷⁴Franco, *Elections and Democratization in the Philippines*, 87.

about Marcos' conduct in office or his threats of dictatorship. Berlin correctly asserts that "the roots of martial law lay in the Philippines' long colonial experience and in the first decades of independence." He describes martial law as "a natural part of the fabric of the Philippine past."⁷⁵ The framework for military rule existed throughout the history of the post-colonial Philippines. It was a direct product of US colonialism and was enshrined under the powers of the executive branch in Article VII, Section 10, of the 1935 constitution, which stated that the president can "suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, or place the Philippines or any part thereof under Martial Law." Berlin, however, argues that martial law was in many ways simply a return to the normal character of civilian-military relations established during the colonial period. In this he errs. While the seed of military rule had been planted by the office of the US Governor General, the Marcos dictatorship was not the atavistic re-emergence of a prior mode of rule. Martial law in 1972 was something qualitatively new, and was an expression of global developments.

The impulse to military rule existed within the ruling class since the formal granting of independence in 1946, and machinations to that end had been pursued during their terms of office by Quirino, Garcia, Macapagal and Marcos. What distinguished Marcos' machinations from those of his predecessors was the international situation of political and economic crisis. It was neither Marcos' cleverness nor his will to power that determined his success. By the late 1960s, global capitalism was in a crisis which marked the beginning of the precipitous decline of US economic dominance. The post-war *modus vivendi*, over which Washington exercised historically unprecedented global power, formally came to a close when Nixon ended the Bretton Woods agreement of fixed exchange rates and dollar gold convertibility in August 1971. The explosive class struggles which emerged around the globe from the middle of the 1960s to the middle of the 1970s were a manifestation of this economic crisis. This is why the First Quarter Storm was presaged in the streets of Paris, and followed by those of Athens. It is in this context that we see the rise of dictatorship as the preferred mode of bourgeois rule. Suharto and Marcos, Pinochet and the Shah shared a common geopolitical DNA. Washington facilitated and propped up these tin-pot rulers. Moscow and Beijing, looking to secure advantage against each other, followed suit. Moscow supported Suharto; Beijing, Pinochet.

In the face of this crisis, there was common consent from every section of the Filipino ruling class that dictatorship was necessary. Aquino declared just as forthrightly as Marcos that he would implement martial law if he gained power. The contending elites jostled with each other for Malacañang – in a game of political musical chairs – knowing that whoever was seated there would secure the spoils of dictatorship. In the drive toward martial law, Marcos

⁷⁵Donald L. Berlin, *Before Gringo: History of the Philippine Military, 1830-1972* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2008), xx, xxi.

outmaneuvered his opponents at every turn. By 1972, the opposition, clustered around Aquino and Osmeña, was resorting to increasingly desperate measures, including assassination plots. They were not fighting against military rule; they were fighting to secure it.

The ruling opposition was thus mobilized for a particular reason – to have their hands upon the reins of the inevitable dictatorship. The working class and exploited masses of the Philippines were mobilized for very different reasons: price hikes, runaway inflation, and slashed wages had cut them to the bone. An intense social anger fueled the rallies of 1970, '71, and '72. The role of the Communist Party of the Philippines was to subordinate the latter to the former, to ensure that these social explosions safely fueled the machinations of their bourgeois allies. While the PKP provided ideological justification for Marcos and his 'revolution from the center,' the CPP led the masses into a political cul-de-sac. This is what made martial law possible.

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Diplomacy and Dispute

*Huminto siya [Soliman] sandali upang humigop ng kaunting kape, pagkatapos pinagpatuloy na naman niya ang kaniyang pagtalakay. ...
Kahit papaano, ang kanyang mga huling salita ay nakapagpapagunita ng mga sinabi ni Che Guevara. Ang kanilang mga pangungusap ay parehong nagtataglay ng kagandahan at pangangailangan, ng katapangan at pagpupunyagi, ng habiling makabagbag-damdamin.*

— Ang Mandirigma, March 1972

Nixon continued to pursue a policy of détente with Mao. In October, Kissinger again visited Beijing, making the final arrangements for the visit of the US President in the coming year. On the twenty-fifth the PRC was admitted to the United Nations as “the only legitimate representative of China.”¹ In late February 1972, Nixon traveled to Beijing and met with Zhou Enlai. The week before his arrival US forces in Vietnam launched the heaviest bombing campaign in the war to date, but Beijing said nothing. Nixon and Zhou issued a joint communiqué at the end of Nixon’s visit, declaring their agreement “to facilitate the progressive development of trade between their two countries.” While the Soviet bloc had felt compelled to vote for the admission of China to the United Nations, the various pro-Moscow parties around the globe howled in protest at the tightening bonds between Washington and Beijing.

Marcos meanwhile continue to pursue closer relations with Moscow. In March 1972 Imelda Marcos traveled to Romania, Yugoslavia and the USSR, where she visited Moscow and Leningrad, a trip which marked a significant step to the opening of full diplomatic ties between the Soviet bloc and Manila.² On March 10, in the midst of her visit, Ferdinand Marcos announced the opening of formal diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia and Romania. In Moscow, Imelda Marcos met with Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin for extended discussions over the course

¹UN resolution 2758, which admitted China to the United Nations, had been introduced by Albania on July 15, as Kissinger concluded his meetings with Zhou. Manila voted against China’s admission.

²APL, 7 Apr 1972, 61.

of three days, as well as with the deputy premier, foreign affairs minister and foreign trade minister, issuing a statement that she hoped the talks would lead to “the normalization of relations between our two countries.”³

The ruling class opposition, however, was traveling to China. From March 17-22, as Imelda Marcos returned from Moscow, Salvador Laurel journeyed to the PRC where he met with the Vice Premier to discuss Manila’s possible future foreign relations with Beijing, declaring his support for a one China policy. The *Asia Philippines Leader* aptly described his visit as “an opening salvo in the coming battle for Malacañang.”⁴ Laurel, a disgruntled NP member, was weighing running for Vice President on the Aquino ticket.⁵ A key factor in Aquino’s strategy, which had been tested and validated in the 1971 midterm election, was securing the full support of the CPP and its front organizations for his candidacy. The KM, SDK, MDP and all of the various front organizations of the CPP had actively campaigned for the Liberal Party, and LP candidates had been given pride of place at KM rallies. The LP in turn wooed the CPP, issuing declarations in support of China. Jovito Salonga, for example, announced his support for trade and diplomatic ties with Beijing, declaring that in the wake of pingpong diplomacy and Nixon’s announcement of relations with China, opposition to ties with China had “lost its punch.” The MDP heralded this statement.⁶ Laurel’s visit to Beijing in March was an anticipatory quid pro quo. The foreign policy maneuvers of the bourgeois opposition were carried out with both eyes fixed on 1973.

At the beginning of the new year, as Nixon prepared to visit Beijing, the PKP launched a furious new series of attacks on the CPP. In January the PKP published a special supplement issue of *Ang Komunista* under the headline, “Issues in the Ideological Dispute Between Maoism and the International Communist Movement.”⁷ The PKP denounced the CPP for claiming that when the Soviet Union sought ties with the Philippines this was “social-imperialism”, but when China did the same, it was “Peaceful Coexistence.”⁸ In the same month, the MPKP (UP) issued a paper *Siklab*, calling on its readers to “Combat Maoist Counter-

³APL, 14 Apr 1972, 58. On her return from Moscow she stopped in Spain to attend the wedding of Franco’s granddaughter.

⁴APL, 14 Apr 1972, 53.

⁵The Aquino and Laurel families had long-standing ties dating back to the Japanese occupation when Salvador Laurel’s father had served as President and Ninoy Aquino’s as Vice-President of the puppet government. Salvador and Ninoy spent the final months of the war together in Japan where their fathers were received by the emperor.

⁶MDP, “People Reject US-Marcos Rule.” Salonga’s article was originally published in a business journal, before being reprinted by the MDP.

⁷PKP, “Ideological Dispute Between Maoism and the International Communist Movement.”

⁸In this issue, the PKP began referring to the NPA as Ninoy’s Private Army. Francisco Nemenzo, using the pseudonym Mario Frunze, was head of the editorial board of *Ang Komunista* during this period. In the January issue, he published a statement denying a claim made in *Ang Bayan* that the PKP had issued a fake edition of *Ang Bayan* warning Mao against Nixon’s visit.

Revolution!”⁹ They denounced the CPP for having “branzently [sic] supported” the Liberal Party in the November 1971 election. The majority of the paper was dedicated to rooting the split within the Communist Party in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Where previously the PKP had claimed that Sison broke with the party out of “careerist” motives, they now revealed that the split originated as far back as 1963 in the machinations of Beijing. They denounced the “Judas” Sison and his “Mao-thought” party, and declared that Sison “received instructions to form a pro-Chinese faction in the Philippine movement” in 1963 in Indonesia, bringing back with him a program of “anti-Sovietism.” The MPKP claimed that Sison sought from 1963 to 1967 to appeal to the peasantry but failed. He only succeeded, they argued, in reaching a group of “political juvenile delinquents.” He traveled to China in 1967 and reported his failure to reach the peasantry to the CCP and was instructed to follow the pattern of the Cultural Revolution. The MPKP claimed that the primary ideological difference between the MPKP and the KM was that the KM was “parroting the Peking line” of “anti-Soviet propaganda” and promoting the notion that “feudalism is the social base of imperialism.”¹⁰

At the beginning of March, Julius Torres of MPKP (UP) wrote to the *Collegian* on the growing relations between the US and China, arguing that the “growing isolation of Red China from the socialist camp necessitated a Sino-American detente – a start of an alliance of two counter-revolutionary powers,” and concluded “the local Maoists must certainly be in a quandary.”¹¹ On March 27 the PKP Politburo issued a statement through *Ang Komunista* which declared in a similar manner, “There is no doubt that the Sino-Soviet dispute provided the condition for Nixon’s detente with China. It would be too much of a risk for Nixon to make such an approach had the Sino-Soviet solidarity been maintained.”¹² On the basis of the split, “Nixon’s diplomacy is to use China in the imperialist struggle against the socialist forces under the leadership of the Soviet Union, and China’s role in this collusion is no less active, no less counter-revolutionary than the Nixon government’s.” (9)

In April 1972, the PKP wrote in *Ang Komunista* that China under Mao was “on the road to capitalist integration.”¹³ They claimed that the “joint editorial of the People’s Daily, Red Flag, and Liberation Daily on January 1 1972, implicitly relegates US imperialism to secondary status while elevating the Soviet Union to the status of main enemy.” (2) The PKP wrote that “the nature and extent of China’s foreign trade with capitalist countries show an increasing process of integration

⁹Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, “Strengthen Revolutionary Unity and Combat Maoist Counter-Revolution!,” *Siklab*, January 1972, PRP 42/06.02.

¹⁰The article also identified Sison as Guerrero.

¹¹PC, 9 Mar 1972, 6.

¹²Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “Nixon-Mao Collusion Against the International Communist Movement,” *AK*, March 1972, 7, PRP 33/13.04.

¹³Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “China Under Mao: On the Road to Capitalist Integration,” *AK* 3 (April 1972), PRP 33/13.05.

in the capitalist world. China has continuously rejected Soviet offers of credit ... Not only has it spurned Soviet assistance but China is intentionally trying to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.” (7) A month later, *Ang Komunista* published a collection of statements from pro-Moscow parties around the globe denouncing the Nixon-Zhou communiqué.¹⁴ Pride of place was given to Gus Hall General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA), who attacked Mao for his “opportunistic Trotskyite line.” (3)

The CPP was silent throughout these attacks. Having published, at the end of July 1971, a single, brief defense of the “proletarian foreign policy” of Beijing, they held their tongue. The Nixon-Zhou communiqué, with its promises of increasing ties and burgeoning economic trade, issued while more bombs rained down on the people of Vietnam than ever before, was an embarrassment. The less that was said about it, the better. Scenting blood, the PKP pressed on the geopolitical weakness of its rival, but in late May, Nixon traveled to Moscow. After repeatedly denouncing Mao’s dealings with Washington, the PKP immediately hailed Brezhnev’s deal with the American president as “a victory for peace and socialist foreign policy.”¹⁵ The hypocrisy was mutual; the PKP stopped publishing attacks on the pro-imperialist policies of Beijing and its local lackeys in the CPP.

The published broadsides, which had become repetitive and dull, ceased entirely; but while the ink was left to dry, blood continued to flow. Street battles – waged between these two Communist Parties, now the armed gangs of a cut-throat bourgeois rivalry – commenced in earnest. Early rumbles, staged in the wake of the election, produced individual victims, but by the middle of 1972, rallies left a body-count in scores.

At dawn on November 23, according to the BRPF and MPKP, the “fascist provocateurs and anarchists of the KM-SDK-Sison traitor gang made a treacherous assault against Paterno Castillo, an MPKP labor organizer and member of the National Council.”¹⁶ An MPKP “graffiti team” had been working on Recto Avenue, when they were accosted by KM members who threw pillboxes at them. Castillo, an MPKP member for five years, who worked in a print shop, confronted the bomb throwers. “Seething with anger and indignation, Ka Pat, who was unarmed, faced the mad bombers all by himself to divert their attention from the MPKP team. Frightened by his wrathful figure, the KM murderers threw a pillbox hitting him fatally on the head.”¹⁷ Castillo was now, they declared, one of the

¹⁴Gus Hall, “Maoism and the Class Struggle,” *AK* 3, no. 3 (May 1972), PRP 33/13.06.

¹⁵Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “The Moscow Summit: A Victory for Peace and Socialist Foreign Policy,” *AK* 4, no. 4 (June 1972), PRP 33/13.07.

¹⁶*Struggle*, 1, no. 2 (December 1971): 1, PRP 42/03.01. This issue of *Struggle* was published out of Cebu and is numbered is different from the editions published at UP Diliman.

¹⁷Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF), *Paterno Castillo – A Revolutionary Hero Murdered by the KM-SDK Maoist Counter-*

“martyrs and patriots whose untimely and tragic deaths were caused by the KM-SDK’s violent conspiracy with the fascist state.”¹⁸ The leaflet concluded “Crush the Kabataang Mamamatay-tao [murderers] and their front organizations!!” and called for “retribution” against the “murdering Maoist henchmen of the ruling classes that now run amuck under the disguise of being ‘national democrats.’”

By December the MPKP and BRPF were accusing the NPA of being “bandits who rob, rape and kill the rural population of Tarlac, Isabela and neighboring provinces.”¹⁹ They now accused Sison of embezzlement from the party in 1967, but provided no specific details. (4) They described the FQS and Diliman Commune in viscerally hostile language. “These crackbrained schoolboys raised hell in the cities to force the masses to revolt with them. Toward this end, the pillbox loving fanatics of Sison staged senseless violent demonstrations in which they caused the sadistic sacrifice of the lives of their ‘comrades’ and the untimely deaths of innocent bystanders. Toward this end, these romantic anarchists staged the orgiastic Diliman commune which relegated to the background the jeepney drivers strike against the imperialist hiking of oil prices.” (4) They pointedly referred to the KM-SDK as the “talkative parrots of the Peking Review,” and accused Sison and the CPP of collaboration with ruling politicians and families including Lopez, Aquino, Osmeña, and Roxas among others, stating that “The KM-SDK holocaust will tactically spare the vast tracts of land of Ninoy Aquino, the CIA superbaby, in Tarlac.”²⁰ According to the BRPF, the KM-SDK and Sison, in return for their support, received “elaborate rallies, press publicity, handsome pocketmoney, luxurious apartments and many other vital requirements which they must meet if their grand tactic is to be successful.”

They denounced Sison and the KM-SDK for putting forward a line of class-collaboration through its alliance with the anti-Marcos opposition, writing that “the masses should never have the illusion that they can have as ‘allies’ certain sections of the ruling classes.” The PKP was not repudiating the Stalinist program of allying with the ‘progressive’ section of the national bourgeoisie, as they made clear, approvingly quoting Mao against Sison. Mao they claimed “had advised an alliance with the national bourgeoisie so long as it is done with due vigilance and prudence, he never said anything about alliance with segments of the ruling classes whose very lives subsist on brutal and unconcealed oppression and exploitation of the working masses and the spoils being fed to them by the imperialists.” The PKP was drawing the same tired and utterly false distinction

Revolutionaries, November 1971, PRP 42/03.01. This one-page leaflet was jointly signed by the MPKP, BRPF and Kapunonang Gawasnon sa mga Batan-on (KGB) – their Cebuano affiliate. The range of signatories indicates that the leaflet had nationwide circulation. It was filed in the PRP among the issues of *Struggle*.

¹⁸ *Struggle*, 1970–1971, 1, no. 2 (December 1971): 1, PRP 42/03.01, PRP 42/03–04.

¹⁹ *Struggle*, 1, no. 2 (December 1971): 1, PRP 42/03.01.

²⁰It should be noted that like the KM and SDK, the BRPF also specifically identified the comprador bourgeoisie in the Philippines as “Kuomintang Chinese.”

between the progressive and reactionary camps of the bourgeoisie as the CPP; they were simply asserting that the KM and SDK had allied with the reactionary camp. The article concluded “Expose the KM-SDK traitors and CIA-agents! ... Crush the Sison and KM-SDK bigots and counter-revolutionaries!”²¹ (12)

Young Communist League

There was more than a note of desperation in the chorus of odium sung by the PKP from late 1971 to the middle of 1972. While the CPP kept silent, intimately allied with political forces on the make, the PKP flailed, looking to retain its relevancy. They were tied to the hated Marcos; their youth wing was a staid, straight-laced outfit, ill-suited to the era of the molotov cocktail. Their published attacks bore the imprint of geopolitics and the ire of Moscow is present in every line, but the concern of the PKP that they were becoming a spent force lent them a double share of vitriol. They were doing quite well at present, their leadership comfortably ensconced in salaried government positions from which to negotiate the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, but shadows limned the future. The influence of the PKP with Marcos would persist only so far as they remained politically useful; Marcos would discard them should they prove otherwise, and they knew it.

For Marcos, the party had two significant functions. First, its bombing campaign allowed him to manufacture a pretext for martial law and the PKP worked closely with the military to achieve this end. In the final analysis, however, this function could be played by the military alone, and the role of the party, while useful, was expendable. The party’s second and far more important function for Marcos was to provide his administration with sway over the masses, a political influence and prestige to counter the clout of the Communist Party wielded by his rivals. Retaining utility for Marcos thus required that the PKP have a robust hold over a section of youth. Herein lay the crux of the party’s dilemma: retaining ties with Marcos required securing the support of youth; securing the support of youth required opposition to Marcos.

Francisco Nemenzo sought the resolution to this dilemma in the creation of the Young Communist League (YCL), a new organization of PKP youth which recruited almost exclusively on the basis of the romanticized image of the guerrilla.

²¹This issue of *Struggle* also reveals that the work of the BRPF and MPKP in Cebu had grown considerably by December 1971. They had an affiliated Cebuano organization, KGB. The Cebu chapter of the BRPF held a three day seminar in December, on “The Task of Today’s Youth Leaders.” The seminar featured lectures covering three levels of topics. The first included a class called the “Marxist interpretation of Philippine history”; the second included “Dialectical Materialism” and “The Theory of Knowledge”; the third level included “The Great October Socialist Revolution.” The highest level topic taught was entitled “The Sino-Soviet Conflict.” The head of the educational department of the Cebu chapter stressed that the seminar would not be purely theoretical but would be “practical” as well, and would include “graffiti and leafletting work.” (*Struggle*, 1, no. 2 (December 1971): 3, PRP 42/03.01).

The new group spoke of neither Marcos nor Aquino, but of .45 caliber ammunition, gun battles, and fiery-eyed warriors. The YCL was thus tailored to secure a grip over the imagination of a broader layer of youth while providing a cover to expand the bombing campaign whose explosions were tallied one-by-one in the whereas clauses of Marcos' declaration of military rule.

In July 1969, *Ang Bayan* had written of the PKP, "At the moment, the two 'independent kingdoms' of the local revisionist renegades are already separately set to support the 'New Revolution' of Marcos."²² They noted that while "a majority within [the PKP] determines the character of the clique as a puppet of Soviet revisionist social imperialism" the Party was "wracked by internal contradictions." The internal contradictions of the PKP of which *Ang Bayan* wrote were almost certainly a reference to Nemenzo and his group within the party whose allegiance was to a set of political ideas derived from Havana. This group was attached above all to the image of the petty bourgeois guerrilla as the archetype of the future, and far less to the political line dictated by Moscow. Until September 1972, the rival orientations of the Nemenzo group and the majority of the party leadership did not take the form of opposition, for they shared a common enemy – the Maoists – and worked closely together. The guerrilla orientation of the Nemenzo group provided the basis of the YCL. As the curtain of martial law rung down, however, tensions within the party fragmented Nemenzo and a portion of the YCL from the majority of the PKP, with bloody consequences. In order to understand these developments, it is necessary to examine the theoretical conceptions of Nemenzo as they had been articulated by Régis Debray and Carlos Marighella.

Castroism was a guerrilla movement which sought to secure the ends of Cuban nationalism in opposition to the Batista dictatorship. Fidel Castro, who as a student had been politically influenced by the ideas of Falangism, had no orientation to Communism or Marxism. He sought, through armed *foco* guerrilla bands and the promise of limited agrarian reform measures, to seize political power, but was opposed in this by the Stalinist Communist Party, which had in the 1940s entered into the Batista government. In the end, the Batista regime fell not because of the armed might of the few thousand men organized under Castro, but because it lost the support of the Cuban bourgeoisie and of Washington, which imposed an arms embargo on his government. Castro initially sought friendly relations with Washington, but when the United States sought to dictate economic terms to the new regime by cutting Havana's sugar quota, he turned to Moscow for aid. The Cuban Stalinist Party was instructed to support the Castro government and to supply it with an ideology.²³

The clearest articulation of the ideology of Castroism written for the foreign

²² AB, July 1969, 12.

²³For an extended political critique of Castroism see Van Auken, Bill, "Castroism and the Politics of Petty-Bourgeois Nationalism," *World Socialist Web Site*, January 1998, accessed 27 June 2017, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1998/01/cast-jo7.html>.

press was Régis Debray's *Revolution in the Revolution?* which took the pragmatism of Castro's *foco* guerrilla tactics and dressed them up in the theoretical language of Stalinism.²⁴ A student of Louis Althusser, Debray had traveled to Cuba in 1961 and been impressed by the outcome of Castro's seizure of power. In 1965 he returned to Cuba and gave theoretical expression to Castro's guerrillism in the book which he published first in French in 1967, and which was translated into English in the same year and found a broad global readership.

Castro's guerrilla warfare embodied the politics of pragmatism, as he had put forward no political line or strategy beyond a series of tactical attempts by guerrilla centers, known as *focos*, toward the seizure of power. Debray dressed up this pragmatism as a necessary theoretical principle. The present, he claimed, needed to be "freed from the past," (19) as the principles of Marxism and the lessons of the revolutions of 1917, 1949, and the struggles in Vietnam were not only irrelevant, their implementation would in fact be deleterious. Debray wrote that by "a stroke of good luck" Castro had not read Mao, and "he could thus invent, on the spot and out of his own experience, principles of a military doctrine in conformity with the terrain." (20) Castro's ignorance facilitated the correct development of his tactics, and these pragmatically derived tactics were the basis of all else. Debray argued that "the right road, the only feasible one, sets out from tactical data, rising gradually toward the definition of strategy." (60) The historically derived lessons of past struggles, the scientific understanding of revolution, society and class forces, these were detrimental to the development of revolution. Marxism should be reduced to the tactical campaign for power by guerrillas; the rest should be scrapped.

The *foco*, the center of guerrilla operations, was not a base but a mobile unit, an independent band freed from any ties to the civilian population. (32, 41) It did not emerge out of the masses, but was separate from them. Debray wrote, "Whereas in Vietnam the military pyramid of the liberation forces is built from the base up, in Latin America on the other hand, it tends to be built from the apex down – the permanent forces first (the *foco*)..." (52) Winning the population over to the *ideas* of revolution was irrelevant, for the revolution was not based on ideas at all. What mattered were military victories. "The destruction of a troop transport truck or the public execution of a police torturer is more effective propaganda for the local population than a hundred speeches." (53) Debray boasted, "During two years of warfare, Fidel did not hold a single political rally in his zone of operations." (54) Military successes needed to be heralded, however, and thus leaflets would be left behind proclaiming the victories of the *foco*.

Most importantly, Debray argued, in the second section of his work entitled "The principal lesson for the present," these roving armed *focos*, free from both the broad population and any semblance of political thought, could not be subject

²⁴Debray, Régis, *Revolution in the Revolution?: Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America*, trans. Ortiz, Bobbye (New York: Grove Press, 1967).

to the leadership of a vanguard party, for the *focos* themselves were in fact the embryos of a future revolutionary party. They drew into their armed ranks individuals from all parties, bourgeois and working class, and made of them a new unit. “Gradually, this small army creates rank-and-file unity among all parties, as it grows and wins its first victories. Eventually, the future People’s Army will beget the party of which it is to be, theoretically, the instrument: essentially the party is the army.”²⁵ (105) He expanded, “The vanguard party can exist in the form of the guerrilla *foco* itself. The guerrilla force is the party in embryo.” (106) No external political authority to the *focos* could exist, and “the guerrillas must assume all the functions of political and military authority . . . must become the unchallenged political vanguard, with the essential elements of its leadership being incorporated in the military command.” (109) Debray concluded on this point

[F]or the moment there is a historically based *order of tasks*. *The people’s army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa*. The guerrilla force is the political vanguard *in nuce* and from its development a real party can arise.

That is why the guerrilla force must be developed if the political vanguard is to be developed.

That is why at the present juncture, *the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerrilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties*.

That is why *insurrectional activity is today the number one political activity*. (116, emphasis in original)

For Debray, the solution to the Sino-Soviet dispute lay in a “shortcut” (123) – the abandonment of politics entirely. “*Revolutionary politics, if they are not to be blocked [by the Sino-Soviet dispute], must be diverted from politics as such*. Political resources must be thrown into an organization which is *simultaneously* political and military, transcending all existing polemics.” (124, emphasis in original) While individuals of a pro-Moscow and pro-Beijing suasion could be unified in the *foco* through the abandonment of politics, the *foco* would divide potentially revolutionary forces on the basis of age. Debray wrote, “In Latin America, wherever armed struggle is on the order of the day, there is a close tie between biology and ideology. However absurd or shocking this relationship may seem, it is nonetheless a decisive one.” He continued, “Physical aptitude is

²⁵On this basis, the Stalinist program of class collaboration was developed and expanded. Debray explicitly welcomed any social force into the ranks of the *foco* provided they were willing to join the armed struggle. “Our policy is one of active relations with all Left and popular organizations,” he quoted Castro as declaring. (125) Debray stated that any possible political actor would be welcome, for “if they join in the struggle against the Empire, so much the better for everyone.” (126)

the prerequisite for all other aptitudes.” (102) Older comrades, however politically experienced and knowledgeable, could no longer effectively carry a gun in the *foco*, and were thus superfluous.²⁶

Debray’s *foco* was a politically lethal confection, two parts Henry Ford, one part José Martí, and topped with Stalinism.²⁷ These conceptions served as the basis for the political work of Nemenzo and the YCL: insurrectional activity was the primary political task, and, although Nemenzo did not yet openly articulate this, it would be carried out by units independent of the PKP. Through the YCL, Nemenzo began organizing a *foco* in opposition to the party of which he remained a leading member.

Debray’s ideas, however, were refracted for Nemenzo through the writings of the Brazilian Stalinist Carlos Marighella. Marighella, a member of the Central Committee of the Partido Comunista Brasileiro (PCB), rebelled against the leadership of the party when it refused to adopt methods of armed struggle against the military dictatorship which had been imposed by coup in 1964, ousting the João Goulart administration with which the PCB had been allied. Marighella traveled to Havana in 1967, where he adopted the perspective of Castroism articulated by Debray, and in response was ousted from the PCB. Marighella adapted the principles of the *foco* to an urban setting, transforming the rural guerrilla units of Castroism into urban hit squads engaged in acts of “terrorism.” In 1969, Marighella published his conceptions in a manual dedicated entirely to the practical details of urban terrorism, entitled *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*.²⁸ In

²⁶This was not the only connection Debray drew between biology and ideology. He excluded women from the ranks of the revolutionary movement as incapable of carrying a gun, allotting them the same status as children, old people, and “domestic animals” as forces from which the *foco* must be independent. (49, 29)

²⁷Debray was arrested in Bolivia in early 1967, for working with Che Guevarra’s band of guerrillas in that country. Debray’s book took the petty bourgeois left intelligentsia of the world by storm. *Monthly Review* published a book of articles on Debray’s thesis in 1969, featuring contributions praising Debray from Perry Anderson, Robin Blackburn, Leo Huberman, Paul Sweezy, and Andre Gunder Frank. Debray wrote the concluding note to the volume in which he dismissed his own thesis, but two years old, as “a utopian notion” and “not a coherent revolutionary line.” (Debray, Régis, “A Reply,” in *Regis Debray and the Latin American Revolution*, ed. Huberman, Leo and Sweezy, Paul, trans. Klopfer, Mary [New York: Modern Reader, 1969], 146) Released from prison in 1970, on the personal intervention of Charles de Gaulle, who was an intimate friend of his mother’s, he went on to Chile, where he published a book in 1972, *The Chilean Revolution*, which endorsed “Comrade President” Allende’s “revolution by constitutional methods.” Less than a year later, Debray fled the country in the face of Pinochet’s coup. Debray entered the cabinet of Mitterand in France in 1981, and by the early 2000s he had taken up a seat on the Stasi Commission working to ban the hijab from French public life.

²⁸The work was published in English in 1970 by a Berkeley magazine of counter-culture, *Berkeley Tribe*, and was disseminated in countless mimeographed editions around the world. Its underground character means that there is no reliable first edition in English to which reference can be made. The edition of Marighella’s manual published on the *Marxist Internet Archive* is a generally accurate transcription. (Marighella, Carlos, “Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla,” 1969, accessed 28 June 2017, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual->

keeping with the conceptions of Castroism, Marighella was entirely concerned with tactical matters. He detailed how to carry out kidnappings, executions, sabotage, terrorist bombings, and bank robberies, but gave no political program to which these actions were subordinate. The fundamental political task, however, was clear: small urban *focos*, of approximately five members, would carry out terrorist acts to destabilize the military dictatorship. Marighella wrote in his introduction to the *Minimanual*:

The accusation of “violence” or “terrorism” no longer has the negative meaning it used to have. It has acquired new clothing; a new color. It does not divide, it does not discredit; on the contrary, it represents a center of attraction. Today, to be “violent” or a “terrorist” is a quality that ennobles any honorable person, because it is an act worthy of a revolutionary engaged in armed struggle against the shameful military dictatorship and its atrocities.

Marighella wrote that “The primary task of the urban guerrilla is to distract, to wear down, to demoralize the military regime and its repressive forces, and also to attack and destroy the wealth and property of the foreign managers and the Brazilian upper class.” These urban guerrillas would bomb government facilities and foreign owned firms and would leave behind leaflets as a means of distinguishing themselves from bandits and counter-revolutionaries. “Terrorism,” Marighella wrote, “is a weapon the revolutionary can never relinquish.” Marighella founded an urban guerrilla group, which in 1969 distinguished itself by kidnapping the US ambassador to Brazil, whom they released in exchange for fifteen political prisoners. Marighella was killed by the police in late 1969. Nemenzo circulated a mimeographed version of Marighella’s *Minimanual* within the ranks of the YCL.

Nemenzo was, above all, an intellectual. The ideas of Debray, in particular the centrality of the heroic guerrilla, independent of both party and public, appealed to the intellectual aloof from the working class and disciplined political activity. The *foco* provided a comfortable solution to the Sino-Soviet split: politics were irrelevant, what mattered was activity. Marighella’s ideas, meanwhile, allowed the YCL and its intellectual leadership to remain in the city. Nemenzo could continue to work as a tenured professor of Public Administration at Diliman while orchestrating bombings throughout the city and writing promotional literature celebrating them. Where Castro was a petty bourgeois nationalist lately dressed in Stalinist garb by dint of historical necessity, Nemenzo was a Stalinist in Castroist garb by reason of personal convenience.

The YCL was organized at the beginning of 1971 but did not emerge onto the public stage until December. The YCL recruited its membership from the MPKP

urban-guerrilla/index.htm).

and other PKP front organizations and trained them as members of the party.²⁹ The impact of the YCL, however, was far broader than its membership, for it cultivated the image of the PKP as an organization of rebellious youth taking up arms against an oppressive system. The central committee of the YCL was formed on January 15 1971 and consisted of nine people – two workers, four peasants, and three intellectuals – all of whom took oaths of allegiance in a formal ceremony in Central Luzon. Roberto Mandela was made national secretary of the YCL and chair of its central committee.³⁰ *Ang Mandirigma*, the publication of the YCL, would later carry a page-long biography of the national secretary, which claimed that his father had been a guerrilla fighter when Mandela was six years old. Mandela made his way through school, working in a road construction company and was able to reach his second year in college as a commerce student, before dropping out and joining the revolutionary army in Central Luzon, leaving his young wife and child, and at the age of twenty-three became head of the YCL.³¹ On January 30, the central committee of the YCL met at a “base area” of the PKP in Central Luzon and seven members ratified the principles and program of the organization.³² The program stated that the members of the YCL were selected from the youth front organizations of the PKP for their display of “revolutionary discipline, an adequate level of political consciousness [sapat na antas ng pampulitikang kamulatan], dedication to the struggle of the working class, and recognition of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas as the vanguard of the struggle for people’s democracy and socialism.”³³ (12)

The first evidence I have found of the YCL publishing independent material is a brief statement which it issued in July 1971 denouncing the Anti-Communist Summit in Manila, but it was in December 1971 that the YCL emerged in earnest, publishing the first issue of a new journal, *Ang Mandirigma* [The Warrior].³⁴ In keeping with the orientation of the Nemenzo group, *Ang Mandirigma* occasionally republished statements which had been issued in *Granma*, the journal of the Cuban Communist Party, but never from *Pravda*. The paper stated that the YCL was founded as the “youth arm of the PKP” (4) and that many YCL members had been elevated to be either candidates or full members to the party. The YCL was “formed to serve as the school of revolutionary fighters, the training ground for the future members of the PKP.” (1) The “young Communist ... must learn from the experience of the seasoned Communists but must not be subservient to the

²⁹ Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 104.

³⁰ *Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 2 (March 1972) PRP 36/06.02.

³¹ *Ang Mandirigma*, 1971–1972, 1 no. 1 (December 1971): 4, PRP 36/06.01, PRP 36/06.

³² *Ibid.*, 1 no. 2 (March 1972): 12, PRP 36/06.02.

³³ At the meeting it was reported that a provincial committee of the YCL had been formed in Nueva Ecija, and a regional committee in Greater Manila, and that they would be organizing in Bataan, Pampanga and the Visayas. Noticeably absent from this list was Tarlac, a stronghold of the NPA.

³⁴ Young Communist League (YCL), *Don’t be Cowed by Red Baiters*, July 1971, PRP 18/39.01; *Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 1 (December 1971), PRP 36/06.01.

experience of others and instead carry out new ideas, new techniques, without fear of committing mistakes. The formation of the Young Communist League early last year was in answer to the need for the young to develop initiative and creativity on their own and with the minimum of guidance from their older comrades.” (2)

The cover story of the first issue of *Ang Mandirigma* dealt with an ambush staged by five members of Commander Diwa’s HMB unit against four PC troops in a jeep in San Roque, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija on November 30. It was a detailed and romanticized accounting of the firefight, in which Commander Elmo was shot repeatedly in the side and instructed his comrades to leave him, but they refused. The ambush was successful and only the driver escaped alive.³⁵ The article concluded, “It was a victory for the people’s forces and a heavy blow against the forces of counter-revolution and fascism. Comrade Elmo died from his wounds three days later but this only further strengthened the people’s faith in the HMB forces. Revolutionary justice had thus been meted out to the enemies of the people and the national liberation movement marches on.”³⁶ (4)

The tone of *Ang Mandirigma* feels strikingly similar to the press releases of the CPP, although the publication lacked the CPP’s multi-exclamation point rhetorical salutes at the conclusion to its statements. It referred to the HMB as the “revolutionary army.” The founding editorial stated that the “primary function” of *Ang Mandirigma* “will be that of a collective agitator and organizer of the youth. It will serve to inspire all the revolutionary youth to deliver hard and mortal blows against the neo-colonial state machine. It will prepare them to pass on to higher forms of struggle, at the same time making them realize the inevitability of armed struggle as the final path to take as the ruling classes will not step down on their own accord.” (2) Armed struggle was inevitable, but where *Ang Bayan* would have spoken of the US-Marcos regime, *Ang Mandirigma* hid the identity of its enemies behind the formulation “neo-colonial state machine.” This was not, of course, because they were opposed to the entire bourgeoisie, but rather because they could not name the section to which they were loyal. Thus, while the editorial spoke of armed struggle against the state machine, it insisted that “the present struggle is still at the stage of national liberation.” The editorial decried both “Maoism and reformism” as “counter-revolution and anti-progressive trends.” (2) It denounced the Maoists both for supporting the Liberal Party in the 1971 election and murdering members of the PKP. Mandela, the general secretary of the YCL, published an article in the first issue of *Ang*

³⁵Elmo was the twenty-six-year-old Orlando Mamangon of Angeles, Pampanga, a second generation guerrilla. (5)

³⁶The December issue of *Ang Mandirigma* claimed that the People’s Revolutionary Front (PRF) was a fraternal military organization, assisting the HMB, which had placed a note on the dead body of Elmo and left him in a public location. (5) The PRF was organized under Commander Soliman and had been responsible for a number of bombing campaigns in Manila, beginning in July 1969. See page 412.

Mandirigma writing of “Fernando Manguerra of Capas, Tarlac. He was killed on October 17 in Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga. Comrade Fer was killed by a police deputy of Mabalacat and two others. These three tools of the state have been confirmed to be assassins of the traitorous NPA in Tarlac.”³⁷

The February-March issue of *Ang Mandirigma* saw an escalation of the romanticizing and glorification of the guerrilla. The issue opened with a quote from Che Guevara and dedicated a significant portion of its pages to biographies of members of the organization.³⁸ An article by Vangie de Castro, for example, was dedicated to Soliman, the head of the PRF. De Castro wrote that Soliman was an “urban guerrilla,” and “very manly [lalaking-lalaki]. His movements are smooth, confident and discreet ... While carefully entering his strictly guarded ‘hideout’, one notices that he is wearing a long-sleeved ‘paisley’ shirt, appropriately cut black pants, and suede shoes [sapatos na gamusang] that are clearly well-cared for, all of which help to create a ‘suave’ effect [‘suwabeng’ epekto.]” The biography of Commander Angela reads in a similar manner. “In front of the burning wood that only intensifies the fire in her eyes, her male comrades armed with carbines, armalites and .45s, breathlessly wait to hear her words ... Like her revolutionary namesake, Angela Davis in the United States, Commander Angela has reached the high level of revolutionary struggle.”³⁹ Angela was twenty-two-years-old, we are told, had married a fellow guerrilla, and was “now recognized as a Commander.” “For her, it is of great value to be skillful with a .45.”

While these guerrillas were glorified, they did not live in the countryside, not with their paisley shirts and their suede shoes. Angela rejected the Maoist perspective on guerrilla struggles in the countryside, stating “You can’t organize anything in the mountains except wood.” The interview with Soliman stated that the PRF was created as a rejection of the Maoist line of encircling the city from the countryside, arguing that the true Marxist military strategy was to balance forces in the city and the countryside. Soliman pointed out the “character of the geography of the Philippines,” claiming that because “there are no broad areas to retreat to and establish liberated areas” and because of “the division of the country into numerous islands” it was not possible to successfully encircle the city.⁴⁰ Soliman stressed that the first task to be carried out by the armed wing of the party was urban sabotage and “armed propaganda” through bombings. He

³⁷On March 26 1972, an HMB hit squad “liquidated” Estanislao Garcia, the police sergeant they claimed was responsible for the murder of Fer. Fer had been a member of the NPA under Commander Pusa, the PKP claimed, who left to join the HMB. Fer was “brave, disciplined, smart, and a fast draw with his .45.” The assassins used a jeep belonging to the mayor of Candaba, Nueva Ecija. Garcia was the brother of Ely Garcia a high ranking Maoist in Angeles, who ran for office in the 1971 election. (*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 [May 1972]: 11, PRP 36/06.04.

³⁸*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 2 (March 1972) PRP 36/06.02.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972): 10, PRP 36/06.04.

