

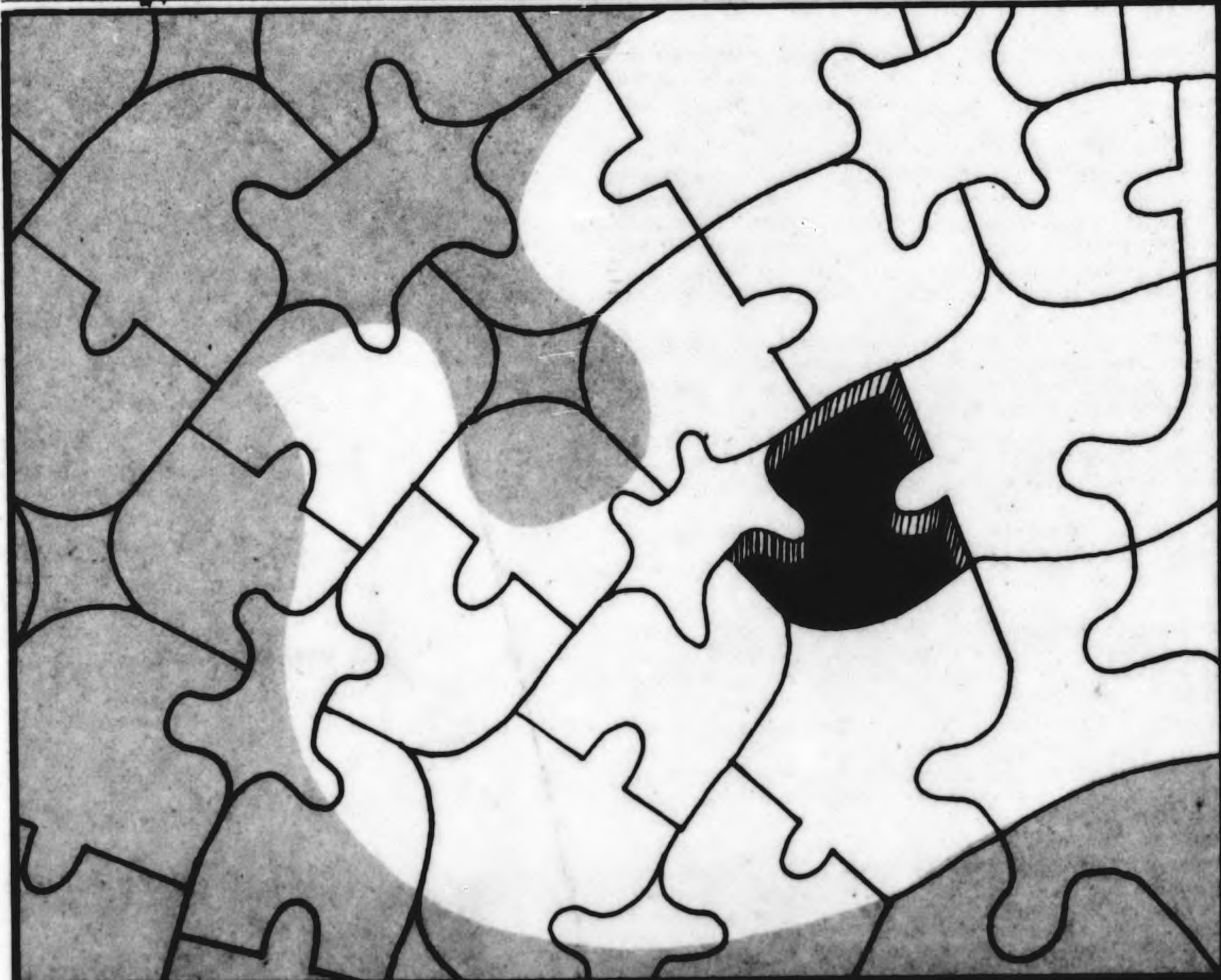
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**LET'S PEACE IT
TOGETHER!**



Christmas & ceasefire

The Christmas season is a time of festivity and celebration for Filipino families. It is a time for reunions and fellowship, a time for gift-giving and remembrance, a time for shared joy and the hopeful glow of the *parol*.

This year, the celebration of Christmas will hold special meaning for our nation. Finally, after 17 long years of armed conflict, the elusive dream of peace will descend upon our war-stricken land. With the signing of the preliminary ceasefire agreement, families driven apart by war and militarization can now hope for a real *Silent Night*, without the sound of mortar fire and the rattle of artillery.

For us in the underground movement, the advent of peace — even if only for 60 days — is also special.

It means coming together with our families and children to share in the festivity, without threat of arrest. But even more so, it means coming before the people to speak of our hopes for peace and dreams of freedom. It means opening ourselves to the glare of publicity, even at great risk to our personal and collective safety, so that people may know who we are and what we are fighting for.

There are many meanings to the ceasefire, as there are many forces that variably seek to destroy or sustain it. But for us in the revolutionary movement, one meaning of the preliminary ceasefire can be found in the shared context of Christmas time. Like the spirit of this season, the preliminary ceasefire period is also a time for hearing and heeding, a time for understanding and learning, a time for goodwill and openness.

This December 10, the start of the preliminary ceasefire, may we then share with the people our basic proposals for a just and durable peace — not only for 60 days, but for the next years until the people's victory is achieved. These proposals are part of the General Program of the National Democratic Front and constitute our basic commitment to peace, freedom and progress for our country:

1. Build a nationalist and popular government that ensures the effective participation of all social sectors and political forces.
2. Promote a nationalist and pro-people armed forces of the Motherland.
3. Uphold and promote the free exercise of the people's basic democratic rights.
4. Terminate all unequal relations with the United States and other foreign entities.
5. Implement genuine land reform, raise rural production through cooperation, and modernize agriculture.
6. Carry out national industrialization as the leading factor in economic development.
7. Guarantee the right to employment, raise the people's living standards and expand social services.
8. Promote a patriotic, scientific and popular culture



- and ensure free public education.
9. Respect and foster the self-determination of the Moro and Cordillera peoples and all ethnic minorities.
10. Adopt and practice a pro-Filipino, independent and peace-loving foreign policy.

To our people, this Christmas time, we say:

*Come, let hope glow
from this radiant star
Let it shine on a country
without poverty, or war.*

"We dare to hope and struggle for peace"

NDF and Aquino government ink 60-day preliminary ceasefire accord

Filipinos received the news with brimming hope. "At last, a ceasefire," beamed a morning tabloid in Manila. Peasants in the battle zones received the news no less hopefully. In Misamis Oriental, Porfiria Acosta, a poor peasant, prepared to go back to her barrio, hopeful that the mortar and grenade launchers which drove her out in early November would be silent this Christmas.

City and countryside folk alike have indeed much reason to hope. Last Nov. 27 — nearly four months since the NDF negotiators' first meeting with their government counterparts — a "Memorandum of Agreement on a Preliminary Ceasefire" was signed by Ramon Mitra, Jose Diokno and Teofisto Guingona for the government side, and Satur Ocampo and Antonio Zumel for the NDF. Carolina Malay-Ocampo and Diokno's daughter Maris signed as witnesses.

