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NPA squad smashes AFP cordon, kills 8

SAMAR, Bataan -- An eight-man squad of the New People's Army beat back encircling A.F.P. commandos and killed eight of them, including a lieutenant.

The encounter took place last Oct. 2 in a thickly wooded mountain area within the limits of this town.

The NPA Red fighters were resting in their encampment after a day of work with the peasants in the area, when the state troopers closed in and opened fire from several directions.

Quickly taking up positions and returning fire, the NPA squad engaged the large commando force in a gunbattle which lasted from 5 to 9 p.m.

Eight state troopers, including a lieutenant, were confirmed killed, and several others were wounded.

By 9 p.m., the NPA squad, with one casualty, had broken through the encirclement and withdrawn, taking with them an M-2 folding rifle and some ammunition confiscated from a slain trooper. (NMP) ●

A deep sense of outrage swept the country these last few days as the full impact of the acute fuel crisis began to register.

With the US-dominated oil cartel and the Marcos martial law regime not only imposing prohibitive prices on oil and oil products but also tightening the valves on the outflow of fuel, almost all aspects of daily life were adversely affected.

Among the most immediate effects were the following:

1. Prices of foodstuffs and other essential commodities skyrocketed way beyond the reach of the masses as freight charges and other production costs spiralled. Prices were increasing further with every passing day, heightening the sufferings of low-wage earners and even those in the higher income brackets.

2. The problems of unemployment and underemployment were aggravated further as industries dependent on oil products for their operations prepared to cut down on their personnel.

3. Transportation operators such as those in the Bus Operators Association of the Philippines (BOAP) and the Association of Taxicab Operators of Manila and Suburbs (ATOMS) pressed their demands for higher

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PRICES SHOOT UP...

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fares to help them meet the hiked costs.

4. Queues stretching several blocks in some cases were familiar sights throughout the country as private motorists and drivers of public utility vehicles were compelled to line up at gasoline stations for gas which was expensive and increasingly more difficult to come by.

5. The supply of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), or cooking gas, tightened as the big oil companies resorted to hoarding. (See story on next column.)

SCAPEGOATS

While these difficulties arose to bedevil the whole nation, the dictator Marcos and leaders of the oil cartel sought to make scapegoats of the oil-producing Arab countries and even the small Filipino gas dealers whose profits have actually been reduced.

No mention was being made of the manipulative practices of US imperialism which controls the oil cartel (see data on page 3) or of US-supported Zionism under which Israel has driven out the Palestinians from their homeland and is expanding its territory through armed aggression against the Arab nations.

HIKED TAXES

Toned down was the fact that fuel prices had been increased to enable the oil cartel to rake in additional superprofits and to buttress the martial law regime through hiked specific taxes that went up to as much as ₱0.14 per liter of gasoline.

As expected, the cost of living rose so steeply that even if the daily minimum wage were to be increased from the present ₱8 to ₱20, workers would be hard-put making both ends meet.

FOOD PRICES UP

Housewives doing the daily marketing had a graphic view of the price hikes as food prices increased day after day in public markets and privately owned supermarkets alike. Compounding their problems was the shortage of LPG, forcing many of them to use wood for cooking.

To them and to other commuters, there also was the problem of transport as many buses and jeepneys and private cars were kept at their respective garages for lack of gasoline. Many motorists have had to get up at dawn or stay up until late at night

to be able to gas up.

As the fuel crisis worsened, the expected chain reaction ensued. At press time, the dictatorship was preparing to allow fare increases to bus and taxicab operators.

BUS, TAXI FARES

The bus operators, through the BOAP, have asked that the minimum fares be increased from ₱0.15 to ₱0.25. On the other hand, the taxicab operators, through the ATOMS, asked that the initial charge registering in the taxi meters be ₱1 and that all succeeding clicks of the meter register ₱0.30 instead of the present ₱0.10.

Jeepney operators, too, wanted the minimum fare at ₱0.25, but the dictatorship reportedly was set to phase out the jeepney from the streets of Greater Manila.

