

Reply to Liwanag:

The CPP and False Friends of the Filipino Revolution

For some time, the genuine revolutionary communists the world over have been deeply concerned by developments taking place in the revolutionary movement in the Philippines. In the twenty years since its formation on 26 Dec. 1968 (the birthday of Mao Tsetung) the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has won impressive victories in the armed struggle it has been leading — and these victories have been greeted with enthusiasm by the genuine revolutionaries and Marxist-Leninists the world over. But at the same time it has been impossible to ignore the ideological and political corrosion that has been eating at the very foundations of the CPP. The genuine Marxist-Leninist forces, and notably the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), would have been flagrantly abandoning their responsibilities had they not attempted to express their concern to the CPP and call for the leadership and membership of the Party to repudiate the political deviations which threaten the very character of the Party itself.

Regular readers of *AWTW* will recall that in No. 8 of our journal we published a major open letter from the Committee of the RIM addressed to the Central Committee of the CPP. In this letter the Committee of the RIM raised a series of im-

portant questions concerning the line and policies of the CPP, notably criticising the stand taken by the CPP in relation to the critical period surrounding the fall of Ferdinand Marcos and the consolidation of the Aquino regime. The Open Letter pointed out that:

“The class nature of the regime you were fighting was lost sight of, the necessity to smash the entire repressive apparatus increasingly downplayed, bourgeois-democratic notions of ‘modern-day republics’ were promoted, as a wrong conception of the path and goal of the revolution have come to the fore; ... the proletariat has been progressively subordinated to other class forces, imperialist puppets are promoted as ‘progressives’ and ‘reformists,’ and one of the original strengths of the CPP, that of rallying the peasants in a genuine people’s war as the main force of revolution, is increasingly put on a par with (or even subordinated to) united action with bourgeois strata in the cities; ... imperialist countries are treated as socialist ones, dependent countries as independent revolutionary regimes, and eventually the necessity of completely rupturing with imperialism begins to give way to ‘practical’ plans to come to terms with imperialism, possibly under the banner of the ‘necessity’ of

Soviet aid.”

Since that letter was published, events themselves have proven again and again the bankruptcy of the line and policies the CPP had been pursuing. Indeed, the CPP itself was required to abandon a number of the most glaring errors — most especially its uncritical hailing of Aquino’s “positive efforts... to dismantle the fascist structures” (as their favourable response to Aquino’s call for a ceasefire put it) and its efforts during the first months after Marcos’ fall to discover a bloc of “liberals and progressives” within the Aquino government who “recognise the legitimacy of fighting an unjust system [and] desire to pursue genuine peace through principled negotiations, to enable the Aquino government to tackle the social roots of the people’s struggle.”

In fact, Aquino has shown no mercy in her murderous pursuit of the New People’s Army led by the CPP. The CPP has responded by resisting these armed attacks and calling for the overthrow of what they now call “the U.S.-Aquino dictatorship.”

Although no political party is immune to error, one would certainly think that mistakes of such gravity as an incorrect assessment of the nature of the regime in power would

call for serious self-criticism and an examination of the roots of such errors.

Instead, statements have appeared like the following in the 29 March 1987 issue of *Ang Bayan* (the CPP Central Committee organ) commemorating the eighteenth anniversary of the New People's Army. Speaking of the period immediately following Aquino's ascension to power, *Ang Bayan* declares:

"Of course, problems, big and small, did appear which tended to diffuse the revolutionary efforts and weaken the revolutionary forces' unity and resolve, like the proliferation of bourgeois liberal views and reformist and parliamentary ideas among their ranks.... But the Party and the revolutionary movement which it led continued to weather these challenges, preserved their unity, charted the revolutionary direction clearly and correctly...."

It is certainly no surprise that some "bourgeois liberal and reformist and parliamentary ideas" existed "in the ranks" when these very same ideas were promoted from the rooftops by Party *leaders!* (See the "Open Letter" in *AWTW* No. 8.) This refusal to make any serious self-criticism on the part of the Party leadership is especially notable when compared to the great hullabaloo that the CPP made over its self-criticism *for boycotting the Aquino-Marcos election contest*. Whatever final conclusions are to be drawn concerning the CPP's line and tactics on those elections, it can certainly be said that any other mistakes that may have been committed pale in comparison to the *fundamental mistake* of misassessing the very nature of the Aquino regime and spreading dangerous illusions about it among the masses.

