

LIBERATION

PUBLISHED BY THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT

VOLUME II NO. 21

MAY 30, 1974

22,000 refugees flee to Sabah

An estimated 22,000 Muslim Filipinos have fled to Sabah as a result of the Marcos dictatorship's use of brute force to suppress all dissent in Mindanao and Sulu.

The number of Filipino refugees was disclosed by Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak in a report to the Malaysian Parliament, according to an Agence France Presse dispatch from Kuala Lumpur.

Razak was quoted as having said that the refugees were admitted by Malaysia as a humanitarian gesture, and that they were free to return home any time they wanted.

The refugees in Sabah are among the tens of thousands of Muslims who have been driven out of their homes and ancestral lands because of the Marcos regime's mailed fist policy in Mindanao and Sulu.

In seeking to suppress the forces of liberation in that region, the dictatorship has resorted to artillery and naval bombardments, and the use of napalm bombs and rockets on populated areas. The latest instance of the regime's use of unrestrained violence was the complete devastation of Jolo, Sulu, last February. (NMP) ●

3 US navy men slain in ambush

MORONG, BATAAN — A squad of the New People's Army ambushed and slew three officers of the US Navy last April 13.

The three officers' armed escort fled from the scene of the ambush.

Sabie naval base authorities later identified the slain officers as Navy Capt. Thomas J. Mitchell, commander of the 30th naval construction regiment in Guam; Commander Leland R. Dobler of the naval mobile construction battalion 133 based in Okinawa; and Lt. Charles H. Jeffries II, officer-in-charge of the naval mobile construction battalion at Sabie.

The three USN officers were inspecting construction work going on
(Continued on page 2)

INFLATION WORSE - PESO SINKS TO 37.8 CENTAVOS



MANILA — The purchasing power of the peso, which was down to 42.7 centavos at the end of 1973 in relation to its 1965 value, sank further to 37.8 centavos as of March, this year.

The further plunge in the peso's purchasing power was revealed in the consumer price index (CPI) for March of the National Census and Statistics Office.

The decline in the peso's value was caused by the rapid increases in prices of goods and services. During the first quarter of 1974, the CPI showed, the prices of practically all items rose by 12.9 per cent.

Due to the latest oil price hike authorized by the dictatorship, the cost of fuels and electricity rose by 44.7 per cent during the first

quarter of 1974. The oil price hike was immediately reflected in higher costs of industrial raw materials and production and transportation of finished products.

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG, 30-pound cylinder) rose from P16.50 in December last year to P22.90 in March. During the same period, kerosene rose from P.50 to P.85 per 20-cubic-centimeter container, and minimum electric consumption went up from P.10 to P.14 for the first kilowatt-hour.

Food prices showed a general increase of 8.5 per cent during the first quarter of 1974. Fish and other sea foods led, with their prices
(Continued on page 2)

Pass on after reading

PESO...

(From page 1)

Prices going up by 20.8 per cent.

The prices of different kinds of fish went up thus: bangus (big) -- from P6.60 to P7.65; dalag (medium) -- from P5 to P7.65, and going as high as P8.85 last January; dala-gang-bukid -- from P4.60 to P6.20; lapu-lapu -- from P7.25 to P8.05.

Meat prices also rose sharply. Fresh pork without bones was sold at P10.40 per kilo in March, up from P9.40 in December. Beef without bones went up from P11.15 to P12.90 per kilo.

The cost of dressed chicken also went up: inabin -- from P8.20 to P9.10; dumalaga -- from P8.20 to P8.45; tandang -- from P8.25 to P8.40. Broilers and fryers were at P8.80 per kilo, up from P8.65.

Even fruits whose prices used to go down during the early months of the year registered price hikes, due to higher transportation costs.

Price spirals were also recorded in the indices for shelter, clothing, health, education and transportation.

Housing costs went up by 3.3 per cent as a result of increases in rent and costs of construction materials.

The clothing index showed an increase of 9.8 per cent, due to more expensive materials and tailoring and dressmaking services.

On the other hand, the cost of goods and services under health, education and transportation, went up by 10.9 per cent.