This would aggravate the unemployment problem as thousands of drivers would be thrown out of their jobs once the jeepneys are abolished. ●

Higher prices of cooking gas hurt households

A great majority of households in Manila and in the provinces now directly bear the brunt of increased prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or cooking gas.

The Oil Industry Commission, in its new decision increasing prices of oil products, authorized the price increase of LPG by four centavos per pound.

Under the new OIC ruling, the price of Esso Gasul (26.45 lbs.) has increased from ₱12.75 to ₱13.80; Starflame Caltex (25 lbs.) from ₱12.50 to ₱13.50; Shellane (30 lbs.) from ₱13.50 to ₱14.70; Mobilflame (25.35 lbs.) from ₱12.25 to ₱13.25; Rockgas (30 lbs.) from ₱14 to ₱15.20; Philigas and Manilagas (25 lbs.) from ₱12 to ₱13.

To escape blame, the dictatorship has resorted to make scapegoats out of LPG dealers.

Malacanang propagandists have loudly accused LPG dealers of overpricing in an effort to conceal the fact that increased LPG prices are part of the present oil crisis created by giant oil companies.

Reacting to the dictatorship's propaganda, LPG dealers interviewed by LIBERATION revealed the following:

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WHY THE OIL PRICE HIKES ARE NOT JUSTIFIED

(SPECIAL REPORT)

The local oil companies, all subsidiaries of giant monopoly oil firms abroad (mainly US), were granted the biggest price hikes so far by the Oil Industry Commission. Among the reasons provided by the oil companies in petitioning for the price increases, two stand out as the principal considerations on which the OIC based its approval.

We are reproducing here observations and data culled from a paper of Samahan ng mga Makabayang Siyentipiko, a group of anti-imperialist scientists and scholars, in order to dispute the two major claims of the oil companies. The paper, entitled "The Recent Price Increase Petitions of the Oil Companies in the Philippines" and dated July 1972, is a condensation of a full report on the oil problem in the country.

First major reason: The price of crude oil increased.

OBSERVATION: This price of crude oil is imposed by the mother oil companies on their local subsidiaries here. It is the "posted price" of crude oil which is 25 to 30 per cent higher than the prices of crude oil from sources other than the oil cartel (group of giant monopoly oil firms). "Posted prices" are merely accounting prices on which the oil producing countries (i.e., Arab countries) and the oil cartel base their calculations of total profit which they split as per agreement.

■ The increase in the "posted price" of crude oil has nothing to do with the prevailing price of crude in the world market. But since the oil firms here are subsidiaries of giant monopoly corporations abroad, these subsidiaries are obliged to buy crude from the mother companies at the exorbitant "posted price".

■ Local subsidiaries resort to overpricing to fatten the profits of their mother companies. Esso and Mobil import the same crude (Light Iranian), use the same vessel on the same date and yet pay different crude prices.

Shell and Filoil import the same

crude from the same source (Kuwait), yet Filoil was generally paying higher prices from 1969 to 1971. In this 3-year period, the overprice on Filoil imports amounted to between \$2.43 million and \$4.4 million.

■ The crude pricing system does not reflect advances in science and technology which cut costs in exploration and production. Geological and geophysical methods of exploration have increased the success ratio of oil discovery by at least 40 per cent. Instead of decreasing crude prices, however, the oil cartel has consistently increased them to amass bigger profits.

■ Mother companies earn about 70 per cent of their net income from the production of crude. Various types of crude oil have prices ranging from \$1.70 to \$2.60 per barrel. Production costs range only from \$0.10 to \$0.35 per barrel. If we take \$0.25 as average production cost per barrel, then the mother companies are amassing profits 600 per cent to 900 per cent of the production cost. And this is from the sale of crude alone.

The profits of the local subsidiaries' mother companies from crude sales alone increased from \$71.4 million in 1969 and \$82.6 million in 1970, to \$109.6 million in 1971.

Note that in the production and distribution of oil products there are four stages in which the oil cartel gains profits. It amasses profits from the sale of crude oil to the subsidiaries; from the shipping companies which are owned or controlled by it; from the refining subsidiaries; and from the marketing subsidiaries.

