

THE MORO PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE

DOCUMENTS FROM THE
MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)



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DEMOCRACY (UGNAYAN)

FOREWORD

THE Ten-Point Program of the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT in the Philippines explicitly affirms its full and unqualified support for the right of six million Moro people to self-determination:

We salute the Moro people and those leading them in a resolute armed struggle for national self-determination. So long as they are confronted with a regime as oppressive as that of the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship, they are completely correct in going to the length of fighting for secession. ...They have all the right to fight the imperialists and their puppets for grabbing their lands and other resources and for exploiting the people.

Last March 1980, Abdurasad Asani, Director of Information of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the sole legitimate organization of the Bangsa Moro people, charged U.S. imperialism as the chief supporter (through aid, military bases, U.S. advisers and combatants) of the Marcos martial law regime in its genocidal massacre of at least 95,000 innocent Moro civilians from March 1968 to the present.

In December 1979, Nur Misuari, chairman of the MNLF, issued an urgent appeal for the imposition of economic sanctions against the Marcos regime, following the cut-off of oil supply to Marcos by the Islamic Republic of Iran in October.

We in UGNAYAN unite with the principles of self-determination and national democracy which the MNLF upholds. Thus we are reprinting these documents for mass distribution throughout the world in fulfillment of our educational and informational tasks.

Cultural genocide in the Philippines

(Speech delivered by Nur Misuari, Chairman, Central Committee of the Moro National Liberation Front, before the International Congress on Cultural Imperialism sponsored by the Lelio Basso Peace Foundation and held at the Palais des Nations, Algiers, Algeria, from 11-15 October 1977.)

To begin with, allow me to convey the fraternal greetings of our people and the Central Committee of the Moro National Liberation Front to this International Congress on Cultural Imperialism and to the Lelio Basso Peace Foundation for the invitation to participate in this historic meeting of anti-imperialist forces in the world. Our boundless thanks go to the Algerian People and Government for their generous and brotherly welcome and for their firm support behind the just cause of our people.

Comrades in the cause of world peace and freedom: Today, as we listen to each other and discuss vital problems of the world we live in, there in South Philippines, the home of 5.5 million Muslim and another million indigenous people, a new war is raging with all its force and fury.

The physical and spiritual existence or well-being of a Muslim nation is precariously at stake. The colonial government of President Marcos, supported by American imperialism, World Zionism, Japanese and Western monopoly capital, is engaged in a new round of war of genocide against our people.

A War of Genocide as a Reflection of a Colonial Order

This genocidal campaign against the Bangsa Moro nation is 9 years old, starting with the cold-blood massacre of 68 Muslim youths in this historic island of Corregidor in March 1968. This is not to mention the earlier crimes of Filipino colonialism against our people. Up to these days, over one-hundred of our youths who, together with those executed in the Corregidor tragedy, were recruited clandestinely by the Special Forces of President Marcos for the abortive invasion of the State of Sabah, are still missing.

This incident was followed closely by the launching of the notorious Ilaga gang by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The Philippine colonial government, exploiting the deep-rooted hatred of the colonial settlers towards our people, organized, trained and armed the Christian settlers in all parts of our homeland and caused them to commit all acts of depredation and savagery against our people, homeland and national culture.

In November 1972, barely two months following the unlawful imposition of Martial Law in the Philippines and the installation of the present dictatorial regime of President Marcos and his military collaborators, the Philippine colonial government finally declared war against our people. Since then South Philippines has been engulfed in a violent conflagration, which has wrought havoc and destruction on our people, as witness the death of about 50,000 innocent Muslim women, children and other civilians, the burning of 200,000 houses and over 500 mosques, several hundreds of Islamic schools and madrasas and vast plantation areas. Thirty-seven Muslim cities and municipalities, including the historic capital of the once power-

ful Islamic government of the Sultanate of Sulu, have been pulverized by cannons, bombs and napalm.

In addition, millions of our people have been uprooted from their homes and became refugees and are now exposed to famine, sickness and the like. This includes 92,000 Muslim refugees who have fled to Sabah, not to mention those affected by the latest military campaign of Marcos and his colonial armed forces.