Earlier, the NDF had proposed a 100-day ceasefire. But for reasons that the NDF and Filipino people can only speculate on, the Aquino government — with apparent advice from defense and military officials — insisted on a shorter period of 60 days. The preliminary ceasefire takes effect at noon of Dec. 10, Human

Rights Day, and ends Feb. 8, 1987.

Two "sticky points" in the Agreement

The agreement suspends all military counter-insurgency operations, and institutes guarantees against arrest, coercion and threats, surveillance, and torture in any form. In addition, aerial and other bombings, armed extortion, arson, artillery shelling, attacks, molestation, naval gunfire, sabotage and searches — which are all employed by the AFP to suppress the revolutionary movement — will be considered hostile acts. Both the AFP and the NPA shall also desist from staging ambushes, disarming operations, explosive mining, grenade throwing, hijacking of aircraft, vessels and vehicles, kidnaping, liquidation and assassination, raids, sniping and tactical firing.

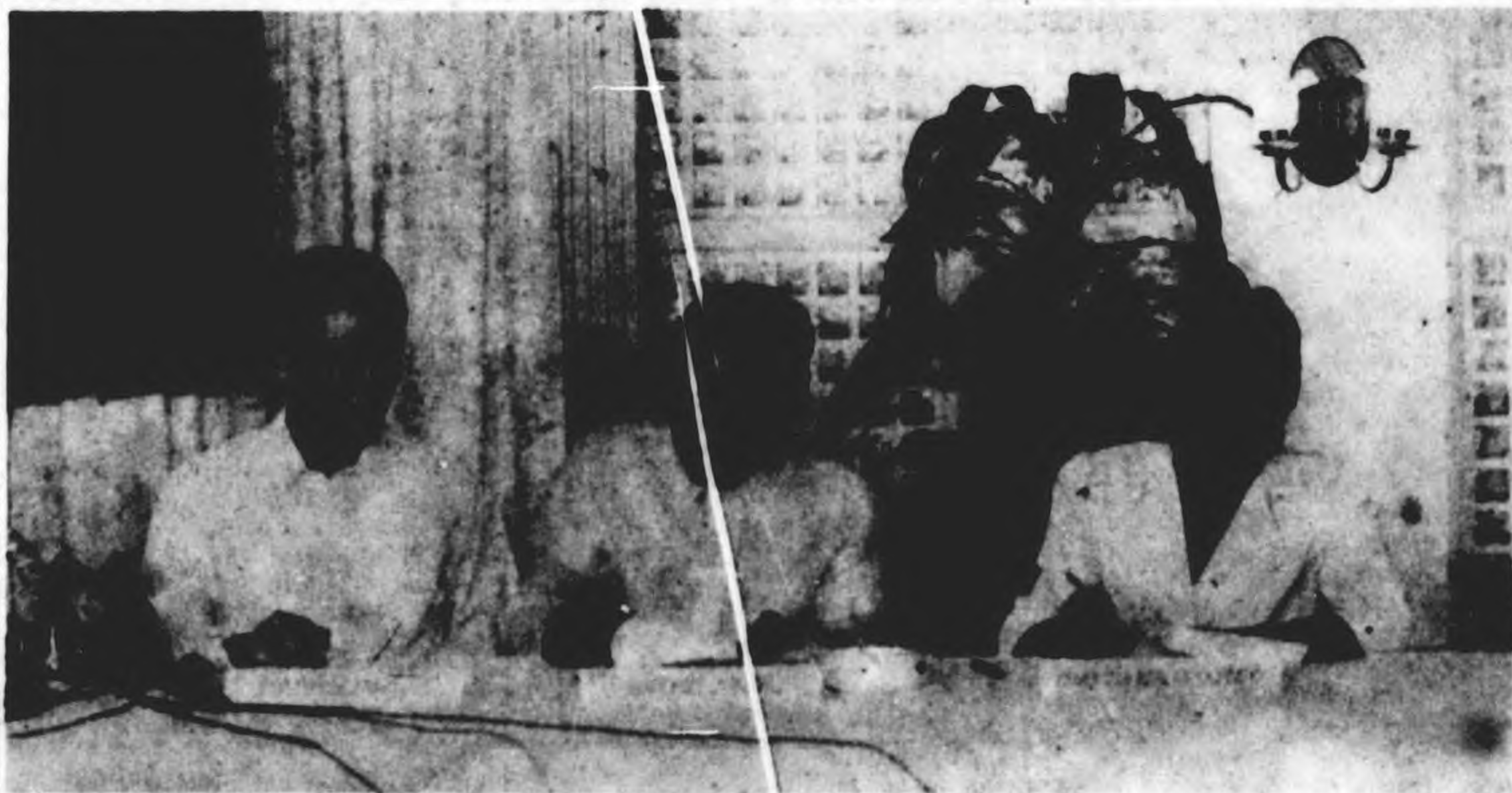
It was in discussing these points that the talks were hardest, said Zumel. For one thing, the NDF negotiators had to convince the government panel to strike out "two sticky points" from the hostile acts clause: illegal procurement of firearms and explosives, and illegal exactions and taxation.

"We told the government panel that those two acts were illegal only from

their point of view, not from the point of view of the people who voluntarily provide the movement with either arms or money used to purchase them," Zumel told *LIB*. "We agreed that if the military could accept US arms aid for repressive uses against the people, shouldn't that be considered illegal too? If not, where is justice?" explained Zumel.

On taxation, Zumel emphasized that the movement is self-reliant. It derives income from membership dues and the voluntary contributions of the people themselves. "So we asked the government panel: if a storeowner voluntarily gave ten pesos to a Red fighter — or for the sake of argument was forced to do so — will such constitute a violation of the agreement? But if a soldier does the same thing, will that constitute a violation?"

Added Satur Ocampo: "We declared our firm position not to include those two issues in the (list of) hostile acts because that would be tantamount to scuttling the revolutionary movement. Therefore, the issues of taxation and arms procurement must not form part of the preliminary talks, but are the proper subject of discussion in the phase of political settlement."



Negotiators Ocampo, Zumel and Malay: Presenting the NDF's agenda for peace to the people

The government acceded to the NDF position, but asserted that a clause be included in the "safeguards" provision: "Nothing in this Agreement shall prevent Government from exercising its lawful power to stop any form of taxation or illegal exaction or the illegal procurement of arms and explosives."

In defining the terms used in the hostile acts clause, the NDF negotiators made sure that "coercion and threats" do not refer to both taxation and procurement of arms. The significance of both points, explained Ocampo, is that the NDF will continue both activities, and the government will continue to stop it. "If we are caught in the act of shipping arms, for example, that will be treated as an ordinary case. It is not a violation of the Agreement."

Further, the NDF negotiators succeeded in adding another important safeguard. If caught in the act of procuring arms or taxes, this "shall not be used as reasons for launching large-scale military offensives that defeat the spirit and meaning of this Agreement."

Other significant points of the Agreement are contained in the safeguards: The government should disarm and arrest private armies, armed goons, armed fanatic sects, groups such as the "Lost Command," and death squads. In punishing these elements, the NDF is "prepared to cooperate with government," and can actually defend itself and the people in case of assaults from these groups.