Second major reason: Freight charges increased substantially.

OBSERVATION: About 40 per cent of the world's tanker fleet is owned by the giant oil companies themselves. The rest is mainly under long-term lease to or chartered by them. The giant oil firms are also the ones that dictate

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3 Red fighters, 2 youth activists bolt Camp V. Lim

CANLUBANG, Laguna (BMP) — Five political prisoners — three Red fighters of the New People's Army and two youth activists— escaped from detention in Camp Vicente Lim, this province, last Sept. 3.

The five political detainees bolted out of the second PC military zone's detention camp after three months of careful planning and immediately rejoined the revolutionary forces fighting the US-Marcos dictatorship.

In a statement issued on Sept. 21, the five escapees declared:

"On the first anniversary of the US-Marcos dictatorship's formal declaration of war against the Filipino people, we reiterate our readiness to continue taking part in the revolutionary struggle to end martial law and bring about the emergence of a truly free and democratic society."

Expressing confidence in the ultimate victory of the people's forces, the former political detainees pointed out that a military dictatorship which "cannot secure its nerve center in Southern Luzon" cannot possibly hope to "secure the vast countryside of the Philippines".

The five stressed that their plan to escape was born out of the conviction that their freedom was to be seized with their own hands.

They said their successful escape proved



the truth of a song composed by fellow political prisoners in the same camp, entitled "Ang dingding ng bilangguan ay dingding na papel (Prison walls are paper walls)".

The daring escape from Camp Vicente Lim recalled a similar one which took place on Jan. 29 this year, where 30 political prisoners bolted out of the Sorsogon provincial jail.

Among the 30 was Mayor Johnson So of Matnog, Sorsogon, who later joined the New People's Army in Bicol. ●

OIL PRICE HIKES

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the freight rates on crude oil.

■ Any increase in freight costs, therefore, ends up mainly as profits for the oil cartel, of which the local oil subsidiaries are part.

■ Due to technological advances in making larger tankers and increasing efficiency and automation in shipbuilding, unit construction costs have been reduced by as much as 50 per cent to 70 per cent. Since 40 per cent of freight costs go to capital charges, these savings in construction costs should decrease freight rates.

■ Except Filoil, all local companies pay freight rates which were set several years ago (as in usual 20-year charters). These rates therefore cannot be decreased without the major oil companies, which control the tanker fleet, allowing it.

These factors are completely ignored by the oil companies.

■ Freight prices paid by the subsidiaries are inconsistent and are therefore arbitrary. Mobil and Esso imported the same kind of crude, loaded this from the same port and used the same vessel on the same date, and yet Esso paid a higher freight rate per barrel than Mobil did.

This excess charge amounted to about \$670,000 for 1970 and 1971.

Freight rates fluctuated for the different companies in the same period. In December 1970, relative to the previous period, freight rates of Esso and Mobil went up, those of Caltex remained constant, while Shell's rates went down. This was repeated in subsequent months.

■ Freight charges on the local subsidiaries are excessive to the benefit of the oil cartel which controls the tanker fleet.

In August and October, 1970, Meralco imported crude oil from the Middle East and paid only \$2.75 per long ton for freight. In the same period, the oil companies paid rates from \$3.20 (Mobil) to \$4.68 (Caltex).

CONCLUSION: The recent oil price hikes are not justified and they serve only to increase the superprofits of the oil cartel. ●

Muslim forces gain control of more areas

Muslim freedom fighters have gained new ground in Mindanao, and with the end of the Puasa Ramadan fasting period, are preparing to launch fresh attacks on mercenary forces of the dictatorship.

This is the gist of reports from LIBERATION correspondents who said that in many areas, troops of the reactionary AFP are confined to towns while Muslim forces hold sway in the barrios.

The correspondents pinpointed six provinces -- Sulu, Basilan, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, South Cotabato and North Cotabato -- as among the areas where the Muslims not only have maintained their



strength but have gained new recruits.