⁴⁰It is noteworthy that some of Soliman’s observations, although not his conclusion, anticipate the tactical lessons drawn by the CPP in *Specific Characteristics of our People’s War* in 1974.

claimed to have bombed Caltex and Esso in January 1970,⁴¹ and further claimed that his group had bombed JUSMAG, the Jefferson Library, the Constitutional Convention at the Manila Hotel, and other buildings. As number of bombings mounted, so too did the list of forces over which the PKP claimed control. By April 1972 the YCL claimed that the PKP had a number of armed forces: the HMB under Diwa; PRF under Soliman; the People's Revolutionary Army in Bataan and Zambales under Commander Maring; and a naval force [!] based in Mindanao. All of these forces met in January 1972 to form a unified central governance under the HMB, and at the same meeting, the PRF renamed itself the Urban Guerrilla Force of the HMB.⁴²

With these repeated open declarations of responsibility for the bombings plaguing Manila, it is unsurprising that there was a growing public awareness that the explosions throughout Manila, which were being cited by Marcos as possibly necessitating martial law, were being staged by the PKP. On March 13, the KM issued a leaflet denouncing the "Lava-MPKP-BRPF revisionists" for using "anti-Maoism" as a pretext for conspiring with the 'clerico-fascists' and the US-Marcos regime against "our liberation movement." The PKP and its front organizations were the "true subversives." The KM accused the Lavaites of working with the Marcos regime in carrying out "terrorism," "arson," "bombings," and "theft."⁴³ On March 15, the Arca building on Taft Avenue was bombed, and the PKP, through *Ang Mandirigma*, proudly claimed responsibility for the bombing which it stated was carried out by Soliman. It headlined the bombing as a "victory for armed propaganda," and claimed to have "carefully" chosen to use only seven kilos of explosive so as not to damage adjacent buildings.⁴⁴ The "project" was ordered by the PKP against Antonio Roxas Chua, the head of Arca sugar, who they claimed was vice president of the Statehood movement, and who had made the largest contribution to the Anti-Communist League. They stated that he was a "notorious comprador, financial swindler and Kuomintang agent who purchased 'Filipino citizenship' from the corrupt neocolonial government by fraudulent means."⁴⁵ Soliman issued a statement.

This should be a sufficient warning to enterprises, organizations, mass media, and individuals who commit grave crimes against the Filipino people. The Urban Guerilla Force of HMB (formerly People's Revolutionary Front) will administer revolutionary justice. ...

There will be many more attacks of this kind in the coming months.
We advise our countrymen to stay away from all American establish-

⁴¹This claim was in error, the bombings occurred in January 1971. The April-May issue of *Ang Mandirigma* corrected this error.

⁴²*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972): 13, 15, PRP 36/06.04.

⁴³Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Labanan ang mga Tunay na Subersibo!*, March 1972, PRP 08/13.19.

⁴⁴*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972), PRP 36/06.04.

⁴⁵*Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972): 15, PRP 36/06.04.

ments and those servicing the American monopolies so as to avoid unintended harm.⁴⁶

On September 22, Marcos would place the Arca bombing at the head of his list of reasons for declaring martial law and lay the blame at the feet of the Maoists.

⁴⁶ *Ang Mandirigma*, 1 no. 3 (May 1972): 15, PRP 36/06.04. It was not simply the YCL and *Ang Mandirigma* which was hailing these bombings. On March 29, *Ang Komunista*, the flagship publication of the PKP – equivalent to the CPP’s *Ang Bayan* – published the “Manifesto of the HMB,” which took credit for numerous bombings carried out under the name of the People’s Revolutionary Front. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 122-124).

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Winning over the ‘Middle Forces’

[Opportunism] needs allies. It rushes from place to place, grabbing possible allies by their coattails. It harangues its own adherents, admonishing them to be considerate towards all potential allies. “Tact, more tact, still more tact!” It is gripped by a special disease, the mania of caution in respect to liberalism, the sickness of tact; and, driven berserk by its sickness, it attacks and wounds its own party.

— Leon Trotsky, 1905

Nineteen seventy-two opened with a whimper. Marcos calmly accepted his electoral defeat; on the eleventh, he fully restored the writ of habeas corpus, but continued to pursue plans for dictatorship which were nearly complete.¹ The pretexts were numerous and growing, the precedent now established, and all that remained was to outmaneuver and split the opposition. The alignment of the ruling class opponents of Marcos was a conjunctural grouping at best. They loosely shared a common grievance: Marcos had been in office for too long and needed to be removed. The tide of dynastic power had not turned in 1969 but continued to ebb; alarmed, they gathered in common cause, a political syzygy, and ebb turned to flow in the election that ended 1971. In its wake, their conflict and confusion of interests broke to the surface. They began jostling, eyeing each other uncertainly. The more electorally-minded elements saw redemption imminent in the presidential election of 1973, and planned an off-year of consolidation and jockeying for position. For others, who felt their interests better measured in balance sheets than ballot boxes, the turning of the tide meant that they could now negotiate to recoup their losses.

¹The restoration was the culmination of an incremental process, as Marcos had been lifting the suspension on a piecemeal, regional basis for the past months until finally restoring the writ entirely at the beginning of 1972. (*So the People May Know, Volume VII*, 27-28). The MDP declared that the lifting of the suspension of the writ was “a fascist bluff designed to deodorize a tottering regime with an aura of restraint and benevolence.” (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Press Statment*, January 1972, PRP 11/18.13). One does not know exactly what to do with such a collection of metaphors.

The contentions began immediately and by March they were being publicly remarked upon. The *Asia Philippines Leader* wrote in April “The current intramurals within the Opposition have been fanned by speculation on who will be the lucky LP standard bearer in 1973.” There were two contenders – “Senators Gerardo Roxas and Benigno Aquino Jr., LP president and secretary-general respectively. The keen infighting for the coveted nomination next year is anchored on the belief that whoever wins the LP convention will win the presidential election hands down.”² It was fully expected that the mass social opposition, which was being channeled by the CPP against Marcos, would sweep whomever secured the LP nomination into office. Gerry Roxas was a rather dull political figure, his power expressed itself in the backroom not on the rostrum, but his weight within the leadership of the LP was unrivaled. He sought an immediate nomination of the party’s presidential candidate by closed convention, knowing that he could, given the current balance of forces, secure the nomination by these means. Aquino recognized that he could not win on these terms, but he also saw that Roxas would in this way split the opposition. Laurel, Lopez, Diokno – these forces had left Marcos’ camp and largely broken with the Nacionalista Party. Where would they now go? Aquino thus called for an open convention – which would include the participation and nomination of independent candidates – to be staged six months before the election, declaring that this strategy would “dangle a carrot” before Lopez, Laurel and company.³ He anticipated that the loose and straining opposition would hold given these terms, each angling for a slot on the ticket, but expected, given the weight he would carry in an open convention, that he would secure the nomination, while Laurel would likely stand as his running mate. The opposition was reaching a breaking point, “the whole problem boiled down to the rivalry between Roxas and Aquino,” and Aquino played an uncharacteristically cautious game, looking to delay the battle; “he kept his loquacious self out of the picture.”⁴

The opposition broke unexpectedly, as its strongest link proved also to be its weakest – in May, Lopez made peace with Marcos. Business interests and not political advantage were paramount to the Lopez brothers. Fernando Lopez was three times a vice-president, never a president, yet this did not perturb him. Malacañang concerned them only as a means to an end, and that end was Meralco. Marcos astutely recognized that the Lopezes, fearing that Aquino was losing out to Roxas and that the opposition would fragment, were inclined to strike a deal with the president while they still carried the political clout of the united opposition. Marcos ensured their profits and they called off their attack. For the Lopez brothers this was victory, but for Marcos it was a gambit in a larger game. The neutralization of the Lopez family was the moment he had been waiting for:

² APL, 14 Apr 1971, 8.

³ APL, 21 Apr 1971, 51.

⁴ APL, 14 Apr 1971, 56.

the opposition had lost its strongest backer; now was the time to strike before the opposition recovered its forces. He launched all of his plans for military rule – bombing campaigns, preparatory propaganda, foreign delegations to secure international support. Within four months he had successfully declared martial law.

The program of the CPP sought to articulate the interests of a section of the capitalist class in order to secure their allegiance. Their allies on the platform of old money eyed one another with suspicion from January until May and the CPP perforce hesitated, waiting for a clear signal. They sought to secure gains in the wake of the successful election by uniting with the conservative and right-wing forces around the Liberal Party with whom they had campaigned – those whom they termed ‘the middle forces.’ But the specter of a common enemy was in early 1972 a diffuse motivation; the slogan calling for unity against Marcos led to what exactly? They had just voted against him and won. What was the political imperative now? The first half of the year was thus a time of consolidation without any particular goal; this was a difficult task: to bind together disparate forces without a specific cause. The protests staged by the front organizations of the CPP thus bore the imprint of their allies’ stand-off; they were desultory, disjointed affairs, half-hearted and largely pro forma. Flabby campaign followed flabby campaign, each increasingly enervated and ephemeral.

Thus, in the wake of its successful maneuvering in 1971, the CPP entered 1972 in a position of surprising weakness. Having secured the election victory of its bourgeois allies, the spoils were not forthcoming. Financial support continued, but at a languorous pace as the opposition was preoccupied with jockeying among themselves. What is more, the CPP had lost some of the more significant and radical elements on its periphery. The experience of the latter half of 1971 had been disheartening for those convinced by the earlier rhetoric of pillbox and storm. Community service projects had now replaced barricades, and protest marches were nothing but election rallies; this was not what they had signed up for. The CPP sought to shore up its ranks by recruiting new forces, drawn in their majority from conservative religious groups, bound to the party only by a thin nationalist opposition to Ferdinand Marcos.

The danger of martial law had not gone away. Marcos and Aquino both spoke of it regularly and everyone knew it was being readied. The opposition’s frenzied jostling over 1973 was in part an expression of the fact that a great many suspected it would be the last election held for a long time. This was the common concern of the ruling class, simultaneously uniting and dividing them: a social explosion was imminent and military rule was needed. The *Asia Philippines Leader* concluded its article on the infighting within the opposition with this line, “Overshadowing all these is the most important question of all: Will the next President of the Republic ... ward off that impending revolution?”⁵ The

⁵APL, 14 Apr 1971, 56.

Table 40.1: Philippine *Collegian* editors, first and second semesters, 1969-72

	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Associate editors</i>
1969-70	Vic Manarang	P. Valencia, A. Tagamolila
	Vic Manarang	P. Valencia, A. Tagamolila
1970-71	Popoy Valencia	A. Tagamolila, R. Vea
	Antonio Tagamolila	J. Barican, E. Gonzales
1971-72	Rey Veal, E. Gonzales	B. Dalisay, S. Coloma
	Teodoro Yabut	J. Barican
1972-	Oscar Yabes	

disjuncture between this imminent peril and the tepid and disoriented actions of the CPP and its front organizations is perhaps the most striking feature of the year of martial law.

Having lost the UP campus elections in the middle of 1971, the KM and SDK lost hold of the *Collegian* by the end of the year. Antonio Tagamolila, 1971 president of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), had described the UP student publication as “the most militant campus paper in the country,” but as 1972 opened and the *Collegian* resumed publication it had fallen out of the hands of the CPP.⁶ The *Collegian* had for years served as a crucial mouthpiece for the propaganda activities of the KM and SDK. The powerful position of editor of the *Collegian* was given to the author of the essay receiving the highest marks in the annual editorial examination. Each year the KM and SDK sent four or five of their most capable members to take the exam to ensure that one of them received the position.⁷ Campus forces opposed to the KM had attempted on several occasions to wrest the *Collegian* from them, but failed each time.⁸ The editorial examination board was comprised of famous journalists and faculty appointed each year by the university administration to judge the student essays, and under the watch of Dean Armando Malay the board had been consistently politically sympathetic to the KM. Renato Constantino and Dolores Ferial, for example, had out-weighed the conservative Max Soliven. In a move to strengthen the KM’s grip on the *Collegian*, the student council during Ericson Baculinao’s term as chair had voted to change the arrangement so that the judges would now be appointed by the student council rather than the school administration. This, ironically, was what led to the KM losing the *Collegian* entirely.

⁶ *The Guild*, 17 Nov 1971, PRP 30/18.01.

⁷In 1970, for example, Popoy Valencia, Vic Manarang, Ericson Baculinao, AB Colayco, Fred Tirante (!), and Rafael Baylosis all took the exam; each was a member of KM or SDK. They constituted a significant majority of the pool of candidates. (PC, 10 Apr 1970).

⁸An attempt was mounted in the first semester of 1970-71 that involved a petition to make the student fee supporting the *Collegian* optional, essentially converting the mandatory fee into a voluntary subscription and drastically cutting the readership of the paper.

In September, a dispute broke out between the first semester staff of the *Collegian*, who had come to editorship prior to the defeat of SM, and the student council now under Ortega. Alarmed that the hostile council would appoint the judges board for the editorial exam, the outgoing *Collegian* editorial staff insisted that the panel of judges be expanded from the members appointed by the Council to include an additional equal number selected by the outgoing staff of the student paper, a position which fundamentally altered the bill passed by Baculinao during the previous school year.⁹ The *Collegian* staff insisted that if the Student Council did not accept its proposal it would call a University Plebiscite to determine the composition of the examination board.¹⁰ The Student Council ignored the ultimatum and, on October 15, announced that the examination board would be composed of Max Soliven, Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, Raul Ingles, and Ruben Balane, a group of largely conservative journalistic figures.

The KMP and SDK did not go ahead with their threatened plebiscite. An election on campus had been recently staged and it had ended poorly for the SM; democratic measures seemed ill-suited to their ends. After waiting for Ortega to leave town, the SM convened the UP Student Council to elect a new board of judges, but gave no notice that they would be holding this meeting and summoned only those loyal to them. Twenty-two members of the council were present, out of a total of forty-three councilors, and by a vote of 20-1 with one abstention they elected a new board, ousting the KMP nominations.¹¹ When he heard of the SM's tactics, Ortega along with Councilor Jorge Camara filed a petition before the Manila Court of First Instance for an injunction against the declaration of editors, and against the publication of the paper, claiming that the election did not have quorum. While twenty-two councilors present and twenty-one absent constituted a simple majority, Ortega maintained that quorum required 50% + 1, meaning at least 22.5 delegates needed to be present; the SM lacked the critical half of a delegate needed to achieve quorum. The court issued an injunction on November 14, preventing the publication of the *Collegian*.¹² On December 8 there was a rally to protest Ortega's – that "marionette" of Marcos – moves against the *Collegian*.¹³ The *Collegian* did not see print again until late January. The Court ruled in favor of the KMP, invalidating the appointments made by the SM dominated meeting and reverting to the original panel of judges. January 9 was set as the date for the editorial exam. The SM boycotted, staging a picket of the examinations which they declared to be rigged ["lutong makaw."]¹⁴

⁹PC, 8 Oct 1971.

¹⁰PC, 13 Oct 1971.

¹¹APL, 28 Jan 1972, 45.

¹²*The Guild*, 17 Nov 1971, PRP 30/18.01.

¹³Samahan ng Makabayang Siyentipiko (SMS), *Ortega's Attempts to Control the Collegian - Part of Marcos Fascism*, December 1971, PRP 36/02.01.

¹⁴Kal, 1 no. 1 (January 1972), PRP 32/03.04. This was the UP Diliman edition of *Kalayaan* and was thus published as issue 1 no. 1.

Baculinao's initiative had sought to rig the examination; when this backfired the SM attempted to remedy the situation through secret backroom maneuvers. Ortega and the KMP succeeded in rigging the examination, but they were only able to do this because of the conspiratorial and anti-democratic tactics of the KM and SDK.

According to their own material only thirty students joined the picket on January 9; by the standards of the KM and SDK over the past years this was an embarrassment, and was indicative of the petering out of student radicalism in 1972.¹⁵ Of the radical bloc, only Jerry Barican participated in the examination. The semester would reveal that the SDK member and former chair of the UP student council had largely broken with his rebellious past. Teodoro Yabut was appointed editor; Jerry Barican came in third; and the *Collegian* resumed publication as a staid, generally dull, and entirely English language publication.¹⁶

Barican began publishing a column entitled "Gadfly," but his tone had changed and was now a mixture four parts elitist sarcasm and one part politics; his first column was dedicated to the art of enjoying different types of wine. It was not simply Barican. Many of the older members of the SDK, drained of their political vim, were abandoning their earlier radical posturing and adopting the mien of world-weary sarcasm. In December 1971, for example, Ninotchka Rosca traveled to China for a ten day visit and published an article in the *Asia Philippines Leader* on the experience. There was no political enthusiasm left in Rosca, and her article did not speak of Mao but of the pretty clothing that women wore in Hongkong. Rosca, like Barican, was tired and more than a bit smug.¹⁷ An editorial in the *Collegian* at the end of the 1972 school year wrote that "the university hushed up into the tired and quiet tones of a sedate council and a year of apathy and bitter cynicism."¹⁸ "Sedate" is an apt characterization of the editorship of Yabut; while "apathy and bitter cynicism" certainly marked the writings of Jerry Barican.

The 'Middle Forces'

In their drive to recruit the 'middle forces' – the conservative and right-wing elements around the Liberal Party with whom they had been working intimately throughout the LP election campaign – the front organizations of the CPP cobbled together a number of broad but shallow organizations in the first months of 1972, including the Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis [People's Alliance against Oil Price Hikes] (ABLPP) and the Movement for Democratic Reforms. On January 22, the First Civil Liberties Assembly was held on the UP

¹⁵ *Alab*, 1 no. 3 (14 January 1972), PRP 19/05.06.

¹⁶ The *Collegian* would not publish again in Tagalog until Martial Law shut the paper down entirely.

¹⁷ APL, 14 Jan 1972, 8 ff.

¹⁸ PC, 22 Mar 1972, 8.

campus by the UP Civil Liberties League (UPCLL).¹⁹ The theme of the Assembly was “National Solidarity Against Fascism.”²⁰ Solidarity against Fascism had come to mean nothing more than political opposition to Marcos, and this was the common political tie which held together every one of the groupings formed by the CPP and its front organizations in 1972.

The KM and its allies continued to speak of Mao and China.²¹ Despite these invocations of revolutionary China, the tone of their rallies was markedly different from the preceding two years and there was an air of general unseriousness to their proceedings. During the State of the Nation address, the KM and its allies staged their annual rally and demonstration, holding a “People’s March” led jointly by the MDP and various SocDem groups. Ten thousand students, youth and workers attended.²² In place of the fiery political tirades of previous years, the MDP had Willie Nepomuceno speak. Nepomuceno, who had been part of the Diliman Commune and was a member of the editorial board of the *National Liberation Fortnightly*, the publication of the MDP, was now building his career as a stand-up comedian. He performed comic impersonations of Marcos, Villegas, and other political figures, interspersed with his renditions of Popeye. Roger Arienda spoke, calling for the development of closer unity between radicals and moderates. The MDP burned the usual effigy of Marcos, staged a “revolutionary drama” and departed promptly at three in the afternoon.²³

As part of its attempt to win over the “middle forces,” the SM and its allied organizations threw themselves into campus sports. From February 18-27 they staged the Sandigang Makabansa sportsfest on the Diliman campus. Where exactly one year before they were still removing the barricades from campus, now they were raising volleyball nets as a concerted political tactic. The Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists] (SPP) formed a women’s volleyball team, called the Volleybelles, while the Progresibong Kilusang Medikal [Progressive Medical Movement] (PKM) fielded a woman’s bowling team, the “Keglerettes.” Sonny Coloma and Ed Araullo led the Sandigan Makabansa basketball team, the SM Councilors.²⁴

¹⁹Elmer Ordoñez was chair of the UPCLL, which was part of the broader MCCCL. The KM, SDK, and SM were all members of the UPCLL, along with “52 other organizations.” (UP Civil Liberties League (UPCLL, *Manifesto*, [1972], PRP 18/11.03).

²⁰PC, 20 Jan 1972.

²¹From January 22-27, for example, the KM (UP) was slated to hold daily showings at UP Theater of a documentary, “Twentieth anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China.” The KM was already staging showings of the film elsewhere in the country and the mayor of Dagupan City seized the reels, so the KM held showings of “Struggle Over Nanking Bridge” on the UP campus instead. (Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Guard Against Fascist Suppression*, January 1972, PRP 08/13.09).

²²Committee on External Affairs Student Council of the Institute of Social Work and Community Development University of the Philippines (UP), *The Filipino People vs Marcos on the True State of the Nation*, January 1972, PRP 17/50.01.

²³PC, 26 Jan 1972, 10.

²⁴PC, 2 Mar 1972, 2. The *Collegian* includes an account of a basketball game played against

During the latter half of 1971, the CPP had made initial attempts to organize professionals, which it saw as a key component of securing the support of the ‘middle forces.’ At the center of the effort was the the Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP). HLP had been in existence since at least October 1971 when they had issued press statements denouncing Asistio. The paper of the HLP stated that the organization was working to unite “scientists, businessmen, engineers, doctors, priests, [!] teachers, lawyers, journalists, writers, and artists, etc.”²⁵ The member organizations of the HLP included the Samahan ng Makabayang Siyentipiko (SMS), KAGUMA, SAGUPA, NBA, Panulat para sa kaunlaran ng bayan [Writing for the progress of the nation] (PAKSA) – in short, all of the various groups of professionals associated with the KM. The first issue of the HLP paper was entitled “The Professionals in the Philippines,” and it addressed itself to “teachers, intellectuals, lawyers, bureaucrats, businessmen, engineers, doctors, scientists and the like.”²⁶ A second leaflet confirmed this, stating that the HLP “affirms” the “progressive role of the professional today.” It was oriented to helping “provide professionals a perspective by which they can view their role in Philippine society, and create in them the urgency to re-orient their persuasions ... [in] the struggle for national democracy.”²⁷

At the beginning of 1971, the CPP expanded its drive to win the ‘middle forces’ from organizing professionals as a social layer to securing alliances with existing conservative and right-wing organizations. Anticipating that mounting prices, particularly the price of oil, would be a central political concern in the coming year, the CPP front organizations made it their focus at the beginning of 1972. Leto Villar, the head of Pambasang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper [National Federation of Nationalist Drivers] (PSMT) held a press conference

the SAGUPA Mentors, in which Coloma blocked a shot by Floro Quibuyen with “only seconds left in the game.”

²⁵[Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP)], *The Professional in the Movement for Change*, [1972], PRP 14/14.04.

²⁶Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), “The Professionals in the Philippines,” *HLP Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (July 1972): 1, PRP 30/21.01.

²⁷Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *The Professional and the Humanist League of the Philippines*, PRP 14/14.03. The HLP traced the historic roots of the Filipino professionals to the ilustrados of the nineteenth century, and claimed that there were currently 459,000 professionals in the Philippines, a majority of whom were educators. (Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *Historical Perspective of the Filipino Professional*, [1972], PRP 14/14.02; Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *The Filipino Professional Today*, [1972], PRP 14/14.01). Among HLP’s member organizations was Makabayang Samahan ng mga Nars [Nationalist Federation of Nurses] (MASANA) which published a paper, *The Medical Partisan*. (*Medical Partisan*, 1 no. 1 [July 1972], PRP 36/09.01). MASANA worked with Makabayang Samahang Mediko [Nationalist Medical Federation] (MASMED) and PKM to establish Klinika ng Bayan [People’s Clinics] among poor communities in the regions where they had chapters, providing free medical care and medicines. The creation of Klinika ng Bayan was associated with the KKD. (HLP, *The Professional in the Movement for Change*, 3). All of this was part of the CPP’s community service orientation from the bombing of Plaza Miranda until the declaration of martial law.

on December 19, in which he told reporters that “This time there won’t be any compromise,” and appealed to the Liberal Party to “make their stand [regarding oil price hikes] clear.”²⁸ The KM and its allied organizations declared the week of January 10-14 to be a “Week of Resistance to Oil Price Hikes,” a direct repetition of the policy of the previous year. They were joined by a number of SocDem organizations, including LAKASDIWA, which issued a leaflet on January 10 calling for a “united and militant” struggle against oil price hikes.²⁹ On January 12-13 the KM throughout Manila and Rizal staged a “Long March” in opposition to an increase in the price of oil, which began at two locations, Malabon in the north and Muntinglupa in the south, and converged in an MDP rally at Plaza Miranda on the thirteenth. The goal of the long march, according to the KM, was to “expose to the Filipino people the dialectical relationship [maka-diyalektikong relasyon] of the issue of oil and martial law under a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country like the Philippines.”³⁰

At the center of the January 13 rally at Plaza Miranda was a new organization calling itself Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis [People’s Alliance against Oil Price Hikes] (ABLPPL).³¹ The ABLPPL issued a statement denouncing oil price hikes and calling to avenge the deaths of the “martyrs” of January 13 1971.³² The KM distributed a statement regarding the founding of the ABLPPL, which they stated, was to be made up of drivers organizations (PSMT); mass organizations (“KM, SDK, KKD, SPK, Molabe, atbp. [etc.]”); womens organizations (“MAKIBAKA, KKS, Katipunan, Kalinga”); sectoral organizations (KASAMA, UPM, Katibay); car owners associations (Democratic Car Owners Association [?]); civil organizations (CNL, Jaycees, Lion’s Club); tactical alliances (KKP, PSR, FLA, MAKAMASA); Con-Con delegates; gasoline dealers; and “other progressive sectors.”³³

²⁸Mauro Gia. Samonte, “The Gathering Storm over Oil,” *Asia Philippines Leader*, January 1972, 16. The next day, the Ugnayan ng Progresibong Manggagawa [Association of Progressive Workers] (UPM) held a press conference at the National Press Club (NPC), where they endorsed a resolution of PSMT to call a strike in the event of an oil price hike. The KM, SDK and Molabe-SPK endorsed the resolution as well.

²⁹Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanggi (LAKASDIWA), *On the Oil Issue*, January 1972, PRP 09/30.01.

³⁰*Kalayaan*, 1 no. 1 (January 1972), PRP 32/03.04. The KM conducted “agitation” in the University Belt to get the students to boycott their classes and attend the rally.

³¹Different publications issued by the ABLPPL have either Pagtaas or Pagtataas in the organizations name. For example, Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Pagtataas ng Presyo ng Langis (ABLPPL), *Tutulan Ang Muling Pagtataas ng Presyo ng Langis at Gasolina! Ipaghiganti ang mga Martir sa Masaker ng Enero 13, 1971*, January 1972, PRP 01/15.02 has Pagtaas and Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Pagtataas ng Presyo ng Langis (ABLPPL) and Molabe - SPK (Pinagsanib), *Ano ang Ating Dapat Gawin*, [1972], PRP 01/15.01, Pagtataas. There does not seem to be any political significance lurking behind the use of the past and present gerunds of raise [taas].

³²ABLPPL, *Tutulan ang Muling Pagtataas*.

³³Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Ang Suliranin ng Langis sa Pilipinas*, [1972], PRP 08/13.32, 8. I have not been able to verify the identity of each of the acronyms used. A number of allied organizations also distributed material at the rally. (Progresibong Kilusang Medikal (PKM),

This was an alphabet soup of organizations of such politically disparate character that there was not a single programmatic line upon which they could agree, or which could hold them together. The Jaycees and the SDK, the Lion's Club and gasoline dealers – all were progressive sectors according to the CPP. Even the promiscuous bloc of four classes could not find adequate space to house all of these groups and was compelled to rent additional rooms in the name of the alliance. The leaflet distributed by the ABLPPL at the January 13 rally featured a political cartoon (fig. 40.1) which summed up the perspective of the organization. There were no classes depicted supporting the oil price hike, and the enemy of 'the people' was simply US imperialism working through Marcos, who was depicted as Hitler and was supported by various government bureaucrats and members of congress. All of these were protected by the fascist military and police forces. There were no landlords, no capitalists – just the Marcos administration and in opposition to him, the entire assembled people.

The ABLPPL began forming chapters. A Diliman chapter, Alyansa ng Komunidad ng Diliman Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis [Diliman Community Alliance against Oil Price Hikes] (AKDLPPL), issued a statement on February 1 to commemorate the Diliman Commune, and another chapter released a joint statement with Molabe-SPK.³⁴ The class character of these organizations was highlighted in the fact that Jose Astorga, the head of the campus religious fraternity Aletheia, was a leading member of the Diliman group.³⁵ In 1967, Astorga had published a fiercely anti-Communist letter, in which he had threatened that the violence carried out in Indonesia would be implemented in the Philippines against the KM.³⁶ His politics had not changed, but the united front must grow so now the KM allied with this man who wished them dead. The spokesperson of the AKDLPPL, Dr. Edgardo Pacheco, denounced the Diliman Commune of the prior year, declaring that "the unnecessary hostility that arose last year from the setting up of barricades should give way to militant unity among all sectors of the University and the neighboring communities against the imperialist oil cartel's oppressive scheme."³⁷ Thus we see that leading members of this group which the front organizations of the CPP had called into existence in service to their bourgeois allies were in fact openly hostile to them. After the first week of February the ABLPPL and its chapters disappeared, as did Leto Villar's promised strike.

Makabayang Samahan ng mga Nars (MASANA), and Makabayang Samahang Mediko (MASMED), *Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis – Kahirapan – Paglaganap ng Sakit*, January 1972, PRP 14/16.02; Serve the People Brigade, "Magkaisa at Kumilos," *Ang Pamantasan* 2, no. 1 [January 1972], PRP 37/13.02).

³⁴Alyansa ng Komunidad ng Diliman Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis (AKDLPPL), *[Diliman Commune Manifesto]*, Quezon City, February 1972, PRP 01/16.01; ABLPPL, *Ano ang Ating Dapat Gawin*.

³⁵Alyansa ng Komunidad ng Diliman Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis (AKDLPPL), *Letter to UP Residents*, Quezon City, 1972, PRP 01/16.02.

³⁶PC, 13 Dec 1967, 8.

³⁷PC, 26 Jan 1972.



**Tutulan Ang Muling Pagtataas Ng Presyo Ng Langis At Gasolina!
Ipaghiganti Ang Mga Martir Sa Masaker Ng Enero 13, 1971 !!**

Figure 40.1: ABLPPL leaflet. [01/15.02]

Those opposing the oil price hikes from l-r: national minorities; businessmen (notice the frills on his barong tagalog); students and youth; workers; and peasants.

January's alliance had gone nowhere, so in February the CPP turned its attention to the creation of another umbrella cause-oriented grouping, the Movement for Democratic Reforms (MDR). The MDR attempted to unite the KM, SDK and MDP with various campus organizations against the threat to shut down UP Tarlac, a question which dominated student politics in February and early March.³⁸ The Tarlac chapter of the state university had been founded in 1964 by a bill authored by Aquino, but the University was from its inception poorly funded. In January 1972, newly elected Governor Eliodoro Castro wrote to UP President Salvador Lopez announcing that the province would no longer be funding the

³⁸Sonny Coloma was made chair of the organization.

university, and Lopez responded that without the support of the province he would shutter the institution.³⁹ On February 24, the MDR staged a protest on the Diliman Campus demanding various educational reforms, at the center of which was the retention of UP Tarlac.⁴⁰ On March 2, two thousand students, workers, and faculty members marched to negotiate with Lopez, under the banner of the MDR. Lopez and the MDR reached a sixteen point agreement, largely dealing with matters at Diliman and not the larger issue of UP Tarlac. The KM issued a statement criticizing the agreement, stating that it focused on student and faculty welfare and ignored the more vital issues of autonomy and democratization.⁴¹ Like the ABLPPL, the MDR disappeared from the historical record.

Another umbrella organization was formed in this period, the Anti-Imperialism Movement (AIM), which was founded on March 1. AIM issued a statement from the National Press Club (NPC) headquarters, describing itself as an association of “progressive businessmen, nationalist industrialists, progressive government officials, professionals, intellectuals, workers, farmers and youth in unity with other progressive sectors of Philippine society,” and called on “all Filipinos” to unite against foreign exploitation.⁴² AIM was the party’s attempt to unite with Roger Arienda’s *Ang Magigiting* [The Brave] by appealing to explicitly racist nationalism on behalf of Filipino capitalists. The organization’s initial list of progressive forces, where extra nouns – businessmen, industrialists, officials, professionals – accumulated on the capitalist end, already suggests this orientation. It is raised to the level of strong suspicion by the language appealing to Filipinos against foreign exploitation, and not US imperialism. It is substantiated fully by the organization’s only other extant publication; but a fragment still exists, yet it is enough to consign AIM to the category of racist nationalism in service of capitalist interests.⁴³ Our “ENEMIES are on the loos [sic],” it declared, identifying these enemies as “US Imperialists, the Kuomintang Chinese, the Japanese Businessmen, British and other aliens in our midst. These are our ENEMIES. They must be DESTROYED.” It added, “The Phil. AIM therefore is not any system that professes particular system [sic] whether it be socialism or communism. The AIM is a nationalist movement that targets the ENEMIES of our country. If we want capitalism then let it be FILIPINO capitalism.”⁴⁴ Roger

³⁹Save UP Tarlac Movement, *General Guidelines for the February 24 Rally in Front of Congress*, February 1972, PRP 16/14.01.

⁴⁰Movement for Democratic Reforms, *Reform the University*, February 1972, PRP 11/18.18, 4; Movement for the Retention of the University of the Philippines at Tarlac, “Matatag na Ipagtanggol ang Ating Baseng Pangkultura!,” *Ilaw ng Masa* 1, no. 2 (February 1972), PRP 31/01.01.

⁴¹Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Raise High the Banner of Autonomy and Democratization*, March 1972, PRP 08/19.13.

⁴²Anti-Imperialist Movement of the Philippines (AIM Philippines), *Declaration of Principles*, March 1972, PRP 01/24.01.

⁴³Anti-Imperialist Movement of the Philippines (AIM Philippines), *[Manifesto]*, [1972], PRP 01/24.02.

⁴⁴Anti-Imperialist Movement of the Philippines (AIM Philippines), *[Manifesto]*, All caps in

Arienda was made vice chair of the organization. AIM flitted in and out of the periphery of events organized by the CPP over the next six months, and was closely associated with its work during Operation Tulong.

In May the front organizations of the CPP launched yet another issue-based umbrella coalition, the Kilusan ng Bayan Laban sa Batas Medicare [People's Movement Against the Medicare Law] (KBLBM), and Mauro Samonte, a CPP member active in KASAMA, was made general secretary. Marcos' Medicare Act was designed to create limited state-run medical coverage for workers funded through monthly contributions made by the workers themselves. Samonte stated, in an interview with Conrado de Quiros, that "we are not against the *concept* of Medicare. What we are against is the Medicare *Act*. From the specifications of the Medicare Program itself, we will readily observe that it cannot function in our society which is semi-feudal and semi-colonial. The concept of Medicare is socialized medicine. This cannot operate under a system other than socialism. . . . [I]t is not possible to introduce socialist medicine into a society which is not itself socialized."⁴⁵ Samonte argued that what was needed was employer-provided health-care, which should be fought for at the level of the individual workplace, not health-care provided by or mandated by the state. The Medicare Act was *not* a socialist measure. It provided limited medical coverage to the employed which was funded by monthly payments made by the workers themselves. It was also grossly inadequate; workers' families were not covered, nor were the unemployed. A socialist leadership needed to place a set of transitional demands before the working class which would respond to their objective conditions but would require socialist measures to implement. At the very least, a socialist response to the Medicare Act would have included the demand for full coverage universal health care paid for by a tax on the capitalist class. The CPP, however, looking to secure further ties with the 'middle forces,' attacked Medicare from the right, calling for the roll back of the measure, reducing the number of those covered, because the Philippines was not yet ready for the "socialism" being put forward by Marcos.

Through each of these groups the CPP was reaching out to the 'middle forces,' and with them it staged protests, but each was an isolated event and only tenuously connected with a larger political struggle. Yet even as it allied with conservative forces and launched weak demonstrations, the KM continued to declare that military suppression and dictatorship only served to hasten the revolution. On March 16, the KM wrote of the death of Arsenio Rienda, who had been shot in the back, they claimed, by security guards at Arellano University while he was marching in a protest. The "forces of the revolutionary people are reaping victories," the leaflet wrote, and "the ruling class more than before [higit sa rati] must use violence." The leaflet concluded, "This will only further inflame

original.

⁴⁵APL, 5 May 1972, 41. Emphasis in original.

the eruption [mag-aalab ang silakbo] of the national democratic struggle.”⁴⁶ In mid-April, when Diosdado Guanlao, a member of the KM National Council was arrested, Adelberto Silva, the KM regional spokesperson told the press, “For every member detained by the ruling regime a thousand more shall join the forces of change for a better society.”⁴⁷

And yet, while they hailed repression for building revolution, their rightward orientation led the CPP to embrace sections of the repressive apparatus of the state. On May Day, the KM, SDK and MDP staged their annual labor day rally, and among those in attendance were the striking working of LK Guarin in Malabon.⁴⁸ On April 23 they had been attacked on the picket line by the PC and Metrocom, as the PC drove a weapons carrier through the workers’ barricade and opened fire with Armalites and machine guns, killing an unknown number of workers and arresting sixty workers and activists.⁴⁹ At the May Day Rally, STAND issued a leaflet which stated that “at least nine workers and students” were killed in the Guarin massacre.⁵⁰ When events like this took place among workers on the picket line, the CPP did not herald them as “martyrs” of the movement. Unlike Sonny Mesina and Ricardo Alcantara, whose presence at the rallies and barricades where they were killed was almost accidental, the workers who were killed by the military while manning a picket line were not named, nor were they remembered. Bal Pinguel addressed the demonstration. His specialty was regaling the audience with accounts of NPA victories, most of which were invented out of whole cloth. He frequently reported that the NPA had downed helicopters, sometimes even multiple helicopters in a single encounter. On this May Day, he reported how the NPA had cleverly tricked two contingents of the PC into killing each other.⁵¹ One of the slogans chanted by the MDP throughout the May Day rally was “Mabuhay ang Makabayang Pulis!” [Long Live the Nationalist Police!] which they followed with “Ibagsak ang Pasistang Pulis!” [Down with the Fascist Police!] While law enforcement murdered workers on the picket lines the MDP praised what it claimed were its nationalist, progressive sections. They did not want the ‘middle forces’ to think that they were opposed to the state security apparatus entirely, only to its ‘fascistic’ elements. The ‘nationalist’ police were the good guys, and should be embraced. To highlight this fact, the MDP invited a member of the Malabon police to serve as a featured speaker at its May Day Rally.⁵² Two days later the

⁴⁶Kabataang Makabayan (KM), *Alay Kay Kasamang Arsenio Rienda*, March 1972, PRP 08/13.01.

⁴⁷APL, 28 Apr 1972, 57.

⁴⁸At some point during the May Day rally, a fight broke out between members of the MPKP and the MDP leaving several wounded. (Billy F. Lacaba, “May Day 1972,” *APL*, May 1972, 15, 43–44).

⁴⁹SDK, “Paggunita sa Mayo Uno,” 2.

⁵⁰STAND, “Ang Mayo Uno sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas,” 3.

⁵¹Lacaba, “May Day 1972,” 44.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 43.

Malabon police again attacked the picket of striking workers at LK Guarin.

SDK and KM: The Question of Merger

The CPP worked to scoop up the aimless middle elements who served as a bulwark of detritus around the squabbling bourgeois opposition. The result was inert purposelessness in a context of imminent repression, and the ranks of the KM and SDK bore the twin pressures of social tension and political ennui. As their ruling class allies lost their common orientation, the front organizations of the CPP, uncertain where to channel the energy of the streets, fell to squabbling as well. Aquino and Roxas turned from haggling to backstabbing, Lopez eyed the exits, and the old disputes between the KM and SDK, long buried under shared political purpose, reemerged.

The KM held a conference in February which arrived at the decision to insist upon the merger of the two organizations, folding the SDK into the KM. They determined as always to achieve their ends through organizational maneuvers and secret plots, not through democratic means. A set of “consol” teams were sent out to implement the decision at the level of various SDK branches before the SDK had an opportunity as a national organization to resolve the merger question. SDK chapters in the Western Visayas were compelled to merge, the SDK claimed, and this policy was pursued elsewhere as well.⁵³ “In Cabanatuan, the leading SDK activist was offered the position of prov-sec (provincial secretary) should he agree to the merger.” (171) The SDK wrote “These serious misdeeds of the KM, maneuvering ‘underground’ to foster the organizational breakdown of its major fraternal organization, negatively affected not only the SDK but also the KM itself.” (175)

From April 15-21 the SDK held its First National Conference at UP Los Baños. Rey Vea was elected chairman and Jerry Araos vice chair, while Antonio Hilario remained secretary general.⁵⁴ The focus of discussion during this gathering was the question of merger with the KM and the Conference published a statement “On the Merger Question,” which opened

The Kabataang Makabayan (KM) and the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK) will NOT be merged.

⁵³Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), “On the Merger Question,” in *Militant but Groovy: Stories of Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan*, ed. Soliman M. Santos and Paz Verdades M. Santos (Pasig: Anvil Publishing, 2008), 170, 172.