Both the NPA and the AFP shall also disarm and punish their abusive members, with the AFP responsible for disciplining the CHDF. In addition, government forces shall continue their peace-keeping functions against criminal elements to protect civilians. If a violation is committed by any party, the other must desist from taking reprisals. Instead, the case will be referred to the appropriate ceasefire committee, which shall be set up on the national, regional or provincial levels before the preliminary ceasefire takes effect.

NDF proposal for a lasting peace

As the NDF panel prepares for the substantive phase of the negotiations — to start within 30 days from Dec. 10 — it would want this phase to be open to the public so as to draw in as many interested people as possible. Despite charges from critics that it is out to use the talks for propaganda purposes, nothing will stop the revolutionary movement from asserting the demands of the people in the talks. "It is our right to inform the people of the truth about us," said Ocampo. "Let the people judge, let them see that our program contains their most profound hopes."

The NDF's 12-point program will be the basis for its proposed agenda. But to

be realistic and reasonable, the NDF negotiators said, they will not push for the adoption of the entire program, but only for some of its most significant aspects. These issues in the NDF agenda are classified into four broad categories: human rights, people's welfare, national dignity and sovereignty and lasting peace.

Under human rights, the NDF plans to raise the following: the repeal of all remaining repressive laws issued by the Marcos regime, immediate release of all political prisoners, and indemnification for all victims of human rights violations; strengthening of the Presidential Committee on Human Rights to empower it to arrest and prosecute violators; and accession to Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions of Aug. 12, 1949 (relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts.)

For the people's welfare, the NDF will press for the confiscation and redistribution to peasants and farm workers of landholdings of the Marcos clique, complete transfer of various agricultural lands covered by previous land reform programs, guarantees for cheaper farm inputs, and the setting up of the necessary infrastructure and credit support for small farmers. For the workers, the NDF will push the government to guarantee and promote the right to strike and to or-



Ocampo: Raising hopes for peace

ganize of all workers in the private and public sectors, including agricultural laborers. It will also ask for low-cost quality education for the youth and an expansion of government social services; and the guarantee of the right of national minorities to self-determination.

To enhance national dignity, the NDF will push for the adoption of a comprehensive and feasible program for nationalist industrialization on the basis of domestic capital and resources, supplemented by justifiable foreign investments; a review of all economic obligations, contracts, treaties and agreements with foreign governments and entities, and the repudiation or renegotiation of all those that are found to be unjust, unbeneficial and illegally contracted. On the US bases, the NDF will demand the review of the US-RP Military Bases Agreement, Mutual Defense Pact and the Military Assistance Agreement.

Finally, the NDF will discuss concrete arrangements for a lasting peace. To completely terminate all hostilities between the NPA and the AFP, the military must be reformed and reoriented to uphold the principles of civilian supremacy, nationalism and service to the people.

If a political settlement of these issues is arrived at, the NDF will also push for the effective and maximum participation of all social sectors and political forces in implementing, promoting and defending the principles and specific agreements of the settlement. Ocampo clarified that this is not the democratic coalition government envisioned by the NDF. It is simply the joint mechanism for implementing the agreements arrived at in the peace talks by both parties.

On the whole, the NDF panel is optimistic about the Aquino government's peace efforts. But Ocampo cautioned, "We know that in negotiations of this nature, there will be external obstacles that will be put up by those who seek to stop the peace process." He cited the arrest of revolutionary leader Rodolfo Salas in October and the brutal slaying of labor leader Rolando Olalia on Nov. 13.

Still, the NDF remains hopeful. As Ocampo stated during the signing of the preliminary ceasefire agreement: "When we presented our formal proposal for 100 days of peace, we said, 'we dare to hope that after so many years of fighting, the guns of both sides will be silent this Christmas and New Year.' Now, we further say that we continue to dare, to hope, to struggle and to win, so that this dash of calm shall become a period of peace — peace based on justice, freedom and democracy."

Perhaps, that determination — more than anything else — sustained the talks to Nov. 27. The people can only hope that that same determination will sustain the peace process until the attainment of a just and lasting peace. ■



Peace-builders

NDF sectoral and territorial units launch activities to support the ceasefire

The call for ceasefire by the Aquino government was received warmly by members of the revolutionary movement. In fact, various NDF underground mass organizations in the sectors and territories have openly and enthusiastically supported the peace effort since March.

Among the first to earnestly welcome it was the New People's Army (NPA) which scaled down its military operations in deference to the preliminary peace negotiations and adopted an active defense policy. In an interview with *LIB*, Tito de la Paz of the NPA General Staff said the NPA will "respect and protect" the preliminary ceasefire agreement. "Respect," he said, "means strictly adhering to its provisions, while to protect it is to defend it against violators." Tito said the NPA will report the violators to the ceasefire committee.

Last Nov. 28, 24 hours after the ceasefire accord was formally signed by the NDF and government panels, the NPA General Staff issued a statement ordering all its regional, front, provincial and district commands and all unit commands to respect the agreement upon its effectiveness. The NPA affirmed its right to self-

defense when subjected to unprovoked attacks by hostile forces out to sabotage the ceasefire. At the same time, the General Staff gave an assurance that the Red fighters will exert utmost caution not to be provoked. "For as long as there is a possibility of a peaceful solution to our country's problems, we should go and try it," Tito said.

The CNL peace crusade

Another NDF member-organization which has openly declared its support of the peace negotiations is the Christians for National Liberation (CNL). Consisting of church workers and laity, it has already issued five statements since the start of the peace talks. It described the ceasefire bid as a call that consciously heeds the prophetic imperative to "let justice and righteousness flow like a river that never runs dry."

During its national congress held in the third week of November, the CNL also passed a resolution stating: "The ways of peace are superior to the ways of war. President Aquino must know this from the depths of her own faith as a devoted

Christian and a member of the Church.... We ask her to seek deeply from her own faith and conviction and truly 'give peace a chance.'"

In an interview, Jose, a leading member of the CNL, said the organization plays a very significant role in the peace talks. "The CNL also wants peace. But of course, it must be a principled peace. We can contribute to the negotiations by preaching peace to anybody who wants to hear it. As it is said in the Bible, we want to shout it from the rooftops."

In addition, CNL leaders in some regions have played key roles in dialogues with local government officials. In Panay, one of the two local NDF leaders who spoke to President Aquino was CNL-Panay representative Fr. Boy Torre.

Jose also scored the black propaganda presently being waged against the revolutionary movement by "forces who wish to see the peace talks collapse." Jose cited the anti-communist hysteria being whipped up as an attempt to sabotage the talks by discrediting the NDF and provoking its forces to violate the accord. "The communist bogey is simply being used by the military in order to scare the



Forging justice and righteousness: CNL martyr Fr. Nilo Valerio (left); church people in protest rally (right)

people. We strongly believe that the national democratic response is also the Christian response," Jose explained.

"We also want the ceasefire so we can openly talk to our people, without fear of our houses being raided, and our members being salvaged. We know that if we ourselves talk about the theology of liberation, we can present it more clearly and more positively in the Philippine context," Jose concluded.