What's more, as the colonial government of Marcos pursues its act of repression and extermination, it is certain to commit additional crimes against our people and humanity.

For this reason, I would like to ask your favour to focus more attention to this South Philippines problem and adopt this problem as part and parcel of the problems confronting the revolutionary world, the Third World and the peace-loving peoples of the world.

Already the Islamic World, which constitutes over 40 countries in Asia and Africa and represents nearly one-fourth of mankind, has defined its stand and is strongly in support of our people's just cause.

I would like to say that the problem that afflicts our people is very much a part of the problem that grips the world at large.

In truth, the war in South Philippines is a reflection and indeed a product of a colonial order. And the South Philippines problem is therefore organically linked with our global colonial reality.

The Muslim people and homeland have 500 years of Islamic culture and civilization. They were once free, sovereign and an independent nation. As a matter of fact, they were one of the strongest powers in Southeast Asia before. From early 16th century until the close of the 19th century and on till the end of the Second World War, they fought one of the longest and bitterest anti-colonial wars in history.

For 33 years they held Spanish colonialism at bay, not to speak of the sporadic intrusion of Portuguese, Dutch, British, French and German colonialism. And from the beginning of our present century, in the wake of the dissolution of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines, our people were once again locked in an anti-colonial or anti-imperialist war. This time, they found themselves face to face with a newly-emerged colonial government, namely the United States of America.

For more than four decades, until the outbreak of the last Pacific war, our people fought against this new colossus, followed by a few years of violent confrontation with Japanese imperialism during the four years (1942-1945) of Japanese interregnum in the Philippines and its extension to our people's homeland after the defeat of American imperialism early in the war.

As you can see, our people have never been lacking in vigilance, more so when it comes to the defence and protection of their national freedom and independence.

But you'll understand, what a great odds our people had to face after the end of the Second World War and the emergence of US imperialist hegemony in our part of the world.

The Advent of Filipino Colonialism in the Muslim National Homeland

Taking advantage of the total confusion and trauma in the aftermath of the

war, the US imperialist government, in its decision to grant independence to the Filipino people, entered into a collusion with its Filipino puppets to arbitrarily place our people under Filipino colonial rule and domination.

This fateful incident occurred on July 4, 1946, some 30 years ago. Before that our people were never part of the Filipino nation. They were separate - free and sovereign. Even when the idea of unifying our people was broached for the first time in the 1930s by the US colonial government, our people vehemently opposed such a sinister scheme - as witness the famous March 18, 1935 Manifesto of the Bangsa Moro people addressed to the US Congress and the US President then.

It can be correctly said that the present war in South Philippines is or was once also true to all the colonized peoples of the world, be it in Africa, Latin America or Asia.

At the same time, as a reaction to such a regime of colonial exploitation, oppression and tyranny, the oppressed colonized people are inevitably dragged into a violent clash with their colonial ruler, thereby accelerating the development of the revolutionary process and the revolutionary consciousness of the oppressed colonized people and unleashing at a certain stage their revolutionary energy and dynamism.

Such is the case of the emergence of the Bangsa Moro Revolution led by the Moro National Liberation Front.

Muslim Protest Against Filipino Colonialism is Not New

Our people have certainly been protesting against such unjust colonial imposition from the very start. A series of armed rebellions have been staged by our people, the most famous being the Kamlan rebellion, the Tawan-Tawan rebellion, the Hajal Ooh rebellion, and the peaceful independence campaign of the late Sultan Ombra Amilbangsa of the Sultanate of Sulu.

But such struggles were all aborted for one reason or other, and most particularly on account of their limited ideological scope and relative isolation.

But the present Bangsa Moro Revolution led by the Moro National Liberation Front is the culmination of such anti-colonial and anti-imperialist experiences. And it came at a time when our internal colonial contradiction has reached its breaking point in view of the intensification of the colonial aggression in all its political, economic, social, religious and cultural dimensions. Moreover, the Bangsa Moro Revolution has been influenced by the revolutionary ferment in the world.