Indeed it is clear that the leadership of the CPP, so ready to flagellate itself for the boycott policy, dare not open up the subject of their previous tailing of the Aquino regime because they have no intention of thoroughly examining, let alone uprooting, the series of deviations underlying these errors. The new policies of the CPP leadership are but a *new application of the same*

erroneous line under the new conditions *that Aquino has imposed on them*. In this light, it is not surprising that, to the best of our knowledge, the leadership of the CPP have not considered it necessary or useful to respond to the criticisms of the RIM Committee, which were offered in a fraternal spirit.

The most important recent statement by the CPP concerning the international communist movement came in an interview in July 1987, published in a special issue of *Ang Bayan*, with Armando Liwanag, described as Chairman of the Central Committee of the CPP. In this interview Liwanag addresses a number of questions concerning "the international relations of the Communist Party of the Philippines" (see excerpts published elsewhere in this issue).

It is impossible not to respond with alarm to the positions taken by Liwanag in the interview. Of course, these positions should come as no surprise to those who have witnessed the evolution of the CPP's position over the last number of years. Still, the fact that, for the first time, the highest authorities of the CPP have presented a comprehensive and aggressive repudiation of the basic Marxist-Leninist position on the struggle against modern revisionism, coupled with a distortion of Mao Tsetung Thought and an arrogant attack on Maoist forces the world over, can only confirm that the positions of the top leadership of the CPP are indeed menacing the very nature of the Party and threatening the success of the revolution itself.

Mao Tsetung Thought

The Liwanag interview is full of wrong theses from beginning to end, but what gives a certain consistency and thread to the interview, and what makes the line of the interview itself an error and not just a composite of many errors, is Liwanag's short but decisive statement on the meaning of Mao Tsetung Thought.

At its foundation the CPP adopted Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as its ideology. In the last several years the leadership of the

CPP has avoided like the plague any discussion of Mao Tsetung Thought and voices from top levels of the party have even been heard to demand that the CPP officially abandon it altogether. Nevertheless, even as the ideological and political position of the leadership of the Party has increasingly departed from the proletarian revolutionary science and ideology, and while references to the teachings of Mao have nearly disappeared from Party writings, the term Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought has continued to be emblazoned on each and every issue of *Ang Bayan*. While the precise reasons for this incongruity can only be the subject of speculation, it is reasonable to assume that the reluctance to make the formal break with Mao Tsetung Thought is due, at least in part, to the tremendous prestige Mao Tsetung's development of Marxism continues to have in the ranks of the Party and which is correctly associated with the victories won by the Party and the very revolution itself.

It is interesting to note that Liwanag broke the Party's long silence on the issue of Mao Tsetung, not by denouncing him, but by *reducing* Mao Tsetung Thought to *simply* "the light he provided on the problems of imperialism and feudalism and on the road of armed revolution for the completion of the national-democratic revolution and the establishment of socialism," thereby *robbing* Mao Tsetung Thought of its most important contribution, the theory and practice of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which Liwanag never even mentions, and *denying* Mao Tsetung Thought as a *new and higher stage* in the development of the science of Marxism-Leninism. Liwanag offers his narrow re-definition of Mao Tsetung Thought even though the writings of the CPP have, in the past, referred to Mao Tsetung Thought as the "acme of Marxism-Leninism," and have also emphasised Mao's leadership of the Cultural Revolution, his theory of continuing the revolution, his combat against modern revisionism and so forth.

Liwanag states, and for once correctly, that the "CPP owes a lot to Mao Tsetung," but he goes on to repay this political debt by first reducing Mao to simply "a major part of the great treasury of Marxism-Leninism," a statement which underscores that Mao Tsetung Thought is not seen as representing a new stage. Then he goes on, "But the basic principles and lessons... can only be useful and valuable to the CPP as it can make its own concrete analysis of concrete conditions and win its own victories in the course of revolutionary practice." In other words, to the extent that some of Mao's ideas are immediately useful to the CPP they are to be tolerated — as long as they are ripped out of Mao's overall line and all-round development of the science of Marxism-Leninism. We must remember that even the reactionary classes try to glean insight from the writings of Mao (for example the imperialists' counter-insurgency experts who study his military works) but cannot grasp (and certainly cannot apply) the stand, viewpoint and method of Mao Tsetung.

Indeed, the *whole point* of the Liwanag interview is to put the CPP's official stamp of approval on its abandonment of Mao's line and its pathetic begging to be brought into the fold of the international "communist and workers parties," a code word for the revisionist parties recognised by the Soviet Union.

The Negation of the Struggle Against Revisionism

It is only logical that those who want to unite with revisionists are first forced to negate the struggle against revisionism. Liwanag states, "The CPP was re-established in 1968 mainly and essentially because of the exploitative conditions and revolutionary needs of the Filipino people *even as* we took positions in the ideological debates of the 1960s" (emphasis added). Is it necessary to remind Liwanag that the Filipino people have *for a long time* suffered "exploitative conditions" and *needed* new-democratic revolution as well? Why was the

CPP re-established in 1968 and not in 1958 or 1948? Is it really true that the "ideological debates" were only *incidental* to the formation of the Party or, as Liwanag hints throughout the interview, actually harmful to the development of the revolution?

