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LIBERATION

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On the Second Anniversary of the Aquino Assassination

'Only unity and struggle against tyranny will vindicate the death of our martyrs'

It has been two years since the heinous political murder at the Manila International Airport. Try as it might, the Marcos dictatorship has failed to scrub Ninoy Aquino's blood from its doorstep. All its legal maneuvers to whitewash the crime through the Sandiganbayan have only served to fuel greater public outrage against itself.

If there is any lesson that the Aquino assassination has taught the Filipino people, especially the middle forces, it is the outstanding fact that this political murder, as well as the other thousands of gross human rights violations perpetrated by this regime, was only made possible because of dictatorial rule — a reign of unprecedented political terrorism and economic mismanagement which to this day continues to be aided and abetted by US imperialism.

In killing Aquino, the regime has only brought down upon itself a heap of greater problems. The political awakening of millions of Filipinos to the utterly immoral and bankrupt character of the dictatorship has generated a new high tide in the people's struggle for genuine national liberation and democracy.

In the cities and countryside, in the factories and in rice paddies, in the streets and mountain barrios, the people's war is steadily advancing, drawing the greater support and participation of the people, in spite of the regime's attempts to deflect its course. This people's war which is waged in all fronts of the struggle will certainly lead to the overthrow of the US-Marcos dictatorship in the not too distant future.

The Filipino people indeed have great cause to harness all their energies in ending this regime. The second anniversary of the Aquino assassination finds our people in even deeper misery. Saddled with a \$30 billion debt — triggered by the massive outflow of capital from which both the US and the regime have profited tremendously — the economy continues to gasp for breath. In exchange for an economic recovery program that is mainly geared at repaying the country's huge indebtedness, the regime has prostrated the Filipino nation and people before a series of IMF imposed conditions.

These IMF impositions have resulted in a huge 10 percent drop in economic output, tens of thou-

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prices amid large-scale profit-taking by foreign companies and the Marcos faction. Even now, famine haunts large areas of the Visayas and Mindanao — in a country that ironically prides itself on being agricultural. Contrary to the self-serving protestations of the dictatorship, the economic situation is bound to get worse before it gets better.

Even as the Filipino people reel under the worst economic crisis in Philippine postwar history, the dictatorship's extreme political isolation drives it to even more heinous campaigns of political terrorism and repression. Mediamen and human rights lawyers, union leaders as well as priests like Frs. Rudy Romano and Tulio Favali have been killed outright or have disappeared. Under the Marcos regime, no day passes in our country without a case of military repression.

Even the opposition within the regime's own Batasang Pambansa has not been spared the blows of the iron hand. In a move which can only be described as *garapal*, the KBL majority, acting on the orders of their leader, quickly and unceremoniously squashed the opposition's motion to impeach Marcos. This latest action of the dictatorship betrays its utter contempt for even its own legal processes once these do not operate to its favor. It further underscores the truth that the regime will resort to ever more desperate measures to hold on to power.

As before, the US is as concerned as ever about Marcos' heightening isolation and politically defensive position as well as the continuing growth of the popular anti-dictatorship movement. The US is specially worried over the steady buildup of the strength of the New People's Army whose military offensives these past two years have increased in size, frequency and scope and gained greater strength from the ever growing support of the peasant masses and other sectors in the countryside and urban areas.

Anxious over the effects of all these on its strategic interests in the Philippines, US imperialism is thus vigorously pushing its schemes to stabilize the political and economic situation and prevent the precipitate downfall of its shaky puppet. Towards this end, it is applying renewed pressure on Marcos to hold another election. The US hopes that a new election, like last year's Batasang Pambansa polls, will divide the broad opposition ranks, stop the polarization of the moderates towards the left, by enticing the more vulnerable among them with the prospect of replacing Marcos at the helm of power.

So thus is it today, as the Batasang Pambansa goes into the backburner of Philippine politics (or more precisely, as one oppositionist stated, "into the dustbin of history"), that the US-Marcos dictatorship again holds forth the promise of yet another election. While the stakes appear to be higher this

time around, both US imperialism and the Marcos dictatorship are at parallel purposes again — to stem the growing tide of the people's militant struggles by fomenting disunity within the broad anti-dictatorship movement.

Of course, as has been repeatedly shown this past decade and more, the US will continue to back whomever is capable of fully serving its military and economic interests. Should Marcos again prove himself capable, there is no doubt that US imperialism will gladly accommodate him despite his dirty and discredited record of terrorism and corruption.

To be sure, certain Filipino politicians will do everything and anything to unseat Marcos from the lap of the US. Even today, there are already some who have developed the habit of groveling at every promise of political accommodation the US holds out. There are those who even now are trying to prove themselves the more worthy spokespersons of US imperialism than even Marcos himself. They consciously collaborate with the US, even as they pay lip service to the people's democratic movement, in the hope that by straddling both the people's cause and US interests, they would have a better chance at replacing Marcos.

The National Democratic Front calls on all these elements in the legal opposition to stop offering themselves up as instruments of US imperialism. To do so is tantamount to betraying the legitimate and just interests of the broad masses of the Filipino people and would only benefit US imperialism.

The NDF, at the same time, takes this opportunity to welcome and offer its support for all sincere efforts and initiatives to oust the US-backed Marcos regime, even as it reiterates its commitment to relentlessly wage a people's war to completely overthrow this hated dictatorship.

In the midst of the US-Marcos dictatorship's renewed schemes to foment disunity, we call on the entire Filipino people — workers and businessmen, peasants and lawyers, students and teachers, church people and professionals — to forge closer ranks and exercise greater vigilance.

Let not the great unity that was forged in the heat of the people's anger on August 21, 1983 crumble into ashes. Let not the death of our martyrs like Ninoy Aquino and countless others be put to waste.

The blood of our martyrs is the seed of our struggle. It is only with the complete overthrow of this obnoxious rule that the martyrdom of Ninoy Aquino and of all those who dared to fight the US-Marcos dictatorship can be fully vindicated.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT (NDF)

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The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) serves as the organizational framework and channel for the unity, cooperation and coordination of all anti-imperialist and democratic forces, including overseas Filipinos. It traces its beginnings to the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. LIBERATION is the official publication of the NDF.

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