Teachers and students for peace

Meanwhile, the Katipunan ng mga Guro ng Makabayan (KGM) said it earnestly hopes that the negotiations will succeed and that it pledges to cooperate as it continues building a stronger teacher sector for national democracy. In the editorial of the June-September issue of its official organ, *Liyab*, KGM called on its members to continue working for the just and lasting peace that the national democratic movement has been fighting for. Earlier, the KGM issued an official statement endorsing Antonio Zumel and Satur Ocampo as official representatives of the NDF to the negotiations.

KGM Information Officer Aya Plantasyon also said they are encouraging their members to volunteer and join the NDF staff during the ceasefire period.

On the other hand, one of the oldest organizations in the NDF, the Kabataang Makabayan (KM), also expressed its full support of the preliminary ceasefire. Vidal Rubio, acting national chairman of KM, said the youth's role in this period is to explain to the widest audience possible the issue of peace. Rubio said the youth and students have a very special interest in the ongoing talks. "Whatever happens in the talks will affect our political participation now and in the future. In fact, our whole future is at stake."

Rubio explained that the KM program and the NDF program are both directed

towards achieving genuine and lasting peace. If through the negotiations, genuine peace can be achieved, then the KM and the other NDF organizations are willing to sit down and talk with the government.

He stressed: "The youth have suffered and sacrificed so much because of oppression. In the countryside, the youth are both witnesses to and victims of military abuses. The impressionable stage of their development is often marked with brutality. The youth in the urban areas, meanwhile, are victims of deceptive programs such as the National Service Law which is the embodiment of distorted consciousness. The educational system which moulds the minds of the youth is used as a tool of deception to keep us from asking (questions) and protesting. Thus, we are anxious for the ceasefire to succeed and for peace based on justice to prevail." The KM has launched several activities in support of the peace negotiations. It has organized information centers in schools and communities to update the people on the ceasefire issue. It has also formed the "Edjop brigade." Named after student leader Edgar Jopson who joined the underground in 1972 and was martyred 10 years after, the brigade will serve as a propaganda team that will go around Metro Manila and hold discussions with the masses to explain the NDF position on significant issues.

Feeding the soul, healing the body

Another underground mass organization intensely preparing for the ceasefire period is the Artista at Manunulat ng Sambayanan (ARMAS). Adel Musidora (literally meaning 'noble gift of the muses'), chairperson of ARMAS, explained to *LIB* the role of the cultural sector in the peace talks: "In the same manner that artists and writers join in the education and publicity campaign of the national democratic movement, *ganoon*

din ang nakikitang role ng ARMAS sa specific isyung ito ng ceasefire. Our task is to popularize the issue among the ranks of national democratic forces and the broad masses to help them understand the issue better and become more well-equipped to handle discussions."

Adel said this popularization will come in the form of comics, songs, plays and perhaps video-cassette recordings and other creative works. Adel further discussed the possibility of ARMAS sponsoring art exhibits which could help explain the justness of the revolutionary struggle and particularly, the ceasefire issue. Poetry-reading is also possible. In the meantime, musician-members of ARMAS are composing the NDF song which will be presented during the ceasefire period.

"We are presently working very closely with the NDF secretariat to produce materials that will be immediately used during the next phase of the peace talks. The NDF, for example, will come out with Christmas cards and posters this December," said the revolutionary artist.

"*Pinakakongkreto siguro ang papel ng mga cultural workers sa darating na ceasefire. Ang sining at panitikan ay talagang bahagi ng buhay ng tao at mas madali nilang mauunawaan ang isyu kung idadaan ito sa iba't ibang porma ng sining.*" Adel said. During the actual ceasefire period, Adel said ARMAS will have a wider space to ventilate the people's demands. It will also give artists and writers a chance to produce plays, literary works and visual art in an atmosphere of peace and without the sword of possible reprisals hanging over their heads.

Meanwhile, ARMAS is holding discussions and forums among its members to explain the tasks of the organization during the peace talks. Early this November, for example, the groups of visual artists, singers and musicians held a special meeting led by officers of ARMAS and the NDF to discuss the negotiations for

peace. One of the suggestions from an ARMAS member was for the NDF to come up with an exhaustive paper on the ceasefire to help NDF members, especially mass leaders, grasp the significant points of the issue. "But the material should not simply be an update on the talks. It should go back to the history of the national democratic movement to better contextualize the peace negotiation and prove the sincerity of the NDF. At present, the only source of information from the underground is *LIB*. We must have more to disprove the black propaganda from the other side," Adel said.

On the other hand, the revolutionary mass organization of health workers and professionals, the Makabayang Sanahang Pangkalusugan (MSP), has also come out with a statement lauding the President's call for ceasefire. It read, "We look forward to the ceasefire negotiations as a rare opportunity to speak to our people especially those in the urban areas, the Filipino people and the peoples of the world so that they may see for themselves without distortions from the years of carefully nurtured anti-Left bias, that we have the interest of the people at heart."

Jun Liwanag, a spokesman of MSP, said the ceasefire will help the MSP launch more health projects especially inside guerrilla zones and in urban poor areas in Metro Manila. With the ceasefire in place, they can now hold medical and dental training sessions in the provinces and carry out more freely, medical services to the people in the name of the NDF.

"Our task at present is to explain to our members and to other members of the health sector what the ceasefire is all about, and find ways of disseminating and popularizing the issue to other sec-



Fighting for peace and liberation

tors," Jun stated.

The underground mass organization of women, meanwhile, has put up for exhibit a tapestry calling on the people to support the peace talks. The Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) said they, too, are anxious for the peace talks to succeed since women's liberation and equality could hardly be achieved if there is oppression.

Regional peace initiatives

In addition to the activities of the various national democratic underground organizations, territorial chapters of the NDF are also launching activities to support the peace talks and ceasefire. The NDF-Visayas, in a statement dated Nov. 9 expressed "firm advocacy and support" to the NDF ceasefire proposal submitted to the government panel. In an interview with *LIB*, Renato Serviente of the NDF-Visayas secretariat explained that provincial chapters of the NDF in the Visayas are undertaking provincial caucuses to see how the people could help in the peace talks and the creation of monitoring committees in the regions.

Regional and provincial chapters which have openly expressed support for the talks were Panay, Negros, Cebu and Samar. The NDF-Cebu held a press conference last Oct. 15 where Rafael Flores represented the NDF, together with Tomas Magtanggol who spoke for the executive committee of the CPP-Cebu and Roger Garcia of the Provincial Operational Command of the NPA-Cebu. The three assured the press of their openness to a ceasefire although they expressed doubts on the sincerity of the military to stop the firing, citing mounting AFP counter-insurgency operations.

Meanwhile, several NDF regional chapters held dialogues with local government officials, with some signing local ceasefire agreements. Among these were NDF-Panay, NDF-Northeastern Mindanao and NDF-Southeastern Mindanao.

In Panay, President Aquino, through Bishop Piamonte, arranged a dialogue with NDF leaders Fr. Boy Torre and Concha Araneta. The two informed Aquino about military operations on the island where houses were burned and valuables stolen. They also said that since the February revolution, the number of AFP battalions in Panay has doubled. On the other hand, the NPA said it has temporarily stopped staging ambushes, a fact attested to by Bishop Piamonte. Both sides made arrangements to conduct a dialogue between NDF-Panay and the local government.

