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PEOPLE'S PROTESTS JOLT DICTATOR

Not since the years immediately preceding the declaration of martial law were there such huge and militant protest actions against the Marcos dictatorship as those which raged in Metro Manila during the recent "election" campaign period and the week after April 7. Despite all sorts of harassments, intimidations and terrorist actions like bombings, fires and other Red-scare tactics perpetrated by the regime, surging numbers of enraged citizens went out of their homes, took to the streets and joined opposition rallies, marches and other mass actions. These reached a peak in the resounding "noise" demonstration on the eve of the "elections" when hundreds of thousands of aroused citizens expressed their hatred for the dictatorship by creating various kinds of noise.

The dictator, already frantic over the overwhelming support of the people for the opposition party, the Lakas ng Bayan (Laban), was jolted by all the noise-making. He barged out of his fortress, flew out on a helicopter and was stupefied to see hundreds of thousands of Metro Manilans out on the streets chanting Laban! Laban! and other anti-martial law slogans.

The pre-election day demos, however, were only the first phase of a two-phase campaign which centers on exposing the farcicality of the Interim Batasang Pambansa (IBP) "elections". After experiencing for themselves the unprecedented fraud and terrorism committed by the Marcos regime during the April 7 "elections", the people of the entire country are seething with indignation. They are raring for "action" and have started to undertake more active and more militant measures to express their contempt for the dictatorship.

As Liberation goes to press, lightning demonstrations erupted in various populated areas of Metro Manila. Despite the dictator's threat to arrest any demonstrator, several hundreds of youths and other citizens have staged marches to protest the rape of the people's will during the last "elections". More militant protest actions are being planned to dramatize the people's indignation over the massive fraud and terrorism committed by the Marcos regime on "election" day.

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1. People Join Protests

On the whole, about one million concerned citizens participated in the various rallies, marches, mass meetings, symposia and other protest actions launched by Laban and its support organizations. Among the biggest of these were the huge rallies spearheaded by the Kilusan ng Mamamayan para sa Kalayaan (KMK), a nationalist and anti-fascist group with sectoral member organizations among the workers (Kilusan ng mga Manggagawa para sa Kalayaan), urban poor (Kilusan ng Maralitang Mamamayan para sa Kalayaan), youth and students (Kilusan ng Kabataan para sa Kalayaan), professionals, and the religious.

These rallies, which were preceded by marches from several points in Metro Manila were held at Plaza Bustillos last March 3 with about 10,000 people, mainly youth and students, attending; Plaza Miranda (March 10) with about 15,000 participants; Plaza Hernandez in Tondo (March 18) with also about 15,000 people, mainly slum dwellers, participating; Plaza Sta. Cruz (March 30) with about 45,000 citizens, mainly workers, attending (spearheaded by the Kalayaan Labor Coalition); and at Liwasang Bonifacio (April 5) with about 70,000 people from various sectors in attendance.

In addition, there were the more than 200 local rallies, mass meetings and symposia held in communities, factory areas and schools in which more than one half million citizens attended. KMK and other Laban volunteers also reached tens of thousands of community residents on their saturation campaign drives during which they went from house to house explaining the issues in the "elections" to the people.

Many of these local gatherings drew large crowds in themselves. Some of the biggest assemblies were the symposia at the University of the Philippines (6,000), Far Eastern University (a total of 16,000) and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (3,000); the local rallies at Marikina (15,000), San Francisco del Monte (8,000), Bagong Baryo (Calocan), Monumento, Pandacan, Navotas, Tondo and several other places.

These gatherings contrasted sharply with the few rallies held by Marcos' "Kilusang Bagong Lipunan" (KBL) where the audiences were often herded from places distant from the site of the local assemblies. The introduction of popular singers and other entertainment personalities into these rallies failed to draw the wished-for crowds.

KBL cultural presentations diverted the attention of the people from their present conditions and the masses, recognizing this, all the more boycotted such cheap come-ons. On the other hand, the presentations of the KMK cultural group, the Alyansa ng mga Artista ng Bayan (Alab), became the raves in communities, factories, and schools appealing as they did to the problems of these sectors.

Marches which preceded the big KMK and other rallies provided great opportunities for propagandizing among the people. During these marches, participants gave away manifestoes and candidates' leaflets to spectators along the routes of the marches, pasted posters and stickers on walls and lamp posts, and chanted slogans along the way.

Some of the common slogans that were chanted and incorporated in posters and stickers were: Ibagsak ang batas militar!; Demokrasya Hindi Diktadura. Kasaganaan Hindi Kahirapan. Taumbayan Hindi Dayuhan!; Sahod Itas. Presyo Ibaba. Martial Law Ibagsak!; Ibalik ang karapatang magvela!; and IBP - Pakana ng Pangkatang Estados Unidos-Marcos! Such posters and stickers stood out and were talked about by many commuters and passersby although they were greatly outnumbered by Imelda-KBL posters that literally peppered walls along many metropolitan streets in a grandiose show of waste of the people's money.