⁵⁴Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 14. The incorporation of Araos into the SDK leadership is significant. Araos was the head of the anarchist SDKM, which the mainstream SDK had previously held at arms length and only brought close when it was necessary to wage street battles. That Araos merged with the SDK as it was engaged in a campaign of community service work and conservative protests, indicates that the SDKM had brought its orientation into alignment with the larger organization.

This is the final decision of the highest organs of the two organizations.

In due time, a memorandum explaining the decision will be circulated among the activists of the two organizations as well as among the members of all mass organizations.

The memorandum will be signed by Lito Alvarez, acting national Chairman of KМ, and Antonio Hilario, Secretary-General of the SDK.

The SDK argued in the document that the organizations should not merge because “the existence of a multiplicity of organizations in the youth sector, as in other sectors, is necessary for greater mobilization and more extensive organization of the students for the cultural revolution and of the broad masses for the national democratic revolution.” (159) This perspective had been a vital component of the SDK’s break with the KМ in the first place. In keeping with the ideas of the Mass Line the SDK sought to adapt to the existing consciousness found in different layers of society, and this involved having a multiplicity of organizations each adapted to different sets of ideas and conceptions. Rather than presenting a coherent political program for the working class, this strategy sought to re-articulate back to different sections of the masses their own preconceptions and prejudices as a means of winning their support. The SDK raised this as a criticism of the KМ which, the SDK claimed, was “suppressing the organizational initiative of other revolutionary mass organizations based on the narrow and incorrect one-organization-per-function theory.” (162)

The Merger Document reveals that while they were intimately collaborating by 1971 and 1972, the two organizations still had their conflicts and rivalries. The document accused the KМ of declaring certain regions to be “their territory – their veritable reservation.” It stated that “The whole of the Western Visayas region, till recently, has been, as it were, ruled by the KМ.” (162) The SDK wrote that “The organizational initiative of the SDK to expand on a national scale was unduly suppressed. Has this hastened the cultural revolution? NO!” In response to the KМ’s question “Can’t one big organization provide such an outlet [for organizing the nation’s youth]?” the SDK responded “BUT this would overlook one very important consideration, which is the uneven development of the consciousness of the masses.” (164) They wrote “Backward ideas are still prevalent in the consciousness of the masses in varying degrees. That is why, the national democratic revolution is not yet concluded. That is why we have to apply the mass line.” (185) They made clear that the mass line meant adapting to the existing spontaneous consciousness of the masses in the next paragraph.

Among the more advanced sections of the unorganized masses, the enthusiasm for revolution is strong. Full play should be given to this enthusiasm by providing many outlets whereby they may be organized, with the vestiges of backward ideas in their consciousness

well-considered. This is especially true for the petty bourgeoisie among whom we work and in whom subjectivism is fortified by their class origin. (165)

The SDK thus sought the solution to the spontaneous consciousness of the masses, not in the systematic patient education of the masses by the vanguard party, as Lenin wrote in *What is to be Done?* but rather by recruiting them into one of a range of organizations which were designed to conform to their prejudices and on that basis to win their support for a broad movement. The SDK continued “when KM states that unity in ideology and politics between KM and SDK should lead to organizational unity, the SDK has to raise serious disagreement.” (168)

In the first place, the assumption that the SDK and KM are united in ideology is only partially correct. While it is true that the leadership of the two organizations both adhere to the proletarian ideology ... neither organization makes it a policy to accept members on the basis of their acceptance of proletarian ideology but rather of their acceptance of the political programme of the struggle for national democracy. (168)

In other words, the leadership of both the KM and SDK were guided by the CPP, but their membership were drawn simply on the basis of the broad nationalist agenda the youth groups articulated, and there was a wide range of ideological views contained among the ordinary members of these groups. Thus, the SDK asserted “Of course, there should be a common center for the whole of the national democratic revolution that will ensure the unity of will, action and command in the implementation of the programme of the struggle for national democracy. But this common center can only be the proletarian revolutionary party, which exercises its political guidance and assures the unity of will, action and command even with, and necessarily through a condition of multiplicity of mass organizations. This common center can never-ever be the Kabataang Makabayan.” The SDK proclaimed its loyalty to the CPP not the KM, and declared that both the KM and SDK were under the common center of the CPP.

The SDK concluded “The points in this paper have been raised not to drive a wedge of disunity between the two organizations. It is only an effort at wholesale and mass criticism of a deeply entrenched problem, the solution of which would strengthen further the unity between the two organizations.” (175)

The SDK sought to resolve the problem of the existing consciousness of the broad array of forces they were attempting to recruit through organizational diversity. They saw this as the means of adapting their political line to conform to the ideas of each social layer. The KM did not counter with the need for a principled program, which corresponded not with spontaneous consciousness but

objective tasks, but rather sought to resolve the dilemma through organizational maneuver. They would adapt their political line to the spontaneous consciousness of diverse social layers, and would, as needed, articulate anti-Chinese racism, support for the police, or opposition to birth control, just as readily as the SDK. They would then seek, however, through backroom maneuvers and the rigging of elections, to control the organizational apparatus in which these social layers were incorporated, unifying them under centralized control. Both organizations shared the political program of Stalinism; both were oriented to Beijing; both sought to adapt to the backwards ideas of a broad array of social forces in order to win their support. The SDK, in keeping its anarchistic roots, sought to channel this into a loose collection of organizations, while the KM sought through machinations to achieve direct, centralized control. The KM did not fight for political unanimity on the basis of open and principled discussion, but for organizational uniformity through subterfuge and plots.

The reemerging tensions between the SDK and the KM never reached a breaking point, not because they resolved their dispute, but largely because martial law rendered it moot. By the end of 1972, both organizations had effectively vanished from political life, and by 1975 they were formally dissolved.

Marcos and Lopez Reconcile

In the first weeks of May, Ferdinand Marcos and the Lopez brothers made peace. Marcos revealed the acuity of his political insight in his recognition that the giant of the opposition was its weakest link. The dispute within the Liberal Party deeply concerned Fernando and Eugenio Lopez, as they saw their clout weaken at a time that their business interests were deeply imperiled.

By early 1972, Meralco was in a deep hole because of a combination of its high costs, interest rates rising out of control and outdated power rates. In March 1972, it filed an application with the Public Service Commission (PSC) for a rate increase of 36.5%. The next presidential elections were not until November 1973. Under the most optimistic scenario, even a change to a sympathetic administration meant that Meralco would not get rate relief until nearly two years later – an eternity given the scale of the financial shortfall. So a ceasefire – if not necessarily a lasting peace – was vital to Meralco.⁵⁵

To carry out his ends, split the opposition, and launch the last preparations for martial law, Marcos had to make the reconciliation with the Lopez brothers look like a defeat. He humbly petitioned them to resolve the dispute in April, offering conciliatory terms. The Lopez brothers would not come to Malacañang, and so on May 10, Benjamin ‘Kokoy’ Romualdez, brother of Imelda

⁵⁵Rodrigo, *The Power and the Glory*, 248.

Marcos, personally drove Fabian Ver and Marcos to Lopez' house, where they concluded the negotiations. Marcos granted Meralco its rate increase and the Lopez brothers immediately altered the oppositional stance of the *Chronicle* and ABS-CBN. Amando Doronila and Renato Constantino, both employed at the *Chronicle*, pushed backed at the reversal of the editorial policy at the paper to one conciliatory toward the Marcos administration. Doronila threatened to resign; Constantino resigned from both the *Chronicle* and the Lopez Museum on June 15. He wrote:

I have been made to understand that certain Meralco executives believe my columns ... may imperil the position of Meralco in the present [power rate] case. Although as a columnist I am supposed to ventilate my views, I can understand the fears of Meralco quarters that if these views displease the president, their continued ventilation in the *Chronicle* may be counted against the owners of the [newspaper].⁵⁶

As the Lopez brothers broke from the opposition, Aquino found a renewed sense of purpose. He was no longer biding his time for 1973, seeking through patience and silence to outlast Roxas; now was the time for action. There were rumblings from sections of the military loyal to Aquino and Osmeña that Marcos would attempt to implement martial law by the end of the rainy season. The imperative was no longer long-range electoral jostling but immediate maneuvers against the possible seizure of power by the President. The music had reached a frenetic tempo and only two men were left competing for the throne: Aquino and Marcos. Roxas, the man of the political machine, was as ill-suited to these heady final months, as his rival had been to the torpor of January to May. The reckless and headstrong Aquino came to the fore, self-assured and relentless. The CPP and its front groups drew renewed energy from their revived ally and sought to mobilize the entirety of the 'middle forces' in the final battle for Malacañang. The conservative groups among whom the CPP had been working since the bombing of Plaza Miranda met the Communist Party halfway in this endeavor. The Jaycees and Catholic Student groups began chanting the slogans of the KM and marched alongside their allies into street battles marked by pillbox explosions and gunfire, while the SM ran a campus election slate dominated by its conservative partners. The community service projects continued, but now they distributed both relief goods and the literature of the Communist Party. This common purpose did not express an ideological meeting of the minds, but the renewed focus of the bourgeois opposition which summoned both its right and left flanks behind it in disciplined lockstep.

Rallies immediately reverted to their earlier incendiary tactics and strident language, and within ten days they had again turned bloody, with gunshots fired

⁵⁶Ibid., 255.

and pillboxes thrown. The initial pretext for the unleashing of this renewed militancy was the war in Vietnam. In late April, as the United States launched a massive bombing campaign against Hanoi and Haiphong and Nixon announced that US forces had mined Haiphong harbor, protests broke out around the world. The forces of the CPP unleashed by the peace reached between Marcos and Lopez on the tenth, staged a demonstration the next day.⁵⁷ They gathered in front of the American embassy to denounce US imperialism in Vietnam and for the first time that year they spoke and demonstrated as they had in the past. The leaflet prepared by the KM and SDK hailed the “iron will” of the Vietnamese people and declared that “The war of liberation being waged by the Vietnamese masses is a burning example of how a small nation of a determined and united people can deal crushing blows on an imperialist superpower.”⁵⁸ They stated that “In the same way, the Filipino masses are courageously waging their own war of liberation. Hundreds of reactionary troops, who are trained and armed by the same power committing atrocities in Vietnam, are being meted out revolutionary justice.” The leaflet concluded by calling on the people to “Unite and crush imperialism and their local diehards!”

The KM and SDK began to make preparations to stage a larger rally on the subject of the US war in Vietnam, bringing together as broad an alliance of the ‘middle forces’ as possible. To this end they created the Committee for Solidarity with the Vietnamese People (CSVPP), an organization dedicated to these forces into the May 20 Committee, an ad hoc leadership body to coordinate the rally. The extensive list of groups represented in the May 20 Committee reveals that it was comprised of the same forces which had previously been ineffectually assembled in the ABLPPL. The SDK, KM, and every conceivable CPP front group joined up with the Manila Jaycees, the Student Catholic Action (SCA) and other church groups, various student councils and a number of Concon delegates. The only force missing from the list were the front groups of the PKP.⁵⁹

The day of the rally arrived and still the protesters had not been issued a permit. The marching demonstrators found that the police had barricaded the street across from the US embassy. Deputy Chief of Police Barbers informed Oyie

⁵⁷It is probable that planning for this rally began before Lopez concluded peace with Marcos on the tenth, but the final character of the rally was determined by this development.

⁵⁸Kabataang Makabayan (KM) and Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *US Imperialism – The Number One Enemy of the Peoples of the World*, May 1972, PRP 08/13.33.

⁵⁹May 20th Committee and Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Unite with the Indochinese People in their Struggle Against US Aggression!*, May 1972, PRP 11/18.25. The May 20 Committee drew up a resolution: “Unite with the Indochinese People in their Struggle against US Aggression,” which they distributed at a meeting of the MCCCL. (May 20th Committee and Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Unite with the Indochinese People in their Struggle Against US Aggression!*) On May 18, the May 20 Committee held a general meeting and the next day a press conference, during which Dante Simbulan of PCC, and Danilo Vizmanos of the Philippine Navy, and a representative from the G.I. movement at Clark Air Base all spoke to the press. (Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 157-159).

Javate, who was at the head of the march, that “a diplomatic protest had been received from US Ambassador Byroade: ‘We have strict orders to maintain the blockade at all costs.’” Bonifacio Gillego, former military intelligence and now a leading coup plotter against Marcos, joined Javate in attempting to convince Barbers to allow the crowd to pass.⁶⁰ Ten thousand people had assembled and while they were stalled at the police barricade, Bal Pinguel addressed the crowd.⁶¹ The rally began inching forward, singing the national anthem, when explosives were thrown. Lacaba wrote that “No one can say where the first pillbox came from ... The demonstrators do not deny that before the first blast died away some of them had reached for their pockets like fast-draw gunslingers, pulled out their own pillboxes, and hurled these into the ranks of the Metrocom.” He also wrote that some of the explosives were thrown among the demonstrators from upper floors of the nearby Shellborne Hotel.⁶² The Metrocom opened fire on the protesters.⁶³ The CSM wrote that “fresh from a four-month riot control training course sponsored by the local USAID Office of Public Safety, the Metrocom men were in fine battle form indeed.”⁶⁴ Fifty demonstrators were injured, eight critically. Ninety were arrested, of these seventy-five were subsequently released, but the government claimed that the remaining fifteen had been “abducted by a rightist terrorist group.” They were not heard from again.⁶⁵

All of their prior attempts to organizationally unify with the ‘middle forces’ had come to naught because of the fragmented will of the opposition. By late May, however, these groups were marching in the face of police gunfire with the front organizations of the CPP, and the opportunity thus at last presented itself in June to consolidate these ties as the front organizations of the CPP and their allies held a number of congresses. From June 18-23 the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP) held its national congress under the theme, “Raise the Cultural Revolution to Greater Heights,” and Cong. Ramon Mitra and Sen. Salvador Laurel addressed the assembly.⁶⁶ This was followed, from June 24-25,

⁶⁰Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 161; De Guzman, *Women Against Marcos*, 10-11. Alongside Gillego were Constitutional Convention delegates Heherson Alvarez and Oscar Leviste.

⁶¹Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 162; *Breakthrough*, 4 no. 3 (June 1972): 6, PRP 29/11.03.

⁶²Lacaba, *Days of Disquiet*, 164.

⁶³Among those injured was Moises Calo “whose stomach was hit by an armalite bullet fired by Metrocom troopers.” The twenty-year-old UP student claimed he had stopped to tie his shoe when he was shot. He was operated on twice at Philippine General Hospital, losing his gall bladder and part of his liver. (Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan (KAGUMA) et al., “*We will defend the US embassy at all costs*”, May 1972, PRP 09/09.04; AM, Jun 1972, 2).

⁶⁴*Breakthrough*, 4 no. 3 (June 1972): 6, PRP 29/11.03.

⁶⁵*Breakthrough*, 4 no. 3 (June 1972): 7, PRP 29/11.03. In the weeks that followed a People’s Investigating Committee (PIC), chaired by Dante Simbulan, was formed to inquire into the violent dispersal of the demonstration. Simbulan stated that “Time was ... when every effort of the PC to enter Manila was resisted by its mayors, including Villegas,” but now it was routine for the Philippine Constabulary to be deployed in the city against protesters. (*Breakthrough*, 4 no. 3 [June 1972]: 9, PRP 29/11.03).

⁶⁶Mal, 24 Jul 1972, 7. The constant intersection of aboveground and underground work is

by the national conference of the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP). The paper of the SCMP published at the conference announced that it had “formally adopted the national democratic line,” and was now building in keeping with this orientation.⁶⁷ The theme of the SCMP conference reveals the coordinated character of these events as it was nearly identical to that of the CEGP: “Raise the national democratic cultural revolution to newer and greater heights.”

As the KM and their conservative allies united in the streets, Marcos deployed the front organizations of the PKP, who were directly funded by Malacañang, to confront them. From June 7-12, the KM and its allies staged a “March against American Imperialism for National Democracy,” marching from San Fernando, Pampanga, to Manila, and concluding with a demonstration in front of the US Embassy on June 12, Independence Day. The CPP medical front group, MASANA, claimed that the marchers were attacked by members of the MPKP while they were marching through Bulacan.⁶⁸ The MPKP in turn claimed that they were attacked by the KM.⁶⁹ They wrote “A political act must be judged by its objective consequences. The Maoists, by their actuations, provide Marcos the best arguments for increasing the military budget and arming the AFP with the most modern weapons, in line with the infamous Nixon doctrine. They are tolerated and even encouraged by the fascistic regime because, wittingly or unwittingly, they serve the tactical ends of fascism.” The article concluded, “The oppressed mass of our country will march to victory and freedom... over the debris of the Maoist apparatus!” This line, that victory and freedom would be achieved over the debris of the Maoists, would in the near future be turned into support for martial law as the mechanism for the drive against the CPP and its front organizations.

By early July the ambushes and assaults turned into open street battles, in which scores were wounded and some quietly kidnapped and murdered. On July 4, the MDP staged a rally at Plaza Lawton, where a battle broke out between its diverse array of forces and those of the MPKP. Both sides threw pillboxes and thirty-five people were wounded in the conflict. In the wake of the bloodletting, the rival Communist Parties denounced each other. The organizations allied to the PKP published a leaflet declaring that a group of marchers, belonging to the

illustrated by the fact that Antonio Tagamolila had Butch Dalisay bring a Beretta in a hollowed Bible to this congress of College newspapers. (Santos and Santos, *SDK: Militant but Groovy*, 38).

⁶⁷*Breakthrough*, 4 no. 3 (June 1972), PRP 29/11.03.

⁶⁸Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA), *Labanan at Ibagsak ang Imperyalismong Amerikano, Makibaka para sa Pambansang Kalayaan!*, June 1972, PRP 10/21.01; *Medical Partisan*, 1 no. 1 (July 1972): 2, PRP 36/09.01; *National Liberation Forum*, 1 nos. 5-6 (July 1972): 5, TLBNP Box 31, Folder National Liberation Forum. The KM 1984 anniversary statement incorrectly claims that the march took place in 1971. They also claimed that marchers came from Southern Luzon as well as San Fernando. (KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 6).

⁶⁹Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, *Who are using Fascist Tactics to Justify the Fascist Programme of Mr. Marcos?*, July 1972, PRP 10/31.07, 2.

MPKP, Kilusan, SPP, and NATU, were assaulted by Maoists who threw a “hail of pillbox bombs.”⁷⁰

Among those immediately hit were Clarita Sabat, an old woman and a MASAKA member from Taguig and Jose Ditiguís, 71, also a MASAKA member from the same place. Several women MPKP members from Makati were beaten up with sticks by the Maoists as they fell on the sidewalk. All together, more than 100 bombs were treacherously hurled by the Maoists at the MPKP-Kilusan group, who were unarmed and thus could offer no defense. It was an ambush, pure and simple, with the Maoist thugs doing US imperialism and the fascist state a good turn, perhaps to pay back the favor done to them last June 10 in Matimoo, Malolos, Bulacan when the PC saved them from the wrath of the peasant masses of the barrio. It almost turned into a massacre had it not been for the fact that most of the pillbox bombs thrown were crudely made and did not explode.

More than 30 revolutionary fighters, mostly workers and peasants and many of them women were injured, six of them seriously. Passengers of public vehicles cruising along Taft Avenue and pedestrians were similarly hit by shrapnel from the bombs. The MPKP-Kilusan-SPP-NATU march was thus dispersed and their projected rally at Plaza Miranda sabotaged. Metrocom troopers in patrol cars who have [*sic*] been following the marchers since they left the Agrifina Circle merely watched as the Maoist thugs did their dirty work for them.⁷¹

The CPP allied organizations, in turn, accused the MPKP of throwing the pillboxes, but the MPKP responded that if this were the case, “why were the injured in Plaza Lawton all on their side and not a single one from the Maoist group?” A number of MDP members were injured, but the MPKP claimed that they incurred these injuries in front of the US Embassy “when the Kilusan-MPKP and their fraternal groups were still regrouping in various areas around Quiapo, Manila.” In other words, they claimed that none of the injuries to the MDP were inflicted by the MPKP. The leaflet concluded, “We are primarily dedicated to the struggle against imperialism and its local minions, not to the physical liquidation of members of other groups who differ with us ideologically. But this does not mean that we will not retaliate if criminally assaulted. This should serve as a warning to the Maoist agents of fascism and reaction as well as the puppet state!”

⁷⁰The archived leaflet is torn and no organization’s signature is present, but it would appear to be the MPKP which produced the document.

⁷¹*On the July 4 Ambuscade: Weed Out the Agents of Fascism and Reaction Hiding Behind the Mask of Revolutionism!*, 1972, PRP 14/22.02.

Both sides were in fact violently assaulting each other. They had turned sections of their demonstrations into roving armed groups, the street-fighting proxies of Marcos or Aquino as they vied for military dictatorship. While the KM and SDK were renowned for their street battles and molotov cocktails, it was the forces of the MPKP who were largely responsible for instigating the bloody conflicts of mid-1972. The MPKP's leaflet on the events of July 4 contained an admission that its forces had in fact assaulted the marchers in Bulacan in mid-June. This was a reversal of its prior allegations that the violence had been instigated by the KM; they now claimed that it expressed the "the wrath of the peasant masses of the barrio." In the same manner, subsequent testimony reveals that the PKP leadership provoked and profited from the violence of July 4. Commander Soliman recounted to Nick Joaquin, "The Pekape [PKP] march included our provincial forces. Of course, Ruben [Torres] and I were among the marchers. On reaching Plaza Lawton, the Pekape found itself face to face with the Kabataang Makabayan. As everyone knows the KM was very fond of pillboxes and it greeted us with a shower of pillboxes. Many among us were wounded. In the ensuing rumble we succeeded in catching the pillbox-throwers; in fact that was the reason for the rumble, in which, of course, Ruben and I participated. We turned over the KM pillbox-throwers to our provincial forces, who could be ruthless with troublemakers. I don't think those KMs got home that day."⁷² Soliman's laconic "in fact that was the reason for the rumble" clearly indicates that the PKP deliberately provoked the fight, with the intention, it seems, of capturing and killing a number of KM members.

⁷²Joaquin, *A Kadre's Road to Damascus*, 82. It should be pointed out that Torres, overseeing street battles against the KM, was a salaried Marcos administration official.

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The Declaration

... Done in the City of Manila, this 21st day of September, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy two.

— Proclamation No. 1081

Minister of Public Information Francisco Tatad intoned the lines of Proclamation 1081 in a nationwide broadcast at three in the afternoon of the twenty-third of September, but the public had become aware of the imposition of military rule earlier in the day when their radios greeted them with nothing but static and no morning papers could be purchased. The steady flood of publications, daily papers, news weeklies, with their revelations, allegations and counter-allegations, all abruptly stopped. The curtailing of journalism thins the archival record to a trickle, not only for the period after the imposition of dictatorship but also for the weeks leading up to it. Each publication was tied to a rival ruling family and served it as a political weapon; thus with a predictable regularity the backroom deals of contending sections of the elite would emerge within months to public consciousness in the form of interviews and exposés popularly referred to as *bomba*. The censorship of martial law not only ended daily coverage of developments, it truncated the exposure of the final political maneuvers on both sides from July to September.

The last months are poorly documented but the tenor and thrust of the final machinations can nonetheless be adequately traced. The tide of dictatorship was rising, it had to be taken at the flood. Marcos and Aquino both sought to use their own Communist Party to secure military rule; the NPA attempted, and spectacularly failed, to smuggle arms from China; the PKP, working with the military, launched a frenzied bombing campaign throughout Manila; and the KM and SDK latched onto the August inundation to distribute both relief goods and the anti-Marcos literature of the CPP. Washington readied to accept either side as victor; it had numerous assets in both camps and would endorse whichever man finally sat secure upon the ‘throne of bayonets.’

The denouement proved stunningly lopsided. Aquino’s reckless self-assurance and will to power were no match for the remorseless calculation of Marcos

as he moved through the final stages of the plot he had carefully calibrated over the course of two years. Aquino's failed bid for dictatorship in 1972 was one of the grossest miscalculations in Philippine political history; it proved so slight, so insubstantial, that most are unaware that it was even attempted. Political actions had never had negative consequences for Aquino. He was gathered among the highest ranks of Japanese militarism in the Nara prefecture as Enola Gay flew over Hiroshima, yet the stain of his family's collaboration was promptly expunged and within a decade the planes of the CIA took off from his sugar estate to bomb Sulawesi. He was a quick-witted man, his aspirations, and the coffers of his wife which fed them, were limitless. His rash, precipitate behavior evinced a certain political charm. The nation's youngest mayor at twenty-two; youngest vice-governor at twenty-seven; governor at twenty-nine; and youngest senator at thirty-four; he was not yet forty years old, had never lost, and it went to his head. He seems to have genuinely believed that Marcos' final steps toward martial law would occasion a spontaneous upsurge of the masses led by his allies in the CPP in coordination with coup-plotting elements in the military and thrust him into power. In retrospect he resembles a vainglorious prize-fighter posturing in the ring before being knocked out in the opening seconds of the first round. The subjective psychology of the man, with his ill-fated sense of invincibility, was not the determining factor in the defeat of the opposition, but it did lend the entire affair a biting irony.

In the final analysis the weakness of Aquino's gambit expressed the irresolution of the entire opposition and was intrinsic to its class. They sought martial law; they did not oppose it. The danger of a social explosion mounted, they could all sense the rumbling, imminent threat to their class position and privileges and agreed that an apparatus of repression was required. Until it was in place, they were, in the words of Rizal, "dancing on a volcano." They fought tooth-and-nail for the throne, but when the music stopped so too did their scramble. They would tolerate the Bonapartism of the occupant of the palace, and endure his occasional predations, as long as the great unwashed were kept in their place. The bourgeois opposition maneuvered desperately to be in power until the morning of September 23. When military dictatorship was fully implemented, in their vast majority they acquiesced, resigning the political field with an apparent sense of relief. They had accepted every step toward dictatorship; their objection had never been to military rule but to Marcos, not the apparatus but the occupant.

Successful opposition to the danger of dictatorship required fighting against this entire class and its mad dash to martial law. The independence of the working class is the lifeblood of democratic rights and requires cultivation, nurture and safeguarding. The working class can only achieve this independence if it fights for its own interests, not for the interests of classes alien and hostile to it. This demands a socialist program. These points are but the ABCs of Marxism, a name which the CPP espoused but a perspective which it fundamentally opposed. Over the course of 1970 to 1972, the working class in the Philippines demonstrated that

they were prepared to fight, but the CPP yoked them to their enemies, expending their energies, disorienting and exhausting their will. There was nothing natural in the alliance. The working class will not spontaneously put forward a socialist program, but neither will they respond to mass hunger and exploitation by embracing the sugar barons and their parvenus. To effect this alliance required all of the concentrated poison of Stalinist dishonesty, distilled over long years of betrayal. The CPP provoked repression and then welcomed it; they hailed the election victory of their bourgeois allies as a defeat of fascism. By the time Marcos declared martial law in September 1972, a good deal of the independent initiative of the working class had been broken.

The CPP and Aquino thought this wellspring of support was inexhaustible, and they banked on martial law provoking an uprising under the continued leadership of the bourgeois opposition. The uprising never materialized and the bourgeoisie absconded. Aquino and the CPP had each relied upon the other. As the dust of September began to settle, they eyed each other with anticipation, increasing impatience, and then a sense of despair. Sison compensated for the disappointment with bluster, hailing martial law as good for revolution, while he desperately scanned the political landscape for allies; Aquino turned to hunger strikes.

Final Maneuvers

Karagatan

In July, the CPP smuggled arms into the country from China but failed in a manner that brought their attempt to the center of public attention, and Aquino and Ramon Mitra, who clearly knew of the arms deal, publicly lied to cover up the trail of the Communist Party. On September 30 1971, Fidel Agcaoili traveled to Beijing on behalf of the CPP to negotiate an arms shipment from China, bearing Sison's request that the CCP supply the party with M-16 assault rifles and deliver the weapons by submarine. The Chinese party leadership responded that they would supply M-14s, but that the CPP would be responsible for delivering the arms to the Philippines themselves.¹ In late 1971, Agcaoili traveled to Japan and purchased a fishing trawler in rather poor shape, named Kishi Maru, which the CPP renamed Karagatan.² The CCP reimbursed the CPP for the purchase of the ship. Looking to profit from the transaction, Sison instructed Ibarra Tubianosa to inflate the price of the Kishi Maru, and "reported a purchase price of several thousand dollars more than had actually been paid."³

¹Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 312; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 75.

²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 75. Contemporary accounts claim the ship had been named Hakuryu Maru. (APL, 28 Jul 1972, 24).

³Jones, *Red Revolution*, 75.

Edwin Alcid, Rolando Peña and a crew of seven received training in China for three months before the ship embarked in June 1972 at the onset of typhoon season for the northeastern coast of Luzon.⁴ Karagatan arrived at Digoyo Point, the mouth of the Digoyo river on July 3 1972, the day after the execution of Danny Cordero. Mariano Lacsá was assigned to bring the arms to shore in a smaller boat, but Karagatan ran aground on a sandbar barely one hundred yards from shore driven by the winds of Typhoon Edeng.⁵ The CPP forces on the beach at Digoyo point were spotted by a plane operated by a logging company executive who promptly reported the suspicious activity to the military, which sent a boat to investigate.⁶ A firefight broke out between Corpus' forces on shore and the military in the boat. The NPA had managed to off-load the weaponry and supplies onto the beach, but had not yet moved much of it into the shelter of the jungle. The next day the military deployed F-5 jets and helicopter gunships which strafed and bombed the beach, Corpus and the NPA were forced to retreat, and the government forces captured 738 M-14 rifles, 150,000 rounds of ammunition, and five hundred rocket shells.⁷

The story of the Karagatan arms shipment broke in the Philippine press on July 7 and 8. The CPP and its allies immediately claimed that the Karagatan affair was a hoax staged by Marcos to justify martial law, and Ramon Mitra and Aquino both told the press that they had evidence to back up this claim.⁸ Mitra claimed that Karagatan was too small to carry out an ocean voyage at that time of the year and thus could only be a local vessel. He delivered a privilege speech in the legislature, announcing that the Karagatan hoax "ties in with the Marcos plan to impose Martial Law and perpetuate himself in power."⁹

On July 28, a letter signed by Rolando Estrella, claiming to be the president of Karagatan Fishing Corporation, was published in the *Asia Philippines Leader*. The letter claimed that the ship had been purchased in Japan in March and had begun fishing northeast Luzon shortly thereafter. It stated, "We believe that the boat was forced to sail or even anchor too closely to what they were obviously unaware of as NPA territory possibly because of an impending storm."¹⁰ The letter concluded, "We appeal to President Marcos and the military authorities under him to allow us our legal rights as businessmen and citizens of this country. We wish to have our boat returned to us as soon as possible so that we can make our modest contribution to the fishing industry." The point of the subterfuge was two-fold. First, it was imperative that the fact that China was arming the NPA be

⁴Jones, *Red Revolution*, 75; Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 181.

⁵Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 313; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 51; Kintanar and Militante, *Lost in Time, Book One*, 181. Lacsá had served as a guard during the founding congress of the CPP.

⁶Jones, *Red Revolution*, 51.

⁷APL, 28 Jul 1972, 6; *The Palanan Incident*, 1972, PRP 13/08.01.

⁸Jones, *Red Revolution*, 76.

⁹APL, 28 Jul 1972, 25.

¹⁰APL, 28 Jul 1972, 4.



Figure 41.1: Karagatan arms cache captured by the military. [APL, 28 Jul 1972, 6.]

covered up, as Beijing was already reluctant to send arms to the Philippines and disclosure of their involvement would almost certainly mean that they would not send another shipment. Second, the CPP and its allies sought to depict the Karagatan affair as a staged provocation carried out by Marcos to justify martial law. This was the same manner in which they presented the Plaza Miranda bombing.

The CPP's allies in the press ridiculed Marcos' claims regarding Karagatan. *Asia Philippines Leader* sarcastically wrote "AFP troopers captured a massive arms cache ostensibly delivered by the *Karagatan*, several nipa shacks, and a collection of feminine underwear." In this manner the AFP, "proved it was deserving of a bigger budget by sinking a couple of bancas and bombing three or four huts."¹¹ The editorial went on to mock the government's account claiming that it included a "labyrinth of air-conditioned tunnels packed with electronic gear, the nerve center of international conspiracy" run by the NPA. Lacaba described the Karagatan affair as "a fifth-rate ghost story told by the boy who cried wolf once too often."¹²

Four soldiers had been killed in the encounter, so the CPP and its allies could not dismiss the affair as entirely fabricated, but claimed instead that an ordinary fishing vessel had run aground at a location where the government had engaged in a minor firefight with the NPA. Seizing the opportunity, Marcos had arms planted on the beach to depict this as a major incident involving an international arms shipment. Dante Simbulan wrote a similar account in *Breakthrough*, declaring that the Karagatan affair was a hoax and part of Marcos' "Hitlerian schemes," before concluding, "But in the final analysis, a vigilant and militant citizenry cannot, and will not be duped. It will fight and prevent a

¹¹ APL, 28 Jul 1972, 5.

¹² APL, 28 Jul 1972, 6.

power-hungry politician or oligarchy from riding roughshod on the people in the manner of a Hitler or a Mussolini. The lessons are too clear for all to see. The people will triumph.”¹³

While the NPA worked to smuggle arms into the country, the front organizations of the CPP made one last attempt to expand their united front, focusing their energies on community service work and on a deliberately conservative campus election campaign.

Operation Tulong

In the wake of Edeng, Luzon was hit by typhoon Gloring, and massive flooding covered much of Luzon. On the Pampanga river, the Arnedo dike burst, in Laguna the lake overflowed its banks, and the regions surrounding Manila were inundated.¹⁴ “Entire towns and villages remained under water for weeks when the Laguna Lake rose by two meters and overflowed its shores, inundating hundreds of villages and laying waste the vast rice fields of Laguna, Bulacan and Pampanga province. The importation of more than 400,000 tons of rice from Thailand, Taiwan and Japan became a matter of national survival as the prices of commodities soared by 25%.”¹⁵ The MDP claimed that over 260 people died in the floods.¹⁶

In response various front organizations of the CPP, including the MDP and the Anti-Imperialism Movement (AIM), launched a massive community service program, “Operation Flood Relief.”¹⁷ Within the ranks of this broader effort, the most active component was “Operation Tulong [Help], which was launched by the Sandigang Makabansa (SM) on July 19,” and which received the support of Salvador Lopez, who created a committee to oversee it, under the leadership of Student Council member Carol Pagaduan.¹⁸ Eugenio Flores, a member of the SDK, chaired Operation Tulong, soliciting donations of relief goods in Manila and supervising their distribution in the surrounding provinces. It was not the only charitable action in which the MDP organizations were engaged in August. On August 5, the SDK, SCAUP and Progresibong Samahan sa Inhinyeriya at Agham [Progressive Federation of Engineering and Science] (PSIA) initiated “Operation Road Repair” on Katipunan and Aurora, fixing potholes caused by flooding along the thoroughfares.

¹³*Breakthrough*, 4 no. 4 (August 1972): 9, PRP 29/11.04.

¹⁴BP, 2 no. 1 (August 1972), PRP 22/02; Samahan ng Makabayang Siyentipiko (SMS), *Devastating Floods and Calamities: By-product of a Semi-fuedal, Semi-colonial Society*, August 1972, PRP 36/02.05.

¹⁵Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution*, 2-3.

¹⁶Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Baha at Hirap – Dulot ng Rehimeng US-Marcos*, 1972, PRP 11/18.01.

¹⁷Joselito Ruaya, *Operasyon tulong, Patuloy*, August 1972, PRP 42/01.05.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

On July 26, the PC prevented the distribution of relief goods by Operation Tulong in Hagonoy, Bulacan, attempting to take the supplies from the activists. The PC claimed that the military would be responsible for the distribution of goods, but the members of Operation Tulong refused to turn over their supplies. At midnight on August 9, the PC raided the headquarters of KASAMA in Angeles, which were serving as a relief center for Operation Tulong, accusing the volunteers of distributing subversive materials. Commander Melody, the former Central Committee member of the CPP, led the PC raid. Twenty-three doctors and interns were arrested, along with another twenty-nine volunteers from UP, Ateneo, St. Pauls and the University of Manila; the PC seized the relief goods.¹⁹ The forty-two members of Operation Tulong who were arrested in the raid were detained and interrogated, which Commander Melody assisted the military in conducting, and were only released twenty-one hours later.²⁰

The ‘subversive literature’ which the relief workers were distributing was a comic book produced by the MDP. Entitled, “Ang Bayan at ang Baha,” [The Nation and the Flood] it made no attempt to hide its connection to the CPP. The words “Ang Bayan” in the headline were printed in the distinct font of the CPP flagship publication, and the comic book concluded with the aroused masses taking up arms led by a man holding a copy of the party’s central text, *Philippine Society and Revolution*. The focus of the eight page publication was mocking and attacking Marcos as the cause of the nation’s ills, including the recent floods. Marcos was depicted with a swastika on his arm, while the AFP was scared witless by a child’s paper boat labeled “Karagatan.”²¹

Campus Elections

Having lost control of the Student Council in 1971, the SM was determined to regain it in the 1972 campus elections. The KMP tried to retain its hold on the council by posturing as radical and mouthed the stock phrases of the front organizations of the CPP. The SM meanwhile drastically toned back its rhetoric, posing as concerned citizens and running devoutly religious candidates associated above all with community service work. In the lead up to the election the KM attacked the KMP’s election campaign slogans – which denounced US imperialism and Marcos – for resorting to “the Hitlerite method of donning

¹⁹Ruaya, *Operasyon tulong, Patuloy*; BP, 1 no. 2 (18 August 1972), PRP 22/03. The 22/03 series of *Bandilang Pula* was published at UP Diliman and followed a different volume and edition numbering from the 22/02 national series. While 22/02 published 2 no. 1 in August 1972, 22/03 published 1 no. 2. Confusing matters further, the UP series published another 1 no. 2 in November 1972.

²⁰PC, 21 Sep 1972.

²¹Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP) and Nagkakaisang Progresibong Artista-Arkitecto (NPAA), *Ang Bayan at ang Baha*, August 1972, 11/18.02, 8.

a progressive gown to attain power.”²² The idea that “donning a progressive gown” was a “Hitlerite method” expressed the KM’s total lack of understanding of fascism and its history; for the KM and its allies, Hitler, the Nazis, and fascism were simply words that signified really bad things.

The Sandigan Makabansa ran Jaime Tan for student body chair and Carol Pagaduan for vice chair, while KMP ran Eduardo Robles and Julio Arambulo. Campaigning began on August 21.²³ Pagaduan embodied the shift that had taken place in the politics of the CPP over the past year. She was a devout member of UPSCA, a graduate of the private Catholic girls school, Stella Maris, and had served as head catechist for area eleven of the Diliman community. In many ways, Pagaduan represented everything that Sison and his cohort had initially rebelled against ten years earlier.²⁴ Jaime Tan likewise had deep ties to UPSCA. In fact, of the fourteen candidates on the SM slate, eight were members of the Catholic Student organization that had been the *bête noire* of Sison and his cohort. One, Bobby Crisol, was a high-ranking member, serving as both the editor of the UPSCA paper, and as “propaganda coordinator” for the organization. Not a single candidate on the SM slate had ever been part of SCAUP.

While the KM and SDK thus gave pride of place on their electoral slate to the leading representatives of UPSCA, the MPKP entered an alliance with fiercely right-wing fraternities and student religious groups in opposition to the Maoists. They formed a third party for the student elections formed, *Samahan sa Ikaunlad ng Kabataang Pilipino* [Federation for the Progress of Filipino Youth] (SIKAP), which was comprised of a number of fraternities – including Alpha Phi Omega, Sigma Rho, Upsilon, and Vanguard – as well as the State Varsity Christian Fellowship (SVCF) and the MPKP.²⁵ In forming this alliance the MPKP was uniting with groups that had previously attempted to have it suppressed. The Vanguard organization had repeatedly attempted to brutally physically suppress the student wings of both the CPP and the PKP, and in late 1971 the MPKP had accused Vanguard of publishing a fraudulent leaflet in its name.²⁶ The SVCF had hosted an anti-communist speaker in August 1970 and had attempted to tear down posters of Lenin put up by the MPKP.²⁷ SIKAP issued an election statement on August 28, ostensibly the first of a series of statements although only two statements are extant. The statement focused not on immediate campus issues

²²Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Expose the Malacañang Agents in the Kampus!*, August 1972, PRP 08/19.02.

²³BP, 1 no. 3 (September 1972), PRP 22/03.

²⁴The information on each member of the SM slate can be found in PC, 31 Aug 1972.

²⁵BP, 1 no. 3 (September 1972), PRP 22/03; Sandigan Makabansa (SM), *SIKAP and KAMP are Alike*, August 1972, PRP 16/10.17. One of the SIKAP candidates, Allen Guevarra, claimed to be a leading member of the SDK, but the SDK disputed his claim, stating that he was “only an applicant sometime ago.” The SDK stated that it was “allied with Sandigan Makabansa and does not allow its members to run in other parties.” (BP, 1 no. 3 (September 1972): 2, PRP 22/03).