However much some would like to deny it, the CPP is a *direct product* of the struggle Mao led against modern revisionism, of which the infamous Lavaite revisionist clique (the PKP) in the Philippines was an integral part. Interestingly, it was the Lavaites who, under the conditions of the 1960s, were arguing for the *independence* of the party from the ideological struggle in the international communist movement. The *founding line* of the CPP was developed as a conscious attempt to apply Mao Tsetung's teachings on the revolution in the semicolonial, semifeudal countries to the concrete conditions of the Philippines. It was not *and could not have been* founded on the basis Liwanag now wants to propose for the international communist movement — namely the obliteration of the distinction between Marxism and revisionism which, as we know from repeated historical experience, always means the triumph of revisionism and the suffocation of revolutionary Marxism.

Speaking of "the ruling parties of Eastern Europe," Liwanag says, "We cannot afford to engage in endless open ideological disputes which can only benefit U.S. imperialism, our common enemy." What this really means is not that the ideological disputes should be *forgotten* but that verdicts should be *reversed*, that the previous positions fought for by Mao Tsetung be replaced with the positions he was fighting *against*.

For the most part Liwanag seeks to pass over in silence the actual content of the dispute between the Marxist-Leninists and the modern revisionists. But he does give some insight into his efforts to replace Marxism with his own eclectic stew when he discusses the problem of armed struggle. He specifically cites as one of "the major advantages"

of the ideological disputes of the 1960s the "emphasis on the correctness and justness of revolutionary armed struggle in *many* countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, including the Philippines." He is then quick to point out, "But I would not go so far as to say that armed struggle is immediately possible and necessary for *all* countries. Due attention must be given to concrete conditions in every country that determine appropriate forms of struggle" (emphasis added).

Liwanag begins by muddling the question at hand. Mao and the genuine revolutionary communists *never argued* that armed struggle is "immediately possible and necessary" for all countries. First, Mao made a clear distinction between the historical *need* for armed struggle which exists in *all* countries where the reactionary classes still hold power and the *requisite conditions* for the launching of such armed struggle for power which depend on a number of factors and differ qualitatively between the two basic types of countries — the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the imperialist citadels. (Nor, for that matter, did Khrushchev and company ever argue that *all* armed struggle was to be prohibited in *all* countries of the Third World. We have seen that Soviet leaders since then have often found it useful to promote certain types of armed struggle as part of pursuing their overall revisionist and social-imperialist aims.)

In the polemics with the Communist Party of China the Soviets argued that liberation could be achieved *without the revolutionary war of the masses* and *without shattering the old state machinery* and they heaped abuse on Mao as a "warmonger" for arguing otherwise. The question at hand is Mao's teaching that "the seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution" and that this holds true for all countries. Is this what Liwanag is refuting when he says he doesn't want to "go too far"? Is this problem just one of the "matters belonging to

history" that Liwanag wants to close the book on? Does he really want us to believe that Mao's insistence that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" had nothing to do with the formation of the CPP? In fact, didn't the CPP's deviations concerning the nature of the Aquino regime, its efforts to find a "civilian bloc" in the government to support, etc., all show that these lessons are *far from outmoded* and very much at the heart of the problems of revolutionary strategy today?

The question for debate in the split with modern revisionism was *not only* the general question of the universal need for violent revolution but also a particular question, one which also retains its full validity today, of the *general path* for the revolution in the oppressed countries. Do the teachings of Mao Tsetung serve as "the *point of reference* for the elaborating of revolutionary strategy and tactics in the colonial, semi- (or neo-) colonial countries..." (as the *Declaration of the RIM* puts it), or are these merely useful ideas to be applied or discarded according to the pragmatic whims of party leaders? Is this what Liwanag is getting at when he argues against "models"? Just what "appropriate forms of struggle" does Liwanag have in mind? Of course, revolutionary communists have *always* understood the need for utilising different forms of struggle in countries like the Philippines, but *in the service* of a strategy of protracted people's war based in the countryside.