In Northeast Mindanao, the first round of talks between the NDF and local government representatives started last Oct. 20. Also present was a group which served as witness to the talks. It consisted of Bishop Ireneo Amantillo, scores of



MSP medic at work

priests and nuns who are members of the United for Peace Movement, professionals and other sectors.

The objective of the talks was to integrate the NDF and government peace proposals. During the five-hour discussion, the NDF offered a permanent venue for the talks, which included at least three barrios, all within NDF territories. The area was called "Peace Talks Zone," and both sides agreed to stop NPA and AFP military operations there during the talks. The mayors also promised to formally pass a resolution in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to declare the area as a "Peace Talks Zone" and to convince the military to abide by the "Joint Declaration of Intent."

On Oct. 25, a mammoth rally in Tandag, Surigao del Sur was staged. Speakers from the local government and cause-oriented groups took turns explaining the local peace talks. The highlight of the rally, however, was a 20-minute voice tape of underground leader Fr. Frank Navarro, explaining the reasons of the NDF for entering into the ceasefire. The rally participants, most of whom were peasants who walked all the way from their barrios, wildly applauded the NDF message.

Meanwhile, in Davao del Norte, the NDF signed on Aug. 14 a ceasefire agreement with local government officials. The day before, all scheduled NPA tactical operations were already ordered cancelled. On the 15th, however, AFP forces entered one of the barrios included among the ceasefire areas and conducted military operations. The following days, two NDF cadres were arrested and several farmers living in the ceasefire zone were

mauled, arrested and interrogated, while many houses were burned. By Aug. 26, AFP operations had already spread to nine towns. A company of combined forces from the 2nd and 4th Coy of the 1st Scout Rangers Battalion entered San Josefa, San Vicente where a regional NDF conference was being held to discuss the ceasefire. Five unarmed NDF organizers were picked up and three farmers were salvaged. The peace talks was shattered and the NPA was forced to defend the masses and its own forces. Ironically, the military charged the NDF of violating the ceasefire accord, murdering the three farmers and attacking the AFP.

However, the Davao del Norte experience proved that there lies a tricky road to peace and that the NDF must be constantly alert to traps and pitfalls. Although the shattered talks in Davao del Norte served as a warning to the revolutionary movement and should have been enough proof of the AFP's treachery, the NDF has remained open to negotiations. The NDF panel and the revolutionary mass organizations have sincerely opened their arms to a possible settlement of the 17-year insurgency. All means are being undertaken to give the peace talks a chance to succeed. However, if their efforts to bring genuine peace in this country by demanding justice and dignity for the masses through the peace talks are spurned, then peace will have to be reached through a different road.

Until then, the NDF and all its member-organizations, including the CPP and the NPA, are prepared to meet the Aquino government half-way to finally let justice and peace reign in this beleaguered country. **Liz Boltran**

MAINSTREAM

Developments in the people's movements

Elegy for a martyr

Mammoth rally marks funeral march for slain labor leader Rolando Olalia

On the day of the long march, spectators lined both sides of the streets to witness the final rites for slain labor leader Rolando Olalia and his driver and friend, Leonor Alay-ay.

They cheered as the funeral march passed. Occasional showers of confetti poured from the buildings. And to pour in their sympathy in more ways, the street crowd offered water for the thirsty and weary marchers, beamed whenever the militants chanted "Enrile Resign!" or the much bolder "NPA, Lumalalakas, Lumalaban!" and badgered for copies of the one-page NDF statement printed by *LIBERATION* and *Taliba ng Bayan*.

Some 600,000 marchers joined the funeral cortege that day, Nov. 20. The biggest gathering of the Left since the 1930s, the march stretched from the UP Chapel to the main streets around downtown Manila towards the Mandaluyong public cemetery. Laborers from Metro Manila and from as far as Baguio, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon skipped off a day's work to lay Ka Lando and Ka Leonor to rest. Allies and sympathizers of the working class were there too.

For the open mass movement, it was a time for grief but one marked with a massive show of strength. The revolutionary forces joined in paying tribute to Olalia and Alay-ay, the most recent victims of the fascist forces' assault against the pro-

gressive mass movement.

The Kabataang Makabayan (KM) boldly waved its huge streamer throughout the march. This was a breakthrough for the youth group since it went underground in 1972. But the biggest breakthrough was the unfurling, for the first time, of the NDF flag and the first appearance of the underground in the open. The NDF panelists to the peace talks — Satur Ocampo, Tony Zumel and Carolina Malay-Ocampo — were part of the multitudes that honored the new martyrs of the people's struggle. For the first time, they were marching with the huge mass of regular street parliamentarians, like Lando Olalia once was.

"We pay the highest tribute to the courage and patriotism of Ka Lando," the NDF wrote in honor of the man who, like his father, Ka Bert, died in the service of the Filipino working class and the entire Filipino nation. "We shall not forget them and their names shall be enshrined in the glorious list of heroes and martyrs who offered their lives so that future generations may live in peace, justice and prosperity."

Rolando Olalia — constantly described as the sober and soft-spoken leader of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno and Partido ng Bayan — was abducted on the night of Nov. 13. The following day, his body surfaced, brutally tortured and murdered, in



Turning grief to courage: Revolutionary underground joins massive turnout for Olalia's funeral



Olalia: Championing the workers' cause

a grassy spot along an isolated Antipolo road. Four gunshot wounds pierced his head, the eyes gouged out. His mouth, which was stuffed with newspaper, was frozen agape as if in an anguished scream. He had six stab wounds in the body. His hands, tied with a leather belt, were clenched as he died.

Shortly after the murder, progressive labor hinted that the ultra-rightist faction had the most to gain and the most capability to do the dastardly slay, in its relentless attempts to destabilize the Aquino government and the entire Filipino nation.

All through the wake and the funeral, however, the call for restraint and sobriety was heeded. Any outbreak of violence, the militant organizations said, was bound to be blamed on them and used as an excuse for brute military force.

The bereaved mass movement brushed aside the provocation apparently intended in the killings. But the people from the open and underground mass movements showed up by the hundreds of thousands, in sympathy and in protest, to demand justice for Ka Lando and his companion. They turned sorrow into strength, grief into courage. And hopefully, a cry of protest into a song of peace. ■

Confused Corpus

NPA answers Lt. Col. Victor Corpus' claims on Plaza Miranda bombing

"We wish to believe that (this) outrageous statement was born out of confusion." This was the NPA General Staff's reaction to Lt. Col. Victor Corpus' claim that it was the CPP-NPA that was responsible for the 1971 bombing of the Liberal Party rally at Plaza Miranda.

Corpus, a PC lieutenant who joined the NPA in 1971, made the allegation during a press conference held at Camp Crame on Nov. 6. During the press conference, it was also announced that Corpus had rejoined the AFP and had jumped two ranks to become a lieutenant colonel in the reserves.

In its statement, the NPA General Staff explained that "terrorist acts similar to the bombing of Plaza Miranda have never been a part of revolutionary tactics for these go against the interests of the masses whom we have vowed to serve." The rapid growth of the NPA's mass base, said the General Staff, is primarily rooted in the Red fighters' dedication to "uphold first and foremost the interest and welfare of the Filipino people." Said the General Staff, "We will never condone, much more perpetrate anti-people acts such as terrorist attacks, for this would mean the loss of mass support, the lifeblood of the revolution."