The Rise of the MNLF

The Philippine colonial government, particularly under President Marcos, has curtailed and suppressed our people's political freedom. They usurped our people's economic rights by depriving them of their traditional sources of livelihood, specifically their ancestral land. Besides, they flouted the socio-religious and cultural rights of our people by imposing a totalitarian social order, which is embarked on the creation of a so-called "New Society".

This conception of a new society is but a misnomer for a more repressive colonial regime in South Philippines, which is being used to justify the brutal

suppression of our people's Islamic and indigenous culture and supplanting them with the Filipino colonial culture. This Filipino colonial culture is fundamentally a reflection of Western Christian civilization — inherited from Spanish and American colonialism.

The Philippine colonial regime is now engaged in a programme which calls for total and complete integration of the so-called cultural minorities to which our people are classified.

In truth, this is a colonial scheme designed to complement its campaign of genocide against the physical existence of our people. In reality, therefore, this cultural scheme constitutes a cultural genocide, intended to annihilate the spiritual and cultural identity of our people.

It must be said that behind this cultural genocide is the sinister colonial attempt to destroy our people's national identity, which is essentially founded on our cultural reality.

However, as the Philippine colonial government pursues its criminal design, our people are all the more become alienated from the colonial milieu and are driven into the other extreme end of the colonial spectrum.

This led to the appearance of a revolutionary consciousness among our people and the rise of the Moro National Liberation Front.

The MNLF is the Vanguard of the Bangsa Moro Revolution

The Moro National Liberation Front, to be specific, came into being some years before the formal launching by Marcos of his anti-Muslim genocidal campaign. While the MNLF had been directly involved in the anti-ilaga resistance, yet it did not surface formally until the colonial violence had become widespread following Marcos' declaration of war in November 1972. It stayed deliberately in the background while the masses of our people were putting up their own resistance against the colonial terror.

But once the MNLF was caught in the revolutionary storm, starting with the famous November 14, 1972 encounter in the historic island of Jolo, which was the bastion of our people's resistance during their 400 years of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist resistance, it rapidly became the rallying point of the Bangsa Moro Revolution.

Thus since this last 5½ years of intense fighting, interrupted only by the 9 months of ceasefire arranged by the Quadripartite Ministerial Commission and the Islamic Conference, the MNLF has assumed the role of the vanguard of the Bangsa Moro people and Revolution.

National Freedom and Independence: The MNLF's Initial Political Objective

And in keeping with the desire of the broad masses of our people, the MNLF adopted a political programme which called for the complete liberation of our people and national homeland from all forms and vestiges of Filipino colonialism, to ensure our people's freedom and the preservation of our Islamic and indigenous culture and civilization as well as our revolutionary heritage.

Accordingly, the MNLF declared its intention to work for the restoration of

the sovereignty and independence of our people. This declaration was contained in a Manifesto submitted to the 5th Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference in Kuala Lumpur in May 1974.

The "Bangsa Moro Republik" was launched by our people and a revolutionary government was organized at all levels in the liberated areas, complete with its political, military, economic, judicial and other apparatus. Afterwards, a National Parliament and various provincial congresses were enthusiastically organized by our people.

In short a complete state system was brought to life.

MNLF Changes Political Objective and Opts for Political Autonomy

But despite our declaration of intention and largely due to the mediation of the Islamic Conference, the MNLF and our people agreed to tone down our political demand.

Instead of asking, therefore, for complete independence and for the liberation of the entire Bangsa Moro national homeland of Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu and Palawan, which has an aggregate land area of 116,895.3 square kms., the MNLF agreed to put aside its original objective and opted merely for 'complete political autonomy'. While the area we demanded was reduced to 13 provinces and 11 cities, which is roughly 60% of our people's national homeland.

There were other compromises made by the MNLF, as could be seen in the Tripoli Agreement of December 23, 1976 signed by the representatives of the Philippine government, the MNLF, the Quadripartite Ministerial Commission and the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

The United Nations, the Organization of the Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of African Unity have been duly notified about this agreement.