²⁶See page 684.

²⁷PC, 13 Aug 1970, 10.

but on Beijing's veto of Bangladesh's membership in the United Nations. It wrote, "the UN veto is only another item in the litany of Maoist sins against national liberation movements all over the world," and proved "the utter bankruptcy and duplicity of Maoist rhetorics and posture as 'leader' of the Third World countries. It is high time that right in our own backyard we refrain from empty rhetorics and and raise the issues to the ideological level."²⁸ SIKAP concluded, "Expose the duplicity and bankruptcy of Maoist posture [*sic*] as inimical to forces of liberation movements!" The second SIKAP statement denounced SM for smearing SIKAP's candidates without addressing their platform.²⁹

The SM ran a campaign that was deliberately moderate in its tone and its rival, KMP, noted this, writing a leaflet in the week of the election which claimed that this was part of SM's secret Operation Oblation. The first phase of this plan, they claimed, involved

a shift of KM/SDK/SM stance from revolutionary radicalism to moderate reformist, from openly mouthing the university as a base for national democratic revolution to parroting the "the student welfare" line. This also necessitates a change in the personality of the candidates – from the foul-mouthed, slogan-parroting and highly aggressive candidates to the humble, soft-spoken and clean-cut guys and demure dolls. The clenched fist is taboo, so is the Communist Internationale ... Now its the Bayang Magiliw sung with fervor (shamelessly).³⁰

Another component of this alleged plan was the effort of the SM to link up the KMP with Malacañang and Hitler in students minds. Whether there actually was an "Operation Oblation" the description of the changed tactics of SM was certainly accurate.

Bobby Crisol, the son of Jose Crisol, Marcos undersecretary of Defense whom the KM had previously accused of masterminding SM's defeat in the 1971 campus election, was among the candidates running on the SM slate. The KM hailed Bobby Crisol's commitment to the SM despite "knowing full well that his candidacy poses a threat to the security and economic well-being of his family."³¹ National newspapers reported that Marcos threatened Undersecretary Crisol with dismissal from his position if his son did not drop out of the race.³² In response Bobby Crisol initially announced that he was dropping out, but then reversed his decision, issuing a statement that "after serious reflection and

²⁸Samahan sa Ikauunlad ng Kabataang Pilipino (SIKAP), *Manifesto*, August 1972, PRP 15/40.03.

²⁹Samahan sa Ikauunlad ng Kabataang Pilipino (SIKAP), *On SM's Gutter Politics*, August [1972], PRP 15/40.01.

³⁰Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa (KMP), *What is SM's "Operation Oblation"?*, August 1972, PRP 09/05.07.

³¹UP, *Expose the Malacañang Agents in the Kampus!*

³²MC, 30 Aug 1972.

deep soul-searching, I have decided to continue my candidacy at all cost.”³³ The defense of Crisol was mounted by LAKASDIWA, which was now in a united front with the KM, while the student Christian group, KKKP, began publishing material stating that the KMP and Marcos shared a common “fascist-puppet nature.”³⁴ The SM chose to make Bobby Crisol the center of their campaign against KMP. Using a painfully mixed metaphor, they wrote, “With Bobby Crisol’s case the umbilical cord which has long bound KAMP to Marcos now sticks out like a sore thumb to the students.”³⁵

Attempting as ever to shame women into political activity, MAKIBAKA issued a statement on August 29 declaring that “KAMP’s fascist moves” resemble “those of the Hitlerite occupant of Malacañang.” Confronted with this “fascism” even “the UP coed cannot but be awakened . . . She cannot forever stay contented with a security afforded by her cozy room. She cannot perpetually remain buried in her books.”³⁶ On August 30, two bags of pillboxes were found on campus by police at four in the morning, but the SM declared that the pillboxes were planted evidence and part of the “black propaganda campaign” of the KMP.³⁷

Jaime Tan of Sandigan Makabansa won the election in “a landslide,” and the KM wrote “the victory of the UP studentry in the recent student council elections is a victory for the Filipino people.”³⁸ Tan secured seventy percent of the vote, Pagaduan received a similar tally. The entire SM slate was elected, securing council seats one through twelve, while the KMP’s top vote getter secured seat thirteen.³⁹ Oscar Yabes, fresh from completing his MBA in Bloomington, had already become the *Collegian’s* new editor. No doubt the SM hoped that by the second semester they could again secure the editorial slot for someone within their own ranks. Tan’s victory statement was calm and, while it called for “vigilance against US-Marcos fascism” and the “people’s struggle for authentic liberation and democracy,” it lacked the strident tone of his predecessors. On September 8, the UP chapter of the MPKP published a leaflet congratulating the SM on their election victory, which while it was not openly hostile, appealed to the SM to “terminate emotional, adventurist, and ultra-leftist actuations which

³³Roberto Crisol, *An Open Letter from Bobby Crisol*, August [1972], PRP 06/10.01.

³⁴Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanggi (LAKASDIWA) – UP, *Malacanang Intervention in UP Election: Plan to Subvert Student Will*, [1972], PRP 09/30.03; Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang Pilipino (KKKP), *Marcos and the KMP-Ortega Clique are Alike*, 1972, PRP 09/21.01.

³⁵Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *The Case of Bobby Crisol and Marcos’ Intervention in the UP Elections*, August 1972, PRP 16/10.03.

³⁶Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) – UP, *KAMP’s Performance*, August 1972, PRP 10/26.01.

³⁷Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *Kitang-Kita ang Ebidensiya – Ang Dami-Daming Pakulo!*, August 1972, PRP 16/10.11.

³⁸Sison and Sison, “Foundation for sustained development,” 60; *Kal*, (September 1972), PRP 32/01.05.

³⁹PC, 8 Sep 1972.

the enemy could easily ride on.”⁴⁰

Aquino’s Gambit

Aquino intended to seize power through an uprising led by the CPP in conjunction with a military coup and then immediately implement martial law. For this to succeed it was imperative that he have the support of Washington, and on September 12, Aquino held a private meeting with two political officers of the US Embassy. Aquino first made clear that he supported military dictatorship regardless of who implemented it. He stated that “Marcos must take strong actions in the near future and these will include martial law. If the President follows this course, Aquino said that, ‘for the good of the country,’ he will support Marcos.”⁴¹ The Embassy reported that

Aquino believes that martial law is the most likely means Marcos will use in order to stay in power. Aquino said that he would support Marcos if this is the course he adopts. Since the law and order and economic situation is deteriorating so rapidly, in Aquino’s view, the good of the country requires strong measures on the part of the Central Government. The growing threat from the dissidents, the worsening law and order problem, the serious economic setback that has resulted from the floods in central Luzon and the probable ill effects of the Quasha decision of the Supreme Court on the country’s foreign investment climate were cited by Aquino as reasons why stronger central government action is needed. Such action means martial law. Were he President, Aquino indicated that he would not hesitate to take such strong action and would, for example, execute several corrupt officials at the Luneta Park in Manila as a lesson to other officials that he meant business.

Having established that Washington could rely on his support for martial law, Aquino then informed the Embassy political officers that he might in the near future attempt to seize power. “Aquino believes that the possibilities of his becoming head of government by legitimate means are quickly diminishing, and he is accordingly keeping open an option to lead an anti-Marcos revolution in alliance with the Communists.” During the same meeting, Aquino informed the Embassy officers that

⁴⁰Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) – UP, *September 8 Manifesto*, September 1972, PRP 10/31.05.

⁴¹“Airgram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State,” chap. Document 257 in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XX, Southeast Asia, 1969–1972* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2006). A political officer of the US embassy is almost always some form of intelligence agent.

he had recently held a secret meeting with Jose Maria Sison, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines / Marxists-Leninist (CPP/ML).⁴² Aquino and Sison discussed the possibility of forming a broad united front in opposition to the Marcos Administration. Aquino said that he had been offered, and had declined as being premature and unwarranted by the present situation, the position of leading a revolutionary government “in the hills” in alliance with the CPP/ML. Aquino also subsequently provided Sison with a statement of his principles and program for review by the CPP/ML. In Aquino’s view, however, the internal security and socio-economic situations in the Philippines are rapidly deteriorating. He believes that President Marcos intends to stay in power indefinitely and that his own chances of becoming head of the government by legitimate means are slight. He thus may be willing at some point in the future to ally himself with the Communists as the leader of a revolution, if he is convinced that this is the best way for him to realize his ultimate political ambition.⁴³

Aquino was dissembling as much as he was revealing. Many of the formulations recorded by the Embassy political officers in this summary statement are decidedly false. The idea that Sison and Aquino discussed the “possibility” of a “broad united front” is absurd, for the CPP had been at the core of such a united front with Aquino for the past four years, mobilizing their forces on his behalf while funded and salaried by him. Several of their leading members worked on his staff. The phrase government “in the hills” is similarly ridiculous. Aquino did not aspire to be President of the Sierra Madre and Sison knew this; he sought full control of Malacañang and would go to any length to seize it. Between the lies, Aquino was informing the Embassy that he was about to attempt to seize power with the assistance of the Communist Party. The outlines of the plot are clear, although its details are hazy. The CPP was engaged in a coup plot involving sections of the military brass with ties to Manglapus, which was being orchestrated through Danilo Vizmanos. Both the CPP and its bourgeois allies saw their plan to put Aquino into power as effecting something akin to Allende’s relationship to the Communist Party and the military in Chile. The CPP would characterize this as a “revolutionary coalition government” with combined representation

⁴²The US Embassy was using this name to distinguish the CPP from the Moscow section.

⁴³This summary is contained in a separate confidential Embassy memorandum to the State department, A-245, September 21 1972. A digital copy of the memorandum is available in Lisandro Claudio, “Ninoy networked with everyone, Reds included,” *GMA News*, August 2010, accessed 15 May 2016, <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/198820/news/specialreports/ninoy-networked-with-everyone-reds-included>. Sison disputed that he personally met with Aquino on this occasion, claiming that Julius Fortuna acted as his emissary, a claim which Fortuna confirmed. The meeting took place on September 7. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 96; Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 347).

of the CPP and the military, a formulation in close accord with the founding document of the party, the “Programme for a People’s Democratic Revolution.”

Aquino was not naïve and he knew that Washington would look askance on a Communist seizure of power. He sought to allay these concerns by declaring his support for martial law and informing the Embassy that if he succeeded in taking power he would implement military dictatorship and publicly execute dissidents.

The Declaration

While Aquino readied his plot to seize the presidential palace, Marcos took the final steps to gain permanent hold of it. A string of bombings rocked Manila. A bomb was set off at Joe’s Department Store on Carriedo street on September 6, leaving one dead and scores wounded.⁴⁴ On September 18 SAGUPA published a statement which claimed that among those “arrested in connection with the Carriedo bombing and the aborted Good Earth Emporium bombing was a PC Sergeant, a top-notch in a PC special course on explosives handling.”⁴⁵ More bombings followed: Manila City Hall, two Meralco power stations, the water main in San Juan, the telephone system in Quezon City, and Quezon City Hall.⁴⁶

On September 13, Aquino delivered a privilege speech in the Senate accusing Marcos and the military of orchestrating the bombings in a plot to justify martial law. He claimed the plot had the code name “Operation Sagittarius,” and cited “confidential sources in the Armed Forces.”⁴⁷ Aquino had intimate ties to sections of the military leadership and his information was correct, but only partially so. Sagittarius was a military plan, drawn up by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Romeo Espino in early August. It was not a bombing plot, however, but was rather the military blueprint for responding to riots and “massive civil disturbance,” during the early stages of dictatorship. Sagittarius was not the pretext for martial law but a component of its implementation.⁴⁸ Aquino’s allies in the front organizations of the CPP published and circulated his speech, adding to his accusations that the PKP was working closely with the military to carry out the bombings. On September 11 the KM staged a protest rally at Plaza Miranda where they circulated a leaflet at the rally accusing the “junior fascist Lavaite gang HMB-MPKP” of carrying out the terrorist bombings which were being used as a pretext for the possible declaration of martial law, and claimed that the

⁴⁴ APL, 22 Sep 1972, 4,6.

⁴⁵ Samahan ng mga Guro sa Pamantasan (SAGUPA), *Vigorously Oppose Military Rule!*, September 1972, PRP 15/31.08.

⁴⁶ Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution*, 3.

⁴⁷ The text of Aquino’s speech is available in Aquino, *A Garrison State in the Make and other speeches*, 345-351.

⁴⁸ Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 391.

MPKP had “braggingly admitted” that it was responsible.⁴⁹ The September issue of *Kalayaan*, the publication of the KM, featured a caricature of Marcos and Lava jointly holding a gigantic grenade labeled ‘terrorist bombings’ at the behest of Richard Nixon, wearing a tall Uncle Sam hat.⁵⁰ On September 19, the SDK issued a statement which cited *Ang Mandirigma* from April-May as proof that the PKP HMB was behind the bombing spree, listing eighteen bombings or attempted bombings that had taken place since July 3. The SDK claimed that these had been carried out “by the puppet military with the help of their Lavaite cohorts,” and called on their readers to join a rally of the MCCCL on September 21 against the danger of martial law.⁵¹

On September 14 Marcos gathered a council of twelve men to implement the declaration of martial law; ten were members of the top military brass and two were civilians: Juan Ponce Enrile and Danding Cojuangco. This group would later become known as the ‘Rolex Twelve,’ as Marcos, after his successful imposition of dictatorship, gave each a commemorative watch. Marcos informed the group that he intended to impose martial law and they discussed the logistics of the declaration and the targets for arrest, holding daily meetings from the fourteenth to the twenty-second of September to hammer out the details. Their plotting carefully drew on the experience of Suharto in Indonesia in 1965-66, and at least two of the Rolex Twelve had been in Jakarta at the time.⁵² Two days later, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* wrote that Marcos “hinted this week that, for the second time in two years, he may resort to emergency measures such as the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in the face of growing threat from subversives and anarchists,” and added that “a so-called militarization bill was pending in the lower house of Congress seeking to make all civil officials and government employees technically members of the military service.”⁵³

Marcos blamed the CPP for the bombings and continued to point to their ties to Aquino. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that Enrile claimed that “a fifteen-man liquidation team – led by two ranking NPA commanders, Noli Villanueva (alias Ka Temyong, a former leader of the militant youth organization

⁴⁹Kabataang Makabayan (KM) – UP, *Terrorist Bombings – Prelude to Martial Law*, September 1972, PRP 08/19.17; Arts and Sciences Student Council, *Oppose Terrorist Bombings as a Prelude to the Imposition of Martial Law!!!*, September 1972, PRP 17/44.05.

⁵⁰Kal, (September 1972), 32/01.05. An issue of *Bandilang Pula*, meanwhile, accused Commander Melody, now a key agent of Marcos, of being behind the Plaza Miranda bombing under instructions from the US-Marcos regime. (*Bandilang Pula*, (August 1972): 2, PRP 22/02).

⁵¹Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK), *Expose and Oppose the US-Marcos Scheme to Militarize the Country*, September 1972, PRP 36/06.05. This was a two page issue of *Bandilang Pula*, but it was misfiled in the *Ang Mandirigma* folder of the PRP [36/06].

⁵²Alfredo Montoya, head of the Metrocom, and Gen. Ignacio Paz, head of military intelligence, had both been stationed as military attachés in Indonesia during Suharto’s seizure of power. (Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 360-361, 398; Bonner, *Waltzing with a Dictator*, 96).

⁵³Bernardino Ronquillo, “The Guerilla Mystery,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 1972, 25. This bill had been drawn up by “four pro-Marcos congressmen (Barbero, Yñiguez, Navarro, and Natividad).” (*UPCLL Bulletin*, no. 7 [June 1972], PRP 43/15.01).

Kabataang Makabayan) and Benjamin Sanguyo (alias Commander Pusa) – is at large in Manila.”⁵⁴ Sanguyo was closely tied to Aquino, and his name would be used to add weight to Marcos’ charges against his rival. Repeating the line of the Marcos’ administration, the article declared that “the NPA itself has made no attempt to contradict reports blaming it for the bombing incidents.” This was an outrageous falsehood. The CPP and its front organizations had repeatedly denied culpability and had pointed to copious evidence that the PKP had itself claimed responsibility for the bombings. Despite the multiple publications of the PKP proudly claiming responsibility for the bombings, at no point did Marcos accuse them. He intended to use the bombings as a pretext not only for imposing military rule, but also for rounding up the leaders of the front organizations of the CPP prior to the official declaration, breaking key links between the bourgeois opposition and the mass movement. At dawn on the seventeenth, the PC launched a wave of arrests, capturing approximately fifty leading members of the CPP and its front groups and shutting down thirteen of their organizational headquarters.⁵⁵ In response to the mass arrests, the MDP called upon its members to join the protest rally of the MCCCL on September 21.

The Rolex Twelve continued to convene each day; Aquino began to gather with his coterie in a suite of rented rooms at the Hilton Hotel; and the CPP channeled all opposition behind the MCCCL which was building for a massive rally against Marcos on September 21. The SM issued a leaflet on September 19, with the heady yet correct title “The Situation is Critical – What Is To Be Done?,” it laid out the steps Marcos had taken toward the imminent declaration of martial law, but then answered its crucial political question in one sentence, calling on readers to “act as we did during the period of the writ suspension.” During this period, the front organizations of the CPP had channeled all opposition behind

⁵⁴The first was almost certainly Nonie Villanueva.

⁵⁵These arrests are documented in a number of publications of the front organizations of the CPP. On the same day the HLP published a statement claiming that “48 activists within the national liberation ranks were arrested.” The haste with which the leaflet was produced is indicated in the fact that was originally intended to be a statement on art. The notification of the arrests abruptly turned in its second paragraph to the distinction between the writings of Jose Garcia Villa and Amado Hernandez, criticizing Villa and Andy Warhol as bourgeois artists and concluding “Art is political! Artists, unite and fight fascism and militarism!” (Humanist League of the Philippines (HLP), *Fascist Tactics by Government Troopers Again Led to the Arrest of 48 Activists Within the National Liberation Ranks Last 17 September 1972*, September 1972, PRP 07/37.03). The same figure of forty-eight student activists arrested was included in a leaflet issued by the Association of Concerned Teachers (ACT). (Association of Concerned Teachers (ACT) – UP, *The Politics of Terror*, [1972], PRP 02/04.01). The MDP claimed that over fifty activists had been arrested and that thirteen headquarters had been shut down. (Movement for a Democratic Philippines (MDP), *Pag-isahin ang Sambayanan at Gapiin ang Diktadurang EU-Marcos*, September 1972, PRP 11/18.16). UP Women’s Club also wrote on the raids, and PAKSA claimed that fourteen headquarters were shut down. (Samahan ng Kababaihan ng UP (SKUP), [Untitled], September [1972], PRP 15/27.03; Panulat para sa Kaunlaran ng Sambayan (PAKSA), *Mga Katanungan ng Bayan*, September 1972, PRP 13/17.03).

the Liberal Party, and they were doing so again now. This entailed building for the protest of the MCCCL on the twenty-first, and “meanwhile, let us continue our militant protest actions in the University.”⁵⁶ These actions in the University were speaking opportunities for the coup plotters. That afternoon, Diokno led a rally on the AS Steps at UP, telling the gathered audience of one thousand students and faculty members to “do mass protests now against the Marcos administration and against Marcos manufactured situations, if we are to maintain our freedom and prevent a Marcos takeover of the government.”⁵⁷ The danger was not martial law itself, but Marcos; it was a Marcos takeover that needed to be prevented. Diokno played down the danger of martial law, telling his audience, “The implications of martial law, if implemented, are the following: firstly, the President would in effect have the highest priority in issuing orders as the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces; secondly, the Constitution of the Philippines would not be suspended nor will the writ of habeas corpus be suspended if the situation did not warrant it. Our constitutional rights would still be intact if the imposition of martial law materialized.” Two days before military dictatorship was firmly imposed, Diokno informed protesters that martial law would effectively change nothing. The President was already commander-in-chief, and, according to Diokno, constitutional rights would remain intact. The next day, Bonifacio Gillego, Bal Pinguel and Roger Arienda spoke from the AS steps. Gillego and Diokno were in the leadership of the coup plotting of the opposition; their task was to speak alongside CPP members such as Bal Pinguel who would whip up the crowd with tall tales of the NPA, and marshal their support for the coming storm. The leadership of the MCCCL was not opposed to martial law, they were opposed to Marcos. While the CPP rallied protesters to listen to their speeches, Aquino advanced his scheme to secure the reins of dictatorship.

At some point in the immediate lead up to the declaration of Martial Law, the MCCCL held its first national assembly and an article bearing greetings from political prisoners to the assembly was published in the final issue of the *Collegian*.⁵⁸ The KM and CPP leaders in prison wrote to the MCCCL, whom they

⁵⁶Sandigang Makabansa (SM), *The Situation is Critical – What is to be Done?*, September 1972, PRP 16/10.18.

⁵⁷PC, 21 Sep 1972.

⁵⁸PC, 21 Sep 1972, 13. A paper, *The Trial*, began publication in August on behalf of the imprisoned members of the KM and SDK, each issue of which dealt with the struggles of nine political prisoners, arrested after the suspension of the writ, whose cases were now coming to trial – Luzvimindo David, Angelo de los Reyes, Rodolfo del Rosario, Victor Felipe, Diosdado Guanlao, Gary Olivar, Fluellen Ortigas, Teresito Sison, and Antonio Tayco. The first issue for example denounced the installation of a fine wire screen divider between the prisoners and their visitors in the visitation hall. (*The Trial*, 11 Aug 1972, PRP 43/07.01; 21 Aug 1972, PRP 43/07.02. During the trial the state attempted to establish, using the testimonies of Commander Melody, Elnora Estrada and Evangeline Cruz, that the accused were Communists, and charged them under RA1700. Evangeline Cruz had been an officer of the KM Lyceum and a military agent, while Estrada was now directly testifying against Tayco, her former lover. (PC, 21 Sep 1972, 9;

addressed as “Fellow patriots and comrades,” “The MCCCL has come to constitute a potent organized oppositionist force not only against the ruling US-Marcos regime, but also against the rotten political system itself represented by the two ruling-class political parties that are but opposite faces of one and the same filthy coin.” This was a lie. The MCCCL was under the control of the ruling class opposition; they were not the opponents of the LP or the NP, but their leading members.

It cannot be denied that the gains of the MCCCL have been brought about in no small measure through the indefatigable efforts of mass organizations and personalities within the national democratic movement. Recognizing this, therefore, and because we political detainees ourselves are national democrats, permit us, through this message, to touch upon what we feel is a basic question confronting this alliance – the question of the relationship between the civil liberties struggle and the long-term national democratic struggle – and take up related issues in this context.

They proceeded through a brief analysis of the “State itself” as “the organized apparatus for the formulation and execution of fascist policy,” asserting that “the record of the Philippine state is one of almost uninterrupted fascist violence of varying degrees.” They wrote this in a message addressed to the leadership of the MCCCL, which included a number of Senators and congressmen and at whose head was Sen. Jose Diokno. The CPP prisoners were thus appealing to a section of the core leadership of what they claimed was the ‘apparatus of fascism.’ What the CPP was calling upon the MCCCL leadership to do was never clarified as the serialized publication of their address was cut off, before it reached the section containing their strategic recommendations, by the declaration of martial law. As the ruling class entered the last week of its fight for dictatorship, the CPP hailed the section to which it was allied as “comrades and patriots,” and subordinated the struggle against ‘fascism’ to their leadership.

On September 20, Marcos held a televised press conference in which he announced that Aquino had met with Sison on September 7. He cited Enrile who claimed that Aquino had personally revealed this to him in a meeting and that he had in turn informed Marcos.⁵⁹ Aquino responded in a speech in the Senate on the twenty-first, denying that he had met with the CPP. He claimed that the Marcos administration was making this up as a pretext to assassinate him, and then to claim that the NPA had carried it out.⁶⁰ It is highly implausible that Aquino informed Enrile of his meeting with the CPP, and it is much more

So the People May Know, Volume VII, 44). Heading the defense panel were Diokno and Voltaire Garcia. (*The Trial*, 4 Sep 1972, PRP 43/07.03).

⁵⁹Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 121.

⁶⁰Aquino’s speech can be found in *ibid.*, 121-124.

likely that Marcos learned of this from the US Embassy. Enrile also claimed that Aquino spoke of a plot by “men in the AFP” backed by “big financial supporters in Manila” to bomb Malacañang with “commandeered Air Force planes.” This claim was not out of keeping with the schemes which Aquino, Osmeña, Diokno, and Manglapus were engaged in. If there was any truth to the claim, the CPP would have been a subordinate component of the plan, and not at its center, as Enrile alleged.

What is most striking in the political flurry of the last week before dictatorship is that the majority of accusations being hurled were accurate. Aquino and the CPP charged Marcos with having the military and the PKP stage bombings throughout the city as a pretext for martial law. Marcos accused the CPP of smuggling arms from China, and working with Aquino, in conjunction with elements in the military, to plot the president’s ouster. The broad details articulated by both sides were true.

On the same day as Aquino’s speech, fifty thousand people assembled at a rally in Plaza Miranda under the leadership of the MCCCL, of which there are few available details, as the press was silenced the next day.⁶¹ What is noteworthy is that there was mass opposition to the danger of martial law, but it had been mobilized behind Diokno, the MCCCL, and the bourgeois opponents of Marcos by the front organizations of the CPP.

On the evening of September 22, Marcos and Enrile concocted the final pretext for the declaration which they had drawn up weeks before. Enrile staged an armed assault on his own motorcade and blamed the Communists. This “ambush” was the final straw, Marcos stated, and he declared martial law at midnight that night, backdating the proclamation to September 21, in keeping with his superstitious predilection for the number seven and its multiples.⁶²

Marcos immediately had his leading opponents arrested, including Benigno Aquino, Jose Diokno, Ramon Mitra, Joaquin Roces, Teodoro Locsin, Jose Mari Velez, Voltaire Garcia, Napoleon Rama, Cipriano Cid, Alejandro Lichauco, Hernando Abaya, and Renato Constantino.⁶³ Aquino was at the Hilton with a cohort of opposition figures when military forces under Col. Gatan came to arrest him. “Aquino merely smiled, believing Marcos to have made a monumental blunder. ‘Colonel,’ he congratulated Gata, ‘you have just made me the President of the Philippines!’”⁶⁴ This was not mere bravado; Aquino was convinced that the declaration would spark an uprising which would lead to his seizure of power. Aquino’s allies held the same conception. Manglapus was in Japan on the twenty-second and “[h]is first instinct when he heard that martial law had been declared

⁶¹Dante L. Ambrosio, “Pangangapa sa simula ng Martial Law,” in *Serve the People: Ang Kasaysayan ng Radikal na Kilusan sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas*, ed. Bienvenido Lumbera et al. (Quezon City: Ibon Books, 2008), 114.

⁶²Bonner, *Waltzing with a Dictator*, 101.

⁶³Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution*, 21; Abaya, *The CLU Story*, 125.

⁶⁴Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 419; Abaya, *The CLU Story*, 125.

was to come home and join the ‘resistance.’ He telephoned his family and told them so. What resistance? – they cried.”⁶⁵

The character of the arrests varied greatly depending on the class of those detained. Abaya recounted that “A number of Left sympathizers in plush Makati villages had also packed overnight bags, dressed and waited for the dreaded knock on the door, but it never came – somewhat to their chagrin. They were safe, by NICA standards. It was a different story for the young activists and ideologues who bore the brunt of the inquisitors’ blind fury.”⁶⁶ While the activists arrested may have borne this “blind fury,” the leading bourgeois political figures – Aquino and his cohort, including Cid, Olalia, and Lacsina – were quite comfortable. Abaya wrote that the morning after their arrest, “Breakfast, self-service style, was a pleasant surprise – eggs, boiled or scrambled, bacon, *pan del sal*, *longaniza*, fried rice, coffee, and Danish pastries no less, but not enough to go around. And lunch was fried chicken in picnic boxes.”⁶⁷ Smuggling king-pin Lino Bocalan was among those arrested and he made arrangements so that every day they had “Native delicacies and hot coffee in the morning, full meals at lunch and supper, prepared by Bocalan’s second lady from the day’s catch by his Capipisa crew. We passed our rations on to our security guards, and Bocalan saw to it that they also had a share of the specials, like prawns, crabs and lobsters.”⁶⁸ Thompson writes “All traditional politicians and their close allies who had been arrested were released within weeks except for Senators Jose Diokno . . . and Aquino who were held two and seven and a half years respectively. . . . Although properties were confiscated from a few top oppositionists, most members of the Philippine elite were left alone by the Marcos regime.”⁶⁹

In its vast majority the bourgeois opposition was not suppressed, and within weeks a mere handful remained imprisoned. Those released acquiesced to Marcos’ military rule and resumed a comfortable existence. They had lost the contest for the palace, but the real threat to their interests would be effectively stamped out; no social uprising would jeopardize their class position and privileges. Intimate friends gathered in a quiet *sala* might jealously gripe – while their household servants replenished their drinks – at the gaucheness of the first lady and her shoes, but they would not organize, they would not imperil the dictatorship; it served a useful end. The outcome might not have been ideal, but things were quieter now and they would cultivate their gardens. It was different for the working class and peasantry. “Between September 1972 and February 1977 a total of nearly 60,000 had been arrested for political reasons by the martial law regime.”⁷⁰ The great mass of those arrested were neither traditional politicians

⁶⁵Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 422.

⁶⁶Abaya, *The Making of a Subversive*, 6-7.

⁶⁷Ibid., 7.

⁶⁸Ibid., 9.

⁶⁹Thompson, “Searching for a strategy,” 186.

⁷⁰Ibid., 205.

nor members of the CPP; they were workers, peasants and students, and they bore the brunt of state repression throughout the martial law period.

Immediately after the declaration, executive secretary Alejandro Melchor flew to Washington where he met with top officials and held a press conference on September 25, while Carlos Romulo announced the declaration before the United Nations.⁷¹ Washington approved of the military dictatorship. The American Chamber of Commerce announced its full support for martial law; in the first week of October, the US State Department announced an additional thirty million dollars in military aid for the Marcos administration; and on November 24, the New York Times published an editorial by Ambassador Leon Ma. Guerrero justifying the declaration.⁷² As we will see, Washington wrote Marcos land reform bill, which attempted to provide a reformist justification for military dictatorship. In 1973, Nixon stationed his old intelligence hand, William H. Sullivan, who had been responsible for the conduct of the US secret war in Laos, to serve as the US Ambassador in the Philippines under the Marcos dictatorship.⁷³ On September 24 Marcos sent House Speaker Cornelio Villareal to Moscow to formally announce the declaration of Martial Law and to expand diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union.⁷⁴ Marcos had until this point been negotiating diplomatic and trade ties with Moscow under the auspices of the executive trade authority extended to him by Congress in 1967, but this authority had lapsed and Marcos' dealings were in violation of the anti-Red trade law. Martial law removed this hurdle and made ties with the Soviet Union possible.⁷⁵

On the morning of September 23, before the official announcement from Malacañang, the Civil Liberties Brigade of the UP Student Council issued a statement, "Marcos, the mad bomber, has imposed martial law!" It provided a few cursory details of arrests and then asked "what is martial law? ... Martial law is nothing but the last card of the US-Marcos regime to prevent its total collapse in the face of massive opposition from the Filipino people. We have nothing to fear ... Marcos has still to learn that the Filipino cannot be cowed!" The leaflet concluded with now familiar language: "A movement supported by the people is invincible. Try as they might to suppress it they will only miserably fail. For every patriot they arrest, two or more from the masses come forth to replace them."⁷⁶ A new group calling itself Nagkakaisang Mamayan ng Pilipinas Laban sa Taksil at Pasistang Pangkating Estados Unidos-Marcos [The United People of the Philippines Against the Treacherous and Fascist US-Marcos Clique]

⁷¹Canoy, *The Counterfeit Revolution*, 30; Del Rosario, *An Integrated Course on Communism and Democracy*, 25.

⁷²Abaya, *The CLU Story*, 124.

⁷³William H. Sullivan, *Obbligato 1939-1979: Notes on a Foreign Service Career* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984).

⁷⁴Tolentino, *Voice of Dissent*, 467.

⁷⁵APL, 2 Jun 1972, 54.

⁷⁶Civil Liberties Brigade UP Student Council, [Untitled], September 1972, PRP 18/04.01.

– whose rhetoric revealed its ties to the CPP⁷⁷ – wrote “Martial Law has finally been declared ... Brute military force now rules our lives,” and continued,

We must unite in the face of outright suppression of our democratic rights. We must form underground anti-fascist, anti-US Marcos clique alliances ... We can make it difficult for the hired goons to move about by the organization of anti-fascist alliances in communities, factories, schools and offices ... One way of counter-acting the media black-out is by writing letters to friends ... Another way is by passing this paper around...

Let the US-Marcos clique shiver at the sight of an awakened people. We should always bear in mind that the defeat of the US-Marcos clique is the victory of the Filipino people ... We the Filipino people have the spirit to fight the enemy to the last drop of our blood. Thousands upon thousands of Filipino martyrs have heroically laid down their lives for the people; let us hold their banner high and march along the path crimson with their blood.⁷⁸

The immediate response of the front organizations of the CPP and their allies was to double down on their nationalism and to insist on unity with the bourgeois opposition. The defeat of Marcos was now proclaimed as *the* victory of the Filipino people, that is to say, the defeat of Marcos would be the victory of the national democratic revolution. The US-Marcos clique would “shiver” in the face of the anti-fascist alliances – yet to be formed – and... chain letters. The CPP fully expected its bourgeois allies to continue to fight against Marcos. The silence that followed was deafening.

⁷⁷It referred to Marcos as a “paper tiger” and enjoined the masses to “Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win!!!” This was the stock vocabulary of the Maoists, and the Maoists alone.

⁷⁸Nagkakaisang Mamayan ng Pilipinas Laban sa Taksil at Pasistang Pangkating Estados Unidos-Marcos, *The Defeat of the US-Marcos Clique is the Victory of the Filipino People*, 1972, PRP 12/01.01.

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The CPP: Utterly Unprepared

The liberation of the workers can come only through the workers themselves. There is, therefore, no greater crime than deceiving the masses, palming off defeats as victories, friends as enemies, bribing workers' leaders, fabricating legends, staging false trials, in a word, doing what the Stalinists do. These means can serve only one end: lengthening the domination of a clique already condemned by history. But they cannot serve to liberate the masses. That is why the Fourth International leads against Stalinism a life and death struggle.

— Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours*

The declaration of Martial Law found the CPP utterly unprepared. By September 1972, the party had grown to nearly two thousand members, and its network of front organizations was vast.¹ Marcos in Proclamation 1081 accurately stated that the KM had a membership of fifteen thousand and the SDK fifteen hundred. This entire apparatus was founded on the political strategy of supporting a section of the bourgeoisie, and the CPP, at the head of the KM, SDK and their allies, had carried out this strategy with precision. They had cultivated alliances with the sections of the bourgeoisie opposed to Marcos, carefully serving their interests and exacting concessions and support in return. It was not an error in the implementation of the political line of the party that led to its utter lack of preparation for martial law, an event which they had been anticipating for years. My examination of the record of the CPP from 1968 to 1972 reveals that the leadership generally exercised tactical skill in the implementation of their program. It was precisely the program itself – Stalinism – that made possible the declaration of martial law and left the party floundering.

The CPP allied with a section of the bourgeoisie, but in the face of martial law their allies disappeared. A handful were arrested, some left the country, a few joined the apparatus of the dictatorship, but the majority acquiesced. Had history proceeded along an alternate track in which Aquino outmaneuvered

¹Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*, 61; Jones, *Red Revolution*, 6.

Marcos, martial law was just as inevitable. The rival Stalinist parties had allied with the leading contenders for the throne, and both were positioned to ride the coattails of dictatorship. Neither scenario – victory for Marcos and the PKP or Aquino and the CPP – provided a way forward in the struggle against dictatorship and repression. In the event, Aquino was defeated and the CPP was left desperately repositioning itself. As martial law was announced the CPP immediately sought to facilitate the continuation of opposition under its bourgeois allies. Rigoberto Tiglao, head of the Party's Manila-Rizal Regional Committee, instructed members of the party to mobilize a demonstration that would gather at the Sta. Cruz church in Manila, where, he stated, they would be joined by congressmen and senators who would vote against Marcos' declaration of martial law. The party was to "protect the assembly inside the church with the might of the mass movement, and with armed resistance if necessary." The oppositional gathering of senators and congressman under the protection of the Communist Party never took place, as only a handful of legislators arrived. The police arrested a few of those guarding the church and the rest moved to another church in Binondo, where, along with a few congressmen, they staged a mass.² If their appeals for bourgeois intervention went unheeded, perhaps they could secure divine intervention instead.

The party continued to reach out to the coup plotters, examining in a November publication the various sectors of dissent within the military leadership and appealing to them to join the anti-Marcos struggle. Manglapus was in exile, however, and Diokno and Aquino in prison; the pursestrings of dissent drew tight. The loyalty of the disgruntled brass had been to the highest bidder and none would venture from the barracks for the scant rations on offer. Like their counterparts in uniform, the CPP lost its patrons. They issued repeated appeals to the bourgeoisie to join a united front against Marcos, but were greeted with silence. They sweetened the terms and expanded the market, offering to protect the business interests of anyone – landlord or capitalist – who would fund them. Eventually there were takers, landlords and logging interests in the hinterlands, who knew a deal when they saw one and rented out the affordable muscle of the NPA. The mesh of ties to the bourgeoisie, however, who kept their heads down for half a decade, would not be reestablished until 1978.

Martial law shattered the front organizations of the party. Some of the leadership were arrested; a great many of the rank-and-file went into hiding or exile; the debris was swept into the countryside. Of the fifteen thousand members of the KM in September 1972, the majority took up neither arms in the countryside, nor enforced residence in Bicutan detention facility. They looked to the party for leadership, and the party dug through the ashpit of its history and located the cindered remains of the single file policy, dusted it off, and dressed it up with a new name – student revolutionary committee. Whether bound

²Melencio, *Full Quarter Storms*, 47.

together in the remnants of old organizations or absorbed into the gelatinous structures of the new, those who sought direction from the CPP were given very little to say. The party had reduced its political platform to the denunciation of martial law, and claimed that dictatorship would bring about the revolution. The actual imposition of military rule thus found them at something of a loss for words. The front organizations of the party denounced restrictions on miniskirts at Santo Tomas or lights out curfews in the UP dormitories. They sought to cobble together opposition behind the banner of the most tepid reformism, recruiting from layers within the ROTC and the Lion's Club.

The party effectively emptied the cities of trained and dedicated cadre, sending everyone to the hills. The ranks of the NPA swelled slightly, not through an influx of new forces but through the redeployment of the old. The squadrons roaming the Sierra Madre and the byways of Bicol, however, no more threatened Malacañang than a comparable bunch would endanger the White House from the Adirondacks. The vanguard abandoned the working class, leaving them in the city without leadership, to bear the brunt of dictatorship. Ten of thousands were arrested, thousands tortured and murdered. Their mutilated corpses were tossed among the sparse tufts of talahib in the trash-strewn lots of Cavite, Rizal and Bulacan. Through all this, Sison celebrated the imposition of dictatorship. Repression bred resistance, he claimed, and the more Marcos brutalized workers, the more they would rise up. In the cracking bones and bloodied faces of the Filipino working class, Sison found cause to rejoice.

SRC: Return to the Single File Policy

On October 9, a group calling itself the Student Revolutionary Movement issued a three page appeal to students to take up the struggle against the Marcos regime. The document was written by the Communist Party of the Philippines; it called on students to read *Philippine Society and Revolution* and assured them that the CPP would contact them shortly. This first set of instructions issued by the CPP to its urban network in the wake of the imposition of martial law exposes with startling clarity the extent of the damage which had been inflicted upon its apparatus. Printed seventeen days after the declaration, the instructions attempted to reconstitute – in an unplanned, ad hoc fashion, through chain letters and personal acquaintances – the movement which the party had painstakingly built over the course of years of struggle and consolidation. The document declared that the “US-Marcos military dictatorship is hellbent on ‘dismantling’ all student organizations ... Student leaders have been incarcerated ... Student publications have been banned and all forms of organizations, from Christian organizations such as the Student Christian Movement to national democratic organizations, such as the Students’ Alliance for National Democracy are now

the target of military suppression.”³ The front organizations of the party had not been prepared for this repression and the party was compelled to rebuild from scratch, yet it claimed that the movement had never been stronger.

In its sick thinking, the US-Marcos clique imagines it can crush the revolutionary mass movement . . . But the imposition of martial law and the suppression of all dissent has only served to raise ever higher the level of revolutionary consciousness and strength among the students and the people for effective resistance. . . .