Meanwhile, *Pulang Bandila*, official publication and news service of the NPA, released the following open letter of Romulo Kintanar in response to allegations made by Lt. Col. Victor Corpus. Kintanar was Corpus' former political officer in the NPA.

"Isang bukas na liham"

Mahal na kasama,

Labis kong ikinalulungkot na kailangan kong basagin ang pagsasawalang-ki-bo at pabulaanan ang iyong mga paratang sa paraan ng isang bukas na liham. Ang interes ng katotohanan ay dapat na mangibabaw sa anupamang dating pinagsamahang. Bilang Pampulitikang opisyal ng yunit ng Hukbo na ating kinabilangan, na kung saan ikaw ang tumayong Kumander, minarapat kong maging bahagi sa pagtutuwid ng mga mali mong paratang. Tumbalik nga lamang ang mga pangyayari dahil sa pagkaraan ng mahabang panahong di natin pagkikita, ikaw na isang malapit na kasama at matalik na kaibigan ay kailangan kong salungatin ngayon.

Hindi ako makapaniwala sa aking narinig at nabasa nang ipahayag mo kamakailan sa radyo, telebisyon at pahayagan na ang may kagagawan ng Plaza Miranda Bombing ay ang Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas at Bagong Hukbong Bayan. Pinipilit kong papaniwala ang aking sarili na hindi ikaw ang aking narinig at nabasa subalit malinaw ang nangyari. Ibig ko ring maniwala na ang mga mabibigat mong bintang ay bunga lamang ng kaguluhan sa pag-iisip at hindi mulat na pagpapagamit sa mga pakana para isabutahe ang tumatakbong negosasyon sa kapayapaan sa pagitan ng NDF at pamahalaang Aquino. Lalong ayaw kong isiping ito'y bahagi ng balak ng isang paksyon ng militar sa pamumuno ni Enrile upang patalsikin sa kapangyarihan si Gng. Aquino at ibalik ang pasistang paghahari. Ngunit bakit tila may kakatwang pagtatagpo ang iyong pahayag sa mga nagaganap sa kasalukuyan?

Nagtatalo sa aking isip ang mga dahilan ng iyong maling paratang. Dahil sa ang Victor Corpus na aking nakilala ay isang



Corpus: Teller of tall tales

dating opisyal ng AFP na marangal at maginoo na namulat sa katotohanan at naging isang huwarang kumander ng Bagong Hukbong Bayan. Nais ko pa ring bigyang puwang ang ganitong pagkilala at paggalang sa iyo.

Hindi ko inaasahan na titimo sa iyong isipan ang mga paninirang ikinalat ng ilang nakapuslit na di-kanaisnais na elemento sa ating hanay. Naniniwala akong ang mga alaala ng mga dinaanan nating hirap at sakit ay nakaukit pa rin sa iyong puso at isipan. Saan nga ba natin kinuha ang tibay ng loob at determinasyon para kayanin ang mga ito? Noo'y hindi natin masasabing nabasa at naunawaan natin nang buo ang mga teorya at prinsipyo ng mga dakilang rebolusyonaryo. Subalit nakatitiyak ako sa isang bagay — naisapuso natin ang diwa ng paglilingkod sa sambayanan. Anupa't sa bawat pagkilos ng ating yunit ay nasasaisip natin ang disiplinang dimamiminsala gaano man kaliit sa interes ng sambayanan.

Netatandanan mo pa ba na ilang operasyong militar na may katiyakan tayong ipagwagi ang hindi natin itinuloy dahil sa



Corpus with military lawyer: "Outrageous statements born out of a confused mind"

masaring masangkot ang buhay ng sibil-yan? Natatandaan mo pa ba ang dinanas nating hirap at gutom nang magmartsa tayo mula Isabela tungong Palanan at Dilasag Quezon? Nadsanaa natin noon ang isang puno ng saging na hitik sa hinog na bunga at ang iba'y halos mabulok na. Hindi natin matiyak kung may nagmamay-ari pa sa punong ito. Anong dahilan at tila iisa ang isip ng ating yunit na hindi galawin ang saging at tila ang gutom? Alam ko at alam mong di lang minsan ang ganitong pangyayari. Alam ko at alam mo na ilang kasama rin ang nasawi dahil sa gutom. Maaaring hatulan tayo ngayon ng ilan na mali ang pag-unawa natin sa pag-unod sa disiplina dahil ito'y nangahulugan ng buhay ng ilang kasama. Ganoonpaman, nais kong sabihin at idiin sa ngalan at ala-ala ng mga nasawi nating kasama na di-matatawaran at di-mapag-aalinlanganan

hanggang sa kasalukuyan.

Alam kong batid mo na malaki ang kinalaman ng pamumuno ng Partido sa Hukbong Bayan, sa pamamagitan ng matiyagang pampulitikang gawain sa loob ng mga yunit nito, para mulat na sundin ng lahat ng opisyal at kawal ang mga patakaran at disiplina. At alam kong alam mo na sa iisang pundamental na layunin umiinog ang pagisikap na ito - Ito'y para puspung itaguyod ang kapakaman ng sambayanan at pengalagaan ito sa anumang pinsalang masaring idulot ng sinuman sa ating hanay. Bakit naging takinik ka sa katotohanang ito, Ka Eming? Ang iyong mga peratang ngayon ay hindi sumasang-ayon sa naging karanasan natin sa yunit at ng buong rebolusyonaryong kilusan. Lalong sumasalungat ito sa mga prinsipyong ating natutunan. Masakit mang sabihin, alam kong labis kang nanluhomo ngayon dahil

san. Ano't sa kabila ng mga pagtatangkang ito'y nabigo sila? Ano't sa kabila ng mga ito'y nahinang ang higit na matibay na pagkakaisa ng Hukbong Bayan at sambayanan. Alam kong mahahanap mo ang kasagutan sa kaibuturan ng iyong puso sa pagkat di maikakailang naging bahagi ka sa pagkamit ng tagumpay na ito.

Hindi kita sinisisi kung magpasya ka mang maglingkod muli sa AFP sa pag-aakalang nagbago na nga ito at tunay na ngang naglilingkod ito sa interes ng sambayanan. Iginagalang ko ang ganitong paniwala mo. Ngunit para pakasangkapan pa sa maruming pakana ng iilan para dungisan ang dangal ng Partido at Hukbong Bayan ay kalabisan na at di-karapatdapat sa isang maginoong katunggali. Sana'y mali ang inaakala ko sa bagay na ito.

Hindi mo dapat ipangamba ang iyong personal na kaligtasan dahil sa mga paratang mo laban sa Partido at Hukbong Bayan. Alam mong hindi ito sapat na dahilan para iyong ipangamba. Hinihiling ko lamang sa iyo na muling surtin ang tinitindigan sa kasalukuyan at kung may natitira pa mang pagalang-sa-sarili ay ituwid ang nararapat. Hindi pa huli para panigan ang katotohanan. May sapat pang panahon para piliin ang dapat damayan at kilanlin ang tunay na kaibigan.