We have briefly commented on Liwanag's effort to minimise the importance of Mao's polemic with the modern revisionists on the question of revolutionary warfare because he singles it out as having had "advantages." But the *other* questions involved in the dispute with modern revisionism are not outmoded either. For example, the criticism of Khrushchev's "goulash communism," the criticism of the Soviet thesis of the disappearance of colonialism which the Communist Party of China under Mao's leadership correctly refuted as an apology for neocolonialism, Mao's

refutation of the revisionist charge of being a "splitter" for having upheld principle in the international communist movement, the criticism of parliamentary cretinism, to name but a few, were vital to the formation of genuine Marxist-Leninist parties, including the CPP. Calling these life and death questions mere "historical disputes" is reversing correct verdicts and the inevitable prelude to repeating the past deviations Mao struggled against.

Liwanag's Desire to be a "Stable and Serious" Party

As pointed out above, the CPP never considered it appropriate to respond to fraternal criticisms of the RIM Committee, just as they had previously turned a deaf ear on the efforts to regroup the genuine communists internationally that resulted in the formation of the RIM. In lieu of a response to the Open Letter, readers of *Ang Bayan* are treated to a disparaging paragraph which states, specifically referring to those who uphold Mao Tsetung Thought, that, "those who have been successful in their revolutionary practice understand the needs of the CPP.... There are also the dogmatists who keep on debating, splitting and liquidating their parties or groups over theoretical and international questions, divorced from revolutionary practice in their respective countries." Translated this means that there are some, like Liwanag himself, who have "grown up" and realise now that principles should never be allowed to get in the way of the most immediate and narrow interests of a party or organisation. Liwanag calls this "success." Others, the "dogmatists," are still concerned with such questions as the nature of socialism as a transition to communism, proletarian internationalism, the coup d'état in China, Mao Tsetung Thought, and so forth. In fact it is those whom Liwanag calls the "dogmatists" (by which Liwanag means the RIM and other Maoist forces) who have waged a *real and consistent* struggle against revisionism in its dogmatic form as seen most clearly in the line of En-

ver Hoxha. Of course, the CPP has not participated in *this* struggle against dogmatism, just as it has not uttered a single word against the coup d'état in China, preferring, apparently, to treat it as an "international question" with no connection at all to the revolution in the Philippines. Instead Liwanag, careful to utter not a single word that could offend the "Marxist-Leninists" of the Kremlin, saves his abuse for the genuine revolutionary communists!

Liwanag makes very clear that the CPP seeks to establish relations with "stable and serious parties." Note that Liwanag does *not* say with genuine Marxist-Leninist parties, or parties following a revolutionary line, but simply those that are "stable and serious." We have already seen that the "ruling parties of Eastern Europe" are amongst those considered "serious" — and far be it from us to argue that they are anything but deadly serious in the pursuit of their counter-revolutionary aims. Amongst those parties out of power, "serious" means, in the West, those like the Communist Party of Italy or the Communist Party of France that long ago traded even the *pretence* of working for revolution for seats in parliament and positions in trade unions, while in the oppressed countries "serious" includes those who have based their strategy on building big opposition movements in the cities, compromises with the reactionary classes, and reducing the armed struggle (when it is permitted at all) to a pressure tactic in the service of "stable" non-revolutionary ends.

When the CPP was reconstituted in 1968 it in no way fit Liwanag's criteria of a "stable and serious" party. Rather it was a small group of revolutionaries determined to apply Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to the conditions in the Philippines and to unleash a people's war to win victory in the New Democratic Revolution.

By "stable," Liwanag is insisting that the communist parties, starting with the CPP itself, forswear all struggle against revisionism in order to maintain "unity" in the party.

One is first required to ask, unity and stability for *what end*? Unity for the making of revolution, for advancing towards socialism and communism, for advancing the world proletarian revolution? Or unity based upon opposing, hamstringing or diverting the proletarian revolutionary struggle? As Lenin put it with such clarity, "what the workers need is the unity of Marxists, and not the unity of Marxists and revisionists"!

Liwanag *appears* to be abandoning political criteria in his search to establish ties with "serious and stable" parties and simply judge them all by his pragmatist standards of "success." Actually, he replaces the criteria of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought with opportunist criteria. For example, the CPP has, to our knowledge, has not issued any clear statement of support for the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) and the revolutionary war it is engaged in. This is because the victories won by the PCP in eight years of people's war are not the kind of "successes" that Liwanag is talking about. The PCP has had no "success" at all — and it is to their credit — in adapting their outlook and practice to that of the loyal and respectable "opposition" movement of the cities nor that of the pro-Soviet "armed opposition" current seen in some countries in Latin America and elsewhere.