The cultural revolution it [the student movement] has waged can never be suppressed; it will continue to awaken the masses of the people and mobilize them against the US-Marcos military dictatorship. The US-Marcos fascist dictatorship has only inflamed the revolutionary students and youth throughout the country.

The strength of the masses for resistance had grown, the CPP claimed, and the consciousness of students and youth had been inflamed by Marcos declaration. The document called on students to unite with “all forces and individuals” opposed to Marcos and to study the Programme for a People’s Democratic Revolution in *PSR*. (2) This drastic expansion of the bloc of four classes was in keeping with the strategy the party had adopted since the November 1971 election and which it had implemented through the ABLPPL, MCCCL, and similar ventures. These alliances were as broad as the social structure of the Philippines, yet were bound together solely by opposition to Marcos; their breadth was limitless but their depth negligible. You could wade across the expansive ocean of the MCCCL and scarcely wet your feet. Unity with “all forces and individuals:” CIA operatives and landlords, clerics and corrupt politicians – it did not matter, if they opposed Marcos they were welcome.

The masses were inflamed and the alliance limitless, the CPP declared; but the organizational apparatus in which to house this will and expansive network had been effectively suppressed. Despite pervasive language hailing martial law as having increased the revolutionary fervor and strength of the movement, the document clearly demonstrates just how unprepared the CPP and its front organizations were for its imposition and how devastated they were by it. Seeking to rebuild, the CPP called for the adoption of “the particular form of organization of the Student Revolutionary Committee (SRC).”

These SRCs can assume the general task of organizing and mobilizing the students, peasants, farm workers, the national minorities and fishermen in a well-defined area of the province. We can effectively combat the US-Marcos military dictatorship’s attempt to crush our

³Student Revolutionary Movement, *A Call to the Filipino Student Youth*, Manila, October 1972, PRP 17/15.01.

organizations by keeping the membership of such committees unexposed while still boldly organizing hundreds of committees. Every student must assume the responsibility of organizing his closest friends or schoolmates into such a committee. Every member of such a committee must then assume the task of organizing his own friends into another new committee, and each member of the new committee must then organize other new committees, and so forth. (3)

This was a revolutionary pyramid scheme, a sort of Stalinist Amway. Less than three weeks after the declaration, the CPP was scrambling to rebuild its urban front organizations from the ground up by means of spontaneous networks of friends and classmates. The party instructed students to expand their networks and circulate political material by "chain-letter" campaigns, writing out by hand copies of political material and mailing them to a broader group of acquaintances. (2) The party depicted these steps as a security measure.

To guard against enemy suppression and infiltration, the members of one committee need not be known to other members of other committees. Thus will the revolutionary mass movement protect itself and rapidly expand the underground movement to transform the masses into a sea of flames in which to drown the US-Marcos military dictatorship. Every patriotic student must be integrated into these SRCs and we must build these committees into cohesive and self-sacrificing cores of revolutionary leadership. (3)

The SRC policy of the CPP repeated, almost verbatim, the single file policy of the PKP under the Lavas which Sison had made the target of so much political ire during the early stages of the dispute. Like the single file policy, the formation of SRCs eliminated the possibility of any democratic discussion within the movement, for when you were contacted your task was simply to pass on directives. What is more, the SRC did not provide additional security, as the liquidationism of this policy drastically weakened the defenses of the CPP. The security of a revolutionary organization rests in its disciplined centrism, not its decentralized structure. The SRC policy made it the simplest matter for agents to form committees, join committees, and arrest individuals and groups without anyone else's knowledge. If an agent were exposed, he could simply join a different committee and no one would be the wiser.

Attempting to dispel concerns that this policy represented an immense setback for the party, the document continued,

The students who take the initiative of forming their revolutionary committees should be confident that many others are doing the same

in the city. They shall be approached by the proletarian revolutionary party for recruitment and cooperation on the basis of what they have already contributed to the national democratic movement. The masses of students should feel confident that the revolutionary mass movement and the revolutionary organizations have been unscathed. The revolutionary mass movement has expanded more vigorously than ever, in other forms of organizations and struggle to advance the people's democratic revolution against US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism to victory!!! (3)

What this document spells out is that the legal front organizations of the CPP, every sectoral alliance and umbrella group, were completely unprepared for the declaration of martial law. Having denounced its advent for over three years, they had not made even the most rudimentary of preparations; their mimeograph machines were seized and their leaders arrested or fled. No amount of lies stating that the "revolutionary organizations have been unscathed" could cover over the fact that the movement was attempting to re-establish itself from scratch. If they were unscathed why were the SRCs necessary? The publications of the KM and SDK vanished and the SRC was an attempt to reconstitute an underground student movement out of the ashes. When KM wrote a retrospective in 1984, they stated that

KM was not caught napping. ... In fact, the core of KM's leadership had started to partially go underground in 1969 and to completely go underground in 1971 upon the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

The full-blown fascist dictatorship could not make wholesale arrests of KM officers and members, except in areas where they did not make ample preparations. On the whole, only a few could be arrested. The KM could continue to operate from the underground, with [illegible] of leadership intact. Many KM members were unidentifiable to the enemy.⁴

It is accurate that the majority of the leadership of the KM, and of the SDK for that matter, were not arrested. They burrowed so far underground that their muffled political instructions could no longer be heard. The paramount concern of an underground revolutionary apparatus is that it is still able to provide leadership in conditions of repression.⁵ Going underground does not

⁴KM, *Brief History of Kabataang Makabayan (1964-1972)*, 7.

⁵A useful book on revolutionary work under conditions of repression is Victor Serge, *What Everyone Should Know About State Repression*, trans. Judith White (New York: New Park Publications, 1979), which Serge wrote on the basis of his study of the archives of the Okhrana, the Tsarist secret police, which the Bolsheviks captured in October 1917.

mean disappearing entirely, in the manner of the front organizations of the CPP, for there is no difference between this 'underground' work and resigning oneself from political life entirely. Safehouses had been prepared throughout Manila and its environs for the leadership of the party's front groups and they rapidly absconded to them. The air in the safehouses was thick with conspiratorial plots and tobacco smoke. The party had no shortage of ideas for rekindling relations with military officers inclined to coup d'etat, or for securing support from the bourgeois opposition which, like the CPP leadership, had suddenly vanished. What it lacked entirely was a politically educated mass base and an underground organizational apparatus through which to lead it. The party scrambled to construct the latter under conditions of military dictatorship.

An immense blow to organizing this effort was the loss of the party's mimeograph machines. A core aspect of a party's ability to exercise leadership under repressive conditions is the dissemination of ideas, but for this to be effective requires print. The majority of mimeograph machines operated by the front organizations of the party were neither safeguarded nor hidden, and with the declaration of martial law they were easily confiscated. The writ of habeas corpus had been suspended, and they did not hide their machines; the headquarters of their organizations had been raided but a week prior to the dictatorship, and still they did not hide their machines. Everyone knew that martial law was imminent, and yet when it was declared, most of the party's means of printing were seized by the state with ease. This abject failure on the part of the leadership of the CPP was a manifestation of its confidence that its ally, Aquino, would succeed in seizing power. Two weeks later, the party was left to call upon students to write messages out by hand and mail them to their acquaintances.

The rank-and-file members of the front organizations of the party, along with the broad periphery that saw the CPP as the center of opposition to dictatorship, looked now to the party for leadership. They took precautionary measures, burned all party literature, visited uncles or aunts; those who could went home to the provinces. They busied themselves nervously with mundane tasks and they waited for instructions. Some gathered in groups and independently attempted to oppose the dictatorship, employing tactics in equal measure courageous and silly. For most, however, instructions never came and gradually, with an acrid distaste, they grew accustomed to military rule. Those who had money sought exile overseas, but the majority took up jobs at home and led lives of quiet desperation, never free of the fear that the man boarding the jeepney might be PC. The hesitation and gradual despairing acceptance did not root in a shortage of courage. These forces lingering before Proclamation 1081 had been steeled in the storm, they had in large numbers marched before truncheons and teargas, and regrouped under fire. Now, bewilderment and disorientation, a sense of political purposelessness, gripped them; and the healthiest layers of the nation were taken by malaise.

They were given no leadership nor had they been prepared. The party's

instructions to form SRCs embodied the dilemma of the rank-and-file: on what basis should they build or recruit to these committees? There was no content, no program, not a single principle held up to guide them, just the party's vapid watchword: unite with everyone against Marcos. On this point hinges the entirety of the failure of the CPP: they had not educated the working class in its political tasks and as a result the social layers around the party did not know how to fight dictatorship. They had not been trained to act independently. The political and theoretical education of the most advanced layers of the working class and youth must be the paramount concern of a revolutionary party when preparing for repression. In the event that the party's organization is suppressed, the forces gathered around it will be able to continue their revolutionary struggle on the basis of this training and when the time is right the apparatus of the party can rapidly reconstitute itself.

What education had the CPP provided to the rank-and-file members of its front organizations and its broader periphery? Martial law will hasten revolution; a section of the bourgeoisie is our ally; it is not yet time for socialism, we must limit ourselves to national and democratic ends. It is impossible to educate a politically independent cadre on this basis. The program of Stalinism requires that the membership and periphery be dependent upon the leadership of the party, for at its core is an alliance with a section of the bourgeoisie and how could anyone independently anticipate the vicissitudes of the party's alliances? The political imperative, as Sison had repeatedly stressed, was to be prepared to zig and zag as ties with different sections of the bourgeoisie ebbed and flowed.

Accepting these alternating alliances required cultivating amnesia within the cadre, who received a systematic political miseducation which justified every abrupt turn in occluded and dishonest language. Training in the history and program of the revolutionary movement is the strongest preparation of the cadre for conditions of repression, because it allows each of them to act independently as a disciplined leader of political struggle. The shifting alliances of the party, however, were not the product of principles, but of haggling opportunism, serving interests alien to the revolutionary struggle against dictatorship. Macapagal is progressive, they cried; no wait, he's reactionary. Marcos is progressive, they declared; no wait, he's reactionary as well. Aquino is progressive, they claimed... No political education could prepare the cadre to adjudicate the progressive or reactionary character of sections of the bourgeoisie on their own, for this was assessed not on the basis of program, but on the pragmatic conjunctural ends mutually agreed upon by the leadership of the party and the bourgeoisie. The political education of the cadre was thus not to judge for themselves, but to accept thoughtlessly, to swallow whatever new alliance had been formed.

The CPP's lack of preparation for martial law, so fundamental to Marcos' successful imposition of dictatorship, was thus intrinsic to the program of Stalinism.

In response to the instructions from the CPP, students began forming SRCs but the lack of political direction was palpable. On December 6, the UP Student



Figure 42.1: Cafeteria Protest (*Dissent*, Dec 1972)

Revolutionary Committee published the first issue of a paper called *Dissent*. There was very little substance to the paper, which focused on increased dorm fees and the fact that it was mandatory that lights were put out at ten at night in the UP School of Nursing.⁶ The UP SRC wrote, “the new heroes of the people’s democratic struggle unhesitatingly raise high their clenched fist to defy and once and for all crush the US-Marcos dictatorship.” (8) How was such ‘crushing of dictatorship’ being carried out? The leaflet proclaimed that “Mass actions in the form of silent marches, chanting protest songs, spontaneously singing the National Anthem in the AS lobby, and the simultaneous pounding of spoons and forks on the table to the tune of ‘Marcos, Hitler, Diktador, Tuta’ in the cafeterias, have been successfully staged by the awakened studentry.” (5) [fig. 42.1] This revolutionary plate tapping was likewise cited in another leaflet that heralded the tapping as the “fearless student masses creating new forms of protest.”⁷

Norman Quimpo recounts

In the urban areas, youth groups like KM had such tasks as carrying out anti-martial law propaganda and protest actions. These campaigns were meant to combat feelings of helplessness and prove that dissenters could still be active despite the overwhelming grip of the

⁶ *Dissent*, 1, no. 1 (6 December 1972), PRP 30/06.01.

⁷ Kapit Bisig – UP, *UPGA Prison*, 1972, PRP 08/30.01 This leaflet also indicated that the students had given nicknames to all of the perceived agents on campus: Mr. Slim, Baho, Bodyfit, Tatang and Pungay.

military on the city.

KM was naturally among the first with novel urban propaganda activities. A week after the declaration of martial law, it organized groups to launch “lightning rallies.” A handful of activists would suddenly gather at a public place, shout out anti-martial law slogans, and quickly disperse.⁸

Quimpo describes “one such rally at Farmers Market in the Cubao district,” “[The KM] prepared cards with anti-Marcos slogans and hung them on chickens, which they carried in *bayong* (market bags made of woven palm fronds). At a couple of busy intersections in the labyrinthine passageways of the mall, they released the chickens, shouted slogans, and dispersed quickly.”⁹ This was not a one-off event, as protesters continued to attach hand-written slogan cards to animals and set them free in public locations and on the UP campus, the protesters tied slogans to cats.¹⁰ Over fifty thousand people had flooded Plaza Miranda on September 21 denouncing the threat of martial law, but after it was declared, the remnants of the KM were posting slogans on chickens. Ambrosio aptly described this period as a “time of groping in all directions” [panahon ng pangangapa sa iba’t ibang lugar.]¹¹ On November 15, five hundred students staged a silent protest march within the Arts and Sciences Building, quietly walking up and down the hallways. A pillbox explosion was set off, and the SDK wrote that a “stupid policeman was running frantically like a mad bull when a pillbox exploded a meter away from him. The students clapped enthusiastically in support of the pillbox explosion.”¹² The explosion, the SDK claimed, had been carried out by “a militant student.” This protest – silently pacing the halls of a single building on the UP campus and then disappearing into classrooms accompanied by the throwing of a small bomb – had been organized by the UP Student Revolutionary Committee.¹³

By February 1973, the *Collegian* reported that as many as three thousand students had not reported back to school after the reopening of campuses in the wake of the declaration of martial law.¹⁴ Many had, in an admixture of fear and political despair, simply gone home.

⁸Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 124.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ambrosio, “Pangangapa sa simula ng Martial Law,” 117.

¹¹Ibid., 120.

¹²Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK) – UP, “Crush the US-Marcos Fascist Bunch and their Campus Marionettes!,” *BP* 1, no. 2 (November 1972), PRP 22/03.

¹³UP Student Revolutionary Committee, *Free the University!!*, 1972, PRP 18/24.01.

¹⁴Patricio N. Abinales, “Fragments of History, Silhouettes of Resurgence: Student Radicalism in the Early Years of the Marcos Dictatorship,” *Southeast Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2008): 179.

Recovering publications

The majority of the publications of the front organizations of the CPP disappeared. An occasional leaflet, most typed by hand, appears in the archival record, but the newspapers, manifestos, and endless stream of revolutionary ephemera vanish. This was a result of the capture of their mimeograph machines and the loss of the leadership which had been responsible for their production, as some were now in safehouses, others in the hills, and still others in prison. In the wake of martial law, therefore, a new set of publications began to appear; the first regular underground paper to emerge was *Taliba ng Bayan* [The People's Vanguard].¹⁵ In its first issue *Taliba ng Bayan* wrote that

Martial Law has made even clearer [lalong nagpalinaw] the contradictory forces in Philippine society, the force of reaction and the force of revolution. More than ever before [Higit kailan pa man] the national united front has grown now in all classes, groups, elements and individuals who are prepared for an armed struggle against the fascist dictatorship of Marcos and his boss, American imperialism. Martial Law did not lengthen [hindi nagpalawig] but shortened the remaining days of the fascist US-Marcos regime.¹⁶

On the same page, *Taliba ng Bayan* informed its readers that “[t]he moment that the fascist dictator Marcos declared Martial Law, the armed struggle in the countryside grew even more. A hundred thousand peasants [Daang libong mga magsasaka] have truly taken up the path of armed struggle as the only cure ...” This was a flagrant lie; a hundred thousand peasants did not take up armed struggle on the declaration of martial law. The dishonesty of the publication was matched by its unserious tone throughout. The first issue, for example, concluded with a “Rebolusyonaryong Pinoy Medli [Medley]” of songs. To the tune of the folk nursery rhyme “Sitsiritsit Alibangbang”, we find this song:

¹⁵There is some confusion in dating the initial issues of *Taliba ng Bayan*. The issue published as volume 1, no. 1, is not dated, but can be placed after October 23, as it refers to an event which transpired on this date. The first issue is labeled “edition of the Katipunan ng Kabataang Demokratiko (KKD)”. Issue 2, however, is dated October 9. It is possible that this is a misprint and it was published on November 9, but no event is mentioned in the second issue which occurred after September 30. It is also possible that there were multiple local versions of the first issues of *TnB*, which would explain the variant dating.

¹⁶*TnB*, 1 no. 1, 3.

Sitsiritsit, pakinggan mo
 Ang sekreto ng bayan ko
 Ang pangulong sira ulo
 Nagdeklara ng *martial law*!^a

^aEmphasis in original.

Sitsiritsit^a, listen to
 The secret of my people
 The crazy president
 Has declared *martial law*!

^aA nonsensical word and part of the original rhyme

Having nothing to tell the working class, the publication instead insinuated dictatorship into a children's nursery rhyme in the same manner that one might write doggerel on Hiroshima to the tune of London Bridge. Not content with this insipidity, the first issue published a story about a barber who was initially excited by the declaration of martial law because short haircuts would now be mandatory, but no one came to his barber shop. Finally, he jumped up and down with joy, as a group of soldiers came to get their hair cut. Having cut their hair, he awaited his payment, but was only given a New Society lapel pin. As the soldiers turned to leave, he took his scissors and stabbed them in the neck. The story was entitled "Culture for the masses." *Taliba ng Bayan* routinely referred to the military, PC and other forces of the Marcos government as *hapon* [Japanese] playing off resentments and memories of the Second World War. The word "hapon" was used, essentially as the equivalent of 'jap,' on every page of the first issues of the paper, e.g., on page five, "the 'Japs' are drinking the workers' money", page six, "the 'Japs' invaded UP." The light-minded celebratory tone of *Taliba ng Bayan* persisted in subsequent editions. The third issue, which trumpeted again that "People's War is the Answer to Martial Law" also denounced the University of Santo Tomas for still banning mini-skirts, and called on students to rise up against the restrictions.¹⁸ The paper adopted the slogan "Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win!" on its masthead.

Taliba ng Bayan was directly run by the CPP out of a safehouse in Novaliches. The staff of the paper were overseen by leading CPP member and *Manila Times* business editor, Satur Ocampo. Jose Lacaba, a journalist with a remarkable facility with prose, edited the paper, and its correspondents included the poet Bayani Abadilla, experienced journalists Bobbie Malay and Joann Maglipon, and gifted screenwriter Ricky Lee.¹⁹ The asinine, semi-literate glee of the paper in the face of repression expressed not a want of talent but of content. Martial law had been declared, but this was good because now the masses would take up arms against the 'japs', and possibly against restrictions on mini-skirts as well. On one of the

¹⁸TnB, 3 Nov 1972, 6.

¹⁹Satur Ocampo, *Tala-Gabay sa Pagtalakay ng Ang Alternative Press sa Panahon ng Batas Militar*, October 2014; Lourdes Gordolan, "Butch Dalisay, Ricky Lee, and other writers remember prison life in Martial Law era," *Rogue*, April 2012.

only printing presses left to the party, this was the publication they chose to produce and disseminate.

Other publications briefly appeared in October and November 1972, pursuing a similar line. A paper entitled *Bangon!* launched a three page leaflet on October 5. Like *Taliba ng Bayan*, it denounced the ‘japs,’ adding “these times, [*sic*] however, the enemy is no bandy legged child of the Rising Sun.”²⁰ The next issue referred to the PC as “Kempetai.”²¹ The repeated references to the ‘japs’ were intended to do more than whip up racism as a means cultivating dissent, they sought to equate martial law with the Japanese occupation to invoke the historical precedent of creating the broadest possible united front. As Stalinism around the world had used the pretext of the anti-fascist struggle to justify uniting with the major imperialist powers and with every class and social layer at home, so too now the CPP sought to ally with coup plotting elements tied to the CIA, politicians favored by Washington, and brutal hacenderos. Without any sense of irony, the CPP placed Ninoy Aquino, son of a leading collaborator during the occupation, at the center of this anti-‘Hapon’ united front.

On November 14, *Taliba ng Bayan* headlined a demonstration at UP. At ten in the morning on November 3, students, they reported, had gathered on the second floor of the Arts and Sciences building to sing the National Anthem. “Government agents” were too “dazed” [tulala] by the protest to arrest anyone. A great many of the accounts of the early days of martial law record that singing the national anthem was regarded by forces around the CPP to be an act of protest. Where previously the KM and SDK had led its followers in loud performances of *Lupang Hinirang* as a means of defusing tensions, so now the same verses were hoarsely sung as if they were a form of dissent. A week later *Taliba ng Bayan* reported that students at MLQU protested by shouting “If you want freedom, you need revolution!” from the roof of the building and then throwing their manifestos in the air for students on the ground floor to catch or pick up, before fleeing. There was an amount of courage involved in such protests, at times even a certain inventiveness, but these scattered leaflets and shouted slogans were the weapons of the exceedingly weak and unprepared.²² By September 1973, the headlines of *Taliba ng Bayan* had largely returned to the staid politics of the United Front. “Diokno needs to see a Doctor” and “Aquino: ‘It’s better to die with honor’” occupied the front page. The lead on Aquino concluded with the report that the masses gathered in the rain [nakatayo sa ulan] outside the courthouse, shouting “Mabuhay ka, Senador Aquino! [Long live Senator Aquino!]” while the inner pages of the paper were still dedicated to the stirring victories of the NPA, complete with illustrations of women throwing grenades

²⁰*Bangon!*, 1 no. 1 (5 October 1972): 3, PRP 22/04.

²¹*Bangon!*, 1 no. 2 (11 October 1972): 1, PRP 22/04.

²²In the same issue *Taliba ng Bayan* announced that it would now be selling its paper for ten centavos.

and AFP soldiers cowering.²³

By the middle of October the party began publishing *Liberation*, as the official newspaper of the National Democratic Front (NDF), which it was in the process of founding as an organizational means of recovering ties with sections of the bourgeoisie. Just as *Taliba ng Bayan* peddled both Aquino and grenades, so too *Liberation* immediately began printing fictitious reports of victorious campaigns being waged by the NPA, running them in tandem with inspiring quotations from the bourgeois opposition. At the beginning of December, they published a report of an entire three hundred member battalion of the AFP being “wiped out” in Isabela, stating that over 250 of the soldiers were killed, while in the same issue approvingly publishing quotations from Sen. Soc Rodrigo – “as long as the seed of freedom is in the hearts and minds of our people, time will come when the climate will be favorable, and that seed will germinate and flourish once again.”²⁴ Rodrigo had delivered the keynote address to the 1956 Asian People’s Anti-Communist League Conference, but now he was an ally in the struggle against Marcos. From its inception, *Liberation*, the publication of the NDF, was bent on dishonest cheerleading. Its second issue, published in the first month of Martial Law, was headlined, “The Cultural Revolution Gains New Heights as the US-Marcos Dictatorship is Encircled from the Countrysides. [sic]”²⁵ By mid-December it claimed that the AFP was on the run in Isabela, Central Luzon and Marawi.²⁶

Both Aquino and the CPP had fully expected martial law to sweep them into Malacañang. When it did not, the CPP spent several months publishing flagrant lies about how close they were to seizing power. The AFP was on the run, they claimed; hundreds had been wiped out by the NPA in a single encounter; over a hundred thousand peasants were taking up arms. In the middle of October *Bangon* wrote that “Martial law is so unpopular that Marcos is a virtual prisoner in Malacañang.”²⁷ These repeated dishonest claims added to the disorientation of those looking to oppose the dictatorship, for they were grossly incongruous with reality and everyone knew it.

²³TnB, 9 Sep 1973, 2.

²⁴National Democratic Front (NDF), “Reject the Marcos Constitution,” *Liberation* 1, no. 7 (December 1972): 4, PRP 34/01.05. In November the NDF reported that “freedom fighters” in Marawi City had killed 519 AFP soldiers, and wounded 236. (National Democratic Front (NDF), “Oppose the Con-Con Plot to Legalize Dictatorship,” *Liberation* 1, no. 4 [November 1972], PRP 34/01.03).

²⁵National Democratic Front (NDF), “The Cultural Revolution Gains New Heights as the US-Marcos Dictatorship is Encircled from the Countrysides,” *Liberation* 1, no. 2 (October 1972), PRP 34/01.01.

²⁶National Democratic Front (NDF), “‘Vote No’ Movement Snowballs,” *Liberation* 1, no. 8 (December 1972), PRP 34/01.06. They further reported that the NPA had begun deploying “sparrow units” for carrying out urban assassination, and a squad had opened fire in the movie theater in Tarlac, killing three PC and one BSDU man.

²⁷*Bangon!*, 1 no. 1 (5 October 1972): 3, PRP 22/04.

On April 24, 1973, the NDF was officially founded. Sison wrote of the NDF, “It sought to integrate into the underground the mass organizations under the Movement for a Democratic Philippines, which had been outlawed,” and its purpose was to be able to “link up with the national bourgeoisie or even some relatively ‘progressive’ part of the reactionary classes.”²⁸ By ‘progressive reactionaries,’ Sison meant the large landlords, owners of sugar plantations and haciendas, whom the CPP embraced as the “enlightened gentry.” The bourgeoisie was keeping its head down at the time, and no dishonest trumpeting of the victories of the armed struggle could interest them in an alliance with the party. The efforts of the CPP proved fruitless, and the NDF effectively disappeared in early 1974, and its journal, *Liberation*, folded at the same time. While the NDF became a key component of CPP work beginning in the latter half of the 1970s, it did not play a significant role in the first five years of martial law.

As it solicitously but ineffectually appealed to the bourgeoisie, so too the party reached out to coup inclined elements in military leadership. In November *Kontres*, the umbrella publication of the front organizations of the CPP in the arts, wrote, “we consider that the present conditions are more favorable than ever before for the revolutionary movement.”²⁹ Under these conditions *Kontres* stated that the “revolutionary movement” needed to “encourage [himukin] the members of the national bourgeoisie in the cities and countryside to give political and material support to the revolutionary movement,” (15) and must also work to “expand and develop an anti-fascist united front with every possible level [antas] of the Liberal Party and some sections of the Nacionalista Party, religious or semi-religious [relihiyoso o mala-relihiyoso] organizations, and various other groups and political persons who are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship.” Many of these individuals, *Kontres* stated, are “not in agreement with the ideology of the national democratic movement but will agree with this program and political line. [i.e., unity solely on the basis of opposition to Marcos].”

Having expanded the field of class collaboration to its widest possible extent, *Kontres* called for carrying out “revolutionary propaganda among the officials and troops of the reactionary armed forces. Very many of them [marami-rami sa kanila] are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship.” In the analysis of the CPP, the armed forces were divided into three camps: those supporting Marcos; those opposed to him and looking to carry out a coup; and those, like Corpus and Tagamolila who support the national democratic movement. It was, as always, on the middle group that it focused its attention, and it further divided this group of coup plotters into two sub-groups: one which would await a guarantee of support from US imperialism for their coup attempt, and another which did not need this support. This latter group of “independent” coup plotters, from the

²⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 74-75, 77.

²⁹Konsehong Tagapag-Ugnay ng Rebolusyonaryong Sining (KONTRES), “Ibagsak ang Diktadurang EU-Marcos upang Makamit ang Pambansang Kalayaan at Demokrasya,” *Kontres* 1, no. 4 (November 1972): 13, PRP 33/15.03.

rank-and-file to the top brass, should be encouraged, they argued, in order to win their support for the masses of the people. (15)

On November 2, a new journal *Ulós* began publication, carrying the slogan “Ulusin ng pluma at pinsel ang kaaway!” [Pierce the enemy with pen and brush] The founding editorial statement called on readers to “Oppose martial law and build the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist united front in the field of culture!” The issue concluded with several anti-martial law poems and a page sized drawing of the Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Martial Law. [People’s Alliance against Martial Law] Although no explanation of the organization was included, this conception of the ABLML was clearly the continuation of the ABLPPL, that is, a loose alliance of various middle forces with the party.³⁰ The December 1 lead editorial of *Ulós* opened with the statement that “All of our art and culture is for the masses of the people, and foremost for the workers, peasants and soldiers.” [manggagawa, magsasaka at kawal.]³¹ The inclusion of soldiers as a group separate from workers and peasants and yet at the core of the masses was a dramatic alteration in the basic class line-up employed in the usual slogans, and expressed the fact that the various organs of the CPP were seeking to win the support of potential coup plotting elements within the army.

The thrust of all of the publications which the CPP created in the wake of the imposition of martial law was not to provide leadership to the forces which looked to it for guidance. They were left to tap plates, sing the national anthem, tie slogans to chickens, and write chain letters. The CPP used every bit of its strength, which it amplified with outrageous lies, to appeal to the bourgeoisie and its coup plotting allies in the military for a renewed united front. The ruling class opposition, however, no longer had any interest in the alliance; the majority welcomed martial law, even in the hands of Ferdinand Marcos. If he used it to suppress their erstwhile allies in the Communist Party, so much the better.

“Hinggil sa Legal na Pakikibaka”

Seeking to recover their alliance with a section of the ruling class, the CPP deliberately curtailed militant activity in the working class, channeling all urban political work into the mildest possible reformism. This strategy, which

³⁰*Ulós*, 1 no. 1 (2 November 1972), PRP 43/10.01. In its second issue, on November 15, *Ulós* published a long article denouncing the performance in the Philippines of “West Side Story.” The performance of West Side Story, they stated, “is an expression of the rot of Filipino genius under the parasitic influence of a colonial culture” [ekspresyon ng pagkabulok ng henyong Pilipino sa mala-lintang impluensiya ng isang kulturang kolonyal.] (*Ulós*, 1 no. 2 [15 November 1972]: 5, PRP 43/10.02). Another article attacked *Liwayway* magazine for publishing stories about sex, as an opiate [opyo] of the masses. One story in *Liwayway* which it singled out for criticism featured a “homosexual ‘father’.” (Scare quotes around father in original) *Ulós* wrote, “by illustrating this extraordinary disability of abnormal characters, this story becomes an opiate because it hides the true essence of the prevailing contradictions.” (10)

³¹*Ulós*, 1 no. 3 (1 December 1972), PRP 43/10.03.

amounted to leading workers to appeal to the martial law regime for improved trash service, was not designed to secure the safety of the working class under repressive conditions, but to win over the “middle forces,” who in their majority had embraced martial law. On November 4 1972, the Manila Rizal Regional Committee of the CPP released a document entitled “Tasks of the Party in the Manila-Rizal Region in the New Situation,” which argued that

we must advance limited demands and forms of struggle acceptable to the masses according to the specific conditions at a given time and place and the degree of political consciousness of the masses. Then, in accordance with the changing conditions and experiences of the masses in the course of struggle, we must either gradually raise the struggle to a higher stage or conclude it temporarily so as to consolidate our gains and prepare for the next struggle at a higher stage and on a larger scale. . . . We must wage steady and sure struggles in conformity with the principle of waging struggles on just grounds, to our advantage, and with restraint and utilize every legal measure and social custom that suit our purpose.³²

While *Ang Bayan* hailed martial law as the onset of a massive revolutionary upsurge, the party turned in the city to piecemeal reformist politics carried out by legal means. They sought to excuse this orientation by pointing to the low level of existing consciousness among the masses, never seeking to reconcile this flagrant contradiction to their shibboleth that the masses had been inflamed by the declaration. It was not the consciousness of the working class to which the party was adapting, for any worker who transgressed the boundaries of its reformist orientation was rapidly herded into the hills to take up arms with the NPA. They were adapting yet again to the middle forces, and under conditions of military dictatorship, the CPP demanded of the working class that it exercise “tact, more tact, still more tact!”

This perspective found extended articulation and justification in a document written by Antonio Hilario in January 1974 for the SDK, entitled “Hinggil sa Legal na Pakikibaka [On the Legal Struggle].”³³ Hilario depicted vividly the confusion that reigned in the party and its front organizations in Manila in the wake of the declaration of martial law. Everyone, he claimed, was trying to resolve the problem of how to carry out the legal struggle in the city, and while it had been over a year this problem was still far from a solution and there was considerable disunity over how to proceed. He described this confusion, “If four horses pull in

³²Quoted in Ambrosio, “Pangangapa sa simula ng Martial Law,” 121 fn 8.

³³Antonio Hilario, *Hinggil sa Legal na Pakikibaka*, January 1974, PRP 15/18.05. I base Hilario’s authorship of this document on Abinales, “Fragments of History.” While Abinales dates the document to the last months of 1973, the PRP copy is signed January 4. This would be in 1974. I have dated it accordingly.

different directions, one north, one south, one east, and one to the west, you can be sure that the carriage will not budge. [siguradong hindi titinag ang karwahe]” (1) A significant reason for this disunity, he argued, was that most did not have a systematic understanding about the nature of work in the city. Because of this deficiency, they were moving with their eyes blindfolded [nakapiring ang mata] and running wildly without direction. [takbo nang takbo, walang tinutungo.]

Hilario laid out what he regarded as the correct understanding of urban work, which he argued would necessarily be in its majority a legal struggle. Political work in the city was limited he claimed for several reasons. The cities were the stronghold of reaction, the countryside that of revolution. The task of the revolution was to encircle the cities from the countryside, while the task of those in the city was to support the armed struggle in the countryside. This was not, however, exclusively a matter of sending new recruits to the armed struggle, as the city forces also needed to organize the masses in order to split the forces of reaction, forcing some of the forces of the state to concentrate on the city. (2) City work was also limited, he claimed, by the weak condition of the forces in the city at present, and by what he characterized as the low-level of political consciousness among the masses. (3)

We knew that martial law was coming, wrote Hilario, and yet we were inadequately prepared. [hindi naging sapat ang ating aktuwal na paghahanda] (3) In the end, however, it did not matter that the party had lost the majority of its organizational apparatus, for the revolutionary could reach the masses through any organizational means and the movement simply needed to find new means of legal struggle which were adapted to the martial law epoch. Despite this claim, Hilario was compelled to admit that “We are in a new stage of repression, and yet after a year, the correct form of organization and struggle against this repression” had not yet been found. (7) Having stated the problem, Hilario pointed the way forward for urban work: the legal struggle, which he characterized as any struggle which was not suppressed by the state, carried out through existing organizations. (10) Under conditions of sharply curtailed freedom, Hilario argued that the party needed to limit its urban work to what the state deemed acceptable. It should not focus on underground, illegal activity, organizing the working class in the struggle for power; anyone inclined to such activity should be sent to the remote countryside. Further, the working class should not organize its own, independent organs of political work, it should enter into existing structures, which were of a deeply conservative and reactionary character. Hilario described three types of organizations which the party’s urban forces should enter: traditional religious and social organizations; existing legally recognizing organizations, such as the Jaycees and the Lions; and the organizations of martial law such the ROTC and Civilian Army Training (CAT). (11) The work in these legal organizations, he stated, was based on the mass line and its goal was to reach the middle and more backward elements of the masses by adapting to their existing levels of consciousness and winning their trust through day-to-day interaction. (13) The

support of the middle layers would be won by carrying out minor reformist struggles in their daily lives, as Hilario explained that if the state granted reforms then the masses would learn of their democratic power but if the state denied the reforms, then this was even better, for the masses would learn that only revolution could solve their problems. (18) If the party did not carry out this reformist integration into existing legal organizations, Hilario claimed, it would have practically no influence in the city. (16)

The party directed the working class to enter into right-wing social organizations – the Jaycees, religious groups, and the ROTC – to win the trust of the ‘middle forces’, i.e. the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Those workers, straining under conditions of brutal dictatorship, who might not be content requesting improved delivery of municipal services through participation in a local civic group, were directed to go to the hills. Most workers joined neither the Lions Club nor the NPA, but this was all that the party offered them. They hunkered down and looked to weather the dictatorship. Open working class struggle would not resume until October 1975, when workers courageously went on strike at the La Tondeña distillery, in defiance not only of management and the martial law regime, but of the CPP as well, as the party repeatedly told the distillery workers not to go on strike.³⁴ For the first three years of martial law, the cities were quieted and emptied of opposition. Marcos could not have secured better aid in stabilizing military dictatorship if he had drafted the strategy of the Communist Party of the Philippines himself.

“Conditions ... have been tremendously enhanced.”

Joma Sison and the Communist Party had spent years arguing that martial law and repression were the triggers of massive revolutionary struggle, and that the greater the repression, the greater would be the resistance, yet when martial law was declared they were completely and criminally unprepared. Sison never ceased to argue, however, that dictatorship and repression served the ends of revolution and taught the people to rise up. As silence pervaded Manila, as protests and strikes were replaced with tapping forks and labeled chickens, Sison claimed that the masses were rising up and that this was thanks to Marcos and military dictatorship. He wrote a lengthy piece entitled “Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship to Achieve National Freedom and Democracy”, which was published in *Ang Bayan* on October 1 1972, less than two weeks after the declaration, in which he described the “essence of the formal declaration of Martial Law” as “the brazen imposition of the US-Marcos dictatorship on the entire Filipino nation and people.”³⁵ He wrote that the declaration was “in the final analysis the death sentence for its criminal authors because the people shall

³⁴Pimentel, *Rebolusyon!*, 166-167.

³⁵Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 5-39.

win in the end through revolutionary struggle.” (5) Martial law was advantageous to the masses because

As a result of the complete self-exposure of the US-Marcos dictatorship, the conditions for the rapid advance of the Philippine revolution against US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism have become far more excellent than ever before. The ranks of the revolutionary movement have rapidly broadened and the various forms of revolutionary struggle, principally armed struggle, have further intensified.

The last sentence was a lie. The ranks of the movement had been massively depleted by the declaration and vast sections of the organizational structure of the party and its front organizations had collapsed. As he had hailed the slaughter of the PKI in 1965 as the beginning of a revolutionary struggle, so now he welcomed martial law. Sison wrote,

A new level of revolutionary struggle has come about. All over the country, the people are brimming with revolutionary hatred for the US-Marcos dictatorship, the violent opposite of national freedom and democracy which they cherish. It is starkly clear to everyone that a fascist dictatorship, seeking to perpetuate itself through counter-revolutionary violence can be overthrown only through revolutionary violence. The US-Marcos clique has only dug deeper its grave. (5)

After examining the details of Marcos’ proclamation, Sison wrote,

In the new situation, three things stand out. First, the Communist Party of the Philippines is the most prepared to lead the revolutionary struggle that calls for the armed overthrow of the fascist government. Second, the Party has the strongest and most experienced revolutionary army, the New People’s Army. Third, the ranks of the revolutionary movement have greatly expanded and fighting cadres as well as allies are all over the archipelago determined to conduct people’s war. These things would not have stood out as clearly as now were it not for the fascist viciousness of the US-Marcos dictatorship. (30)

One can almost hear Sison thanking Marcos in these passages. Martial law, he claimed, was a boon and the revolutionary movement was ready for it. On the next page he wrote “we consider the present situation far more favorable to the revolutionary movement than ever before.” (31) Sison announced that the CPP was “determined to join hands with all those who are opposed to the US-Marcos

dictatorship.” He made no class distinctions, anyone opposed to Marcos was an ally of the CPP. Sison called for workers to be sent into the NPA, writing “Those who can no longer conduct legal work or underground work in cities and towns should be dispatched to the people’s army as the Party’s principal form of organization.” (33) Notice that Sison not only liquidated the legal urban organizations of the party, but its underground organizations in the city as well. As martial law was declared, Sison emptied Manila of trained cadre. Sison hailed the suppression of the working class as a benefit for the party, declaring “The more the fascist dictator madly goes after all kinds of workers’ organizations, the more it will aggravate its already isolated position. The more the workers’ rights are suppressed, the more will the workers become fearless of the US-Marcos dictatorship. . . . The violent suppression of workers’ unions and strikes can only yield more determined fighters for the revolutionary cause, provided the Party does well its duty of arousing and mobilizing the workers.” (34)

Sison saw cause for celebration in the suppression of the working class. Despite this, the CPP’s organization of the trade unions went nowhere. Central Committee member Noli Collantes, head of the party’s trade union bureau and son of Marcos’ undersecretary of foreign affairs, was arrested on December 26. He immediately began to identify to the police and military the location and identity of the entire party apparatus in the labor movement, and in January 1973, the “principal underground houses of the trade union bureau under the organization department of the general secretariat were raided.”³⁶ Pimentel writes that the entire labor apparatus of the CPP was crippled.³⁷ Collantes not only identified those associated with the party, he participated in, and even led, their torture.³⁸

Sison’s October article wrote of the party’s relationship to the bourgeoisie as well, as he saw in the declaration of martial law the chance to consolidate ranks with a section of the ruling class.