Ang iyong kaibigan,

Romulo Kintanar o Ka Roy

"Natatandaan mo pa ba ang dinanas nating hirap at gutom nang magmartsa tayo mula Isabela tungong Palanan at Dilasag, Quezon?"

ang kanilang taus-puso at buong pagpapahalaga sa kapakaman ng sambayanan.

Ang ganitong takinik na pag-unod sa disiplina ng Hukbong Bayan ay di-lamang totoo sa yunit na ating pinamunuan. Ito ang naging kalakaran sa lahat ng yunit ng Bagong Hukbong Bayan sa ating panahon at isang maipagmamalaking tradisyon

sa binitawan mong mga paratang na walang batayan.

Mahigit isa't kalahating dekada nang nagpupunyagi ang demokrasya. Mahigit isa't kalahating dekada ring tinangka ng pangkating Marcos at US na ilublob sa putik ang ngalan ng rebolusyonaryong kilu-

"A fitting crown"

Samar NDF Provisional Council launched

Andres Bonifacio's Katipunan was formed in an old house in the proletarian district of Tondo, while Jose Rizal's "Mi Ultimo Adios" was written inside a grim prison cell in Fort Santiago. Indeed, historic moments do not often occur in grandiose settings. In fact, only a few weeks ago, the National Democratic Front (NDF)-Samar Provisional Regional Council (PRC) was founded inside a simple room - its walls white and bare while the wooden chairs and tables looked worn and ordinary.

With these blank walls as background, last Oct. 14, nine men stood inside this room and pledged in solemn voices and with tightly clenched fists, to "discharge their duties with revolutionary zeal, dedication and courage, in order to fully promote the national democratic interests and aspirations of the Filipino people." Consisting of three priests, three lawyers, a journalist, an engineer and the representative of the CPP-NPA Samar, these nine men were the newly elected members of the NDF-Samar provisional council.

The induction capped the four-day special conference held somewhere in Southern Luzon from Oct. 11 to 14. Represented were the three NDF provincial

territorial organs and sectoral underground mass organizations in the island. There were also observers from the NDF-Visayas, NDF national secretariat and NDF-Leyte.

Among the messages of solidarity sent to the conference was one from the NDF, hailing the PRC formation as a "historic event (that) constitutes a major step forward in the advance of the national democratic movement particularly at such a crucial moment in our struggle." It added that "with the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship and the installation of the Aquino government, it has become all the more urgent that we build the revolutionary political power of the people in order to hasten the full realization of national independence and democracy."

"A fitting crown"

After over a decade-and-a-half of relentless struggle for democratic rights and freedom, the establishment of the NDF-Samar provisional council symbolizes the advanced stage reached by the national democratic movement on the island. In its message, the NDF-Visayas aptly described the PRC formation as "a fitting

crown" to the long years of hard work in laying down its foundations. "Samar's growing and active revolutionary mass organizations and alliances among peasants, workers, students, church people, professionals and intellectuals have produced a high level of unity and coordination that has enabled the advance of the revolutionary mass movement, both in the open and secret, legal and illegal," noted the NDF-Visayas representative.

Among the mass organizations in Samar, the Pambansang Kilusan ng Magbubukid (PKM) counts the biggest and most active members. It serves as the backbone of open peasant mass struggles, and its barrio chapters are the main pillars of the NDF's barrio revolutionary committees.

The Christians for National Liberation, the underground group of church leaders, also prides itself as being one of the oldest and most active mass organizations on the island. On the other hand, the Kaba-taang Makabayan and the Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan are in the process of forming their provincial committees in Samar.

These organizations lead in their respective sectoral struggles and often coordinate and form alliances to launch campaigns on other political and economic issues, including militarization and the economic crisis. As a PRC member remarked, "The advances today in Samar's revolutionary mass movement are simply the rewards of years of painstaking and sustained political work among the peasant masses and, in the recent years, among the middle forces."

Provincial reports during the conference showed that there are now over 1,300 barrios (representing 69% of the total number) that are influenced by the revolutionary movement in varying degrees. The NDF-Samar also has about 620 barrio-level mass organizations of women, youth and peasants. Out of the 74 towns in the whole island, only eight have not yet been reached. Reports, moreover, revealed that over 90,600 peasants and some 3,100 middle forces have been organized under organizing groups of the NDF. All these figures are proof of the NDF's extensive and successful organizing work and mass support in the area.

Colorful history

Unknown to some, the history of Samar is a colorful tapestry of stories of its people's heroic resistance against exploitation and oppression. From the revolt against the Spanish colonizers, to the Sumoroy-led uprising against American exploiters, to the present guerrilla warfare against the fascist armed forces, the Samarenos have courageously fought for their rights through armed struggle.

The NDF-Visayas noted that the first major successful ambush in the region against government troops was staged in



Solidarity: Peasant with NPA fighter

Samar in 1974. This sparked the rapid growth of armed struggle throughout the Visayas region. In addition, it was from Samar that many revolutionary cadres developed, who were later deployed to the other parts of the Visayas and Mindanao, to contribute their wealth of knowledge and expertise in guerrilla warfare.

The middle forces have played a key role in the growth of the revolutionary movement on the island, including the development of anti-feudal mass campaigns and armed resistance. The middle forces include small businessmen, teachers, rich peasants, government employes and students, as well as small and middle landlords.

The NDF-Samar provisional council noted that many respected regional and provincial personalities, including some landlords and businessmen, have joined NDF cells and accepted the NDF's revolutionary land reform program. While some have not directly joined, they still continue to support the armed struggle by providing food and medicine to Red fighters or even to peasants who are known members of revolutionary mass organizations.

In many areas in the island, the middle forces are organized into support groups which provide technical and administrative skills in livelihood projects of local mass organizations. Such projects include the development of cooperatives, improvement of crops, organizing of mutual labor exchange programs and the launching of anti-usury campaigns.

In the PKM's rent-reduction campaigns, the middle forces gave invaluable support by facilitating the marketing of crops which the farmers confiscated from abusive landlords. Businessmen allies helped by buying the harvest themselves or by facilitating its sale to other merchants.

In addition, some landlords who, because of the influence of the revolutionary movement, have recognized the exploitation of peasants, voluntarily increased their tenants' wages to more humane levels, while the businessmen bought the crops at more acceptable prices.

Larry, a PRC member said that the middle forces, particularly the small and middle landlords, often accept the rent or wage terms suggested by peasant mass organizations. However, he said there are cases when the peasants demand wages that are too high. "*Sa kopra halimbawa, bumabagsak na lang at nabubulok ang mga niyog dahil di kaya ng may-ari ng lupa ang hinihingi na hayad.*" But in Northern Samar, a peasant organization demanded that sharing be changed from 50-50 to 20-80 in favor of the farmers.

"*Sa mga ganitong kaso, karanasan natin na hindi lang muna nagpapatanim ang may-ari dahil hindi talaga kaya at wala na silang kita. Mali ring gawin ito sa kanila. Nagiging solik pa ito ng paghina ng lokal na ekonomya. Sa pangmatagalan, pare-*

hong maghihirap ang magsasaka at maliit at panggitnang may-ari ng lupa."