The upward trend in the prices of almost all goods and services shows no signs of respite in the months ahead. Even Marcos could not ignore the unprecedented rise in the cost of living, but so far he has done little beyond blaming it on "world-wide inflation".

Meanwhile, the prices of soft drinks and other sugar-based commodities are expected to shoot up soon as a result of the increased cost of domestic sugar for industrial purposes.

The dictatorship, through its Price Control Council, recently announced the increased prices of sugar, aimed purportedly at providing a margin of profit for producers "and thereby assuring ample supply ...at reasonable prices".

This will mean higher prices of all sugar-based commodities, as the increased cost of industrial sugar will inevitably be passed on to the consumers.

Retail-store owners are already saying that a bottle of soft drinks

RICE SHORTAGE: 400,000 TONS

Another rice crisis is coming! Supply of rice for the rest of the year will be short by some 400,000 metric tons, Palita ng Malayang Pilipinas reported.

The expected shortage of 400,000 metric tons was revealed by Agriculture Secretary Arturo Tanco Jr. in a briefing conducted recently for visiting US Agriculture Department officials.

Tanco disclosed that the estimated total production this year will be 4,000,000 metric tons -- 400,000 tons short of the national requirement.

The expected rice shortage was also partly confirmed by Marcos in an announcement ordering a study into the feasibility of exporting high-quality local rice in order to earn foreign currency to pay for

U.S. NAVY MEN...

(From page 1)

in the mountain area beside Subic base when they were ambushed by the NPA guerrillas.

Subic Naval Base is being rapidly expanded to accommodate more US military forces following their defeat in Indochina.

Hundreds of peasant families living around the naval base have been driven off the land as the US military authorities expand the base's area.

In the last two months, some 150 families living in the Pastulan, Nabiga and Tipo areas of the Bataan mountain range have been forced to leave. Their homes were burned by joint teams made up of US Marines and PC troopers.

About 600 more families in Morong, Dinalupihan and Hermosa towns are expected to be affected by the naval base's expansion plans, since they depend for their livelihood on the forest, which the US naval construction teams are clearing away.

might soon cost P.40 at the factory and retail for as high as P.50 at the sari-sari store.

A bottle of beer might then retail at P1 or more, they said. The prices of all liquors would likewise go up.

On the other hand, the PCC announcement caused the price of refined sugar to jump up immediately.

A 100-pound bag of refined sugar now sells at P70. A kilo now costs P1.75 or P1.80 in retail outlets, well above the government-prescribed prices of P1.20 - P1.30.

cheaper rice from abroad.

The plan was to earn dollars to "finance importation of cheaper rice" to "cushion an expected deficit...during the lean months of August and September", according to the Marces-controlle media.

Current rice prices in the world market reportedly range from \$300 to \$400 per metric ton. Taking the lower price, it would take \$120 million, or P840 million, to import 400,000 metric tons of the cereal.

But even if the country has sufficient dollars, there will still be the problem of finding a source, as the overall rice situation in Southeast Asia is reported to be precarious.

Like last year, the regime has been concealing this year's impending rice crisis. Tanco's admission of a 400,000-ton shortage has been carried in the foreign press but suppressed in the local mass media.

Churchmen press freedom drive

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY -- Catholics of Mindanao and Sulu are defying the martial law regime's ban on civil liberties to bring to the people a twelve-point indictment against the Marcos government and help arouse them into resistance.

Through the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Secretariat, they have decided to use different channels to go among the people, "especially in the rural areas", to the end that the people may "participate in the issues affecting their lives".

The call to "go among the people" was made through the Rev. Simplicio S. Sunpayco, SJ, MSPS executive secretary.

The 12-point indictment against the regime was embodied in a statement issued by the Second Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC II) held in Cagayan de Oro City March 28 to April 1.

The statement was read in masses and bible services in churches throughout Mindanao and Sulu on Easter Sunday, April 14.

Additionally, the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Secretariat urged that:

1. The statement be reproduced and distributed "to all churches, barrio kapilyas, radio stations, schools and other institutions, as soon as possible".

2. Translations into the local dialects be prepared and disseminated.

3. The churchmen and lay leaders "discuss the contents of the statement with our people at all levels, especially in the rural areas".