The Party should win over members of the national bourgeoisie, in the cities and in the countryside, to give political and material support to the revolutionary movement. Since they themselves cannot be expected to bear arms against the enemy, they can extend to the revolutionary movement support in cash or kind or allow use of their facilities. The Party should protect their legitimate interests against the wanton assaults of US imperialism and the puppet dictatorship. The national bourgeoisie can join the anti-imperialist and antifascist

³⁶Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 87; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 220.

³⁷Pimentel, *Rebolusyon!*, 138.

³⁸Abreu, *Agaw-dilim, Agaw-liwanag*, 241.

united front and it will be amply represented in the national coalition government to be set up in the future.³⁹

Sison developed this thought, writing that “The Party should seek and develop an antifascist united front at every possible level with the Liberal Party, with certain sections of the Nacionalista Party and various political groups and figures who are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship. ... There are various ways of cooperating with other political groups and figures. Since the US-Marcos dictatorship is bent on disarming them at any cost, they might as well contribute or merely lend their arms to the New People’s Army. They can also advise their following to cooperate with the people’s army and they can give other kinds of material support. In return, such legitimate interests of theirs as those which do not harm the people can be protected.” (37)

Sison thus declared that the party could not expect the bourgeoisie to take up arms against the dictatorship. The CPP would lead workers and peasants to do that on behalf of the party’s capitalist allies. In return, he requested that the capitalist and landlords, the entirety of the elite opposition, give the party cash. Sison extended them a promise – support us financially and we will protect your interests.

In March 1973, Sison wrote the “Fourth Anniversary Statement of the New People’s Army,” which displayed the same logic: martial law was good for revolution.⁴⁰

In desperate straits, US imperialism and the local diehard reactionaries headed by the puppet chieftain Marcos have shamelessly imposed barefaced fascist dictatorship on the broad masses of the people. This fascist puppet dictatorship has more than ever made the situation excellent for armed revolution, giving rise to a new and higher level of the long-drawn revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people. The national united front has greatly broadened and has become ever more firmly anchored on the necessity of armed struggle. ... The ruling system has hopelessly cracked up from top to bottom. (109)

The united front had collapsed not broadened. It had collapsed because the bourgeois allies of the CPP had either acquiesced, left the country, or joined the Marcos administration. Far from cracking from top to bottom, Marcos’ hold on power was more secure than that of any prior figure in Philippine history. Sison continued this line for years, repeatedly declaring that martial law was good for revolution and the people were spontaneously rising up and taking to arms. Facts at times compelled him to admit that this was not true, but he would then immediately double down upon his insistence on the growing revolution of

³⁹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 36.

⁴⁰Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 109-122.

the masses. In October 1975 he published “An Assessment of the Fascist Martial Rule after Three Years,” which stated “Oftentimes, the fascist dictator and his henchmen comfort themselves by claiming that the people are acquiescent to their usurpation of power.”⁴¹ Sison responded “The broad masses of the people have never been cowed: they have only become more prudent than before the fascist rule.” (272) Sison was here compelled to admit that far from seeing a growing revolutionary struggle, what prevailed was ‘prudence,’ i.e., silence, but then on December 26 1975, he wrote an article entitled “Long Live the Communist Party of the Philippines!” in which he stated, “The toiling masses of workers and peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie and other middle forces have been so oppressed that they are convinced of the necessity of revolutionary armed struggle.” (310)

Sison celebrated the declaration of Martial Law. From his bankrupt political perspective what was needed to lead a revolution was not the patient struggle to build leadership in the working class by explaining to them their conditions and their tasks, but rather the blunt brutality of a dictator. If Marcos simply clobbered the workers enough, they would rise up. Marcos did in fact brutalize the Filipino working class. The vast majority of the victims of martial law were neither the bourgeois opponents of the regime nor members of the Communist Party, but ordinary workers. They were arrested, tortured, and murdered, and yet masses did not rise up. What was lacking was revolutionary leadership.

⁴¹Sison, *Defeating Revisionism*, 271-306.

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The PKP: Endorsing Martial Law

*... we passed deeper yet
into the city of pain, along a track
that plunged down like a scar into a sink
which sickened us already with its stink.*

— Dante Alighieri, *Inferno* (Ciardi translation)

The CPP welcomed martial law; the PKP needed it. If the curtain of dictatorship did not ring down on the present act, they would be shunted from the political stage, spent actors who had exhausted their lines. The continued existence of the party, and the achievement of its aspirations, required an abrupt end to the drama with the sole copy of the script left in the hands of the *dictador*.

In pursuit of the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy, the PKP had bound itself to the President. Unlike prior ties to Macapagal and the Liberal Party, these were not easily loosed. The murderous tensions in the ruling class meant that having cast their lot with Marcos, there remained no other section with whom they could ally. They would rise or fall with him; Proclamation 1081 was the Rubicon of their shared political fate. Military dictatorship was not an unfortunate evil to which the party was prepared to accommodate itself in the furtherance of its interests. It was a measure immediately necessary to the securing of its ends and the PKP labored mightily to achieve it.

Martial law consolidated the political power of their ally. Marcos would employ its sanction to padlock the legislature and pocket the key, and he could thus draw up ties with Moscow without parliamentary interference. He would wield its knout against their Maoist enemies, and the leadership of the PKP, as they moved into key positions within military intelligence, would gain a firm grip upon its haft.

The PKP provided the pretexts – both ideological and military – for dictatorship. They wrote statements justifying martial law in the language of Stalinism and clothing Marcos in the diaphanous *piña* fiber of the progressive national

bourgeoisie. Marcos was abolishing feudalism, they claimed, and with the support of Moscow he could be led down the non-capitalist path of development. They ghostwrote Marcos' apologia for military rule, and had the occupant of Malacañang cite Lenin in support of his machinations. In conjunction with the military, they staged bombings throughout Manila, each of which was neatly tabulated by Defense Minister Enrile and subsequently read out on national television by Minister of Public Information Tatad as he listed the grounds for dictatorship.

The Rubicon was crossed and September closed in silence. Marcos himself expressed amazement at the ease with which he finally assumed the throne. It fell now to the leadership of the PKP in exile to secure support for Marcos from Moscow-aligned parties and their fellow-travelers around the globe. Over the course of the past decade, Moscow had become practiced in the art of peddling their dictator-allies as progressive, and in this manner had sold arms to Suharto with which to slaughter the Beijing-oriented PKI. William Pomeroy, a man of the forest no longer, put the party's bottles of snake oil liniment and tonic on display in the pages of the *Daily World*, cleared his throat and launched his rehearsed pitch: martial law was a means of opposing imperialism and would facilitate the rapid implementation of the national democratic revolution. It was not a credible claim, but the tincture contained a quantity of laudanum sufficient to allow the Moscow bureaucracy's supporters around the world to stomach looking their erstwhile conscience in the mirror. They had weathered Khrushchev's revelations and endorsed the crushing of the Hungarian revolution; they saw themselves represented in the cold apparatchik rule of Brezhnev; they could embrace Marcos as well.

Domestically matters were more complicated. The PKP leadership moved with alacrity, long abeyant, to endorse the dictator, yet it required two years for them to complete the process. They had to exact from their followers a public oath of loyalty to the permanent occupant of the presidential palace and to his apparatus of rule. The majority of the membership had not joined the party in furtherance of this end, and a mixture of lies and violence were required to bring it about. Each of the different class constituencies of the party required an adapted set of methods to be brought to heel.

The bulk of the party's leadership was comprised of academics, professionals, and government officials. Against the 'lost, violent souls' of the KM, stood the hollow men of the PKP, grey and faceless, their dried voices suited to their thin words. These were those who 'crossed with direct eyes' into the kingdom of martial law.

They brought in their wake the majority of the PKP's rank-and-file and periphery: the peasantry organized by the party in MASAKA. Beginning in the early 1960s with the founding of MASAKA, this mass of small peasants, predominantly based in Central Luzon, had been politically educated to appeal to the executive for the implementation of land reform in opposition to the

interests of the large landowners. Joma Sison had written this orientation into the founding documents of the organization and it had been built upon this groundwork. The PKP, on Sison's expulsion, had retained control of the peasant wing and continued to lead it on the meager and conservative basis which he had established. The sole political labor of MASAKA for the decade leading up to martial law had been to seek the consolidation of small property holdings through a powerful and sympathetic executive branch which would carry out measures against the massive estates of the hacenderos.

Marxism had long analyzed the character of the peasantry as a class in embryo, with both conservative and revolutionary tendencies. A small property owning class, it inclined toward the defense and consolidation of its holdings, an orientation which bound it to the capitalist class. An oppressed and impoverished class, it often lashed out at the conditions of its exploitation, an orientation which bound it to the proletariat. Marx lucidly analyzed the political implications of the conservative aspect of the peasantry in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. As they were an economically heterogeneous and geographically disparate group,

They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends the rain and the sunshine from above. The political influence of the small peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.¹

Marx stressed that in its conservative tendencies the peasantry served as the bulwark for dictatorship. The struggle against this tendency required cultivating in the peasant class a sense of its own revolutionary power, not its dependence on rain and sunshine from above, and this in turn required strengthening the bonds of the peasantry with the working class. The peasantry would either be won to the side of the capitalists or the workers. Their loyalty to the working class would be secured not by adaptation to the conservative aspects of their character, but by the revolutionary struggle for socialism.

In keeping with its Stalinist program, however, the PKP sought to subordinate the peasantry in MASAKA to a section of the capitalist class, first mobilizing it behind Macapagal and then behind Marcos with promises that one of these two men would use their executive power to represent the interests of the peasantry. The PKP thus carefully cultivated within the peasantry the most conservative

¹MECW, vol 11, 187-188.

aspects of its nature. In the month after Marcos declared martial law, Washington drew up a new land reform plan for his government. Marcos used the scheme to seize the landholdings of some of his ruling class rivals, including Aquino. The PKP leadership promoted the plan as a revolutionary solution to liquidate feudalism, and the peasant wing of the party was won to the dictatorship.

Unlike the CPP, which headed a firebrand union federation noticeably uncontaminated by actual workers, the PKP headed a staid apparatus of older, established unions and, with the re-incorporation of Lacsina into their ranks in mid-1971, its network was extensive. Their political influence, however, was disproportionately small. The unions of the PKP were not political engines of the working class; they were headed by niggling negotiators who ran them as apparatuses for securing sinecures, not for the militant struggle or political education of the membership. Where the CPP sought to provoke repression on the lines of picket, the PKP labored to keep workers on those of assembly; both methods served to break the independent struggle of the working class. While the hollow men at the head of FOITAF and the CTUP leaned together and pledged loyalty, they could move the majority of the membership neither to support nor opposition. The organs they had built could not secure such political ends, they were lifeless, a 'papier-mâché Mephistopheles,' designed to be propped up in a corner and pointed at occasionally during backroom negotiations. The loyalty of labor pledged by the PKP to the dictator brought to him but the service of its bureaucrat barterers. Between the motion and the act, fell the shadow.

The social weight of MASAKA gave political clout to the party, but lent its front organizations a diffuse and conservative character. The majority of its youth wing in the MPKP were the sons and daughters of MASAKA members, and a significant number followed their parents in the embrace of Marcos. Many of the youth in the MPKP and the BRPF, however, had been naïvely led to the shore of the tumid river, and would not cross. This left them with little political recourse, for what precisely could they do, join the KM? It had vanished. One option remained for the youth and workers around the PKP who were horrified by the seemingly abrupt leap of their leaders into the camp of dictatorship: the *foco* guerrilla units of Francisco Nemenzo and the YCL, which, looking to incorporate all of the oppositional elements of the PKP into its ranks, transformed itself into the Marxist-Leninist Group (MLG). The leadership of the PKP could not enter Marcos' cabinet if a sizable fraction of their party took up armed struggle against the dictatorship, and they turned in cold fury upon their own membership. Summoning the specter of 'Trotskyism,' they systematically assassinated the opposition in a rampage that drowned their insubordinate rank-and-file in blood.

The protracted mechanisms through which the party endorsed the dictator are not entirely clear. They were implemented in the shadows by men skulking in the dark corners of history; those who carried this out are understandably loathe now to speak of their role. They secured salaried positions and negotiated the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy. Their victory, however, was a political

crime and it was not forgiven; their very success spelled the eventual demise of the party. The martial law government funded their publications, but they had no audience. The threadbare mantle of credibility slipped off their shoulders and left them utterly exposed. They staffed the Labor Bureau and became colonels of military intelligence, responsible for suppressing the Maoists and the working class generally. Their periphery ghostwrote Marcos vanity' multi-volume history of the Philippines, *Tadhana*. With the downfall of Marcos in the mid-1980s, some of the individual leaders of the party were able to dress themselves up again as nationalist intellectuals, and the CPP, looking to secure new allies, assisted them in affecting this. The PKP, however, was finished. The Sino-Soviet split was buried. Nationalism required but one party to subordinate the working class to the bourgeoisie, not two, and the PKP was not that party.

Today's Revolution: Democracy

Marcos had from the beginning of his presidency incorporated a number of leading fellow-travelers of the PKP into the inner circle of his administration, among them Blas Ople and Adrian Cristobal, who served as Secretary and Undersecretary of Labor respectively, while maintaining intimate ties with the leadership of the PKP.² Cristobal not only served as Undersecretary of Labor, he also functioned as a ghostwriter for Marcos, and in this capacity he wrote Marcos' book *Today's Revolution: Democracy*.³ The book was published in late 1971, in the wake of Marcos' suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. It argued that the political task of the day was the democratic revolution, which would be implemented by the Marcos government, not from above the Philippine polity but from its center, a conception which corresponded closely to Sukarno's guided democracy. The book stated that Marcos might declare martial law, but this would not be in opposition to democracy but in aid to its fuller implementation against those who threatened the democratic revolution.

Cristobal, in writing the book, attributed to Lenin Stalin's theory of a two-stage revolution, and *Today's Revolution: Democracy* put in the mouth of Ferdinand Marcos the phrase "To Lenin we owe the statement that there could not be revolution without a revolutionary theory. ... Lenin conceived of the revolution in two steps: the first the bourgeois, then the proletarian."⁴ Cristobal's Marcos asserted that the democratic revolution in the Philippines was "nationalist," (64) and entailed above all dealing with social inequality, and stated that "The dominant characteristic of our society which demands radical change is the economic gap between the rich and poor." (78-79) This, Marcos argued, was rooted above all in the Philippines' "oligarchic society." Not all of the wealthy were oligarchs, he continued, and "[w]hen I speak, therefore, of oligarchy, I refer to the few

²Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 40.

³Quiros, *Dead Aim*, 330; Ferdinand E. Marcos, *Today's Revolution: Democracy* (n.p.: n.p., 1971).

⁴Marcos, *Today's Revolution: Democracy*, 60.

who would promote their selfish interests through the indirect or irresponsible exercise of public and private power.” (96)

The book laid the political foundation for depicting Marcos seizure of the assets of his political rivals through the mechanisms of dictatorship as the implementation of the “democratic revolution.” In like manner it depicted the curtailing of the freedom of the press as a necessary measure. The oligarchs, Cristobal’s Marcos claimed, controlled the press, and the press therefore needed to be regulated or controlled, as the oligarchic institution of journalism abused the name of “public service” and was “pandering” to the “low taste of the masses.” (100) The issue of inequality Marcos wrote was “inescapable. As I have said earlier, there are two alternatives: socialization and democratization.” By socialization Marcos meant the seizure of wealth and its redistribution, something he fiercely opposed, and to which he presented democratization as the alternative. Democratization meant that the center – Marcos and his administration – would seize the assets of the oligarchs and use them for “democratic” purposes, while the wealth of all those not deemed “oligarchs” would be secure. Among the assets of the oligarchs was the press, which would be controlled in the interest of “democracy.” The implementation of these measures, the book openly admitted, might require martial law.

In modified Stalinist rhetoric, *Today’s Revolution: Democracy* laid out Marcos’ proposal to declare himself dictator, seize the assets of his rivals, and shut down the press. The P K P thus had one of its leading supporters write the document which it then used as the pretext to show that Marcos and martial law were progressive and which Marcos himself used as the justification for dictatorship. Jesus Lava wrote a public response to the release of *Today’s Revolution: Democracy*, effusively describing the book as “a brilliant analysis of the ills of Philippine society as well as a prescription for a ‘revolution’ from the center.”⁵ The party’s leadership awaited the declaration which everyone knew was coming; they poised were to support it.

Pomeroy: ‘... it is all to the good.’

In 1971 William and Celia Pomeroy, Jose Lava, and “two others” met in Moscow, to form an international committee outside the Philippines which would function as an “arm of the party’s international department.” Celia Pomeroy was appointed head of the committee, but Jose Lava objected to her appointment and attempted to remove her by intrigue. Looking to secure support for his leadership bid, Jose Lava attempted to send a conciliatory letter to Beijing, but the Pomeroyes, being advised of Lava’s machinations by Moscow, prevented its transmission.⁶ William and Celia Pomeroy were thus the heads of the international leadership of the P K P

⁵Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 333.

⁶Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 120-121 fn 32. How Moscow became aware of this and how the Pomeroyes prevented its transmission are both unclear.

in 1972 when Marcos declared martial law, and routinely traveled to Moscow to coordinate their work.⁷ On October 1, less than two weeks after the declaration, William Pomeroy wrote to James S. Allen, a leading member of the CPUSA, in which he rehearsed the party's justifications for its support.

So far there is nothing in any of the press reports we have seen to indicate whether any of our people have been affected. Our movement of course is and has been for a longtime underground, and it has been expecting the Marcos move for a couple of years, so we doubt if many would be caught off-guard.⁸

This was a lie. While the party had anticipated martial law, it had prepared for it not by sending its leadership underground, but by securing salaried government positions. Ruben Torres was traveling to Moscow on the payroll of Malacañang; Haydee Yorac, Romeo Dizon, Merlin Magallona, Ernesto Macahiya, Domingo Castro, all Central Committee members, held salaried government offices from which to conduct the work of the party; Felicisimo Macapagal, head of MASAKA and Secretary General of the PKP, was a paid official of the Land Authority, responsible for Marcos' agrarian reform program. Pomeroy continued,

There are certain reasons why the steps taken by Marcos would even be beneficial to us at present. Those who have been arrested from the Liberal Party and the Catholic groups and from the press are those who have had links (an alliance, actually) with the Maoists and have been publicizing and encouraging Maoist propaganda and action against the PKP as well as Marcos. The CIA and other American agencies have had connections with precisely these elements. If the vicious Maoist propaganda can be stifled, it is all to the good.

Of course Marcos will no doubt shut off our own legal forms of struggle. He will hit at both his right and left opposition. The period ahead will be bleak. But we think our movement has prepared for it and is in a position to survive it. It is not unlikely that some features of Marcos' program as it emerges can be supported, particularly if it clashes with US interests. Our impression is that American interests, although they will find accommodation with Marcos and martial law, would have preferred a "reformist" regime to replace him on the "democratic" ballot-box in 1973. A dictatorial set-up is not going to solve anything and is more likely to lead to sharper, more violent

⁷The Pomeroy's spent the summers of 1972 and 1973 in Moscow, and William referenced this travel in letters to James S. Allen, 3 December 1972 and 15 August 1973 in JSAP, Box 1, Folder 20 (Correspondence 1972).

⁸William J. Pomeroy to James S. Allen, 1 October 1972 in JSAP, Box 1, Folder 20 (Correspondence 1972).

antagonisms between ruling sectors and between the masses and those in power.

Although the politics of Marcos have been benefiting the Americans, he is apparently not wholly their boy. He has business links with Japanese corporations in rivalry with US interests, and he has said in interviews with European newsmen that he wanted to force more equalized and balanced international relations. Do you know, he has also been the first president to take serious steps toward relations with socialist countries, a process slammed by the political opposition that used it to make anti-communist propaganda against him.

In general, we reserve complete judgment on the developments until we have more detailed information. We don't have any illusion about any sector of the Philippine ruling classes, but there are differences and antagonisms that we need to recognize and to work with.

Love from Celia and me.

Pomeroy's logic was clear and thought-through. Martial law, he argued, could "even be beneficial to us," because Marcos had arrested members of the Liberal Party and Catholic groups who were in an alliance with the Maoists. If Marcos suppressed the Maoists, this was "all to the good." Yes, Pomeroy acknowledged, democratic rights would be curtailed, but argued that there were features of Marcos' program which the PKP could support. The only positive feature of Marcos' program which Pomeroy mentioned, however, was that Marcos had "after all taken serious steps toward relations with socialist countries." Marcos was suppressing the pro-Beijing party and opening ties with Moscow; the PKP should support this.

James Allen wrote back on October 6 to express concern over this line.

I was rather surprised by the positive note in your first DW [Daily World] article, and again in your letter. While there may be certain side effects which in passing may be of benefit (say, breaking up the Maoist-type alliances in the PI [Philippine Islands]), these seem to me far overshadowed by the entrenchment of the most reactionary forces by the imposition of martial law ...

That the bona fide CP forces are already well underground and had anticipated such a move, while the open allies of the Maoists had been caught by surprise, is hardly ground for optimism [*sic*] ...

True, Marcos has taken steps of reconciliation toward the socialist countries (so did Franco) and the Maoists have been discomfited. (Remember when the CPUSA did not lift a finger when the Smith Act was first used against the Trotskyites, only to get it in the neck very soon?)

True, as you say, it is complex – but the above is the way I see it

initially. Perhaps you have other information – and second thoughts.
Let's hear.
Best to you and Celia, Jim.⁹

The historical analogy of the Smith Act, invoked by Allen, is worth examining. The 1941 Minneapolis trial of twenty-eight leading members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which was at the time the American section of the Fourth International, was carried out under the Smith Act as “the first peacetime federal prosecution for sedition in American history” and was an important aspect of the Roosevelt government’s preparations to enter the Second World War.¹⁰ The Smith Act made advocating the *idea* of the overthrow of the government a crime. The Roosevelt government used the law to go after the Trotskyist SWP, without touching the Stalinist Communist Party, as the CPUSA was giving its full-throated support to US entry into World War II, while the Fourth International opposed the war as imperialist. James Cannon, head of the SWP, issued a warning to the Stalinist CP that the Smith Act would eventually be used against them as well but the Stalinists enthusiastically supported the prosecution of the Trotskyist party. After the war, as Cannon had warned, the Smith Act was used against the Stalinist party in 1948. The SWP immediately offered to form a united front with the CPUSA against the Smith Act. Farrell Dobbs wrote to the CPUSA Central Committee on behalf of the Political Committee of the SWP. His letter stands in such stark contrast to the behavior of the CPP and PKP that it is worth quoting at length.

The indictment of 12 leaders of your party under the Smith Act is another sharp reminder that in this gag law the rulers in Washington have a diabolical weapon whose barb is aimed at the working class political and trade union movement...

Now that you are under attack, we, the first victims of the Smith Act offer you our aid. We are convinced that only a united struggle by the whole labor movement – by all the tendencies within it – can defeat this conspiracy to deprive you of your democratic rights...

We ask you not to permit the profound political differences between your party and ours to stand in the way of a broad united front of the working class in defense of Civil Rights. While you did not come to the defense of the Trotskyists when we were persecuted under the Smith Act, we have already made public our opposition to your indictment and are fully prepared to further assist in your defense.¹¹

⁹James S. Allen to William J. Pomeroy, 6 October 1972 in JSAP, Box 1, Folder 20 (Correspondence 1972).

¹⁰James P. Cannon, *Socialism on Trial* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1965), 3; North, *The Heritage We Defend*, 47.

¹¹Quoted in North, *The Heritage We Defend*, 47.

The SWP called for a united front, despite “profound political differences,” in order to defend the interests of the working class against the danger posed by the state’s crackdown under the Smith Act. The CPUSA ignored the letter of the SWP, refusing to acknowledge the call for a united front. The concerns which Allen voiced in his October letter to Pomeroy went unheeded. The PKP, which Allen had helped to found, had long mapped out what it intended to do and it moved rapidly to endorse martial law. A month later, Allen was removed from the Central Committee of the CPUSA, a position which he had held for twenty years, and he dedicated himself to heading the editing of International Publisher’s forthcoming editions of Marx and Engels Collected Works in English.¹²

Toward Endorsement

Land Reform

While the political motive for supporting the dictatorship of Marcos originated in the alignment of the geopolitical interests of Moscow with a section of the Philippine bourgeoisie, the nationalist politics of the PKP required a domestic pretext to sell its support convincingly and it found this in Marcos’ land reform.

The land reform program of Ferdinand Marcos, like Macapagal’s 1963 code, had been drawn up in Washington. “Only two weeks after martial law was declared, Dr. Roy Prostermann, of the University of Washington, author of the 1970 land reform in Vietnam (and the subsequent program in El Salvador) arrived in the Philippines with a draft decree in his pocket.”¹³ For Prostermann and Washington the impetus for land reform was the fight against communism, and according to Putzel, Prostermann pursued land reform with “anti-communist vigour.”¹⁴ Where the 1963 code reflected the liberal anti-communism of Ladejinsky and an earlier generation of State Department officials, that of 1972 expressed the post-Bretton Woods predilection for authoritarianism as the bulwark of US interests. For Marcos, the land reform code was part of his move to consolidate power from his political rivals, as Wurfel notes: “For the President himself, land reform’s most important political function was to strike a blow at the ‘oligarchy,’ those wealthy elite who had formed the core of his political opposition. Not surprisingly the Aquino estates were among the first to be expropriated. The subsequent pattern of implementation helped to confirm this interpretation.”¹⁵

¹²William J. Pomeroy to James S. Allen, 3 December 1972 in JSAP, Box 1, Folder 20 (Correspondence 1972).

¹³Wurfel, “The Development of Post-War Philippine Land Reform,” 8.

¹⁴Putzel, *A Captive Land*, 15.

¹⁵Wurfel, “The Development of Post-War Philippine Land Reform,” 8. Ladejinsky, in a letter written in October 1974 to Conrado Estrella, Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform, expressed his concerns over the nature of Marcos’ expropriations in somewhat coded language, stating that the “unceremonious vigor” of the agrarian reform, should be “combined with conciliation.” (Ladejinsky, *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business*, 550).

Marcos adopted Prostermann's document as his own, and announced on October 21 that he would be carrying out land reform through what he termed the 'Farmers' Emancipation Act.'¹⁶

The 1972 land reform code, drafted in Washington and deployed by Marcos against his political rivals, provided the PKP the pretext it needed to initiate open relations with, and give public support to, martial law regime. Franco writes,

Shortly after Marcos signed a new agrarian reform law on October 21, 1972, ... negotiations between [Felicisimo] Macapagal's group and the government began that led to a political settlement ... After reaching a "national unity agreement" with Marcos in 1974, MASAKA established a government relations committee and changed its name to *Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura* (AMA), or "Federation of Agricultural Workers," and continued to exist quietly under the new martial law regime.¹⁷

'New Situation, New Tasks'

The party readied to endorse the dictatorship in its own name, to place the Stalinist imprimatur upon Marcos' martial law regime. While they viewed Prostermann's decree as tolerable pap for their peasant wing, official public support from the Central Committee required a more elaborate justification. In December 1972, the British CP, of which William Pomeroy was a leading member, published portions of a PKP statement in *Comment*, with the note that "the following are extracts from a statement issued by the Communist Party of the Philippines."¹⁸ This was their sales pitch.

¹⁶The NDF denounced the measure as a "sterile rehashing of the sham Agricultural Land Reform Code of 1963," but made no mention of the full-throated support Sison had extended to the earlier code, while the CPP claimed the new program was a "hoax." (National Democratic Front (NDF), "Expose the Sham 'Land Reform' of the US-Marcos Dictatorship," *Liberation* 1, no. 3 [October 1972], PRP 34/01.02; AB, 1 Nov 1972). A draft Tagalog version of the statement is in the PRP. (Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), *Reporma sa Lupa ni Marcos – Isang Malaking Panloloko*, [1972], PRP 09/31.06).

¹⁷Franco, *Elections and Democratization in the Philippines*, 110-11.

¹⁸Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), "The Philippines: What is Behind Dictatorship?" *Comment: Communist Fortnightly Review* 10, no. 26 (1972): 409. The editorial introduction continued, "The full statement makes detailed examination, amongst other questions, of the provocative role played by Maoist groups in creating a situation which Marcos was able to exploit in establishing his military dictatorship, and discusses the new tactics of US imperialism contained within the concepts of the Nixon doctrine and the process known as 'neo-colonial industrialisation.'" I have been unable to locate the entire PKP statement, but it almost certainly was the Political Transmission entitled *New Situation, New Tasks*, published in December which declared that the PKP would be giving assistance to the Marcos regime. This work was referenced in Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 128, however it seems that Fuller himself has not seen the document as he does not directly cite it but includes a reference to Nemenzo.

The PKP argued that pressure, brought to bear on Malacañang by both foreign monopoly capital and the militant struggle of the Filipino working class, was compelling the ‘fascist’ Marcos government to implement the necessary steps toward national industrialization, which the party identified as a progressive measure in the furtherance of national democracy. Marcos’ growing alliance with Moscow meant that his administration could grow beyond these compulsory national democratic steps to move in the direction of socialism in approximately five years. The PKP thus needed to support him in this endeavor in order to assist his ‘fascist’ regime in carrying out its progressive tasks. War was peace; fascism was progressive, or could be made so provided the Communist Party gave it full support. The PKP opened its argument by pointing to the weakening of US imperialism by losses in Vietnam, writing

In the light of this, US imperialism formulated the Nixon Doctrine. Abandoning trade embargo and boycott against the socialist countries, the Nixon Doctrine broadened trade relations with them, not only to create new trade opportunities for the US economy in crisis but also to keep up with the competition from Japan, West Germany and other capitalist countries that have gone far ahead in trading with the socialist states. Thus, US imperialism is compelled by the new balance of world forces increasingly to accept the terms of peaceful coexistence that has been the consistent policy of socialist states.

This development – a decisive victory for the forces of progress and socialism – opened an era of détente between the two social systems.¹⁹

This was the geopolitical terrain of martial law. In the face of the global crisis of capitalism in the early 1970s, and confronting defeat in Vietnam, the hegemony of US imperialism was weakening and it sought to restabilize its dominance through dictatorial forms of rule around the world. Neither Moscow nor Beijing responded with the international struggle of the working class to bury capitalism at long last, but instead pursued rapprochement with Nixon, each against the other. For the Stalinist bureaucracies around the globe, the declining relative strength of US imperialism presented not the occasion for a renewed struggle of the working class for power, but an opportunity to secure the diplomatic interests of Moscow or Beijing. The PKP had denounced China and Mao for ‘treachery’ when they had engaged in pingpong diplomacy with Nixon and Kissinger, but now that Nixon was opening ties with Brezhnev, they hailed the Nixon Doctrine as a victory for socialism. The May 1972 journey of the American president to Moscow was a “decisive victory” for socialism; Nixon had met with Brezhnev, capitalism had been defeated.

¹⁹PKP, “The Philippines: What is Behind Dictatorship?,” 409.

The PKP and CPP followed the lead of Moscow and Beijing. The rival ruling Stalinist bureaucracies established ties with Washington to strengthen their hand against each other, and in so doing shored up the tottering position of US imperialism, embracing its new doctrine and dictators. In like manner, the PKP and CPP, in opposition to each other, tightened their alliance with sections of the Philippine bourgeoisie. Whatever method won out – Aquino’s coup or Marcos’ declaration – bourgeois rule would be stabilized with the assistance of the Stalinists. The Stalinists – Moscow, Beijing, PKP, CPP – saw in the weakness of US imperialism, the economic crisis, and social upheaval, not the moment for the reemergence of revolutionary struggle under Marxist leadership, but a source of redoubled pressure on the ruling class with which to exact the interests of the bureaucracy. With the imminent threat of social explosion hanging in the air, the Stalinists indicated that they were prepared to subordinate the working class to any bourgeois administration, even regimes which they occasionally labeled ‘fascist’, as long as these governments were willing to negotiate.

The document turned to the implications of the Nixon Doctrine for the Philippines. US imperialism was weak; this was why it was carrying out the industrialization of the Philippines, and why Marcos was susceptible to pressure.

The Nixon Doctrine underscores the major policy changes in the Philippines, including the imposition of martial law. In foreign affairs, overtures for diplomatic relations with socialist countries and the subsequent opening of trade relations with them were initiated – a progressive shift which has been misleadingly announced by government propagandists as an indication of Marcos’ independence from US imperialism...

A progressive shift was underway in Philippine foreign policy, implemented by the Marcos administration – the opening of diplomatic relations with Moscow – but this was not being carried out in opposition to the dictates of Washington but in keeping with the reorientation of US imperialism itself. Nixon was compelled to accept the “decisive victory” of socialism, Marcos had to follow suit. The crisis of global capitalism compelled Washington and its puppets not merely to accept diplomatic relations with Moscow, however; it also forced them to end ‘feudal’ relations in countries of belated capitalist development and to develop a national capitalist infrastructure, albeit by dictatorial means.

On the part of US imperialism, there are two complementary reasons for the imposition of fascist rule. The first is to suppress the national liberation movement, and the second is to pave the way for a more accelerated development of the capitalist system in the Philippines... The Marcos military-technocratic dictatorship is reforming the government by weeding out official corruption in response to the demand of foreign capital for an efficient administrative machinery...

The Marcos government, the PKP declared, had imposed “fascist rule” at the behest of US imperialism. By this means, however, Marcos would accelerate the development of capitalism, something which both Stalinist parties had long proclaimed as their goal. He was achieving a progressive end by fascist means. These measures, they claimed, benefited the peasantry and the working class and were a response to their militant struggles.

The “New Society” is doubling efforts to implement a land reform programme ... The people do not owe the Marcos administration any favour in speeding up the land distribution. Marcos has no choice but to sell back the stolen lands to the people. It is not out of grace but out of fear of the people’s power that the ruling circles are giving way to land distribution. It is the long years of revolutionary struggle, shaping the people into a political force, which are bearing fruit today. It is from the soil fertilised by the blood of Evangelista, Balgos, Capadocia, Feleo, del Castillo, Mamangon, and other revolutionary heroes who died and sacrificed before and after them, that the working people today are reaping their economic and social rights that have been forced from the ruling classes. It is therefore by the action of the masses themselves that they are on the way to land reform and ultimately to their class emancipation.²⁰

The lies and twisted political language the PKP was compelled to employ to justify ties with Marcos are extraordinary. US imperialism, through a fascist government, was carrying out the “class emancipation” of the peasants. The ‘progressive’ yet ‘fascist’ Marcos administration was responding to the revolutionary demands of the people and “doubling efforts” to implement reforms. The document continued, however, by arguing that these progressive reforms carried out in response to the revolutionary struggle of the working class and peasantry, were in fact being implemented on behalf of “foreign monopoly capital.”

Foreign monopoly capital in the Philippines is engaged in neo-colonial industrialisation, which necessarily entails the dismantling of feudal institutions. The imperialist scheme calls for radical change in the structure of agriculture to conform to developments in the industrial requirements of the imperialist powers.

In the hands of foreign monopoly capital and their Filipino partners, land reform and the co-operative movement become instruments of exploitation. They will be utilised as means by which the labour power of the peasants is released from feudal moulds to be systematically exploited for neo-colonial industrialisation...

²⁰PKP, “The Philippines: What is Behind Dictatorship?,” 410.

The military dictatorship is also expected to speed up the implementation of reforms of the Philippine educational system demanded by the World Bank. These reforms constitute a crash programme for training Filipino workers in the skills necessary for labour-intensive industries to be set up by multi-national corporations.²¹

The PKP thus argued that there was a temporary convergence of interests between the ‘fascist’ dictator and the people, between the World Bank and the working class, between monopoly capitalism and the proletariat. The “rising cost of labour in Japan, the US and other major capitalist countries resulting from working-class militancy” compelled “foreign capitalists to transfer their labour-intensive industries such as textile and car-part manufacturing to puppet states and neo-colonies where labour is much cheaper.” The PKP and CPP had always made national industrialization the centerpiece of their political platform. Imperialist machinations to maintain the Philippine economy in a “semi-feudal” state, they claimed, had prevented the needed development of domestic capitalism. Now, however, the PKP argued that US imperialism had, in response to its weakened global position, adopted the strategy of neo-colonial industrialization which would tear down the old feudal structures and develop the country’s industrial infrastructure. The PKP enumerated the changes which foreign monopoly capital would implement.

Viewed from the requirements of foreign monopoly capital in the implementation of neo-colonial industrialisation, the Philippines is ill-prepared ... The economy is lop-sided, dominated by a few export products mostly grown on one-crop latifundias – the result of a colonial trade pattern. Agricultural production is essentially primitive and limited to subsistence farming to a large extent. The market is restricted by the starvation level of income, particularly among the rural population. Labour productivity is slackened by debilitating malnutrition, inadequate housing, lack of hospital facilities and other conditions inherent in mass poverty. The people lack technical skills because colonial policy provided no material basis for the development of such skills. Industrial requirements of power, transport, highway systems, and other social overheads are inadequate, limited only to the needs of the imperialist power in each particular stage of its rule. The administrative machinery is terribly inefficient and its personnel hopelessly corrupt, the government having been converted into an employment agency and a means of amassing private fortunes – which is only a reflection of the neo-colonial crisis. (411)

²¹Ibid.

To overcome these limitations had been the long-touted tasks of the national democratic revolution, but to carry out the needed changes by means of “limited reforms,” the PKP wrote, would take “200 years or more,” a claim for which they cited a statement from Marcos’ Executive Secretary Melchor as evidence. “The problem is compounded by the fact that the reforms necessary for the future of capitalism in the country involves [sic] conflicts of interest among the ruling classes,” but by declaring martial law, overriding ruling class antagonisms, and making sweeping changes, Marcos “hopes to achieve this assigned task in the next five years or so.” The national democratic revolution would thus be implemented by military dictatorship, one which the PKP still occasionally labeled ‘fascist.’ The political conclusion of the PKP was clear: in the not too distant future, the struggle for socialism might become the order of the day – perhaps in five years or so – but for now, Marcos’ revolutionary measures, carried out through military dictatorship, deserved support.

In December 1972, Jesus Lava writing from prison issued a document, “Memorandum on the ‘Democratic Revolution’ and Our Struggle,” which he sent directly to Marcos for approval.²² His letter, he later wrote, “was anchored on the reality that he, of all presidents, was in the best position to realize a democratic revolution, with the assumption that he had the sincerity, political will, and moral courage to do so.”²³

Within three months of the imposition of military dictatorship in the Philippines, the leadership of the PKP had given their full endorsement to the martial law regime. Proclamation 1081 was now effectively signed: *Nihil Obstat* – PKP Central Committee, December 1972. Before a merger with the ‘fascist’ administration could be carried out, however, the party leadership needed to compel their recalcitrant members to accept the endorsement of dictatorship or, failing that, to silence them permanently.

MLG

The YCL had served a twisted political function. Drawing on the *foco* guerrilla conceptions of Régis Debray and the urban terrorist tactics of Carlos Marighella, it had both given radical cachet to the PKP among layers of urban youth and been instrumental in supplying Marcos with his pretexts.

Francisco Nemenzo, the theoretical luminary behind the YCL, its orientation and its strategy, was an intelligent man, yet he had functioned for the party as a useful idiot. Every measure which he had taken over the course of two years had assisted Marcos in his declaration of martial law and enabled the party to secure support for it, yet when Proclamation 1081 was declared, Nemenzo opposed the new dictator and instigated a split in the PKP. He had headed the youth

²²Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 182-3. Lava claimed that he drafted the memorandum with Casto Alejandrino and Peregrino Taruc.

²³Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 334.

organization responsible for promoting and participating in the terrorist attacks being carried out by men intimately tied to the Marcos administration. He knew of these ties and yet he promoted their urban guerrilla tactics in relentlessly fawning terms. Soliman – that manly, suave, paisley-clad urban terrorist – had traveled to Moscow with assistance from the Marcos government. Each bombing that Nemenzo praised in his party publications, Marcos tallied and openly ascribed to the CPP. Nemenzo had to know where this was heading. Government agents were working with the party leadership to carry out terrorist acts which Marcos cited as pretexts for military rule. If Nemenzo opposed dictatorship, why did he knowingly function as one of its chief facilitators? The answer rests in the *foco* guerrilla theories of Debray which served as the guiding political conceptions for Nemenzo and the YCL.

The political task according to Debray was the building of *focos* and Nemenzo and the YCL sought to do this in Manila through small urban terrorist outfits. These units, carrying out bombings throughout the city, were the embryo of a new party, they claimed. The political line of the larger PKP apparatus was irrelevant to the YCL and its *focos*, for the party's goals and strategy had no bearing on the destabilizing efforts of their bombing campaigns which would eventually serve as the architecture of a new political movement. As long as the PKP continued to assist the YCL in its efforts, supplying it with arms and capable men, this support would not be spurned, for it facilitated the goals of Nemenzo's group. Even the incorporation into their activity of men who almost certainly were tied to the state was in the end tolerable. Debray had written of the need to recruit the support of the state military apparatus for the *foco*. If it suited Marcos to assist in the construction of the fundamental units of opposition, so much the better. The complete absence of political perspective from the writings of Debray and Marighella, those limited men of technique and tactic, meant that their conceptions could be brought to serve any end. As long as the PKP and the individuals tied to the state continued to fund, arm and assist the YCL, they would be welcome. With the declaration of martial law, however, the PKP immediately ordered the end to the bombings. They had served their purpose and now must stop. Abruptly losing support for their construction of *focos*, the YCL turned angrily against the party which it had tolerated. And thus, having ably facilitated the imposition of dictatorship, Nemenzo and the YCL now declared their opposition.