Philippine Colonial Government Sabotage Agreement

But then when the representatives of the Philippine government, the MNLF, the Quadripartite Ministerial Commission and the Secretary-General of the Islamic Conference met again to flesh up the agreement and prepare the ground-works for its implementation, the Philippine government began to recoil and to put up all obstacles in an effort to sabotage what had been formally agreed upon by all the parties concerned.

Two negotiations were held, one in Tripoli last February until March, and the other one in Manila last April. But all our efforts were brought to naught all due to the treachery and betrayal of Marcos and the Philippine colonial government. The MNLF delegation that went to Manila together with the representatives of the Quadripartite Ministerial Commission and the Secretary-General of the Islamic Conference returned empty-handed.

New Phase of the War Starts: Ceasefire is Virtually Scuttled

Following these debacles, the Philippine colonial government intensified its sabotage activities and launched what it called 'a search-and-destroy campaign'

against our forces. And yet the joint ceasefire mission, composed of representatives of the Philippine government, the MNLF and the Islamic Conference were still in South Philippines actively supervising the implementation of our ceasefire agreement.

As a result of this search-and-destroy campaign, which was launched last July 6, tension rapidly began to mount and last week the second phase of Marcos' war of genocide was commenced. To all intent and purposes and by virtue of this new military campaign of Marcos' colonial armed forces, the ceasefire is virtually over, after 9 months of deceptive peace. South Philippines is therefore once again plunged into a colonial war of genocide. And once again our people are molested and massacred right inside their homes and even in their sacred places as the Tipo-Tipo massacre last August 27 would testify.

And from the look of things, it is impossible to determine how this new war can be stopped.

The Bangsa Moro People Shall Win Final Victory and the MNLF the Final Liquidator of Filipino Colonialism

The Philippine government is pouring in more forces and organizing new paramilitary and terrorist gangs among the colonial settlers. But our people shall remain steadfast and resolute and are decided to carry on with their revolutionary struggle until final victory is achieved and the total liquidation of Filipino colonialism in every part of our people's national homeland shall crown our people's patriotic endeavour. Only then that the Philippine colonial war of genocide against our people and our national culture can be finally stopped.

Now that peaceful solution is impossible with the treacherous and blood-thirsty colonial government of President Marcos, a return to our people's original political objective is at once irresistible and inevitable.

And despite heavy odds, our people and Revolution are certain of their final victory. The final verdict of history shall belong to the Bangsa Moro people and Revolution, and the MNLF and its heroic military arm, the Bangsa Moro Army, shall be the final liquidator and gravedigger of Filipino colonialism in South Philippines.

In this struggle, our people and the MNLF count on the support of all anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces in the world as well as on all other peace-loving peoples of the world.

MNLF Appeals for Unity and Solidarity

Accordingly, and on behalf of the MNLF, I would like to reiterate our appeal to you all and to the peoples of the world to strengthen their unity and solidarity with our people in order to accelerate the momentum of our people's march to final victory and freedom. The victory of our people shall constitute an integral part of the victory of mankind against the forces of colonialism and imperialism in the world.

Once again our thanks to the Lelio Basso Peace Foundation and to the great Algerian People and Government. Thank you.

Moró National Liberation Front



Moro National Liberation Front





APPEAL OF THE BANGSA MORO PEOPLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLES

The Bangsa Moro people (in the southern Philippines have, in the last 32 years, suffered untold misery under Philippine colonial domination and oppression. It was on the declaration of Philippine Independence in 1946, upon the evil collusion between American imperialism and its Filipino puppet leaders, when the Bangsa Moro national homeland of Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu and Palawan was criminally annexed to the territorial jurisdiction of the Philippine State.

After Philippine Independence, and the criminal annexation of the Bangsa Moro homeland, the Bangsa Moro people have several times risen up in armed struggle against Philippine colonial rule. But instead of recognising their rights to self-determination and to a free and peaceful existence, the Philippine colonial regime, aided and supported by American imperialism has, in fact, intensified its colonial oppression and economic and cultural repression including, in the last ten years, a systematic campaign of genocide of the most vicious and most brutal kind.