What are the great "successes" won by the "serious" and "stable" revisionist parties the world over with whom Liwanag is so anxious to establish relations? Certainly not successes in making revolution, although some of these parties have had partial and temporary "success" in their role as guardians of the old order, of aiders and abettors of counter-revolution. We can only assume that the "international communist and workers parties" include the Communist Party of India or the Communist Party of India (Marxist) who help the bourgeois state track down, imprison and murder communist revolutionaries. What about the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party of Iran which boasted of having fought alongside Khomeini's soldiers who repressed the armed uprising led by genuine communists

in Amol in 1982 — does Liwanag want to establish "fraternal" or merely "friendly" relations with these counter-revolutionaries?

Liwanag's Conception of Unity

Liwanag hopes to appeal to the deep-rooted sentiments of the members and supporters of the CPP in favour of unity against the enemy. But the responsibility for splitting the revolutionary ranks has always been on the revisionists who try to forbid revolution and try to suppress and drive out those forces who fight for Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Real unity can only be forged around a correct revolutionary line.

In a statement that is hauntingly similar to the arguments made by the Lavaite revisionists when they argued for remaining aloof from the struggles in the international communist movement, Liwanag says, "The most important thing is for the CPP to uphold its internal unity; maintain its independence in the international communist movement; and not to allow the debates and splits, within or between or among other parties, to divide the CPP." In fact, as the history of the CPP over the last period has amply shown, the departure from a line based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought inevitably brings about *disunity*. For example, Liwanag argues that it is possible to have good relations with both the Soviet and Chinese revisionists at the same time. But while it is true that *now* (since the coup in China following Mao's death) both the Soviet and Chinese parties have a revisionist line, the bourgeois state interests of China and the Soviet Union are not at all the same (and are often in sharp conflict) and it is these state interests, and not some non-existent "proletarian internationalism," that govern their relations with other parties. Attempting to patch up the internal unity of the Party by promoting an amalgam of those holding different and conflicting erroneous viewpoints will prove to be anything but "stable." Departing from Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought inevitably unleashes all sorts of centrifugal forces

as the bourgeois self-centered outlook comes to the fore — as is seen, for example, in Afghanistan where the equally pro-Soviet Khalq and Parcham factions of the ruling party regularly demonstrate their "unity" through intrigue, imprisonment and mutual assassination.

Bury the Hatchet, Get Down to Business

It must be said that the Liwanag interview is a pathetic call for aid from revisionists and social-imperialists. In fact, Liwanag seems miffed that, until now, the CPP has not received the material and political support that he believes they deserve from these sources. For some time, the CPP leaders have made it known in a myriad of ways that they are anxious to receive different forms of assistance, including military. According to Liwanag, the Soviets and their East European followers "can be of great help to the national liberation movements and newly liberated peoples" and it would be "ironical" if the CPP "does not get any support from them."

Liwanag says "the basis for friendly relations [with the USSR] is the common struggle against U.S. imperialism." But the fact is that the struggle of the Filipino people against U.S. imperialism is *qualitatively different* than the conflict between two imperialist powers (the U.S. and the USSR). The Filipino people seek a *revolution*, the Soviets simply want to replace the U.S. as imperialist overlords.

The USSR is *not the least concerned* with the liberation of the Filipino people. Their rivalry with the U.S. imperialists does not exclude all sorts of collaboration with Filipino reactionaries inside and outside the ruling circles. After all, didn't the USSR support Marcos to the bitter end? Haven't they always supported the Lavaite revisionist clique? Are we really to be so naive as to think, as Liwanag would have us believe, that this is because the Lavaites have "misinformed" the Soviets!?!

Although we are sure that the Soviets appreciate Liwanag's "offer," the fact of the matter is

that, for the moment, they believe their own interests are best served by backing the regime in power.

Furthermore, the Soviet social-imperialists are *opposed* to genuine revolution even if sometimes they promote the use of arms. Often their support for armed resistance in a given state is simply a means to pressure the existing ruling circles to come to some Soviet-sponsored agreement and, as a corollary, to pressure the revolutionary forces into serving such schemes.

One of the reasons that the Soviets have been particularly reluctant to give support to the CPP is precisely the fact that the party was founded on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and initiated a genuine revolutionary war of the masses for liberation. Liwanag no doubt hoped his interview and similar statements would reassure the Soviets that the spectre of Mao Tsetung Thought had been eradicated from the Party. But even if Liwanag downgrades and minimises the influence of Mao Tsetung Thought on the formation of the CPP, on the nature of the war it has been conducting, and on the ideological training of its cadres, the Soviets are not so easily convinced. It is not so sure that they will accept Liwanag's call to simply forgive and forget, and they may demand the "public self-flagellation" that Liwanag considers "messy."

Of course, sometimes the Soviets might find it expedient to "aid" a liberation movement (especially one which didn't have such "messy" Maoist historical connections). The Soviets are not alone in this practice; even the U.S., for example, has tacitly supported the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia in their fight against Vietnamese occupation. But when an imperialist power does render such "aid" it is always in order to further its *own* imperialist interests. It should never be forgotten that the U.S. established its hegemony over the Philippines by portraying itself as "liberators" against Spanish colonialism.