Protest Sentiment Spreads

The boldness and strength of the protest actions launched during the initial weeks of the 45-day campaign period widely encouraged the unorganized masses to speak out and express their opposition to the dictatorship.

Many expressed their oppositionist sentiment in various enterprising ways. One common reaction of the people, for example, was to reject, tear, crumple or throw away leaflets distributed by hired KBL campaigners. Others tore down Imelda-KBL posters, especially those near waiting sheds. A conductor of a bus on the Cubao-Alabang run called for passengers by chanting Alabang, Labang, Laban, Laban, Laban... A number of listeners at a KMK mass meeting in Cubao even volunteered to speak out against the martial law regime.

The Gigantic April 6 "Noise" Demo

The heightening wave of oppositionist sentiment among the people grew into gigantic proportions on the evening of April 6 during the "noise" demonstration which was mainly a spontaneous protest action.

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For more than four hours starting at 9 p.m., the principal thoroughfares of the metropolis were lined up with chanting people and cruised along by several hundreds of vehicles tooting their horns and/or dragging along strings of empty tin cans. Those on the streets struck at drums and other objects.

Others hailed at passengers of passing vehicles chanting "Laban! Laban!" with arms raised in a V-sign or in clenched fist. Thousands of others took to the streets and marched in groups within their area at first, and as they increased in number, to other distant places. Except for a few hurriedly-scrawled placards, they had nothing but their determined voices to manifest their seething hatred for the dictatorship.

Among the largest concentrations of "noise-makers" were at España in Sampaloc, Tondo, Pasig, Blumentritt, Calocan, Malabon, Navotas, Pandacan, Bacalaran, Las Piñas, Projects 6 and 7 in Quezon City and Cubao. The demonstrators at España alone numbered about 60,000 people; those at Pasig, about 40,000.

Those who marched from their communities to the surrounding or distant districts numbered in the tens of thousands. Among the largest groups of marchers were those from Calocan and Blumentritt who marched to as far south as España wavingleaves and branches of trees and shrubs -- a scene reminiscent of Palm Sunday. The three united groups of marchers then wound through the University Belt area, then trekked along Recto to Quiapo, Liwasang Bonifacio, then back to España where volleys of gunfire forced them to disperse at about 1 a.m. of April 7 ("election" day).

The protest actions launched by Laban, KKK and other Laban support organizations in Metro Manila, however, constituted only a part, though a significant part, of the total opposition to the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

Other Groups Stage Boycott

Other major opposition groups in Metro Manila were the Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines led by former Senator Jose W. Dickno and the Liberal Party hierarchy headed by former Senators Jovito Salonga and Gerardo Roxas, Jr. These two opposition groups called for a boycott of the IBP "elections", calling them a farce.

The CLUP exposed the design of the U.S. in calling for "elections" -- to pave the way for the institutionalization

of the benefits and concessions granted foreign investors and interests by the Marcos martial law regime. The LP hierarchy attacked the "elections" because of the introduction of block voting and other fraud-permitting schemes in the electoral code.

Outside Metro Manila, there was no strong genuine legal opposition although there were various independent political forces which participated in the fake elections. The KBL practically monopolized the campaign in these areas. As in the past fake referenda, the results were cooked up long before the actual voting started.

CPP-NPA and Other Armed Opposition

The strongest opposition force to the Marcos dictatorship during the last "elections" was the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), together with the New People's Army (NPA) which it leads. Well before April 7, the CPP branded the "elections" as a farce and called upon its membership, mass organizations and the people as a whole to stage a boycott except in Metro Manila where it called for more flexible tactics.

Long before this, the CPP also exposed the evil design of the US-Marcos regime to fool the people into believing that it was planning to lift martial law with the declaration of its policy of "normalization".

As a result of the CPP call, great numbers of people, especially in NPA guerrilla zones, refused to register and to vote at the polls. In many areas where units of the people's army have the upper hand, agents of the regime did not dare to show up to get the "will of the people".

This situation also prevailed in southwestern and other parts of Mindanao where the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and its military arm, the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA), operated in force. In these areas, the Marcos regime did not as much speak about the IBP "elections" knowing as it does that the Moro people have only contempt for such nonsense.

Armed Struggle Needed

The farcicality of the recent "elections" shows more than ever to the broad masses of the people that elections and other "normalization" schemes of the dictatorship are all a sham. It stresses to them the necessity to wage armed struggle in order to overthrow the oppressive and puppet Marcos dictatorship. ●

MASSES HIT MASSIVE FRAUD TERRORISM IN FARCE ELECTIONS



True to its tyrannical character, the Marcos regime perpetrated the most massive fraud and terrorism in Philippine electoral history during the recent fake IRP elections.