Now, therefore,

Having read the historic document *Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples* announced in Algiers on 4 July 1976 which consecrates, among others, a people's right to political self-determination, right to existence and economic rights:

Aware that these basic rights of the Bangsa Moro people are being grossly and systematically violated by the Philippine colonial regime and its US imperialist collaborators:

And, knowing that, in an effort to advance the rights of all oppressed and colonised peoples, the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples is convening an International Tribunal in Bologna for the trial of colonial and oppressive regimes:

I, the undersigned, by authority of the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Moro National Liberation Front and on behalf of the Bangsa Moro people in the southern Philippines, as well as in my capacity as official representative of the Front, being Director of the Front's relations office in Tripoli, Jamahiriya, hereby present this appeal and strongly request that the Philippine colonial regime and its master, US imperialism, be put on public trial before the Tribunal in order to expose their crimes against our people and humanity on the following grounds:

1. PHILIPPINE COLONIAL DOMINATION AND THE BANGSA MORO PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

1.1 It is a matter of historical fact that the Bangsa Moro people have been an independent people. They had an independent government under the Sultanate of Sulu in the Sulu archipelago and the Sultanate of Maguindanao in the island of Mindanao.

1.2 When Spanish colonialism came to the Philippines, it tried to conquer the Bangsa Moro people by force with the aim of establishing colonial hegemony in the area. But the Bangsa Moro people courageously defended the integrity of their homeland. The famous Spanish-Moro wars lasted well over 333 years, from 1565 to 1898, hence, Spanish colonialism never gained any permanent foothold or influence until its withdrawal from the Philippines when America took over colonial possession of the Philippine islands.

1.3 American colonialism in the Philippines, like its Spanish predecessor also tried to conquer the Bangsa Moro people by force. But again, the Bangsa Moro people waged a heroic armed struggle to defend their freedom and independence. The war against American colonialism lasted from 1900 to 1914. Realising the futility of its military efforts to subdue the Bangsa Moro people, American colonialism



proclaimed a policy of attraction. Despite this new policy, however, America did not completely win over the Bangsa Moro people, especially the masses who carried out, and suffered most, the brunt of the war.

1.4 At any rate, recognising the distinct and separate character of the Bangsa Moro people from the Filipino people, American colonialism pursued its colonial administration in those areas of the Bangsa Moro homeland which came under its nominal control through the so-called Moro province.

1.5 In 1946, America granted the Philippines independence. But through the evil collusion of American colonialists and their Filipino puppet leaders, the Bangsa Moro national homeland of Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu and Palawan was arbitrarily and criminally annexed to the newly-born Philippine State. This annexation was done over the vehement objection of the Bangsa Moro people and in complete disregard of their inalienable right to national self-determination and to set up their own free and independent Bangsa Moro State. This was how the Bangsa Moro people fell under Philippine colonial rule. Today they have taken the historic decision to break off the shackle of such colonial imposition.

2 ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION, REPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION

2.1 In a sweeping move to extend its colonial authority to the Bangsa Moro homeland, among the first acts of the Philippine State were to divest the Bangsa Moro people of their ancestral land by declaring all lands as part of the public domain. Ownership of all natural resources, mineral, forest, agricultural, and marine wealth, was thereby overtaken by the Philippine colonial State, and their exploitation and utilisation were thrown wide open to big Filipino capitalists and their foreign masters, mostly giant American corporations and multinationals.

2.2 After the annexation, a policy of settler colonialism was vigorously pursued whereby hordes of settlers from the northern and central part of the Philippines were brought down to all parts of the Bangsa Moro homeland especially Mindanao. This was followed by a systematic landgrabbing scheme whereby poor and unsophisticated Bangsa Moro peasants and farm owners were dispossessed of their ancestral land and forced into less fertile and less habitable mountainous regions.

2.3 The new settlers, with the aid and support of the government, or in connivance with unscrupulous government bureaucrats, were given ownership titles to lands which were hitherto the ancestral possession of the Bangsa Moro peasants, thus depriving the latter of their basic source of livelihood. Those who have managed to secure land titles under the alien torrens system have been terrorised into vacating their farmlands. Such lands as those vacated by their owners are immediately seized by the settler-newcomers or by their fanatic terrorist gang, if not by regular officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

2.4 Multinationals, mostly American, and big Filipino capitalists are given special privileges and incentives to establish and expand their business corporations in the Bangsa Moro homeland. This is especially true in the case of several fruit companies which acquired and expanded their plantation areas through forcible eviction of peasants who, for generations, have occupied those lands.