Expose

MALACANANG
MANILA

April 22, 1974

D.A.N.R.
BUREAU OF MINES

RECEIVED

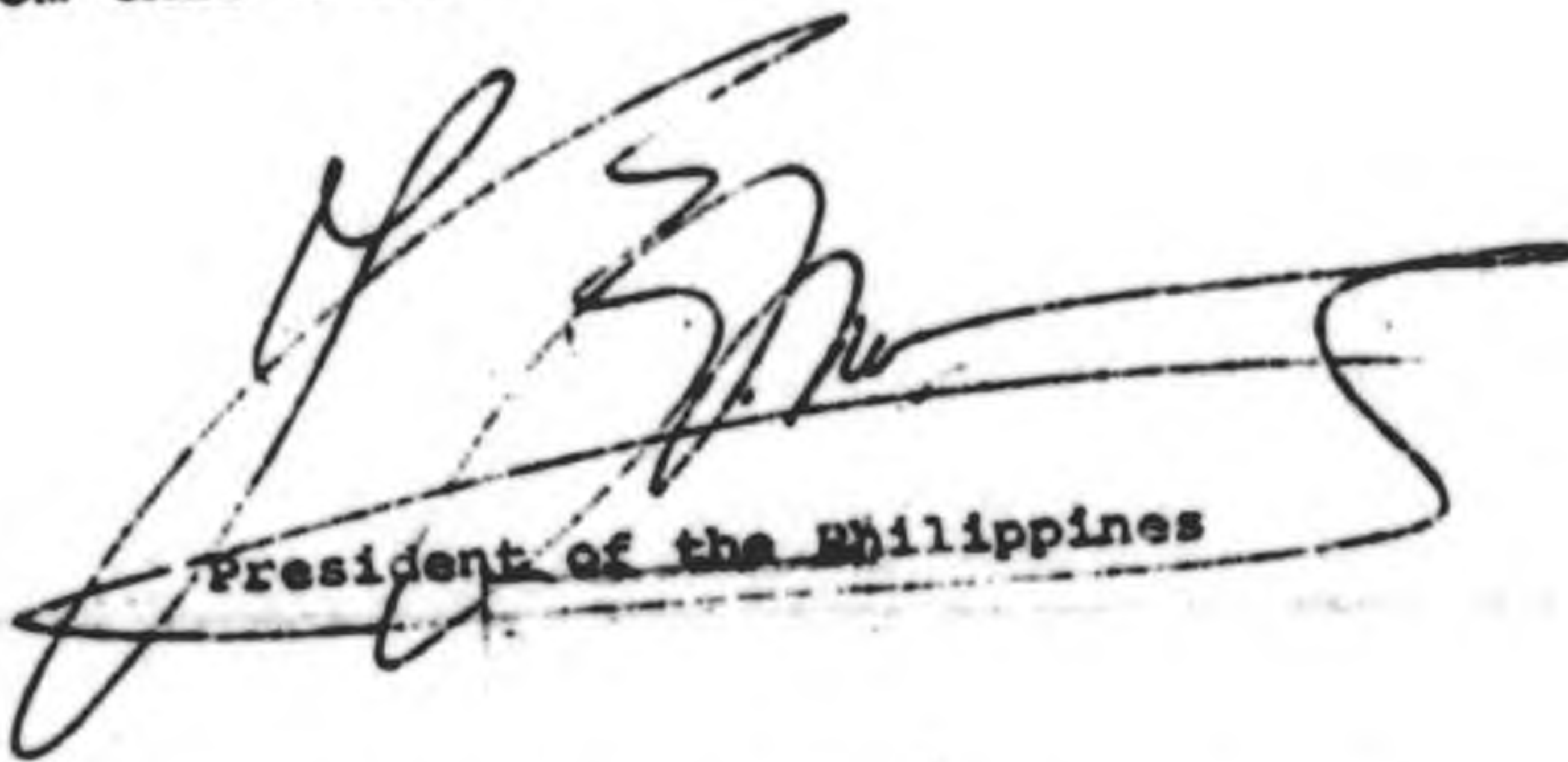
DATE

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 184

TO ✓: The Director
Bureau of Mines
Manila

In connection with the government approved plan thereby authorizing Reynolds Aluminum Corp. of America to establish an Aluminum Smelter Plant in Samar, and in order to be assured of adequate tonnage of Aluminum minerals for the purpose, the entire island of Samar is hereby closed to mining location in so far as Alumina and its related minerals are concerned, pending determination of all possible areas containing these minerals by the Bureau of Mines.