The correspondents also noted that the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), with its army called the "Bangsa Moro Army", has emerged as the organization in command of all Muslim revolutionary forces throughout Mindanao. (LIBERATION, Vol. II, No. 2)

The freedom fighters chalked up gains in these provinces with sporadic armed attacks last month as they regrouped their forces in preparation for large-scale operations after the Puasa Ramadan, a traditional Muslim fasting period from Sept. 27 to Oct. 26.

The reports from the Mindanao front gave
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The arrest and detention by the dictatorship of the family of former PC Lt. Victor N. Corpus have been denounced in a statement issued by the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

From the statement, it appeared that the former PC officer's wife, Geramelinda Tang-lao Corpus, and their two children were arrested last April and have since been detained at Port Bonifacio.

It will be recalled that Corpus defected from the PC in December, 1970, and joined the NPA.

In the CPP-NPA statement dated Sept. 15, a copy of which reached the underground press, the detention of Mrs. Corpus and her children was described as "a clear case of the savage warfare being conducted by the US-Marcos dictatorship against the people".

It was disclosed in the statement that Mrs. Corpus and her children were "taken by force and deception" from their residence in Quezon City in April by a special military unit headed by a Lt. Ilano, and have since then been detained at the WAC quarters in Port Bonifacio.

The statement pointed out that she and

Protest detention of Victor Corpus' wife and children

her two children are "of civilian and non-combatant status", and that therefore "under the basic rules of war, they are supposed to be free from any punitive military measure by the enemy".

The statement also said that Corpus -- called "Comrade Eming" in the document -- was "taking with equanimity and firm courage the abuse being heaped on his family by the enemy".

It quoted the former PC lieutenant as saying:

"Since the beginning, I have been aware that the enemy is capable of the most barbarous methods. A true fighter in the people's national and democratic interests must be ready to make the most selfless sacrifice. Those who resort to the most bestial and inhumane methods are bound to fail and be punished by the people.

"No amount of blackmail and intrigue or any scheme arising from the illegal detention of my wife and children will ever shake my confidence in the victory of the revolution. This shall only serve to strengthen and deepen my determination to fight in a protracted people's war against the fascist dictatorship." ●

MUSLIMS...

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the lie to claims made by Malacanang that "normalcy" had been restored in that region.

ZAMBOANGA

Freedom fighters attacked a 40-man AFP detachment stationed at the outlying barrio of Diculua in the town of Labason, Zamboanga del Norte.

Pinned down by the sustained assault of the revolutionary fighters, the AFP unit then assigned to provide security for three big logging camps in the area, had to pull back to the town.

After the siege, the freedom fighters took with them food, gasoline and other supplies, including motor boats, bulldozers and other equipment of the logging firms.

Several soldiers were reportedly wounded during the clash. According to some of them, they had to withdraw after three days of fighting since no reinforcements were sent to help them.

The soldiers themselves revealed that some of the freedom fighters were non-Muslims, judging from the Visayan dialect and accent heard from their yelling during the battle.

In Zamboanga del Sur, several towns have remained under the control of the fighters. The only "safe area" where government forces can freely operate is esti-

ated to be within the 75-kilometer limit around Zamboanga City.

BASILAN

About 90% of Basilan province has reportedly remained under the control of the freedom fighters.

Ambushes on government forces have been frequent.

One of the most recent ambushes was pulled on AFP soldiers repairing two bridges on the road from Isabela to Maloso. Most roads have remained closed and impassable especially for government troopers.

In the wake of renewed sporadic ambushes which have resulted in the rapid disintegration of the government forces, low morale among the AFP ranks has become a big problem.

Recently, one army battalion was pulled out due to intra-unit clashes. Friction between raw recruits and local military officials are not uncommon.

Meanwhile, the refugees in Basilan have continued to increase in number. Official estimates stand at 3,700 families, with several more not officially registered.

They have of late been left alone by themselves, as a large part of whatever government and civic aid there was has reportedly been pocketed by unscrupulous local officials and military personnel.

COTABATO

In Cotabato, sporadic attacks have been launched by the Bangsa Moro Army. As a result of these attacks, an "ambush threat" has been posed on roads leading from Cotabato to South Cotabato and Davao.