2.5 In industries which have been established in the Bangsa Moro homeland, no indigenous Bangsa Moro capital is given equity participation in investment. The workers are also imported from the northern and central parts of the Philippines. The native and indigenous people are not given any chance to be employed, or if there are a few who are at all fortunate enough to be given jobs in such industries, they are no more than temporary manual workers completely denied any chance to bargain for their worker's rights such as job security, better wages and better working conditions.

2.6 There is gross discrimination in all facets of social life. In health service, education, appointments to government positions and private and semi-government corporations, the Bangsa Moro people, particularly Muslims, are discriminated against because the regime's educational system, being under tutelage and control of the American system, foster the colonial attitude of "a good Moro is a dead Moro", an American aphorism which means that the Moros are bad, savage and treacherous, overlooking the fact that the history of the Bangsa Moro people is more brilliant and colorful than other national groups in Asia.

3. THE MARCOS REGIME'S CAMPAIGN OF GENOCIDE

3.1 Not content with its colonial imposition upon the Bangsa Moro homeland, the Philippine colonial regime, abetted by massive US support of its military arsenals, has launched a campaign of genocide against the Bangsa Moro people. This genocidal campaign began under the dictator, Ferdinand Marcos,

in March 1968 when 68 young Muslim trainees were mercilessly massacred on Corregidor Island by their training instructors who were all officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Until today, many of the almost 300 young trainees are still missing.

3.2 Afterwards, in 1969, the Marcos regime, through its fascist Armed Forces, unleashed their Ilaga para-military terrorist front to massacre and indiscriminately kill innocent Bangsa Moro civilians. Witness, for example, the massacre of 70 Muslim men, women, and children right inside a mosque in barrio Manili, Carmen, Cotabato on June 19, 1971; the massacre of 17 innocent Muslim civilians in Bual, Tuluhan, Cotabato on September 17, 1971; the massacre of 37 innocent Muslim men and women in Tacub, Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte on November 22, 1971 and many other massacres and mass killings between March 1968 and September 1972. In the meantime, while all these grisly killings were going on with impunity, the fanatic "Ilaga" terrorist front, organised, trained and led by officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, were plundering, looting and burning Bangsa Moro villages and towns especially in the regions of Cotabato, Lanao and Zamboanga.

3.3 In September 1972, President Marcos imposed martial law in the Philippines. He assumed dictatorial power and militarised society; he abolished the Philippine congress and made the Supreme Court a rubber stamp of his presidential whims and caprices. The press and communication media were put under strict government control. Two months later, in November 1972, the regime declared war against the Bangsa Moro people and utilising composite military forces from the Army, Constabulary, Navy and Air Force, launched search-and-destroy operations starting on Jolo Island followed by other search-and-destroy operations in Cotabato and other parts of the Bangsa Moro homeland, killing in the process several hundreds of innocent civilians and burning their houses.

3.4 Under Martial Law, the crimes of the Marcos regime increased ten-fold in magnitude and severity. With increased regular troops deployed all over the Bangsa Moro homeland, assisted by their terrorist para-military forces, the military went on a rampage, killing around 500 civilians in the period from February to June 1973 in Lebak, Cotabato; followed by the bombing and razing to the ground of the entire village of Tuburan on Basilan Island in July 1973; and the burning of Jolo City on February 8, 1974 by naval cannons, artillery fire and napalm. Massacres followed after massacres, victimising men, women and children.

3.5 To emphasise the magnitude of the genocidal crimes of the regime committed against the Bangsa Moro people, here is what one report has to say:

"About 2,000 women, civilians and children buried by Army at Malisbong, province of Sultan Kudarat. About 7,000 civilians have evacuated to upper Kolong-Kolong and Kran, Sultan Kudarat province. Every now and then moneyed Muslims are being picked up as suspects for giving aid to the rebels. They are released for certain monetary consideration."