In Metro Manila where the Marcos party, the KBL, faced a formidable opposition in the Lakas ng Bayan, the regime resorted to the most brazen fraud and terrorist schemes to ensure its "victory". It mobilized the government machinery, the reactionary armed forces, the mass media and the supposedly non-partisan Commission on Elections (Comelec) to make sure that Laban would be "trounced in defeat."

Outside Metro Manila where there were no or only token legal opposition, naked fraud and terrorism were also the rule. The "victory" of the dictator's party was cooked up long before April 7. The monopoly of the KBL of the candidates' slots ridiculously showed the farcicality of the whole exercise.

A civic group, the Concerned Citizens for Justice Documentation Team, recently assailed the Marcos government for resorting to various dirty tricks on "election" day. In its report, it outlined three main tactics of the regime to frustrate the people's will during the last "elections".

These were 1) the use of outright terrorism in the form of the actual mi-

litary take-over of the counting of ballots, inflicting physical injuries on opposition volunteers and watchers, bombings, the presence of armed KBL partisans, voter intimidation by Barangay Tanods, and the arrest and detention of opposition volunteers and watchers; 2) the prevention of watchers and volunteers from both the opposition and non-partisan civic organizations such as the Citizens National Assembly on Referenda, Plebiscites and Elections (CINACORPE) from entering or staying within the precincts to observe the voting, and later, the ballot counting; and 3) the massive use of flying voters, fraudulent voters' lists and previously prepared ballots.

Cases of Fraud and Terrorism

Among the most brazen cases were:

1. The military (Metrocom, police) take-over of the counting of ballots at the E. de los Santos, Tonsuya and Amang Rodriguez elementary schools in Malabon;
2. The forcing out of opposition and CINACORPE volunteers by armed Barangay Tanods in many precincts, particularly in Sta. Cruz, Cubao and Muntinglupa;
3. The mauling and arrest of poll watchers by Barangay Tanods at the Gotamco Elementary School in Caloocan;
4. The tearing and burning of most ballots (apparently for Laban) in Daang Hari, Navotas; and
5. The barring of about half of the registered voters in several precincts along North Bay boulevard in Navotas because they were pro-Laban.

Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas (BMP) also reports that at Las Piñas, hired KBL supporters voted in behalf of 30,000 dead people; at Baryo Kapitolyo in Pasig, about 500 military men were allowed to vote without benefit of registration; and at many precincts in Caloocan City, many people were allowed to vote as many as five times. The same underground newspaper also reports that in many places, ballot boxes were stuffed with KBL ballots as early as 8 a.m. of "election" day, while in others, many ballots were not placed inside the ballot boxes.

In Makati, Liberation informants reported that armed men of Mayor Nemesio Yabut took over the precincts at the Makati Polytechnic College at 5 p.m. of April 7 and "supervised" the counting of the ballots to ensure a KBL "victory".

Similar incidents were also reported elsewhere in Metro Manila, perpetrated by local hatchetmen of the dictator.

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EDITORIAL (continuation)

with the defeat of its belligerent schemes in many parts of the world, particularly in Indochina.

It is not a wonder, therefore, that Richard Holbrooke, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs, bluntly told Marcos that the Carter administration is not willing to sign any agreements with governments of a "dubious character".

U.S. imperialism is particularly interested in the settlement of the military bases agreement and in working out another economic treaty with the Philippines. It wants that these agreements, the principal provisions of which have already been threatened out, be ratified by "a law making body, duly-constituted and duly-elected" by the people.

But then the U.S.-Marcos clique would not want to put up a genuine legislature lest it create a monster that would turn against it and eat up all its interests. Hence, it must put up a docile

and unthinking legislature. And a subservient legislature can only be made up of its most loyal and obedient followers. The elections must then be rigged, tightly controlled to ensure the dominance of the KBL, the Marcos party, in the IBP. To complete its control over such a rubber stamp parliament, IBP decisions have to be subjected to the approval of the chief puppet and dictator himself.

All these are already turning into reality.

For the people, the recent fake elections show that they could not expect freedom, democracy and prosperity to follow with the establishment of the IBP and other "normalization" schemes of the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship. As many of them now realize, the key to their liberation from oppression and exploitation lies in participating in the revolutionary mass movement being waged in the cities and the countryside. ●

MASSES HIT FRAUD...(continuation)

All these go to show that completely opposite to Marcos' utterances, the recent "elections" were the dirtiest and most violent in the country's history.

The massiveness of the fraud and terrorist measures undertaken by the dictatorship increased with the growing support of the people for the opposition. Such support was recognized by the dictator himself who became more brazen in resorting to his evil schemes as the campaign moved on.