Instead of alerting the Filipino masses to the dangers of such plots on the part of the Soviets, Liwanag is preparing the ground for Soviet

social-imperialist penetration. And Liwanag is not only talking about the CPP's "need" now for material aid. He stresses, "Even after total victory is won, cooperative relations... will be needed for consolidation, national reconstruction, socialist revolution and construction."

Proletarian Internationalism or Capitulation at Home and Abroad?

However much Liwanag tries to deny it, "the theoretical and international disputes" are not at all divorced from the questions of making revolution in every country. Liwanag would like people to believe that it is quite possible to reverse verdicts on the great struggle against modern revisionism, solicit material aid from social-imperialists, rip the revolutionary heart out of Mao Tsetung Thought and yet continue to blithely go along achieving "success" in the revolution in the Philippines. This viewpoint is not only shocking nationalism (as if *any degree* of success in the Philippines would justify helping counter-revolutionary social-imperialists masquerade as "socialists"), it is also profoundly illusory. The people's war begun by the CPP has been aimed at wiping out imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, at establishing New Democracy led by the proletariat and opening the way for socialism as part of the world proletarian revolution. But for Liwanag "total victory" has a much different meaning. What kind of "socialism" does he really have in mind when he suggests that those who have destroyed socialism in the USSR will help build it in the Philippines? What kind of aid in "national reconstruction" does he expect from those who have desecrated Tien An Mien Square with a Kentucky Fried Chicken² franchise? What type of "national liberation" has been "won" by "more than a dozen countries" since 1960? Is Liwanag willing to settle for the "total victory" achieved in Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Nicaragua or Angola? Is that really all that Liwanag can aspire to? It seems that the

"historical disputes" between revisionism and Marxism are of some value after all!

If one is ready to abandon the path of completely rupturing with imperialism, of making a genuine revolution in social relations, of liberating the country as a *base area* from which to advance the world proletarian revolution and drop the goal of achieving *communism* throughout the world, then it is indeed possible to imagine all sorts of expedient agreements with one or another reactionary force (and why not, as Liwanag seems to propose, many at the same time?). But the members and leaders of the CPP who were nurtured on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals who have taken up arms to destroy all that is old and rotten in the Philippines, are unlikely to be satisfied by Liwanag's vision of "total victory."

In fact, despite Liwanag's pledge to learn from Mao Tsetung Thought on the revolution in semi-feudal, semicolonial countries, it is impossible to apply it selectively. Those who abandon Mao's teachings on socialist revolution, revisionism, philosophy, and so forth will be *unable* to apply Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to making revolution in their own country even if they see the utility of doing so.

Those who make revolution in their own country will want to unite with the oppressed and the exploited, and their leaders, the genuine revolutionary communists, all over the world. Those who abandon revolution internationally will end up abandoning it at home as well. The members and leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and the revolutionary masses of that country, should repudiate the road of Liwanag and his like, before it is too late.

Footnotes

1. Bourgeois press accounts have claimed that Armando Liwanag was arrested by the state authorities. The CPP has not, to our knowledge, confirmed or denied this account.

2. An American "fast food" restaurant which was recently opened up in Peking's Tien An Men square, where Mao had declared the foundation of the People's Republic of China and where his tomb is located. □

For Readers' Reference:

CPP Leader On International Relations

Following are excerpts from the article, "On the International Relations of the Communist Party of the Philippines," an interview with Armando Liwanag, Chairman of the Central Committee of the CPP, published in the July 1987 issue of *Ang Bayan*, the organ of the CC of the CPP. — AWTW.

Q: The growth in strength of the CPP and the Philippine revolutionary movement has been substantial since 1968. How do you account for this? What is the impact of universal theory and international relations?

AL: The principal and most decisive thing is that, under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, the CPP has independently made a correct critique of the history and circumstances of the Filipino people as well as of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist Parties; repudiated the long line of Lavaite errors; and formulated the programme of national democratic revolution for the self-reliant struggle of the Filipino people against U.S. imperialism and the local exploiting classes....

The CPP was re-established in 1968 mainly and essentially because of the oppressive and exploitative conditions and revolutionary needs of the Filipino people even as we took positions in the ideological debates of the sixties. The Party has garnered victories because it has made the correct critique of the semi-colonial and semifeudal Philippine society and the correct programme of national democratic revolution, and has struck deep roots among the people and relied on them in fighting for their own rights and interests.