In one of these attacks in mid-September, an army captain and three soldiers were killed between Bagumbayan and Tapas.

The Bangsa Moro Army maintains a stronghold in Kulong-kulong mountain at the border of (North) Cotabato and South Cotabato. Kulong-kulong has been called an "independent republic" by the local folk since the military cannot penetrate into the area.

The Bangsa Moro Army is also reported to have gained a foothold along the coastline from the towns of Kling to Kiamba and Mac-tum to Palimbang, forcing Philippine navy vessels to steer clear two kilometers off shore.

Recently, the Bangsa Moro Army published a newspaper dealing with national issues ranging from the economic problems of inflation and the spiralling of prices to the image-building gimmicks of the dictator and his wife. ●

COOKING GAS...

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1. The margin of profit for dealers and subdealers remained the same if not lessened due to the additional specific tax burden. Tremendous profits as a result of the price increase accrue to the oil companies, while the Marcos regime is directly benefiting from additional tax revenues.

2. Dealers feel that there is no real shortage of LPG. The limited supply is due to hoarding by the oil companies.

They further revealed that as early as July and August this year, they had learned of a definite plan by the oil companies to increase LPG prices and to limit the supply of the product. During this time, the dealers were already sensing the inevitability of a gas crisis.

3. Hoarding and overpricing by dealers actually rarely occur since these practices ultimately result in reduced sales, to the detriment of the dealers' business. ●

NATIONALIZE THE OIL INDUSTRY!

1. WHO IS TO BLAME FOR THE CRISIS?

The thieves are again crying "Thief!" in order to hide their crime.

The US imperialist oil firms and the dictator Marcos have launched a massive campaign of deception in an effort to make the public believe that the small Filipino dealers and the Arab governments are mainly responsible for the current oil crisis.

The dictator has loudly demanded that the gasoline dealers "police themselves" to curb malpractices. His insinuation is transparent: if there are any malpractices which hurt the consumers, the owners of gas stations and other retailers of oil products are to blame.

There is also a columnist's wild claim that the Filipino dealers of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) are "abusing".

But the favorite scapegoats these days are the Arab countries, which are engaged in a just struggle to recover their lands seized by Israel. The Marcos media keep harping on the current Middle East war and the so-called "world energy crisis" -- despite the obvious fact that the US imperialist oil firms jacked up their prices several times long before the present war or any talk about a worldwide crisis.

The truth of the matter is simple and clear.

The small Filipino dealers are not to blame: what legitimate profit they make comes from their sales of gas and other oil

products, whose prices and supply are completely controlled by the US imperialist oil cartel with the cooperation of the puppet dictatorship.

The Arab governments are not to blame: their fight to regain occupied territories and to protect their oil resources from unlimited imperialist plunder are just causes.

Who, then, is to blame for the skyrocketing prices of oil and oil products? Who is profiting from the newly decreed specific tax on oil and oil products?

Certainly not the masses who have to pay more for food, clothing, transportation and all other basic commodities as a result of the oil price hike. Certainly not the small Filipino dealers, some of whom have already been forced to close shop due to the refusal of the US oil firms to continue deliveries.

To discover who the real thieves and culprits are, one has simply to find out who is holding the loot.

Superprofits are flowing at a faster rate into the already bulging pockets of the imperialist oil cartel's "Big Six" -- Esso, Mobil, Caltex, Shell, Getty and Tidewater (Filoil).

Part of this loot is also enriching the coffers of the dictator Marcos -- his reward for helping the US imperialist robbers intensify their plunder and exploitation of the Filipino people.

2. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Unable to hide the existence of a full-blown economic crisis any longer, the Marcos dictatorship has come up with a clutch of stop-gap measures which do not at all touch the root of the problem. These range from the use of "daylight-saving time" and "ration cards" to such inane tips as not warming up car motors and not going out on Sundays.

The root of the problem is there for all to see and to extirpate.

Such a strategic industry as oil, upon which the country depends for 90 per cent of its energy requirements, is firmly in the hands of the US imperialist-dominated oil cartel. And being puppets of US imperialism, all the post-war Philippine governments, including and especially the Marcos regime, have served to increase the superprofits and monopoly power of this cartel.