In such cases, particularly if the landlords are not anti-revolutionary and do not use violence against their workers and tenants, revolutionary cadres sit down with both the peasant association and the landlords in order to come up with terms acceptable to both sides.

"*Kailangan kilalanin ang problema ng magsasaka pero dapat din isaalang-alang ang mga panggitnang puwersa,*" said Larry. "*Kaya, kung minsan, kailangan rendahan ang demands upang hindi bumagsak ang ekonomya sa lugar, maging ang kabuhayan ng mga middle forces.*"



Light moment: NPA guerrilla conversing with barriofolk

On the other hand, the middle forces in Samar also help to advance the armed struggle mainly by providing material and financial support. They are also good at intelligence work and sometimes even help in hiding guerrillas and cadres during unexpected military operations.

In Samar, where the AFP is relentless in its anti-insurgency campaigns, the middle forces play a key role in outwitting the military's food blockades. The food blockades are designed to starve the guerrillas into surrendering, but the military has overlooked the strong support and unequivocal courage of the masses. While the poor peasants are only allowed to buy a limited amount of rice and goods, the middle forces who are well-respected in the barrios, are often not questioned and they are able to buy food for the Red fighters. Some of those who own stores often sell canned goods and rice to the guerrillas, despite ominous military orders not to.

There have also been several NPA tactical operations that depended heavily on the help of the middle forces, from intelligence work to materials needed. Sometimes, professionals and businessmen themselves actually join offensives, either as guides or combatants. Some even undergo training as members of the people's militia.

The CPP-NPA representative to the meeting stressed that without the support

of the middle forces, armed struggle would not be as strong as it is today in Samar.

The creation of the NDF council in Samar would certainly help in systematizing the implementation of the NDF program in that island. As the political center of the revolutionary struggle on the island, the council has set three major tasks: 1) to advance the armed struggle as the primary means of promoting the national democratic program and defending the political and economic gains of the revolution; 2) to advance and consolidate the mass movement to effectively assert the people's basic demands; and 3) to build a

united front of all progressive and oppressed sectors in Samar to hasten the attainment of national democracy.

The NDF council plans to prioritize the formal establishment of NDF territorial organs on all levels. This includes the formation of BRCs in places where there are still none and the expansion of underground mass organizations.

Indeed, the formation of the provisional council not only symbolizes the success of the past years of struggle but also marks the beginning of a new stage in the colorful history of resistance on the island. As the NDF-Visayas representative said: "The establishment of this council entails new and complex revolutionary tasks with complicated forms which are all concomitant with a higher qualitative stage of development." The PRC formation will pave the way for the expansion of the people's organs of political power and, eventually, the establishment of a democratic coalition government.

The room where the NDF-Samar council was formed may have been simple and devoid of glamor. There may have been no television cameras, not even an instamatic polaroid camera to record this particular event for posterity. However, the dedication and courage that the people of Samar have contributed to the national democratic movement was very much palpable in the room that historic afternoon. Liz Beltran

COUNTERCURRENTS

The Philippine government and the US

Two faces of the same coin

Militarization and "psy-war"— the blunt and subtle sides of counter-insurgency

Rafael Iletto, the new Defense Minister, and AFP chief Gen. Fidel Ramos together make a team of US-trained military men schooled in the rough and fine arts of counter-insurgency. Their ascendancy is likely to influence strongly the direction of future government policy on the insurgency, with stress on a "politico-military solution." The following article by LIB staffer Juan Picas examines and lays bare the real nature of the politico-military solution espoused by Ramos and Iletto:

"Government adopts strategy on counter-insurgency," blared the newspaper headlines this October. But despite the hype that accompanied the adoption of AFP Chief Gen. Fidel Ramos' six-point program to combat the insurgency, a close examination of its provisions would reveal that there is nothing new about the program.

Its combined military and socio-economic solution is a mixture of the blunt and subtle approaches common to every modern counter-insurgency strategy. The "new" AFP strategy mainly calls for more civic action projects, a heightened propaganda drive on counter-insurgency and increased budgetary support for the military.

Its blunt and more obvious side consists of direct military action, mostly in the form of combat operations against the NPA. The AFP itself has been developed as an anti-insurgent armed force instead of being oriented to repulse external attacks. The major adjustments along this line took place during the Marcos regime. Among these were the merging of the AFP and Philippine Constabulary in field operations; the formation of battalion combat teams which are better equipped and trained; and attaching small units highly trained in guerrilla warfare to the battalion combat teams. The recent formation of so-called "Rabbit Hunters" (special teams trained to pursue NPA "sparrow units" across provincial borders), under the command of RUC 10 Commander Gen. Mariano Adalem, is one manifestation of these changes.

Thus, when Gen. Ramos speaks today of a "lean and mean" AFP, he is merely articulating an ideal that has been espoused since the Magsaysay era — that of a small but effective and efficient military force capable of crushing the revolutionary movement. But the more intangible side of counter-insurgency involves a complex package of "psy-ops" (psychological operations or warfare), intelligence work and paramilitary action.

The last two components have included the planting of informers and deep penetration agents (like the "zombies") in revolutionary zones and organizations, the use of paramilitary forces like the Civilian Home Defense Force and armed re-

ligious fanatic cults, and the meshing of private armies of local warlords into the military's counter-insurgency campaign. Mobilizing these forces has been very practical and convenient for the AFP, because by their paramilitary character, they can commit atrocities in behalf of the military establishment and elude courts of justice.

Unfortunately for the military however, their direct military and paramilitary actions and vigorous "base-denial" and "resource-denial" campaigns have consistently failed to forcibly separate the revolutionary forces from their mass base. As a result, the AFP has had to direct its violence against the people themselves, thus contributing to the masses' intense hatred of the military.

Cognizant of this historical handicap of the AFP, the Aquino government has decided to put stress on the combined military and socio-economic solution put forth in Ramos' "six-point plan." Thus, without letting go of the military component of counter-insurgency, the Aquino government has at the same time em-

barked on a revival of socio-economic projects reminiscent of the Magsaysay era. It is this scheme that properly falls under the category of "psy-ops."

Reviving the Magsaysay formula

Way back in the time of President Ramon Magsaysay, America's fair-haired boy, such projects included the construction of irrigation canals, "liberty" wells, bridges, roads, barrio health stations, agricultural extension services, agricultural credit, and distribution or donation of foodstuffs to the rural poor.

The psy-war experts of the 1950s even devised an elaborate con game for the Filipino people's consumption. They set up the Economic Development Corporation (EDCOR) program which was intended to resettle members of the Huk movement from Central Luzon to Mindanao, heralded then by government propagandists as the "land of promise." But by the time the resettlement program was terminated, millions of pesos had been spent for only 950 families, less than 250 of whom belonged to the Huk movement. The truth was the government did not want so many families to move into the resettlement area because there was not enough land available. The psy-war experts merely conceived the scheme to mimic the call of the revolutionary movement and the Huks for "land for the landless."

US scholar B.J. Kerkvliet recounts the "merits" of the farce in an interview with Jose Crisol, one of the prime psy-war gurus of that time and during the Marcos era. Said Crisol: "These projects were aimed at the soft core of the Huk movement — those who were not hard-core communists or Huk leaders, but rather



Aquino and her chief of staff: Opting for a "total solution" to insurgency