The details of the events that followed are as hazy as they are bloody.²⁴ Nemenzo and his group formed a new organization, the Marxist-Leninist Group (MLG), which sought to recruit to its ranks from both the PKP and the CPP. Those in the PKP whom they could not recruit they plotted to assassinate. The PKP responded in fury; the MLG was a unanticipated barrier to its long plotted alliance

²⁴My account of this affair is based almost entirely on Nemenzo's and the PKP's own versions of events.

with the dictator. They had carefully calibrated the entire affair, Marcos was now firmly in power, he was suppressing the Maoists and pursuing ties with Moscow, yet they were not in an alliance with him. They needed to police their own membership in order to secure permanent, formal ties with Malacañang. They went on a political killing spree, murdering scores of the MLG before establishing their alliance with Marcos over the corpses of their cadre.

Nemenzo intended to launch a redoubled campaign of terror bombings throughout the city, later claiming that his strategy was “driven by a sense of urgency. We thought (wrongly in retrospect) that the newborn dictatorship could be prevented from consolidating by scaring off the foreign investors and tourists.”²⁵ This was the demoralized and bankrupt political perspective to which Debray and Marighella lent themselves. Gone was any agency of the working class, of even that classless Stalinist amalgam ‘the people’. In their stead was the revolutionary power of tourists and investors. Terrorism amounted to pressure politics brought to bear on the pocketbooks of visiting foreigners. Perhaps a well placed bomb or two would convince several hundred foreigners to seek the sunny shores of Bali over those of Boracay, and in so doing undermine the dictatorship.

To pursue this campaign, the YCL required arms. They had lost their state supplier and needed a new source of explosives and weapons. The PKP claimed that Nemenzo attempted to secure arms from “a top executive of a foreign company” and through “a dubious ‘united front’ with a notorious right-wing warlord family in the North.”²⁶ The “warlord family” was the Crisologo clan, the cousins of Joma Sison, but Nemenzo claimed that he secured the arms, not through an alliance with the Crisologos, but through a raid on their mansion, which was arranged by a friend of Nemenzo’s who was an “executive of the company owned by the [Crisologo] family.”²⁷

In October the PKP held an enlarged meeting of its secretariat in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, to which they invited Nemenzo, where the party leadership under Macapagal “severely censured” him.²⁸ Looking to prevent Nemenzo from continuing his bombing campaign, the party leadership disarmed him and his two companions and interrogated them regarding the location of the arms which they had recently seized. Nemenzo claimed that in the wake of this meeting, in mid-October, the “MLG core group decided to secede from the PKP and form a separate organization.” Thus, looking to consolidate all available forces to the formation of urban terrorist *focos*, Nemenzo transformed the YCL into the MLG, a political group independent of the PKP which sought to recruit members from

²⁵Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 135.

²⁶Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 129; Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), “The Party’s Struggle Against Ultra-‘leftism’ Under Martial Law,” *Ang Buklod*, 1973, no. 1, 25, PRP 29/08.01.

²⁷Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 130.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 131.

within the party.²⁹ If a potential recruit remained loyal to the PKP, the MLG would “coerce him to keep his mouth shut.”³⁰ In addition to recruiting from the PKP, Nemenzo sought to establish ties with the CPP, although it is unclear on what terms.³¹

The PKP rapidly moved to physically liquidate the MLG. Ruben Torres, who had been recruited to the PKP by Nemenzo and now was chair of the urban committee, was “in charge of resolving the ‘Nemenzo problem,’” and was supplied by the PKP with forces recruited from Bulacan, Pampanga and Laguna.³² Soliman, head of the the PKP’s urban guerrilla squad, who had worked closely with Nemenzo until the declaration of martial law, now assisted Torres in the murder of his former comrades.³³ Fuller writes that a “former activist whose loyalty to the party could not be questioned” acknowledged that “a number of MLG members were shot as they lay in their beds.” The MLG responded by attempting to assassinate the leadership of the PKP.³⁴ Pastor Tabiñas [Soliman] claimed that “There was a plan to assassinate ‘all these old people’ [i.e., veteran leaders] as they were said to be cowards . . . All those with an assignment to assassinate the leaders were annihilated.”³⁵ Nemenzo, a Stalinist, described the methods used by the PKP as “the familiar Stalinist technique of conflict-resolution; namely, to kidnap, torture and execute the dissenters after forcing them to sign false confessions,” while the PKP denounced Nemenzo and the MLG as “Trotskyite.”³⁶ In their nine page document summing up the struggle with the MLG, the PKP used the word “Trotskyite” twelve times, more than Mao, Marighella, Lenin, Stalin or any other name. Nemenzo had nothing to do with Trotskyism. He had himself denounced Sison as a Trotskyite on numerous occasions and Sison had used the same label against Nemenzo. They did this because Trotskyite is the name that Stalinists use against an opponent whom they intend to murder.³⁷

Nemenzo was arrested in December 1972. He was not a threat to the Marcos administration; he ceased political activity and was released from prison within three years to resume tenured academic life on the Diliman campus, where his father was Dean of Arts and Sciences. Nemenzo climbed the academic ladder and eventually became President of the University. The threat to the PKP’s unity

²⁹Ibid., 132.

³⁰Ibid., 134.

³¹Nemenzo Jr., “Rectification process,” 84.

³²Joaquin, *A Cadre’s Road to Damascus*, 104.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 136.

³⁵Ibid., 137.

³⁶PKP, “The Party’s Struggle Against Ultra-‘leftism’ Under Martial Law,” 21.

³⁷The use of Trotskyite as a political label to justify execution finds its roots in the systematic murder of the old Bolsheviks carried out under the orders of Stalin. For an account documenting how the figure of Trotsky was the center of the political genocide of 1937-38, see Vadim Z Rogovin, *Stalin’s Terror of 1937-1938: Political Genocide in the USSR*, trans. Frederick S. Choate (Oak Park: Mehring Books, 2009).

with Marcos came not from Nemenzo himself, but from the movement which he had set in motion. The PKP slaughtered the MLG. The exact death toll from this campaign of murder and assassination is unknown. Sison claimed that the PKP “tortured and murdered twenty-seven members of the MLG,” and Rosca claimed that approximately seventy members of the PKP youth were executed by the leadership, when they “refused to accept collaboration” with Marcos.³⁸ While it is difficult to estimate the body count, it is safe to say that significantly more communists were killed by the PKP in the wake of the declaration of martial law than were killed by the dictatorship. As it carried out the physical suppression of its own ranks, the PKP leadership issued a Political Transmission in December which stated that the PKP should “help them [the Marcos government] to annihilate the Maoists.”³⁹ Any opposition to the Marcos dictatorship would be drowned in blood by the Stalinist PKP.

Sixth Party Congress

In the midst of its campaign to murder its former cadre, the PKP called a party congress to compel its remaining membership to endorse the party’s support for the martial law regime. The party acknowledged in its own publications that the core of the dispute with the MLG was the “larger issue of the Martial Law administration of President Marcos and the acute need to forge clear ideological unity within the ranks of the Party itself.”⁴⁰ In February 1973, the PKP held its sixth party congress to resolve this issue; their last congress had been held in 1949.⁴¹ The party had been preparing for its Sixth Congress, which was dedicated to the topic of support for the martial law regime, for over a year. Central Committee member Romeo Dizon stated that “The preparation took more than one year. Even before martial law was declared there were discussions.”⁴² Before martial law had been declared, the party was actively preparing for the congress in which they would officially embrace it.

The Sixth Congress adopted a Program and a Political Statement, and revised the Constitution of the Party.⁴³ The Program embodied the formal abandonment

³⁸Sison and Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, 79; Rosca, “Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World,” 24.

³⁹Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 128.

⁴⁰PKP, “The Party’s Struggle Against Ultra-‘leftism’ Under Martial Law,” 26.

⁴¹It had, in fact, been so long since the party had held a congress that the PKP was uncertain if this was their fifth or sixth congress. The materials from the congress in the *PRP* are labeled Sixth, while when the documents were published in New Delhi later in the year they were labeled Fifth. In 1977 the Party held its Seventh Congress. (Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 138, 158 fn. 3).

⁴²*Ibid.*, 141.

⁴³Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), *Ang Saligang Batas ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, February 1973, PRP 04/02.16; Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), *Program of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), 6th Congress*, February 1973, PRP 04/02.12; Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), *Political Resolution, 6th Congress*, February 1973, PRP 04/02.11.

by the party of the characterization of the Philippine economy as “semi-feudal and semi-colonial,” and its replacement with the characterization of the exploitation of the Philippine economy as “neo-colonial,” a position in keeping with the line being articulated by Moscow since 1969 of the “non-Capitalist path of development.” Imperialism was developing industrialization through dictatorships, they argued. The results of this were progressive, should be endorsed, and channeled to the interests of Moscow. The Political Statement developed this theme, declaring that “The Philippines is a neocolonial country of dynamic capitalist development. Its economy is in the main backward and deformed by colonial plunder. . . . Under the hegemony of finance capital, spearheaded by US imperialism, the Philippines is vigorously being transformed from a predominantly feudal country into a modern capitalist economy. Today it is experiencing a tremendously rapid pace of capitalist buildup through the instrumentality of the martial-law dictatorship.”⁴⁴

While he was carrying it out in the service of finance capital and imperialist interests, Marcos was in fact developing capitalism in the Philippines, they argued. They repeated their claims that dictatorship accelerated this necessary process. There were barriers to the development of capitalism in the country, particularly the old feudal oligarchies, whose opposition meant that the capitalist reforms which Marcos was undertaking would take two hundred years to complete.⁴⁵ Martial law, however, stripped this opposition of its power and would “pave way for a more accelerated capitalist development.”⁴⁶ Dictatorship allowed the Marcos regime to undertake the sweeping implementation of capitalism in a way that could not otherwise be achieved and the PKP again estimated that it would take five years of martial law to carry out these measures.

The line of non-Capitalist development being purveyed by Moscow meant that not all autocratic or dictatorial regimes were to be opposed. It depended on their orientation: dictatorships allied to US imperialism were bad autocracies, while those with ties to Moscow were building socialism and were thus good autocracies. Marcos’ martial law was contradictory, the PKP argued. It was serving the interests of neocolonialism by building capitalism in the Philippines, and this was, for at least the next five years, a positive development. He was also opening ties to the Soviet Union and there was thus the possibility that the dictatorial powers of Marcos could be used to build socialism in the Philippines by taking the non-Capitalist path of development, a possibility which the PKP included in a section of their Political Statement entitled “The Philippine Road to Socialism.”⁴⁷ According to the PKP, the “socialist states are the decisive factor in world development.”⁴⁸ It was support from Moscow which would make it

⁴⁴ PKP, *Political Resolution, 6th Congress*, 29.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁷ PKP, *Program of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), 6th Congress*, 15-16.

⁴⁸ PKP, *Political Resolution, 6th Congress*, 6.

possible for autocrats in Algeria, Egypt, Burma and the Philippines to build socialism. The working class, which Marxism described as the revolutionary class for the building of socialism and the “gravediggers” of capitalism, played but a secondary role. Their task was to support Marcos so that Moscow could assist him in building socialism. To support and further the positive possibilities latent within martial law the PKP needed a free hand to support and pressure the Marcos regime, and thus needed to be a legal organization and play a key role in his government. This was the conclusion of the PKP congress.

In keeping with its support for the dictatorship, the PKP included “the patriotic elements in the armed forces” among the progressive sectors of society. They called for an alliance with the military, holding out “Chile’s shining revolutionary example.”⁴⁹ Allende, with the support of the Stalinists, welcomed the military into his government, whom the Stalinist CP called “the people in uniform.” Allende made Pinochet the head of the Chilean Armed Forces. Five months after the PKP hailed the “shining revolutionary example” of Chile, Pinochet, with the full support of Washington, seized power, systematically arresting, torturing and murdering large sections of the Chilean working class. In keeping with their call for an alliance with the military, and flowing from the ties already established during their terror campaign, the PKP spent the next year negotiating their formal surrender and union, not with Marcos directly, but with the officers of military intelligence.

In the wake of the Congress, the PKP demanded a renewal of party membership, and every cadre had to state agreement with the documents of the Congress in order to be a member of the PKP. You could not be a member of the party unless you were prepared to ally with Marcos and endorse Martial Law.⁵⁰

Endorsing Martial Law

Leading members of the PKP served as the connection between the Marcos government and the party as a whole, negotiating their formal surrender and entrance into his government. The process took a year and a half, both because the party was actively engaged in suppressing its dissenters and because the terms of its entrance into the martial law regime were being haggled over. What official positions would be granted the PKP leadership? Would official relations with Moscow be opened?

Jesus Lava recounted that “when Merlin Magallona . . . was arrested, he was given the offer to negotiate [between the PKP and the Marcos government], which the Party accepted. Romy Dizon, a member of the PB [Politburo], and a detainee in Fort Bonifacio, was released upon request of the PKP, to become part

⁴⁹PKP, *Program of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), 6th Congress*, 5; PKP, *Political Resolution, 6th Congress*, 9.

⁵⁰PKP, “The Party’s Struggle Against Ultra-‘leftism’ Under Martial Law,” 27.

of the negotiating panel.”⁵¹ The arrests and detentions were formalities, ritualistic gestures to cover over the complicity of the PKP in the martial law regime from its inception. As a result of the negotiations, Magallona was made Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs. Throughout this period, as the PKP negotiated with Marcos, Ruben Torres both headed the efforts to murder the MLG and traveled repeatedly to Moscow with the assistance of the Marcos government. Despite their later claims, the party leadership was not underground, nor were they at risk of arrest. Pomeroy recounted that advanced stage negotiations were held between a “a PKP PB delegation” and “top level army and intelligence officers” in mid-1974.⁵² The PKP leadership thus carried out its negotiations with military intelligence – not with the land reform bureau, the labor ministry, or with Marcos himself, but with military intelligence – and they reached a settlement in September 1974. Pomeroy continued,

The substance of the September 1974 agreement was:

On the part of the PKP: (1) an expression of support for specific features of the Marcos program, including agrarian reform as far as it went . . . , industrialization . . . , establishment of industrial unions that would unite the fragmented and disputing trade unions, and the development of diplomatic and all-round relations with the socialist countries; and (2) disbanding the PKP-led armed force, the HMB, and its disarming. . . .

On the part of the Marcos government: (1) recognition of the PKP as a legal organization able to organize and propagandise freely; (2) the extension of amnesty to members of the PKP and the HMB; and (3) the release of all PKP and HMB political prisoners.⁵³

On October 11, in a widely publicized meeting between Marcos and twenty-seven members of the PKP leadership, Felicisimo Macapagal, the secretary general of the Party, declared the PKP’s support for Marcos: “For the first time in the political history of our country, genuine reforms are being directed and carried out in a determined manner by no less than the President; reforms that are meant to advance the frontiers of social justice and open opportunities for a better life for all our people.”⁵⁴ They staged a symbolic turning over of firearms to the president and Marcos instructed the military and the PKP “to prepare a joint study of areas in which the PKP could participate in the various programs of the government.”⁵⁵ Five days later the PKP held a joint press conference at Camp

⁵¹Lava, *Memoirs of a Communist*, 334.

⁵²William J. Pomeroy, “Negotiation as a form of struggle: the PKP experience,” *Debate: Philippine Left Review*, no. 6 (1993): 73.

⁵³Ibid., 74.

⁵⁴Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 186.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Crame with top military officials and both Macapagal and Merlin Magallona spoke, again declaring the party's support for Marcos. Marcos put out a press release that the PKP had "surrendered," Pomeroy claimed, in order to "cover himself from US and bourgeois opposition accusations that he had 'gone soft' on Communists and had made concessions to them."⁵⁶ Pomeroy concluded that Marcos "adhered to [the agreement] and never went back on the terms enabling the PKP to exist and to function legally."

In the months of November and December 1974 a series of public ceremonies were staged in which PKP members turned over arms and received amnesty, but the arms which the PKP handed in were often supplied to the PKP members by the military for the ceremony "in order to impress the newspaper photographers."⁵⁷ The ceremonies included not only the formal members of the PKP but also the membership of MASAKA, as thousands of workers and peasants were instructed by the PKP to attend the ceremonies in November and December, where they were photographed and fingerprinted by the Philippine Constabulary.⁵⁸ On December 12, 1974, Jesus Lava was released from prison.⁵⁹

In April 1975, Nicolae Ceaușescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, visited Manila and signed a joint declaration with Marcos, and on June 2 1976, the Philippines established formal diplomatic relations with the USSR.⁶⁰ Manila and Bucharest concluded a series of trade deals, in which the Philippines agreed to supply Romania with twenty-eight million pounds of nickel, as well as sugar, copra, abaca and other raw materials.⁶¹ The PKP, now functioning in a semi-official capacity in the Marcos government, issued warm greetings to "Comrade Ceaușescu," who arrived "at a most opportune time when the Philippines is vigorously transforming the American imperialist dictated foreign policy into one of normalizing relations with the socialist countries."⁶² The PKP also issued a public statement on the significance of the visit, writing that "President Ceaușescu himself has shown them [the Filipino people] that communists are not ruthless, power-hungry men out to enrich and aggrandize themselves." This was, albeit in the negative, a rather precise description of the brutal Stalinist dictator of Romania.⁶³ Having lied about Ceaușescu, they turned to Marcos, praising him for his "renunciation of violence as an instrument of international and domestic policy." Marcos' military intelligence forces – into

⁵⁶Pomeroy, "Negotiation as a form of struggle: the PKP experience," 75.

⁵⁷Fuller, *A Movement Divided*, 189.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Dalisay, *The Lavas*, 156.

⁶⁰Simeon G. Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground: The Church and State Today* (Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Company, 1975), 131-136; Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II*, Two, Appendix EE, 1261.

⁶¹Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), *The Significance of the State Visit of President Ceausescu*, April 1975, PRP 03/03.01, 3.

⁶²Felicisimo C. Macapagal, *To Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu*, April 1975, PRP 10/16.02, 1.

⁶³PKP, *The Significance of the State Visit of President Ceausescu*, 1.

which some of the leading members of the P K P had now been integrated – were carrying out torture and murder on an industrial scale, and yet the P K P claimed that violence was no longer an instrument of domestic policy.⁶⁴

⁶⁴Ibid., 2.

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Mao embraces Marcos

Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend

How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost

— G.M. Hopkins, *Justus quidem tu es, Domine*

Doña Andrea: Relations with Beijing Founder

The CPP made at least one more attempt after the *Karagatan* debacle to import arms from China, in a plot to “drop watertight tubes packed with arms off the coast of La Union province. NPA scuba teams would retrieve the weapons and ferry them ashore in small fishing boats.”¹ In December 1973, Ricardo Malay and Ibarra Tubianosa traveled to Hainan to view the planned shipment of arms, which included M-14 rifles, bazookas, and ammunition, and which were to be smuggled to the Philippines onboard a small passenger ship named Doña Andrea. Andrea sailed in January 1974 from the Philippines for Hainan with Edwin Alcid captaining the boat along with a crew of eleven. They ran aground on the second day on Pratas Reef in the Dongsha islands in the middle of the South China Sea where a salvage ship from Hongkong found them later that day. Alcid and the crew sought asylum in China and joined Tubianosa and the rest of the CPP members in exile.²

Abinales reports that the ship sank with the arms during its return voyage from China, off the east coast of Luzon, an account which is almost certainly wrong for the Andrea.³ The source of the confusion may lie in the fact that the party attempted to smuggle arms on at least one other occasion. Norman Quimpo recounted that he had been instructed by Alan Jazmines and Fidel Agcaoili to purchase a ship, FB Elvie-S, which was to serve as the back up should the Andrea fail. While Quimpo purchased the ship and readied affairs, Beijing ended all

¹Jones, *Red Revolution*, 78.

²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 78; Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 176.

³Abinales, “Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution,” 84 fn 100.

future shipments with the foundering of the Andrea, so it proved a moot point.⁴ Rodolfo Salas, then a member of the Central Committee, claimed that a second shipment of arms had been attempted between the Karagatan and the Andrea, adding that Sison instructed the “local populace to dig a tunnel to store the firearms at the landing point,” but the ship sank before it could complete its mission.⁵ Salas further reported that “Joma had plenty of money and support from outside. He was even buying resorts, trucks, speedboats, and scuba-diving equipment in the north. The military seized most of it. One colonel, now an elected provincial official in the north, ended up running a trucking company following those seizures.”⁶

Not only did arms shipments from Beijing end, so too did other forms of communication. At the beginning of 1974, Marcos succeeded in blocking Radio Peking on AM bands and listeners needed to use shortwave to hear China’s broadcasts; by April shortwave transmissions had been blocked as well.⁷ The Andrea affair saw the temporary end of the CPP’s attempts to import arms, and while in the mid-1980s they would attempt to secure arms from Lebanon and Syria, for ties with China, the foundering of the Andrea signified the ending of an epoch.⁸

Imelda travels to Beijing

In September 1974, Imelda Marcos led a diplomatic mission to China to open formal ties between Beijing and Manila. She was feted throughout the country, and she met on several occasions with Zhou Enlai and once with Mao Zedong. Marcos was able to secure a deal for the purchase of Chinese oil, which in the midst of the OPEC crisis was desperately sought, and China committed to purchase Philippine exports. Arrangements were made for a state visit by Ferdinand Marcos to China in 1975. The visit of Imelda Marcos to Beijing entailed the recognition by the CCP of the legitimacy of the Marcos’ martial law regime. It also, in keeping with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, meant that Beijing was committing to a policy of non-interference in the internal matters of the Philippines, something Ferdinand Marcos publicly announced, informing the press that “certain Lin Biao elements were training cadre for Philippine rebel movements but added he was satisfied with Prime Minister Zhou Enlai’s assurances that this would not continue.”⁹

Sison in an article published in *Ang Bayan* on October 20 1974 hailed Imelda Marcos’ visit to China as “A Diplomatic Victory of the People’s Republic of China,

⁴Quimpo and Quimpo, *Subversive Lives*, 176-190.

⁵Lopez, “Running Revolution,” 37.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Vizmanos, *Martial Law Diary and other papers*, 174, 224.

⁸Lopez, “Running Revolution,” 37.

⁹Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground: The Church and State Today*, 120.



Figure 44.1: Mao greets Imelda in Wuhan. September 27 1974.

A Victory of the Philippine Revolutionary Struggle.”¹⁰ He wrote that there were “three types of people” in the Philippines who were “disturbed in one way or another about the developing relations between China and the Philippines:” (165) “those who wish to live in the past and fail to recognize that even the United States has already pronounced her policy to move towards the normalization of relations with China;” “the local revisionist renegades who accuse the Communist Party of the Philippines of being inconsistent in opposing Soviet relations with the Philippines and yet endorsing China’s relations with the Philippines;” and “well-meaning people who fear that China’s friendly relations now with the Philippines would serve to help the fascist puppet dictatorship and adversely affect the Philippine revolutionary struggle.” (165) It was this last group, that is to say, the members and supporters of the CPP who were troubled by Marcos being welcomed in Beijing, that Sison was most concerned to persuade.

Why did the CPP support relations between Manila and Beijing and oppose relations with Moscow? Sison answered that the Soviet Union was one of the world’s two superpowers and was looking to exploit and plunder the Philippines. The USSR was, according to Sison, a graver danger than Washington. He wrote “given a longer leash in the country, this superpower will not only be one more imperialist power on the back of the Filipino people but will possibly turn out to be the principal foreign power exploiting and oppressing the people.” (161) Did not Mao’s welcome to Imelda Marcos and her entourage entail Beijing’s

¹⁰Jose Ma. Sison, *Building Strength Through Struggle: Selected Writings, 1972 to 1977*, ed. Julieta de Lima, vol. 3, *Continuing the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City: Aklat ng Bayan, 2013), 149-172.

recognition of the legitimacy of Marcos' anti-democratic dictatorship? Sison responded with a question: "who should represent the Philippine reactionary government now in dealing with China? More than two years have passed since the Marcos rightist coup but we do not yet see other reactionaries deposing Marcos." (167) From Sison's perspective either Marcos or some other reactionary were the only legitimate representatives with whom Mao should deal. As no other reactionary figures were available, Beijing needed to deal with Marcos. He continued, "We simply have to recognize the fact that Marcos remains the chieftain of the reactionary government and that there is no way for China to develop country-to-country relations with the Philippines except by dealing with his government." (168)

Sison, in a labored and dishonest argument, depicted the ties between Beijing and Manila as a brilliant strategic maneuver on the part of China. Beijing was exploiting contradictions between the United States and the Soviet Union by opening up ties with Marcos. He held up Stalin's pact with Hitler as a positive example of such strategic diplomacy, claiming that Stalin had "defeated the maneuver of the other imperialist powers" through his deal with Nazi Germany. (152) Sison acknowledged that Beijing's ties with Manila were negotiated on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the third principle of which was "noninterference in each other's internal affairs." (151) The significance of this clause was immense. It meant that the CCP would not fund or supply the CPP in any way, and it further meant that Marcos could continue martial law and have the military suppress the CPP, and the working class and peasantry generally, and Beijing would not interfere. China would no longer serve as the Yan'an of world revolution.

Sison did not acknowledge these implications. He insisted that "China has never bargained away principles with any superpower and has always courageously fought for her principles." (170) He passed over in silence the fact that China had agreed with Marcos that it would no longer in anyway support the CPP or oppose his regime. Sison was aware of this, however, and his next paragraph addressed the isolation of the Philippine revolution but depicted it as a nationalist necessity, and not the result of Stalinist betrayal, writing that "Revolution cannot be exported to the Philippines via Sino-Philippine relations. . . . Though Sino-Philippine relations can shed some favorable influence, the Philippine revolution must be the creation of the millions upon millions of the Filipino people and must be carried out according to Philippine conditions."

Beijing had struck a bargain with Marcos, opening trade and diplomatic relations with the dictatorship, and Mao had agreed that China would not in any way interfere in Marcos dictatorship, which was an internal matter. Sison heralded this betrayal as "A Diplomatic Victory of the People's Republic of China, A Victory of the Philippine Revolutionary Struggle." The CPP was now completely isolated, and the Philippine revolution, Sison stated, needed to be conducted "according to Philippine conditions." It was to this proposition that

Sison turned in his next significant statement, *Specific Characteristics of our People's War*.

Specific Characteristics of Our People's War

At the beginning of December 1974, a document written by Sison entitled *Specific Characteristics of Our People's War* was published in mimeographed form and circulated throughout the party leadership. Prior scholarship has depicted the *SCPW* as a significant revision of the guerrilla tactics of the *NPA*, a shift from the concentrated attempt to create a revolutionary rural base in Isabela to a network of decentralized operations. Kathleen Weekley wrote that the *SCPW* was "a review that was forced on the Party by severe beatings the *NPA* took from the military during its early years," and one of "the realities behind this was the failure of attempts to bring arms donated by the Chinese Communist Party back to the Philippines."¹¹ In Jones' conception, *SCPW* was "an attempt by Sison to reassure his battered forces in the countryside that the strategic line of protracted people's war would ultimately lead to victory," and its central focus was the need for "centralized leadership, decentralized operations."¹² He argued that this "policy of decentralized operations proved to be a masterstroke that enabled the *NPA* to adapt to the Philippines complex matrix of ethnic and linguistic diversity."¹³ Abinales agreed that the *SCPW*'s "most important section dealt with the policy of 'centralized leadership and decentralized operations.'"¹⁴ Caouette argued that "what the document sought to do was to root the 'universal theory of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought' in the concrete Philippine condition in order 'to understand the laws that govern' the people's war."¹⁵

All of the existing scholarship concurs that the focus of the *SCPW* was the tactical adaptation of Maoism to the Philippines. The document certainly did this, and did focus on the tactical need for decentralized operations.¹⁶ The *SCPW* did far more, however, than revise the tactics of the armed struggle. It was a strategic reorientation of the party. The sections of the ruling class with which the party had allied had not joined forces against the dictatorship in the wake of the declaration of martial law and the party needed to explain this. More importantly, the political line of Beijing had been fundamentally altered and it

¹¹Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 82-83.

¹²Jones, *Red Revolution*, 96.

¹³Ibid., 97.

¹⁴Abinales, "Jose Ma. Sison and the Philippine Revolution," 36.

¹⁵Caouette, "Persevering Revolutionaries," 181-82, emphasis in original.

¹⁶A further discussion in prior scholarship, was to what extent Dante was responsible for the tactical innovations of *SCPW*. Jones wrote that Dante had written up a primer on guerrilla warfare that formed an uncredited basis of the *SCPW*. (Jones, *Red Revolution*, 318, fn 9). Weekley wrote that there was dispute over whether Sison or Dante were responsible for what scholars described as "the most innovative sections of *SCPW*." (Weekley, *The Communist Party of the Philippines, 1968-1993*, 85).

would no longer be arming or supporting guerrilla movements, and Mao and the CCP were instead entering alliances with Washington and with dictatorships around the globe, including the martial law regime of Ferdinand Marcos.

In the *SCPW* Sison justified Mao's betrayal and reoriented the strategy of the CPP in the face of their isolation, without altering the party's political program; the Stalinist two-stage revolution and the bloc of four classes remained unchanged. Sison opened the first section of the document, headed "National Democratic Revolution of a New Type," by insisting on this point. He wrote,

Ours is a national democratic revolution aimed at completing our struggle for national independence and giving substance to the democratic aspirations of our people. . . .

Though we are still fighting for a national-democratic revolution, this constitutes a preparation for carrying out a socialist revolution in our country.

We are therefore engaged in a continuous Philippine revolution, with two distinct stages: the national-democratic and socialist stages. . . .

At the present stage of the Philippine revolution, the Party wields two weapons against the enemy. These are armed struggle and the national united front.¹⁷

Sison also wrote in the opening section that "the national bourgeoisie is encouraged to bring its support to such basic forces of the revolution as the proletariat, the peasantry, and the urban petty bourgeoisie." (4) The Stalinist program of the party was thus unaltered: the party was leading the first stage of the two stage revolution, the tasks of the revolution were not socialist tasks and the bourgeoisie was depicted as a class ally of the working class. In fact if anything *SCPW* displayed an increased willingness to support the interests of the elite. The CPP was desperately seeking class allies and this included support for sections of the landlord class, whom Sison now depicted as "enlightened gentry," writing "We give special consideration, as the masses and circumstances may permit, to the enlightened gentry who endorse and follow our policies and who support our revolutionary war." (5)

The second section of the document, "Protracted War in the Countryside", insisted that the primary strategy of the party was still the armed struggle in the countryside, and the third section, which all prior scholarship has focused its attention on was entitled, "Fighting in a Small Mountainous Archipelago." It revised some of the tactics of armed struggle. The most important revision of tactics was a response to the archipelagic nature of the Philippines, which was depicted as necessitating decentralized operations. Sison wrote that "there is no alternative now and even for a long time to come but to adopt and carry out the

¹⁷SCPW, 3.

policy of centralized leadership and decentralized operations.” Each decentralized seat of operations needed to be self-sufficient, with “cadres of sufficiently high quality to find their own bearing and maintain initiative not only within periods as short as one or two months, periods of regular reporting, but also within periods as long as two or more years.” (9)

Acknowledging that aid was not forthcoming from China, but not acknowledging the political reasons for this, the *SCPW* stated

The principle of self-reliance needs to be emphasized among all revolutionary forces on a nationwide scale. This is because our small country is cut off by seas from neighboring countries, particularly those friendly to our revolutionary cause. The Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian peoples are more fortunate than us in one sense because they share land borders with China, which serves as their powerful rear. Self-reliance can never be overemphasized among us. The basic needs of our people’s war have to be provided for by the people’s army and the broad masses of the people themselves. Our basic source of armaments is the battlefields.¹⁸

In the next section Sison described how “Protractedness is a basic characteristic of our people’s war,” as the *NPA* needed to grow “from small and weak to big and strong.” (15-16) It was, however, the concluding sections of the document, which have been ignored by prior scholarship, that constituted the most significant revisions of the party’s perspective. First, Sison needed to deal with the fact that martial law had been declared and the great anticipated waves of the masses had not joined the ranks of the *NPA*. The party had for years stated that the onset of open military dictatorship would propel the masses into struggle. In section five of *SCPW*, “A Fascist Puppet Dictatorship Amidst Crisis,” Sison doubled down on this point, declaring

The fascist dictatorship is the open terrorist rule of a reactionary clique with big comprador and big landlord interests. The longer it continues in power the more fertile the ground becomes for our people’s war. By negative example, Marcos has stood as the best teacher of the people on the state and revolution. In this sense he is our best propagandist. He has superbly exposed every evil in this semicolonial and semifeudal society by his own lies and misdeeds. (19)

The continuation of dictatorship was good for the revolution, argued Sison, but the great numbers had not yet been propelled into the ranks of the revolution because Marcos headed a “unified fascist reaction”. (20) The party

¹⁸*SCPW*, 10-11. Clearly Sison did not look at a map of Cambodia prior to writing this.

had previously proclaimed that the declaration of martial law would accentuate divisions and fighting within the ruling elite and this would create, they claimed, a revolutionary situation. They had anticipated sections of the elite taking up arms against the Marcos dictatorship. Now they wrote that fascist dictatorship had consolidated the elite into a single unified fascist reaction. There was no opposition to Marcos within the sections of the ruling elite with which the CPP had been allied. This was the first substantial revision which *SCPW* contained.

Sison tried to depict this as a positive development. He wrote that “there is a long-term advantage to the New People’s Army being the only armed force regarded by the people as their own in at least ninety per cent of Philippine territory. It becomes easier and simpler for the middle forces [i.e. the national bourgeoisie] to choose which side they must support. The choice becomes easier and simpler, indeed, the worse the enemy becomes.” (20) As the elite under Aquino, Osmeña, Lopez, Manglapus, etc, had not taken up arms against Marcos, the NPA was the sole armed struggle against the regime. As the regime grew more oppressive, the better it would be for the NPA, for the bourgeoisie would be driven to support their cause.

Why had the elite opposition not taken up arms? This question was addressed by Sison in the next section, “Under One Imperialist Power.” Sison opened the section with the sentence, “The single most valid explanation why there is yet no open war among the reactionaries despite all the bitterness of the internal contradictions among them, a contradiction so marked by the unilateral acts of terrorism and violence by the Marcos fascist gang, is that the entire country is under the domination of one imperialist power.” (23) Sison was tacitly acknowledging that the sections of the elite which the CPP had supported and allied with were intimately connected to US imperialism and could thus not constitute a viable opposition to Marcos without support from Washington. From 1969 to 1972 the CPP channeled all of the anger of the masses in their protests and political development into support for these sections of the elite, using the program of Stalinism to justify this. Now Sison stated that none of these figures represented a viable source of any opposition to either dictatorship or imperialism. He continued,

All other explanations follow, like the anti-Marcos reactionaries never having had a cohesive armed force of some significant size outside of the state’s armed forces; the country being small and archipelagic and not providing much space for a division into several spheres of influence; Marcos having been smart enough to confiscate the arms of the amorphous petty armed groups under reactionary politicians not reliable to him or known to be opposed to him; the officers of the reactionary armed forces having been so trained to maintain canine loyalty to whoever is commander-in-chief by any “constitutional” pretext; and so on and so forth. (23)

He concluded this point: “Many explanations can be made but so long as they are pertinent to the question they all lead to the single explanation that U.S. imperialism is the single most important determinant force in reactionary politics in the country.” (24) This was a damning indictment of the entire political line adopted by the party in the lead up to martial law. None of the figures with whom they allied and to whom they gave support represented any form of viable opposition to dictatorship or the interests of US imperialism. The CPP had led the masses to support a section of the ruling class, whom they now acknowledged would take no political steps without support from Washington. What is more, Sison was claiming that the reason that masses had not yet flocked to the armed struggle was because the elite had not taken up arms. Sison drew no political lessons from this explanation after the fact, but doubled down on the party’s policy of support for the national bourgeoisie and explicitly expanded this to include sections of the landed elite.

Despite this assessment, Sison would continue to pin the political hopes of the party on a successful coup d’etat staged by the “reactionaries.” Writing in May 1975, for example he stated that “It is very possible that before we can organize trade unions in large droves . . . the Marcos fascist clique shall have been overthrown by a coup d’etat by other reactionaries, who are still supported by US imperialism, but who may adopt some antifascist posture.” He wrote that “The Lopez group has started to stir after more than two years of being blackmailed since the declaration of the fascist martial rule.”¹⁹ In December 1974, Sison wrote in a similar vein.

More and more leading elements of what the fascist dictator has sweepingly categorized as the Right have started to fight back. Marcos is now the one terrified by the united front between the Left and all other antifascist forces. . . .

Significant sections of the Catholic clergy and laity, some local power groups and anti-Marcos groups with the reactionary armed forces have started to stir. Marcos now is definitely more terrified by the possibility of a coup d’etat against him and his fascist clique than by the military operations of our people’s army. Certainly, he is most terrified by the combined strength of the antifascist united front which has already isolated his regime.²⁰

Thus, having concluded in *SCPW* that the elite opposition to Marcos, with which the party had allied, had failed to fight against martial law because of its intimate ties to US imperialism, Sison continued to purvey the need for an united

¹⁹“Uphold the Leadership of the Proletariat in the Revolution and Go Deep among the Masses of Workers,” Sison, *Building Strength Through Struggle*, 266, 268.

²⁰“The Communist Party of the Philippines Enters the Seventh Year Since Reestablishment,” *ibid.*, 224.

front with these figures. He depicted them in the coming years as perpetually on the verge of rising up and promoted the idea that the party should enter an alliance with right-wing coup plotters in the military and their ruling class sponsors.

Sison then turned in the *SCPW* to the question of why arms and support were not forthcoming from China, in a section entitled “Decline of US Imperialism and Advance of World Revolution.” Where previously the CPP had insisted that the greatest resource of the armed struggle in countries like the Philippines was China, which served as a Yan’an for the countryside of the world, now Sison wrote of the need for self-sufficiency. The prior conception had been bound up with the ideas of Lin Biao, but had been abandoned and in its stead Sison articulated Mao’s three world theory which justified the relations which China had established with both the United States and with dictatorships around the world, including that of Marcos. The first world in this theory was no longer composed of the advanced capitalist countries, but was rather the “two superpowers, US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism,” who were “fighting without letup for markets, fields of investment, sources of raw materials and strategic positions and they keep on bumping into each other.” (32) The United States and the Soviet Union were rival imperialist powers, both of whom were capitalist, but one disguised its capitalism in the language of socialism.

Sison argued, absurdly, that “the desertion of the Soviet Union from the ranks of the socialist countries by becoming revisionist, social-capitalist, and social-imperialist does not make for an increase in the strength of the world capitalist system but instead makes for an increase in the virulence of interimperialist and intercapitalist contradictions.” (35) Just as Sison argued elsewhere that the murder of Communists strengthened the revolution, so here he claimed that what he described as the abandonment of socialism in the Soviet Union weakened global capitalism. The worker’s state in the Soviet Union, however immensely degenerated it had become under the weight of the Stalinist bureaucracy, had not yet been fully liquidated. This would require another decade and a half of betrayals. Sison however saw the immense gains of the October Revolution as having been completely obliterated. And, like Mao, Sison hailed this development as weakening global capitalism.

In this context, Sison argued, “socialist construction” in China “enhances its ability not only to defend itself against one or two superpowers but also to fulfill its internationalist obligations.” (36) China would now be carrying this out, not by arming revolutions in surrounding countries, but above all through what Sison called the “Leninist policy of Peaceful Coexistence, specifically the Five Principles.” These principles, first articulated in the treaty between India and China in 1954, included as their third point, “Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs.” This meant that Beijing in concluding diplomatic and trade deals with Marcos, the Shah, Pinochet and others, agreed that it would not support armed insurgency or opposition within these countries. These

principles, Sison argued, were “an important weapon in the service of the world revolution because by it the broadest possible united front can be created against the two superpowers and contradictions even in the ranks of our enemies can be taken advantage of. It fully accords with Marxism-Leninism to make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few and crush our enemies one by one.” (36) In other words, while the CPP was engaged in an armed struggle against the Marcos regime as the embodiment of US imperialism in the country, the CCP would enter the “broadest possible united front” with Marcos as a means of exploiting alleged “contradictions” between Marcos and Washington.