Clearly, there is only one effective and lasting solution, and that is to break the monopoly hold of US imperialist firms on the oil industry and put it in the hands of the people. It must be nationalized. This has been consistently advocated by Senator Jose W. Diokno as well as other progressive individuals and anti-imperialist mass organizations.

Nationalization, however, is a long-range solution whose implementation presupposes a government already in the hands of the people -- a revolutionary government that will free our economy from the stranglehold of the US imperialist monster.

Meantime -- and in preparation for the day when genuine nationalization of the oil industry can be implemented -- we should launch protest actions to expose and resist the anti-people schemes of the imperialist oil cartel and the Marcos dictatorship. ●



To Marcos: Alis d'yan!

Television entertainer Ariel Ureta may have said it in a roundabout way, but he seems to have read the signs correctly when he said, "Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, bisikleta ang kailangan."

With the dictator and his cohorts in the US-dominated oil cartel precipitating a grave fuel crisis, and with increasing numbers of motor vehicles being sidelined due to lack of gas, we may all be riding bicycles soon -- if we can afford one.

While the US-Marcos dictatorship plunges the country into one crisis after another, such shameless Marcos apologists as Teodoro F. Valencia and Primitivo Mijares persist in shrilly proclaiming that the Filipino people never had it so good.

Mijares says Marcos is "obliged" to stay on as dictator "for as long as reforms are necessary". Utang na loob pa natin!

Then there is the pipsqueak Valencia actually congratulating all of us supposedly because we have not sunk to the depths of want and despair that we did at the height of Japanese militarism in World War II.

Our own Mang Ambo recalls that the Japanese warlords never promised to "make this country great again". Neither did they impose martial rule with the pledge to "reform society" looking towards a better life for all.

**DECEMBER
30 '73**



The 1935 constitution calls for the next presidential election to be held on the second Tuesday of November this year. That's Nov. 13 or two weeks from today.

Since no preparation is being made for the election, it is safe to assume that the dictator has no intention of calling one and neither does he intend to vacate the presidency at high noon of Dec. 30, as decreed by the constitution.

It is all too obvious that the dictator means to remain in power, based on the spurious "plebiscite" of last January and the equally spurious "referendum" of last July.

To this criminal usurper and his US imperialist patrons, we join the rest of our countrymen in saying: ALIS D'YAN!

Remember how Marcos applied the squeeze on the Lopezes to sell Meralco to his dummies and cronies?

The same pattern is present in the case of Onico Mining and Industrial Corporation, a firm founded by one Frederick G. Webber.

Almost buried in the Oct. 23 issue of Bulletin Today was a short news item saying Webber has decided to resign all his positions in the corporation and to sell all his stockholdings worth "several million pesos".

The prospective buyer: Judge Pio R. Marcos of the Golden Buddha notoriety and uncle of the dictator.

Another revealing news item has to do with the Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corporation, a pillar of the Soriano industrial empire whose mainstay is the giant San Miguel Corporation.

Described in the story as the largest copper producer in the Far East, Atlas reported a \$250.5-million net profit in a period of just nine months, from January to September this year.

Unreported was the way the workers of Atlas are being exploited and oppressed and how the country's natural resources are being depleted to fatten the pockets of the US imperialist executives of the Soriano economic empire.

It has become a stock propaganda line of the professional anti-communists that the People's Republic of China produces and exports opium to "subvert, undermine and demoralize" the "free world".

Now comes the US news agencies to say that Col. Narong Kittikachorn, son of the deposed US imperialist puppet Thanom Kittikachorn of Thailand, had netted \$2.45 billion while he "worked directly with Gold Triangle drug king Lo Hsin-han and Kuomintang leaders General Li and General Sieng See-fu".

The news agencies further report that American drug agents of the notorious Central Intelligence Agency were aware of the younger Kittikachorn's conspiracy with the Chiang Kai-shek generals "but kept their mouths shut because of political considerations".

Next time you are told that People's China produces opium to "subvert" other peoples, you'll know the truth.