For existing claims, you are directed to suspend all processing of claims on these minerals, until instructions to the contrary are received from this Office.


President of the Philippines

REGIME'S POLICY: KEEP WAGES LOW

MANILA (BMP) — In the face of rising prices, the Marcos martial law regime is determined to keep wages at their present levels.

This means that the already unbearable living conditions of the working masses will further deteriorate as prices keep on going up, spurred on by inflation and the desire for more profits of big business.

The policy to freeze wages was actually enunciated by the dictator Marcos during the 25th anniversary celebration of the Central Bank.

Instead of raising the minimum wage in the face of skyrocketing prices, Marcos has merely made an appeal to private employers to give labor so-called cost-of-living allowances.

However, the decree carrying the appeal does not include legal or administrative sanctions, leaving the suffering employees completely at the mercy of the employers.

Thus far, according to official sources at the Department of Labor, only 2,200 firms with 116,000 employees have granted allowances in

response to the appeal.

The number of employees so far benefited is only a small fraction of the 12,000,000 workers employed by the private sector.

Even in the government, it has been reported that a large number of employees receiving less than P600 a month have not been given any allowance.

Most of the public school teachers, who are among the lowest paid in the government, have not received any allowances despite the regime's incessant propagandizing of the decree.

In addition to inflation and the wage-freeze policy, another factor that weighs the worker further down in the mire of oppression is the growth of the labor reserve.

From 1966 to 1972, the number of employable Filipinos (10 years old and above) rose by 26.4 per cent to 26.7 million, but only 50.1 per cent or 14.2 million was counted in the labor force.

In this same period, the number of employed rose from 10.98 million in 1966 to 13.21 million in 1972,

Reynolds given monopoly over Samar mining!

Reynolds Aluminum Corporation of America, a giant US firm with subsidiaries in many countries, has been given monopoly mining rights over the whole island of Samar by virtue of a secret "letter of instructions" issued by the dictator Marcos.

A photostat copy of the original letter of instructions was handed to a LIBERATION correspondent by an anti-dictatorship source employed at the Bureau of Mines.

The secret "letter of instructions" bears the number "184" and is addressed to the Director of the Bureau of Mines.

The Marcos letter speaks of a "government approved plan... authorizing Reynolds Aluminum Corp. of America to establish an Aluminum Smelter Plant in Samar".

It orders that "the entire island of Samar (be) closed to mining ...in so far as Alumina and its related minerals are concerned" for the purpose of assuring "adequate tonnage of Aluminum minerals" for the smelter plant of the US-owned monopoly firm. ●

or an increase of 20.3 per cent. The number of unemployed went up from 838,000 to 983,000, a jump of 17.3 per cent.

In 1972, however, 589,000 of the "employed" were described as "with a job, not at work".

An analysis of the employment figures conducted by the Bureau of Census and Statistics shows that only 5.6 million were employed in non-agricultural industry, while 7 million were employed in the agricultural sector.

Considering that most workers in agriculture are actually under-employed, the number of unemployed and underemployed could exceed 8 million people, representing the bigger portion of the labor force of 14.2 million.

Job scarcity and the regime's wage-freeze policy have forced many employable Filipinos to seek work abroad.

According to the Department of Labor, some 35,000 Filipinos found jobs in foreign countries in 1973, an increase of 150 per cent over the figure in the previous year.

The mass emigration of Filipinos to provide cheap labor for foreign countries is an indicator of the hard times in which workers find themselves under the Marcos martial law regime. ●



MARCOS' BRAND OF UNITY

The hypocrisy of the Marcos dictatorship regarding Filipino workers is best exposed by its own promotional brochures inviting foreign investors into the country. These say, in effect: Come, invest in the Philippines. Labor here is cheap. Workers are not allowed to strike.