Sison was attempting to justify the betrayal being carried out by Beijing. Capitalist restoration in China was being launched, not by Deng Xiaoping, but by Mao himself, who opened the country up to Washington and supported its dictator allies around the globe. Sison supported this policy using the language of Stalinism, claiming that by means of Beijing’s relations with “third world countries and small and medium sized countries ... the monopoly of the imperialists over international affairs is being shattered.” (36) He repeated his support for Beijing’s new policy, writing,

In the world of anti-imperialist struggle against the two superpowers, it is entirely correct for China and other socialist countries to raise their levels of socialist revolution and socialist construction and rely on their own proletariat and people and upon such a basis carry out an external policy that would foster unity with Asia, Africa and Latin America and take advantage of inter-capitalist contradictions as well as contradictions between the two superpowers themselves.
(37)

The unity which China was concluding with “Asia, Africa and Latin America” was not with the working class and peasantry of these countries but with the dictators who were oppressing them. It was on this basis that Sison argued in *SCPW* that the CPP needed to be self-sufficient. Aid from Beijing to the party was not coming; from this point forward, any aid from China to the Philippines would be sent to Marcos.

Mao greets Marcos in China

From June 7-11 1975 Ferdinand Marcos traveled to China. On June 8, as a demonstration of Beijing’s severing of ties with the CPP and support for the martial Law regime, Marcos issued a statement to the press in China that his hard-line policy on rebels [i.e., CPP-NPA] would continue. On June 9, Zhou Enlai and Marcos issued a joint communiqué, which was published in the Philippines the next day, explicitly affirming the principle of non-interference in each others internal affairs. Following Nixon’s lead, Marcos affirmed the One China policy,

and agreed that Taiwan was an integral part of Chinese territory, and Zhou recognized the legitimacy of the Marcos government.²¹ In the face of Marcos' open declaration that he would continue to suppress the CPP, Beijing, still under the leadership of Mao Zedong, signed a document affirming the legitimacy of his government, and agreeing not to support the CPP in any way. Marcos returned to the Philippines on June 12, independence day, and held a press conference, in which he announced

China's leaders are aware and appreciate our commitment to liquidate any insurgency or subversion that threatens our government

...

In my five days in China, I had one long meeting with Chairman Mao, two meetings with Premier Zhou Enlai, three meetings with vice Premier Deng Xiaoping ...

In all these conversations of about nine hours, I pointedly asked the Chinese leaders questions about the differences in our systems, about the role that China might play, covertly, in any political struggle that might take place in the Philippines.

Consistently, I obtained the assurance that the choice of our social system is our own sovereign business in which no intervention ought to be permitted, and that we should be free to deal with any insurgency, subversion or rebellion in accordance with the security and well-being of our government and people.²²

Neither the CPP nor the CCP made any effort to gainsay Marcos. The Chinese Communist Party was perfectly content to ally with Marcos as he employed the entirety of his dictatorial powers to crackdown on the Filipino working class and peasantry; they had publicly committed themselves to remaining silent on these 'internal matters.' The CPP, founded on a nationalist program in the service of the foreign policy interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing, was by 1975 something of an embarrassment to the CCP and Mao Zedong severed all ties with the Philippine party. Joma Sison, who for years had heralded the Chinese Communist Party as the leadership of world revolution, publicly celebrated this betrayal, proclaiming it "a glorious victory" for the "proletarian foreign policy" of Beijing. He pointed the way forward for the CPP, doubling down on the party's nationalism and politics of class collaboration, insisting that the revolutionary struggle in the Philippines needed to be "self-sufficient."

The Filipino working class and peasantry, Sison argued, had no international allies on whom they could rely. The international solidarity of the working class was nothing but a rhetorical flourish for Sison. He erected nationalist barriers

²¹The full text of the communiqué was reprinted in Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground: The Church and State Today*, 128-130.

²²Del Rosario, *Surfacing the Underground II, One*, 144.

to this solidarity, and within the boundaries of the nation-state sought to bind workers politically to the ruling class. Thus, while Sison claimed that Filipino workers no longer had any international allies, within the country he expanded the field to include any section of the ruling class willing to work with the party. Sison openly proclaimed the party's eagerness to collaborate with landlords and capitalists alike, with anyone who expressed interest in joining the CPP's struggle against Ferdinand Marcos.

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Aftermath

*What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish?*

— T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

Ang Bayan in its earliest years stands in striking contrast to the tone and outlook which was adopted by the CPP's flagship publication beginning in the mid-1970s. During this early period, *Ang Bayan* dedicated a sizable majority of its pages to international developments, particularly focusing on the contest between the Soviet Union and China. Anyone familiar with the later tenor of the writing of the CPP immediately notices the difference. Beginning in the mid-1970s *Ang Bayan* adopted an increasingly parochial perspective. Headlines were occupied almost exclusively with reports of local armed encounters and the number of arms which the party claimed to have won, or enemy combatants which it killed or wounded. The broadest perspective that the CPP achieved was to report on national developments. To the extent that they were reported at all, international events only entered the pages of *Ang Bayan* through the lens of Filipino nationalism, and were interpreted in terms of the impact which they would have on Filipinos. In the period of its founding, the CPP conceived of its nationalism as a component part of a broader international whole – the expansion of revolutionary struggles centered in China. The program of Stalinism led ineluctably toward the restoration of capitalism in China and the complete isolation of the CPP. The party turned in upon itself.

The strategy of decentralized operations, put forward by Sison in *SCPW* in response to the CPP's isolation from China, accelerated this involution. The nationalism of the CPP metastasized from a necessary stage in the revolution into the end in itself. The most grotesque expression of the involution of the CPP was the purges which the party conducted within its own ranks in the late 1970s, throughout the 1980s, and into the early 1990s. Over a thousand cadre were killed in witch-hunting campaigns against alleged infiltration by agents. Comrades were tortured for confessions and then executed in mass graves. The roots of the purges are complex and require detailed study, but they can only be

understood in the context of demoralization and disorientation caused by the utter geopolitical isolation of the party.

Exeunt

The ruling class opponents of Marcos largely moved into exile. They lost political power and some lost their family holdings as Marcos seized many of their businesses and placed them under his loyal cronies. From the vantage point of the elite this was the worst of Marcos' crimes, and in their denunciations, Marcos' corruption, crony capitalism and profligacy acquired near mythic proportions. The crimes of military rule faded into the background. Last of all to depart was Ninoy Aquino, who was imprisoned longest and only departed the country to the United States for heart surgery in 1980. In the United States he joined a group of exiles who were plotting the overthrow of Marcos. Aquino, Lopez, and Osmeña funded bombing campaigns and assassination attempts against Marcos. When Aquino returned to the country, on August 21 1983, he was shot down dead on the Manila Airport tarmac, twelve years to the day after the Plaza Miranda bombing. E. Voltaire Garcia died of leukemia in early 1973 under house arrest. Edgar Jopson, most prominent of the SocDem leaders, joined the CPP, becoming a leading member before being killed by the military in 1982.

The leadership of the PKP was incorporated into the Marcos government apparatus. Some took up positions in the Ministries of Land Reform or of Labor; others were given high-ranking positions within military intelligence and were responsible for the direct enforcing of dictatorial rule. Ernesto Macahiya was made a colonel in the military and then an executive of the Development Bank of the Philippines. Ruben Torres was given a high position in the Labor Ministry which allowed him to travel throughout the world. He later ran for Senate on the Ramos and Estrada slates, before becoming a congressman in 2001. Merlin Magallona was made Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs. Jesus Lava and Tonypet Araneta began channeling spirit guides together in prison in the immediate wake of the declaration of Martial Law. Upon his release from prison, Lava continued to pursue his "psychic research."

In 1975 the CPP issued instructions to both the KM and the SDK to disband. They had served their purpose and all youth dissent would now be channeled directly into the NPA. The most dedicated youth members of the KM and SDK did take to the hills when martial law was declared, and one-by-one they were killed. Antonio Hilario was shot in the back of the head in 1974; Antonio Tagamolila was shot on the same day; Ma. Lorena Barros was shot at close range in the neck in 1976. Many members of the front organizations, however, and even of the party itself, simply resumed civilian life. Their future trajectories were an expression of their class ties and the character of their nationalist politics. Sonny Coloma became spokesperson for the Benigno Aquino III administration; Jerry Barican for Joseph Estrada. Jose David Lapuz became presidential consultant for Arroyo.

Rey Veal became president of MIT. Gary Olivar became an executive at Sumitomo Bank in New York before becoming spokesperson for Arroyo. Rigoberto Tiglao, head of the Manila-Rizal Regional Command (MRRC), became Chief of Staff for Arroyo and then Ambassador to Greece. Nilo Tayag declared his support for Marcos while in prison and on his release became a priest in the Aglipayan church, rising to the rank of Bishop.

Victor Corpus surrendered in January 1976. On his release he was promoted and drew up the military plans under the Corason Aquino government for suppressing the CPP. Renato Casipe, also a Central Committee member, surrendered in the same year, providing evidence to the military against his comrades. Ruben Guevarra, long the party's leading executioner, left the party to become a high-ranking officer in military intelligence in the ISAFP.

Dante was arrested in August 1976. He later told *Asiaweek* in an interview: "Socialism is a goal only in the very far future, if ever. Our immediate aim is a national democratic revolution. The vestiges of feudalism must be wiped out, peasants must be truly free, and the Philippines must be freed from the economic, military, political and cultural stranglehold of US imperialism. After that, the socialist revolution could come next. Maybe we will never need to have communism."¹ He set up an agricultural cooperative in Central Luzon under the Corason Aquino administration.

Joma Sison was arrested in 1977. He was released from prison in 1986 and shortly afterwards took up life in exile in the Netherlands. He has not been back to the Philippines in thirty years.

¹"A Talk with Dante," *Asiaweek*, September 1981, 27.

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Appendices



Acronyms

A6LM	April 6 Liberation Movement
ABLML	Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Martial Law [People's Alliance against Martial Law]
ABLPPL	Alyansa ng Bayan Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis [People's Alliance against Oil Price Hikes]
ACT	Association of Concerned Teachers
ACTION	Association of Citizens to Improve Our Nation
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AG	Artists' Group
AIFLD	American Institute for Free Labor Development
AIM	Anti-Imperialism Movement
AKDLPPL	Alyansa ng Komunidad ng Diliman Laban sa Pagtaas ng Presyo ng Langis [Diliman Community Alliance against Oil Price Hikes]
AKSIUN	Ang Kapatiran sa Ika-Uunlad Natin [The Brotherhood for our Progress]
AMA	Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura [Federation of Agricultural Workers]
APCU	Associated Port Checkers Union
AS	Arts & Sciences
AWA	Allied Workers Association
AWU	Associated Workers Union
BAYAN	Bagong Alyansang Makabayan [New Nationalist Alliance]
BCT	Battalion Combat Team

BRPF	Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation
BSDU	Barrio Self-Defense Unit
CA	Catholic Action
CAFA	Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities
CAT	Civilian Army Training
CCF	Congress of Cultural Freedom
CCN	Chinese Commercial News
CCP	Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines
CCP	Cultural Center of the Philippines
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CEGP	College Editors Guild of the Philippines
CFI	Court of First Instance
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CICRC	Commission Internationale contre le Régime Concentrationnaire
CIR	Court of Industrial Relations
CIU	Counterintelligence Unit
CLO	Congress of Labor Organizations
CLPP	Consolidated Labor Party of the Philippines
CLU	Civil Liberties Union
CMPDR	Citizens Movement for the Protection of our Democratic Rights
CNL	Christians for National Liberation
COLA	cost of living adjustment
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
CONDA	Conference Delegates Association
CORDS	Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
CPM	Cadets' Protection Movement
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Council
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CPUSA	Communist Party of the USA
CSM	Christian Social Movement
CSVP	Committee for Solidarity with the Vietnamese People
CTUP	Confederation of Trade Unions in the Philippines
CUFA	Committee on Un-Filipino Activities
DBP	Development Bank of the Philippines
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs

DMST	Department of Military Science and Tactics
DPT	Demokratikong Pederasyon ng mga Tsuper [Democratic Federation of Drivers]
EDSA	Epifanio de los Santos Avenue
ESOP	Employee Stock Ownership Plan
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCEA	Filipino Civilian Employees Association
FEATI	Far Eastern Transport Inc.
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FEU	Far Eastern University
FFF	Federation of Free Farmers
FFW	Federation of Free Workers
FOITAF	Federacion Obrera de la Industria Tabaquera de Filipinas
FQS	First Quarter Storm
FYP	Five Year Plan
GIS	Criminal Investigative Service
GM	General Motors
GMD	Guomindang
GPU	Gosudarstvennoye politicheskoye upravlenie [State Political Directorate]
HLP	Humanist League of the Philippines
HMB	Hukbo Mapagpalaya ng Bayan [People's Liberation Army]
ICA	International Cooperation Agency
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IMC	Institute of Mass Communications
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	International Police Association
IRBM	Interregional Ballistic Missile
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
ISAFP	Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines
ITWF	International Transport Workers Federation
JCP	Japanese Communist Party

JSP	Japanese Socialist Party
JUSMAG	Joint US Military Advisory Group
KAGUMA	Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan [Federation of Nationalist Teachers]
KAMI	Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia [Indonesian Students Action Front]
KASAMA	Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng mga Manggagawa [Federation of Workers Associations]
KASAPI	Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas [Gathering of the Pillars of the Philippines]
KATIPUNAN	Katipunan ng Kababaihan para sa Kalayaan [Federation of Women for Freedom]
KBLBM	Kilusan ng Bayan Laban sa Batas Medicare [People's Movement Against the Medicare Law]
KGB	Kapunonang Gawasnon sa mga Batan-on
KGB	Kabataang Gabay ng Bayan [Youth Guide of the Nation]
KIAPMA	Koferensi Internasional Anti Pangkalan Militer Asing [International Conference Against Foreign Military Bases]
KKD	Katipunan ng Kabataang Demokratiko [Union of Democratic Youth]
KKKP	Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang Pilipino [The Tagalog name of SCMP]
KM	Kabataang Makabayan [Nationalist Youth]
KMP	Katipunan ng Malayang Pagkakaisa [Federation of Free Unity. Often known as KAMP].
KMP	Katipunan ng Manggagawang Pilipino [Union of Filipino Workers]
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
KPD	Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya [Movement for National Democracy]
LAKASDIWA	Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanggi [Strength of the Brown Spirit]
LDA	Liga Demokratiko ng Ateneo [Democratic League of Ateneo]
LEADS	League of Editors for a Democratic Society
LM	Lapiang Manggagawa [Workers' Party]
LP	Liberal Party

MAKAMASA	Malayang Kapulungan ng Makabayang Samahan [Free Assembly of Nationalist Federations]
MAKIBAKA	Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan [Free Movement of New Women]
MAN	Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism
MAPAGSAT	Malayang Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper [Free Unity of Driver Federations]
MASAKA	Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka [Free Federation of Peasants]
MASANA	Makabayang Samahan ng mga Nars [Nationalist Federation of Nurses]
MASMED	Makabayang Samahang Mediko [Nationalist Medical Federation]
MCCCL	Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties
MDP	Movement for a Democratic Philippines
MDR	Movement for Democratic Reforms
MIT	Mapua Institute of Technology
MKA	Makabayang Katipunan ng Ateneo [Nationalist Federation of Ateneo]
MKK	Malayang Katipunan ng Kabataan [Free Federation of Youth]
MLG	Marxist-Leninist Group
MLQU	Manuel L. Quezon University
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOSTURE	Movement of Students for Reforms
MPD	Manila Police Department
MPKP	Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino [Free Unity of Filipino Youth]
MPS	Manila Port Service
MRRC	Manila-Rizal Regional Command
MTT	Makabayang Tagapag-ugnay ng Tondo [Nationalist Coordinator of Tondo]
NAFLU	National Federation of Labor Unions
NAMARCO	National Marketing Corporation
NATU	National Association of Trade Unions
NAWASA	National Water and Sanitation Authority
NBA	Nationalist Businessmen's Association
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation
NC	Nationalist Corps
NCNA	New China News Agency

NCP	Nationalist Citizens Party
NDF	National Democratic Front
NEC	National Economic Council
NEPA	National Economic Protectionism Agency
NET	Nationalist Education Teams
NICA	National Intelligence Coordinating Agency
NKVD	Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del [People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs]
NLRC	National Land Reform Council
NLU	National Labor Union
NMFWU	Northern Motors Free Workers Union
NOYPM	Negros Oriental Youth Progressive Movement
NP	Nacionalista Party
NPA	New People's Army
NPAA	Nagkakaisang Progresibong Artista-Arkitekto [United Progressive Artists-Architects]
NPC	National Press Club
NPM	National Progress Movement
NSA	National Security Agency
NSL	National Students League
NU	Nahdatul Ulama
NUSP	National Union of Students of the Philippines
NYPM	National Youth Progress Movement
O24M	October 24th Movement
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PACD	Presidential Assistant on Community Development
PAFLU	Philippine Association of Free Labor Unions
PAKMAP	Pambansang Kilusan ng Mangagagawa sa Pilipinas [National Movement of Workers of the Philippines]
PAKSA	Panulat para sa kaunlaran ng bayan [Writing for the progress of the nation]
PAL	Philippine Air Lines
PALEA	Philippine Airlines Employees Association
PAP	People's Action Party
PC	Philippine Constabulary
PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro
PCC	Philippine College of Commerce
PCFSV	Philippine Committee for Freedom in South Vietnam

PCI	Philippine Chamber of Industry
PCTU	Philippine Congress of Trade Unions
PDIC	Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
PDS	Prente para sa Demokrasyang Sosyal [Front for Social Democracy]
PES	Presidential Economic Staff
PGH	Philippine General Hospital
PHILCAG	Philippine Civic Action Group
PIC	People's Investigating Committee
PIFCA	Philippine-Indonesian Friendship and Cultural Association
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia
PKM	Progresibong Kilusang Medikal [Progressive Medical Movement]
PKM	Pambansang Kaisahan ng Magbubukid [National Peasant Unity]
PKP	Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAW	Philippine League of Academic Workers
PLUM	Philippine Labor Unity Movement
PMA	Philippine Military Academy
PMMA	Philippine Merchant Marine Academy
PMP	Pinagbuklod ng Manggagawang Pilipino [Filipino Workers Movement]
PMP	Pagkakaisa ng mga Magbubukid sa Pilipinas [Unity of Philippine Peasants]
POKA	Pederasyon ng mga Organisasyon sa Caloocan [Federation of Organizations in Caloocan]
PPP	Party for Philippine Progress
PRF	People's Revolutionary Front
PSBA	Philippine School of Business Administration
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSIA	Progresibong Samahan sa Inhinyeriya at Agham [Progressive Federation of Engineering and Science]
PSMT	Pambasang Samahan ng Makabayang Tsuper [National Federation of Nationalist Drivers]
PT	Political Transmission
PTGWO	Philippine Transportation and General Workers Organization
PTUC	Philippine Trade Union Council
PTWO	Philippine Transport Workers Organization

QCPD	Quezon City Police Department
RA	Republic Act
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
SAAF	Society for the Advancement of Academic Freedom
SAF	Students Against Fascism
SAFL	Student Anti-Fascist League
SAGUPA	Samahan ng mga Guro sa Pamantasan [Federation of University Teachers]
SBK	Samahan ng Bagong Kaisipan [Federation of New Thinking]
SCA	Student Catholic Action
SCAP	Student Council Association of the Philippines
SCAUP	Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines
SCMP	Student Christian Movement of the Philippines
SDK	Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan [Federation of Democratic Youth]
SDKM	Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan - Mendiola
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SIKAP	Samahan sa Ikaunlad ng Kabataang Pilipino [Federation for the Progress of Filipino Youth]
SK	Sanduguang Kayumanggi [Brown Blood Brotherhood]
SKIT	Samahan sa Ikaunlad ng Tsuper [Federation for the Progress of Drivers]
SM	Sandigan Makabansa [Patriotic Pillars]
SMMP	Samahan ng Mamamayang Malaya ng Pilipinas [Federation of the Free People of the Philippines]
SMS	Samahan ng Makabayan Siyentipiko [Federation of Scientific Nationalists]
SOB	Sectoral Organization Bureau
SPAP	Student Power Assembly of the Philippines
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SPK	Samahan Pangkaunlaran ng Kaisipan [Federation for the Development of Consciousness]

SPP	Samahang Progresibong Propagandista [Federation of Progressive Propagandists]
SPP	Socialist Party of the Philippines
SR	Socialist Revolutionary
SRC	Student Revolutionary Committee
SSS	Social Security System
STAND	Student Alliance for National Democracy
SVCF	State Varsity Christian Fellowship
SWP	Socialist Workers Party
TOYM	The Outstanding Young Men
TRM	Thomasians for Reforms Movement
UE	University of the East
UFC	United Fruit Company
UG	Underground
UIF	Union de Impresores de Filipinas
UIFO	United Islamic Forces and Organizations
UKP	Ugnayan ng Kilusang Progresibo [Progressive Movement Association]
ULP	Unfair Labor Practices
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOEF	Union de Obreros y Estivadores de Filipinas
UP	University of the Philippines
UPCA	UP College of Agriculture
UPCACS	UP College of Agriculture Cultural Society
UPCF	UP College of Forestry
UPCLL	UP Civil Liberties League
UPLB	UP Los Baños
UPM	Ugnayan ng Progresibong Manggagawa [Association of Progressive Workers]
UPSC	UP Student Council
UPSCA	UP Student Catholic Action
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USDU	University Self-Defense Unit
USIA	US Information Agency
USIS	US Information Service
USO	United Service Organizations
UST	University of Santo Tomas
USTC	US Tobacco Corporation

USTCEA	US Tobacco Corporation Employees Association
USTCLU	US Tobacco Corporation Labor Union
VOA	Voice of America
VWP	Vietnam Workers' Party
WFDY	World Federation of Democratic Youth
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WOC	Women's Organizational Committee
YCL	Young Communist League
YCSP	Young Christian Socialists of the Philippines
YOR	Youth Organization for Recto
YPM	Young Philippines Movement
ZOTO	Zone One Tondo

Glossary

antiguo Skilled contractual labor. Part of the *cabo* system.

arrastre Longshoremen.

bakla Homosexual.

buwisan Cash-based fixed rent tenancy.

cabo Contractual labor gang system.

Concon Constitutional Convention. A convention of delegates to revise the 1935 Philippine Constitution.

conefo Conference of Newly Emerging Forces. A Sukarnoism, it was conceived as a bloc of emerging countries in opposition to the old established countries of the US and the USSR.

intsik Chinese. Generally used as a racial slur.

jeepney A privately owned and operated form of public transit, they are extended jeeps running established routes for fixed fares.

juramentado Someone who runs amuck, *amok*

konfrontasi Confrontation. The word entered Philippine parlance during the crisis over Malaysia in 1963-64. Disputes between the CPP and PKP were dubbed *konfrontasi*.

makibaka, huwag matakot! Struggle, don't be afraid! This became the slogan of the FQS

moderno Unskilled contractual labor. Part of the *cabo* system

Maphilindo Malaysia Philippines and Indonesia. An attempted regional political bloc in the early 1960s.

Meralco Manila Electric Co.

Metrocom Metropolitan Command. The PC unit operating within Metro Manila. Metrocom was established by Marcos in 1967.

nasakom Nasionalisme, Agama, Komunisme – Nationalism, Religion, Communism. This term was Sukarno's attempt to meld these three conflicting ideologies.

nekolim Neo-colonialism, Colonialism and Imperialism. A Sukarnoism for the hostile forces arrayed against *Conefo*.

natdem National Democrat. Subscribing to the Stalinist line of the CPP that the national democratic revolution had to precede the socialist revolution.

pillbox A small home-made explosive containing gunpowder, nails and other debris. These were routinely carried to protests and rallies in the pockets of demonstrators.

samahan Share tenancy.

sandigan Something which can be relied upon, such as the back of a chair or a foundation. It is generally used in politics to mean a strong leader upon whom one can rely. I have translated it as pillar in KASAPI and SM.

socdem Social Democrat. Subscribing to the right-wing, reformist politics of various religious groups as well as the Second International.

Extant issues of Ang Bayan, 1969-1975

1969

Jul 01	Eng	Reg	1 no. 2	PRP 23; ABM	52
Jul 01	Tag	Reg	1 no. 2	PRP 27/01	55
Aug 01	Eng	Reg	1 no. 3	PRP 23; ABM	36
Sep 15	Eng	Reg	1 no. 4	PRP 23	45
Oct 15	Eng	Reg	1 n. 5	PRP 23; ABM	36

1970

Jan 15	Eng	Reg	2 no. 1 ²	PRP 23	28
Jan 28	Eng	Rep	On the January 26th Demonstration	PRP 14/22.01	3
Feb 28	Eng	Spe	2 no. 2 ³		
Jun 01	Eng	Reg	2 no. 3	PRP 23	43
Sep 04	Eng	Spe	<i>On the Counterrevolutionary Line of ...</i> ⁴		
Sep 28	Eng	Spe	<i>On MAN</i>		
Oct 04	Eng	Spe	NPA Shoots Down first Helicopter	PRP 23	2
Oct 15	Eng	Spe	Political Report to the 2nd Plenum of 1st cc	PRP 23	27
Nov 07	Tag	Spe	Ulat ng Radio Peking	PRP 27/01	2

1971

Jan 27	Eng	Spe	<i>Against the Wishful Thinking ...</i> ⁵		
Feb 01	Eng	Reg	3 no. 1 ⁶		
Feb 18	Eng	Spe	Cast Away the Labor Aristocrats	PRP 23	2
Feb 22	Eng	Spe	CPP supports National Minorities ...	PRP 23; ABM	2
Feb 24	Eng	Spe	All Blows against US Imperialism and its ...	PRP 23; ABM	2
Mar 19	Eng	Reg	3 no. 2	PRP 23	19
Mar 19	Tag	Reg	3 no. 2	PRP 27/01	20
Mar 30	Eng	Reg	3 no. 3	PRP 23	10
Mar 30	Tag	Reg	3 no. 3	PRP 27/01	11
Mar 30	Eng	Spe	NPA on Tagamolila Defection	PRP 23	4
Apr 06	Eng	Spe	Hsinhua statement on NPA	PRP 23	2
May 03	Eng	Spe	Statement on the May Day Massacre ...	PRP 23	7
May 21	Eng	Spe	NPA wins fresh victories	PRP 23	4
May 30	Eng	Reg	3 no. 4	PRP 23	22
Jun 01	Eng	Spe	<i>Counter-Guerrilla Views</i> ⁷		

²Missing pages.

³This issue can be partially reconstructed from Sison2013a, 153-204, and FQS1970

⁴Reprinted in Sison2013b, 43-50.

⁵Reprinted in Sison2013b, 59-76.

⁶This issue can be partially reconstructed from Sison2013b, 77-82.

⁷Reprinted in Sison2013b, 89-115.

Jun 15	Eng	Spe	The Anti-Marxism and Eclecticism ...	PRP 23	15
Jul 30	Eng	Spe	<i>On the Lavaite Misrepresentation of the ...</i> ⁸		
Aug 24	Eng	Spe	We Unite Against Tyranny of Marcos ...	PRP 23	5
Aug 28	Eng	Spe	Latest Raid brings to 6 total number of ...	PRP 23	3
Sep 20	Eng	Spe	On the Partial Lifting of the Writ ...	PRP 23	2
Sep 23	Tag	Spe	Nilipol ng NPA ang mga Tropa ng Kaaway	PRP 27/01	2
Oct 29	Tag	Spe	Pagpapapanumbalik ng mga Lehitimong ...	ABM	2
Nov 01	Eng	Spe	<i>A Tale of Two Renegades</i> ⁹		
Nov 01	Eng	Spe	<i>Pomeroy's Forest Nightmare</i> ¹⁰		
Nov 04	Tag	Spe	Tungkol sa Bantog na Kriminal na si ...	PRP 27/01	2
Nov 15	Eng	Spe	Pomeroy's Apologia for US Imperialism	PRP 23	12
Nov 30	Eng	Spe	Pomeroy's Apologia for Soviet Revisionism	PRP 23; ABM	19
Dec 15	Eng	Spe	sc Decision on Suspension of Writ ...	PRP 23	6
Dec 20	Dig	Spe	NPA Denies attacking 8 towns in ...	PRP 27/01	2
Dec 23	Dig	Spe	Whole Enemy Platoon wiped out in Bicol	PRP 27/01	2
1972					
Jan 15	Eng	Reg	4 no. 1	PRP 24	25
Jan 15	Tag	Reg	4 no. 1	PRP 27/01	28
Feb 12	Eng	Spe	Suharto: The Ugly Face of a Fascist ...	ABM	3
Mar 03	Tag	Reg	4 no. 2	PRP 27/01	24
Mar 03	Eng	Spe	<i>Summing up our Experience After 3 Years</i> ¹¹		
Mar 05	Tag	Spe	Pinabubulaanan ng NPA ang ...	PRP 27/01	2
Mar 29	Eng	Spe	Hail the 3rd Anniversary of the NPA	PRP 24	5
Mar 29	Tag	Spe		PRP 27/01	6
Apr 25	Eng	Spe	MRRRC Condemns Malabon Massacre	PRP 24; ABM	2
Apr 26	Eng	Spe	CPP condemns US-Marcos Clique ...	PRP 24; ABM	2
May 01	Eng	Spe	May Day 1972 Statement	PRP 24	3
Jun 12	Eng	Spe	Fight of Genuine National Independence	ABM	2
Aug 04	Eng	Spe	On the Deluge in Luzon	PRP 24	4
Aug 05	Eng	Spe	7 BSDU Members Join NPA	ABM	2
Aug 24	Eng	Spe	Reactionary Armed Forces & Lava ...	ABM	2
Aug 24	Tag	Spe		ABM	2
Aug 28	Eng	Spe	sc Decision on Parity Rights	ABM	3
Sep 08	Eng	Spe	Statement on the Psy-War Campaign of ...	IGP 02/02	2
Oct 01	Eng	Rep	Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship	ABM	14
Oct 12	Eng	Spe	Dictator Marcos Uses Concon to ...	ABM	2
Nov 01	Eng	Spe	Marcos Land Reform – A Big Hoax	ABM	5
Nov 15	Eng	Spe	Revolutionary Propaganda Movement ...	ABM	3
Dec 05	Eng	Spe	New Constitution is License for US ... ¹²	ABM	3
Dec 26	Eng	Spe	Party Enters Its 5th Year	PRP 24	4
1973					
Jan 22	Eng	Spe	On the Latest Fascist Proclamations ... ¹³		
Jan 22	Eng	Spe	The 'New Society' is in Peril – Marcos ¹⁴		
Jan 28	Eng	Spe	On the Agreement Ending the War ...	PRP 24	4
Mar 29	Eng	Spe	Fourth Anniversary Statement of the NPA ¹⁵		
Apr 10	Eng	Reg	5 no. 1	ABM	8
Dec 26	Eng	Spe	On the 5th Anniversary of ...	ABM	3

⁸Reprinted in Sison2013b, 273-287.

⁹Reprinted in Sison2013b, 289-307.

¹⁰Reprinted in Sison2013b, 309-320.

¹¹Reprinted in Sison2013a, 375-410.

¹²Only fragments are available.

¹³Reprinted in Sison2013c, 89-95.

¹⁴Reprinted in Sison2013c, 97-105.

¹⁵Reprinted in Sison2013c, 109-122.

1974

May 01	Eng	Spe	1974 May Day Statement	ABM	3
Oct 20	Eng	Rep	Diplomatic Victory of PRC; Victory of ...	ABM	10
Dec 26 ¹⁶	Eng	Reg	6 no. 4 ¹⁷		

1975

Feb 01	Eng	Spe	February 27 "Referendum" ... ¹⁸		
Mar 29	Eng	Rep	Long Live the NPA ¹⁹	ABM	3
May 01	Eng	Reg	7 no. 2 ²⁰		
Aug 15	Eng	Spe	NPA 1974 Victories in Cagayan Valley	ABM	4
Oct 06	Eng	Spe	An Assessment of the Fascist Martial ...	ABM	23
Dec 26	Eng	Spe	Long Live the CPP	ABM	5

¹⁶The problematic character of Sison's reprinted material is here evident. Sison2013c on p. 173 dates this issue to Nov. 15, while on p. 219 it is dated to Dec. 26.

¹⁷This issue can be partially reconstructed from Sison2013c, 173-177; 219-235.

¹⁸Reprinted in Sison2013c, 237-241.

¹⁹Sison2013c, 243, indicates that this reprinted statement was part of regular issue 7 no. 1 on the same date.

²⁰This issue can be partially reconstructed from Sison2013c, 257-270.

Pseudonyms

The sources for this list of pseudonyms are identified by author and date and can be located in the bibliography. DR77 is Del Rosario 1977 Volume One, and DR77a is Volume Two. Certain pseudonyms, e.g., Amado Guerrero, are ubiquitously confirmed in the documentary record and I have not listed a source for them.

There are multiple figures identified by a single pseudonym among the Huks. This reflects the common practice of giving a new guerrilla leader the name of a recently deceased commander. This was intended to create a sense of continuity and to promote the illusion that Huk commanders were not being killed.

CPP and PKP

- Agcaoili, Fidel** Luis Borja; Percy [*Quimp02012*, 190]
Aguilar, Mila Clarita Roja
Atienza, Monico Tomas Lopez [*DR77*, 360] Later in his testimony Melody stated that Atienza was Martin Poblador and that he did not know who Tomas Lopez was. [431]
Belone, Alex Ka Tandis [*Jamoralin1997*, 59]
Buscayno, Bernabe Commander Dante; Payat
Calixto, Leopoldo Babes; Ka Baldo [*Zumel2004*, 283]
Carlos Jr., Sixto Ricardo Rodriguez [*Zumel2004*, 252]
Co, Leoncio Albert Pizarro [*DR77*, 431]
Collantes, Manuel Noli; Juan Rodriguez [*DR77*, 431]
Escandor, Johnny Jose Barrameda [*Jamoralin1997*, 80]
Estrada-Claudio, Sylvia Nikki Lansang [*Abinales2004*]; Sunny Lansang [*Marxism2010*, 140]
Espiritu, Ramon Johnny [*Lava2002*, 291]
Garcia, Arthur Rosauero del Fuego [*DR77*, 360]
Gonzales, Frank Ka Renan [*Zumel2004*, 295]
Hilario, Antonio Tonyhil [*Zumel2004*, 283]
Jallosres, Romulo Commander Tangkad [*SDK2008*, 11]

- Jallos, Ruben A.** Commander Benjie [*Jamoralin1997*, 106]
- Lansang, Teodosio** Manuel Cruz; Angel Santos; Mariano Castro; M.K. Filipov; Boris Borisov; Lin Ching-shan; Chou Hao-ming [*Lansang1972*]
- Lava Jr., Francisco** Paco
- Lava, Jesus** Francisco Villaroman; [*Saulo1990*, 67]
- Lava, Jose** Francisco Balagtas; Pepsi [*Lava2002*, 291]
- Luneta, Jose** Tomas Tambunting [*DR77*, 360] Lilia Tambunting [*DR77*, 431]
- Magallona, Merlin M.** Alberto R. Tiongson [*Marxism2010*, 187]
- Nemenzo, Francisco** Aurora Evangelista [*Fuller2011*, 125] Mario Frunze [*Fuller2011*, 125]
- Pomeroy William** Jorge Maravilla; Bob; Ricardo Morales [*DR77*, 76]
- Quimpo, Nathan** Marty Villalobos; Omar Tupaz
- Rodolfo, Agustin** Gasang. [*Fuller2007*, 209]
- Romero, Henry** Ka Lirio [*Zumel2004*, 281]
- del Rosario, Nona** Ka Mia [*Zumel2004*, 284]
- San Juan, E., Jr.** JR Verdad [*Gollobin 01/14*, 09/28/72]
- Sison, Jose Ma.** Andres N. Gregorio; Ramon Flores; Amado Guerrero; Armando Liwanag; Patnubay K. Liwanag
- Tagamolila, Antonio** Ka Del [*Zumel2004*, 282]
- Tagamolila, Crispin** Commander Cely [*Zumel2004*, 51]
- Tayag, Fernando** Socorro Rojo. [*DR77*, 431]
- Tayag, Nilo** Pio Labrador [*DR77*, 360] Pio Poblador [*DR77*, 431] Romeo Reyes, Romy. [*Saulo1990*, 113]
- Tera, Perfecto** Amado Gaston [in *Eastern Horizons*]; Rodrigo Roxas [in *Temps Modernes*]. [*APL*, 2 July 1971, 14]
- Torres, Ruben** Miguel Gonzales [*Joaquin2003*, 98]
- Vizmanos, Danilo P.** Diana C. Poblete [*Vizmanos2006*, 28]; D. Tenido [*Vizmanos2000*, 205]; Elias Ibarra [*Vizmanos2003*, 259]
- Zumel, Antonio** Manuel Romero (head of NDF); Puri Balandó; Jose Mabalacat. [*Zumel2004*, xi]

Organizations

- Kabataang Makabayan (KM)** Karina [*DR77*, 119]
- Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK)** Shelly [*DR77*, 119]

Huks

- Bagsik, Avelino** Commander Zaragosa [*DR77a*, 770; *Lachica1971*, 158]
- Bie Jr., Benjamin** Commander Melody. [*DR77*, 49]
- Bie, Linda** Sylvestre Liwanag [*MB* 3 Sep 1965]

- Bondoc, Felicisimo** Felicing [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Bulanadi, Ceferino** Commander Ford. [He acquired this name because he was the driver of a Fordson truck, *DR77a*, 788]
- Canlas, Manuel** Commander Melchor. [*DR77*, viii]
- de la Cruz, Cristobal** Ubang [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- dela Cruz, Zacarias** Delio [*Lachica1971*, 23]
- Cunanan, Benjamin** Commander Hizon [*10/29.03*]
- Dimatulac, Manuel** Commander Ligaya [*DR77a*, 1013]
- Dizon, Poincar** Commander Bucoy [*DR77*, 49]
- Flores, Maximo** Nestor, Taga, and Max [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Garcia, Abelardo** Commander Billy [*DR77*, 564]
- Garcia, Dominador** Commander Ely [*Lachica1971*, 25]
- Gatchalian, Juan** Commander Amor [*DR77a*, 1114]
- Gonzales, Felino** Commander Feling [*DR77*, 507]
- Guevarra, Ruben** Estrella del Sur; Commander Peter [*DR77*, 431]
- de Guzman, Mariano** Commander Diwa [*Joaquin2003*, 108]
- Ignacio, Ricardo** Oscar [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Layug, Eduardo** Commander Layug [*DR77*, 346]
- Lopez, Efren** Freddie [*Lachica1971*, 23]
- Lopez, Pepito** Boy Batok [*DR77a*, 644]
- Mallari, Policarpio** Commander Pio [*DR77a*, 1013]
- Mamangon, Orlando** Commander Elmo [*Ang Mandirigma*, 36/06.01, 5]
- Manalang, Cesario** Commander Dante [*DR77a*, 788]
- Manarang, Avelino** Commander Billy [*DR77a*, 1121]
- Mandalla, Roberto** Commander Robert [*Lachica1971*, 145]
- Mayuyu, Ernesto** Esto [*DR77a*, 1249]
- Miranda, Ernesto** Commander Panchito. [*DR77a*, 945]
- Miranda, Gaudencio** Commander Goody [*DR77*, 346] Later named as Segundo Miranda [*DR77*, 431]
- Miranda, Hermogenes** Commander Zaragosa [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Ocampo, Gregorio** Commander Tony [*Lachica1971*, 153], also Commander George [*Lachica1971*, 158]
- Pangilinan, Pablito** Commander Soliman [*DR77a*, 1077, 1130]
- Pacheco, Oscar** Commander Roy [*DR77*, 513] or Commander Boy [*DR77*, 515]
- Rivera, Juanito** Commander Juaning [*DR77*, 346]
- Salac, Felix** Commander Pelaez [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Salac, Florentino** Commander Fonting [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Sanguyo, Benjamin** Commander Pusa [*DR77*, 49]
- Santos, Ciriaco** Daku [*DR77a*, 1118]
- Santos, Roberto** Commander Felman [*DR77*, 360]
- Soriano, Marcelo** Commander Madrigal [*DR77*, 346]
- Subong, Hernando** Sareno [*Lachica1971*, 153]
- Tabiñas, Pastor** Commander Soliman. [*Fuller2011*, 129; *Joaquin2003*, 79]

Tuazon, Ruben Rubio [*DR77*, 431]

Tubo, Paquito Commander Danilo [*DR77a*, 1078]

Yambao, Domingo Freddie. This was an earlier Freddie, Efren Lopez replaced him. [*Lachica1971*, 153]

Other

Astorga, Jose S. Diosdado Guerrero [*Astorga1972*]

del Rosario, Simeon Maximo Giron. [*Rosario1975*, back page]

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- Abad Santos, Vicente, 564
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