In reaction to a KBL survey which showed that 70 per cent of government employees supported Laban, the dictator blatantly threatened those employees with expulsion for being threats to the "New Society". He also mobilized his Barangay para-military forces to intimidate urban poor residents into voting for KBL or else face retaliation. Threats of a bloody revolution should any Laban candidate win were hurled. A Red-scare campaign in which several bombing and fire incidents were blamed on the "subversives" was also unleashed.

At the same time that the dictator resorted to intimidatory tactics, he became more shameless in implementing his fraud schemes. Shortly before April 7, he openly called on his fellow Ilocanos to register and vote in Metro Manila while his wife called on her Leyte provincemates to do the same. Marcos also ordered to Metro Manila several military units like the Tabak Division of the

Armed Forces of the Philippines in order to pad the voters' lists in favor of the KBL as well as to sow more terror among the populace if things "get out of hand." To accommodate these new voters, Marcos had the Comelec extend the registration deadline from March 28 to April 3.

The masses became more enraged than ever upon knowing of these actuations of the dictatorship. Many concerned citizens exposed and protested these actions and for doing so, they were mauled by armed KBL agents. Former Makati Councilor Cesar Alzona was beaten up by goons of Yabut when he protested poll irregularities in his locality. In Calocan City, several opposition watchers were hospitalized as a result of injuries inflicted on them by Barangay Tanods. Long before "election" day, a KMK volunteer was beaten up by 10 KBL hirelings whom he exposed for registering several times at the Las Piñas municipal hall.

One common reaction of people to all these was to refuse to vote even when they have already registered.

The massive fraud and terrorism committed by the dictatorship only showed, however, the complete farcicality of the recent "elections". They further pointed out to the masses to rely on themselves and not on any charlatan like Marcos if they are to attain freedom, democracy and prosperity. ●

EDITORIAL**IBP "ELECTIONS": THE U.S. MEDDLING THE DICTATOR
HASN'T TALKED ABOUT**

While harping against foreign or United States meddling in the country's internal affairs since he can remember until at present, Marcos has not dared mention the U.S.' role in the recent Interim Bata-sang Pambansa (IBP) "elections".

And that is: the architect of a grand scheme to fool the Filipino people into believing that the Marcos regime is indeed "irretrievably on the way to normalcy" and to pave the way for the further institutionalisation of the dictator's tyrannical rule and the entrenchment of U.S. monopoly capitalist interests.

For this scheme, Marcos has been a very able executor, though a brazen one, in masterminding the unprecedented fraud and terrorism which occurred during the recent fake elections.

Even as he has accused the opposition, the Lakas ng Bayan (Laban), as a tool of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and foreign interests (only to say later on that it has been taken over by "subversives"), there has never been a finer model of staunch and unbridled puppetry as the dictator himself. Marcos' servility to U.S. imperialism has long been on record.

Following the declaration of martial rule in September 1972 at the instigation of U.S. imperialism, Marcos opened wide the country's doors to the massive inflow of foreign investments. While foreign investments, mostly American, averaged only \$5.45 million from 1970 to 1972, they jumped to \$120M from 1973 to 1975. Foreign investors have never assumed a more dominant position in our economy as now under the Marcos dictatorship; they have never been more pampered as they are at present with the various incentives and benefits granted them especially since the imposition of martial law.

While Marcos' American masters are pleased with the concessions and benefits they have gained under his one-man rule,

they have their own worries.

From late 1975 to the present, the dictatorship has had to contend with an evergrowing revolutionary mass movement that is shaking it to its very foundations. Armed struggle continues to rage in all regions of the archipelago and its suppression has all but been given up by the dictator. In the cities, especially in Metro Manila, the struggle of workers, slum dwellers, youth and students and other oppressed sectors continue to gain strength.

These, U.S. imperialism sees as signs of an unstable order. Furthermore, what can prevent a future government from taking back the benefits it has gained from the fascist chieftain. They were granted through the decrees and "laws" of one man.



Moreover, the blatantly tyrannical rule of the Marcos regime as proven by its bloody record of massacres, "salvaging", kidnappings, murder and torture, has become an embarrassment to the Carter "human rights" line. This is not to say, however, that the U.S. will not continue to sponsor and prop up repressive regimes all over the world. The U.S. government has declared its determination to support the current regime in the Philippines because of the vital American economic and military interests at stake here. This has been expressed in the increasing U.S. economic "aid" to the Marcos regime which jumped from an annual average of \$716M from 1973 to 1976, the continuing U.S. military "assistance" which jumped to an annual average of \$85M from 1973 to 1977 compared to only \$30.5M a year from 1970 to 1972, and the mounting foreign credit being extended to the Philippines by imperialist financing institutions which now totals a staggering \$6.9B. Thus, Carter's "human rights line" is simply a means to cover up the aggressive nature of U.S. imperialism to cope with the mounting opposition from the American people and

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