Q: What have been the advantages and disadvantages derived by the CPP from

the open and bitter debates and divisions in the international communist movement since the 1960s? How do you propose to enhance the advantages and overcome the disadvantages?

AL: Among the major advantages is the emphasis on the correctness and justness of revolutionary armed struggle in many countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, including the Philippines. Since 1960, the people in more than a dozen countries have won national liberation through revolutionary armed struggle, without having to take direct advantage of an inter-imperialist world war. The Filipino people have been encouraged to wage revolutionary armed struggle against U.S. imperialism and the local exploiting classes and for national liberation and democracy.

But I would not go so far as to say that armed struggle is immediately possible and necessary at all times for all countries. Due attention must be given to concrete conditions in every country which determine the appropriate forms of struggle. Furthermore, no single party or revolution in one country can be regarded as the exclusive model or centre for the proletariat and people all over the world.

Among the major disadvantages is that the international communist movement and socialist countries have been unable to take full advantage of the ever-worsening crisis of capitalism and maximise support for the national liberation movements. Consequently, the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people has not been able to get as much international support as it should, especially from other communist and workers parties which are either in power or out of power. Also, the CPP has not been able to extend direct support to and coordinate with more progressive forces for concerted international actions against imperialist aggression, intervention and war preparations.

It is a sad thing that the open and bitter debates and divisions have also resulted in violent confrontations beneficial to the U.S. and the reactionaries. It is high time for all communist and workers parties to restrengthen the unity of the international communist movement.

To keep and enhance the advantages and overcome the disadvantages, the CPP takes the independent position of consolidating relations which it has with stable and serious parties; expanding relations with ruling parties in socialist countries and all avowed Marxist-Leninist and anti-imperialist parties and organisations elsewhere; and promoting anti-imperialist unity and the proletarian spirit in the international communist movement through a series of bilateral relations of friendship. Under the

guidance of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, the CPP establishes and develops relations with foreign parties on the basis of national integrity, independence, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, full equality, mutual respect, mutual support and mutual benefit.

Q: What drives or impels the CPP to expand its relations with other communist and workers parties abroad? Will not increased foreign support militate against self-reliance?

AL: U.S. imperialism is escalating its military and non-military intervention in Philippine affairs. It is moving in the direction of all-out aggression, especially because the so-called "total war" and "low-intensity conflict" tactics under the Aquino puppet regime are bound to fail. As the revolutionary struggle moves to a higher stage, particularly the stage of the strategic stalemate, the U.S. is bound to escalate its intervention and act more harshly. At any rate, whether there is a people's war or not, the U.S. is engaged in intensifying the oppression and exploitation of the people in the Philippines.

It is U.S. imperialist intervention and aggression which make it urgently necessary for the CPP and the entire Filipino people to seek the broadest possible international support for their revolutionary struggle. The people need moral and material assistance more than ever because of the escalating barbarity and destructiveness of the enemy.

While I frankly speak of the need of the CPP and the people for international support, it should also be recognised and stressed that they extend support to fraternal parties and the people of the world by carrying out the Philippines revolution. Our victories are also the victories of revolutionaries and peoples the world over. The revolutionary struggle led by the CPP contributes to the advance of the revolutionary theory and practice of the world proletariat. To the extent that we are capable of, we also extend the most concrete and the most direct forms of support to revolutionary forces abroad.

Self-reliance can be maintained and even enhanced with the increase of international support. The support that comes must merely supplement and yet amplify the capacity of the revolutionary forces and the people to expand and intensify their struggle. Thus, even if international support becomes larger, it remains small or becomes smaller in proportion to the people's overall self-reliant efforts.

The CPP will never ask for support it does not need, cannot receive and absorb and cannot reduce in proportion to the total increased self-reliant effort of the

revolutionary people. After all, it is the Filipino revolutionaries who do the fighting and the dying to achieve victory in their just cause.

Even after total victory is won, cooperative relations with other communist and workers parties shall be needed for consolidation, national reconstruction, socialist revolution and construction. In the process of these, we shall be able to make bigger contributions to the strength and unity of the world anti-imperialist struggle and communist movement.

Q: Are you now in the process of establishing party-to-party relations with the ruling parties in Eastern Europe and elsewhere? How do you override the ideological and political differences since the 1960s?

AL: Yes, we are now in the process of seeking and establishing relations with the ruling parties in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. It is high time that the CPP does its part in strengthening anti-imperialist unity with them and taking advantage of the crisis of the world capitalist system.

The ruling parties of Eastern Europe can be of great help to the Philippine revolution as we try to be of help to them through revolutionary struggle against U.S. imperialism. To start with, we have a common No. 1 enemy in U.S. imperialism.