Despite the reality of starvation wages and the suppression of democratic rights, the dictator never stops trying one deceptive gimmick after another to paint himself as a "champion" of the Filipino workers.

Last May 1, with a lot of hot air and double-faced praise for the workers, the dictator promulgated a new "labor code".

But only Ople and the yellow labor leaders were beaming with satisfaction as Marcos made permanent in his "labor code" the prohibition to strike and other anti-labor measures.

A union member expressed the general reaction of Filipino workers to this May 1 extravaganza at Malacañang: "Kung walang karapatang mag-strike, puro palabok lang ang keyo pagtalinga ng new society sa manggagawa." ("Without the right to strike, all this talk about taking care of the workers in the new society is only empty talk.")

Again attempting to project an image of being concerned for the workingman, the dictator Marcos now calls for unity of labor. Who would object to that? After all, workers all over the world call for unity, especially on May 1.

But the dictator, of course, has his own purpose in calling for his

brand of "unity".

In the first place, he wants to re-float certain discredited yellow labor leaders and labor aristocrats who can serve his purposes by keeping the workers "peaceful" under the Marcos brand of "unity". And if these yellow labor leaders fail, he will himself force the workers to "unite" -- after all, there is martial law.

Secondly -- and more important -- the dictator wants to establish a "unity" of the workers under the heel of the dictatorship and the greedy American and Japanese monopoly firms. He wants to keep the Filipino workers "united" in passively enduring the low wages, high prices and oppressive working conditions perpetrated by his regime and its imperialist masters.

The Filipino workers, through struggle, will surely achieve unity. But this will be unity against the dictatorship and its foreign masters. They will unite also with all the oppressed -- with the peasants, professionals, students and patriotic businessmen -- to overthrow the dictatorship and establish genuine democracy in the Philippines.

Marcos continues to campaign to domesticate the working masses, to reduce them to fawning beggars for the sake of a measly tip. Makisama sa turista. Makisama sa imperyalista.

The dictator's contempt for the people -- especially for the workers -- only adds more fuel to the smoldering anger of the oppressed and exploited, who will soon cry out again in unison: Makibaka! ●

New 'code' means more oppression, Ang Bayan says

MANILA (BMP) -- The new "labor code" promulgated by the Marcos regime on May 1, Labor Day, "systematizes the oppression and exploitation of the working class", according to Ang Bayan, official organ of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

In a May Day statement, Ang Bayan said the Marcos labor code also "incorporates the fascist dictator's decrees which whet the blood-sucking propensity of imperialists and big comprador-landlords".

On the plight of the working masses, Ang Bayan said that they, like the rest of the people, "are faced with an open terrorist rule that knows no bounds for its political and economic abuses".

Pointing out that general political rights and trade union rights are suppressed, it added:

"In such a situation, the big bourgeoisie -- especially the US monopoly capitalists and the Marcos faction of big compradors -- squeeze profits and build up their assets in an extremely rapacious way. Real wages are rapidly being brought down by the pressure of an accelerated rate of unemployment, by a continuous devaluation of the currency and by an inflationary spiral generated by both US imperialism and the Marcos ruling clique."

Assailing the Marcos labor code, Ang Bayan said: "This perpetuates the arbitrary and corrupt National Labor Relations Commission as an institution within which the triumvirate of fascist bureaucrats, big comprador-landlords and labor aristocrats decides all disputes in employer-worker relations."

Ang Bayan also pointed out that the dictatorship has been "openly and shamelessly admitting" that it is following the "recommendations of the International Labor Organisation comprehensive employment survey mission", otherwise known as the Ranis report.

"These recommendations are wide-rangingly concerned with subordinating all Philippine economic activities to the interests of foreign monopoly capitalism and dictate that wage policy should be merely of an 'adaptive' character," it said.

Thus in the face of rising prices, wages are kept at their depressed levels, and it is left to the employers whether to grant a "living allowance" of a paltry sum by way of "adaptation" to the runaway inflation. ●