The ruling parties of Eastern Europe have been of great help to the national liberation movements and the newly-liberated peoples. They have helped movements and governments consisting of communists and non-communists. It would be ironical if the CPP or they would refuse to establish relations; and if the CPP-led Philippine revolution does not get any support from them.

I see no insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of friendly and fraternal relations between the CPP and the parties in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. There are no direct bones of contention between the CPP and any one of them. The basis of friendly relations is the common struggle against U.S. imperialism. When friendly relations are established, fraternal or comradely relations can begin to grow.

The CPP considers as matters belonging to history those differences in the past arising from disputes between certain parties. We cannot afford to engage in endless open ideological disputes which can only benefit U.S. imperialism, our common enemy.

The point is to establish anti-imperialist unity, gather as many points of agreement as possible and look forward to further developing friendly and fraternal relations. We would be breaking our necks if we keep looking back to

the past. It would be quite messy for one party to demand that the other party make some public self-flagellation.

Because of their different conditions, communist and workers parties have different views on the world situation and the situation in particular countries. To open and maintain friendly and fraternal relations, these parties must collect points of agreement, reserve points of disagreement and increase mutual understanding.

If any party wants to discuss any theoretical problem, it can do so within its own confines, or if the other party is willing, within the discreet venue of bilateral party-to-party relations. Friendly and fraternal relations will certainly put an end to the open debates and conflicts beneficial to and gloated over by the imperialists and reactionaries.

Q: What can you say now about previous CPP declarations that certain parties are revisionist and that certain countries are social-imperialist rather than socialist and practice global or regional hegemonism?

AL: Those previous declarations belong to history in the same way that the declarations made against the CPP by other communist and workers parties belong to history. Let history and our current studies prove the correctness, partial correctness or incorrectness of such declarations. So much water has passed under the bridge in more than two decades of disputation. Since a few years ago, the CPP has voluntarily ceased to apply certain terms or labels to other parties....

Q: How do you override the fact that certain parties have had relations with the Lava group? Will not the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other parties close to it demand that the CPP merge or have a united front with the Lava group?

AL: ...At any rate, the question of the CPP dealing with the Lavaite problem is a domestic matter internal to the Philippines. The CPP is of the firm view that the Lava group is a political corpse or at the most a withering vine.

A united front, formal or informal, can be broad enough to accommodate any political corpse that comes to life by becoming anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-fascist to some extent and ceasing to specialise in attacking the CPP.

Q: In your estimate, what would be the attitude of the Chinese Communist Party to the CPP's establishing and developing relations with the Eastern European parties, especially the CPSU? Will you manage to keep the relations between the CCP and CPP?

AL: The Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Philippines are two independent parties exercising mutual respect. The principles of the

CCP and CPP regarding party-to-party relations are agreeable to each other.

The CCP itself has restored relations with all parties in Eastern Europe except the Soviet Union. Relations with the Albanian Party of Labour are frozen.

There are still bones of contention between China and the Soviet Union which have an impact on the possibility of restoring party-to-party relations.

However, the CCP and the CPSU have relations with the same parties in many countries of the world. The CCP has not taken offense that these parties have relations with the CPSU. Neither has the CPSU taken offense that these parties have relations with the CCP....

Q: Towards the CPP's drive to expand its international relations, what is the attitude of the parties or small groups that have arisen for the first time in the sixties and proclaimed themselves as adherents of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought?

AL: Those that have been successful in their revolutionary practice understand the needs of the CPP and the Filipino people; and recognise that the CPP can best perform its internationalist duty by leading the Philippine revolution to total victory and availing itself of all domestic and international factors in favour of the Philippine revolution. There are also the dogmatists who keep on debating, splitting and liquidating their parties or groups over theoretical and international questions, divorced from revolutionary practice in their respective countries.

Q: In what way does the CPP regard Mao Tsetung?

AL: The CPP has high regard for Mao Tsetung as a great communist thinker and leader of world significance for having made the most comprehensive and profound critique of the semicolonial and semifeudal society and for having led to victory the new democratic revolution among hundreds of millions of people in so huge a country as China and laid the foundation for socialism there.

The CPP has a special high regard for Mao Tsetung because of the light he has provided on the problems of imperialism and feudalism and on the road of armed revolution for the completion of the national-democratic revolution and the establishment of socialism.

The CPP owes a lot to Mao Tsetung. Mao Tsetung Thought is a major part of the great treasury of Marxism-Leninism. But the basic principles and lessons we learned from abroad -- from all the great communist thinkers and leaders -- can only be as useful and valuable to the CPP as it can make its own concrete analysis of concrete conditions and win its own victories in the course of revolutionary practice. □