This top secret report entitled "FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYE THROUGH (INFORMATION) SECRETARY TATAD", was prepared and submitted to President Marcos by a certain Atty. Leloy Caniedo, a member of the Philippine military's investigation team that inquired into the widely known army crimes and abuses against Bangsa Moro civilians in South Cotabato in December 1974. Indeed, the widely publicised Mai Lai massacre of Vietnamese by American troops in Vietnam would be dwarfed by the savagery of the Marcos military in the southern Philippines. (More details of massacre and list of towns and cities burned or destroyed will be supplied at the proper time.)

3.6 In the cities and urban centres, the regime's army conduct systematic arrest, torture and liquidation or salvaging of small traders and merchants suspected of anti-government activities. In Jolo, for example, anyone whose residence certificate shows that he comes from Patikul, would be arrested, tortured and liquidated without any question asked. Fishermen out at sea with their vinta outriggers are strafed with machineguns or bombarded with naval cannons.

3.7 The armed forces of the Philippines and their para-military terrorist front violate with impunity the honor and dignity of our women; in some cases, the women are forced to submit to the carnal lust of the brutes in the presence of their husband. And in many cases, they are raped first and murdered afterwards. Infants are stamped to death under the soldier's boots or just bayoneted to death.

3.8 Consistent with the regime's policy of genocide, the Marcos military defoliate farmlands and agricultural crops. Work animals are forcibly taken from their owner or merely shot dead to reduce the people's capacity to work for their livelihood. Poisonous chemicals are dropped from the air, poisoning water supplies in the countryside and causing widespread disease and epidemics.

3.9 Hand in hand with the physical extermination of the Bangsa Moro people, the Marcos regime through its barbaric armed forces, is out to liquidate the Bangsa Moro people's culture. Such sacrilegious acts as burning of mosques and Islamic schools are as common to the Marcos terrorist army as shooting innocent civilians. The pages of the Holy Quran are used as sanitary papers. Several of the massacres of innocent civilians have in fact been committed by the Philippine military while the victims were in the midst of prayer in the mosques.

3.10 As a result of ten years of continuous and unabated acts of violence and savagery in pursuance of Marcos' and his regime's genocidal policy, around 90,000 innocent Bangsa Moro civilians have to date already died in the hands of the barbaric Armed Forces, no less than 250,000 houses and thousands of mosques and madrasas (Islamic schools) have been burned and reduced to ashes. The Marcos genocidal war has further made millions of peaceful Bangsa Moro masses refugees in their own homeland. These refugees are today exposed to disease, starvation and famine, moving from place to place and in constant danger of being massacred or killed. Furthermore, an estimated 130,000 refugees have already fled to the East Malaysian State of Sabah whose life situation is today similar if not worse than the Vietnamese "boat people".

4. THE ROLE OF US IMPERIALISM

4.1 The United States maintains large military bases in the Philippines, ensuring effective US control of Philippine political, military and economic life. Hence, because of such control, the Philippine regime gives US monopoly capital, multinationals and consortia virtual no-limit privileges and incentives in the plunder of all natural resources, including oil and minerals, in the Bangsa Moro homeland. To service the need of US fruit companies for land, for example, poor Bangsa Moro peasants are forcibly evicted from their ancestral farmlands.

4.2 To make sure that the Philippines would remain a US client state, the United States imperialist strategy is to keep the Philippines poor so that it becomes even more subservient as it relies on heavy doses of US economic and military assistance. Without such assistance the Martial Law political infrastructure would soon collapse in the face of the gathering force of democratic Filipinos opposed to the dictatorship, and of the Bangsa Moro people's liberations struggle in the southern Philippines.

4.3 In recent years, alarmed by the fast growing strength of the Bangsa Moro people's struggle which threatens US economic interests, not only has the US government increased military aid to the martial law dictatorship of Marcos, but the US has resorted to direct intervention in the Marcos genocidal war against the Bangsa Moro people by allowing American jets from the huge Clark Air Base to participate in bombing missions over Mindanao in South Philippines.

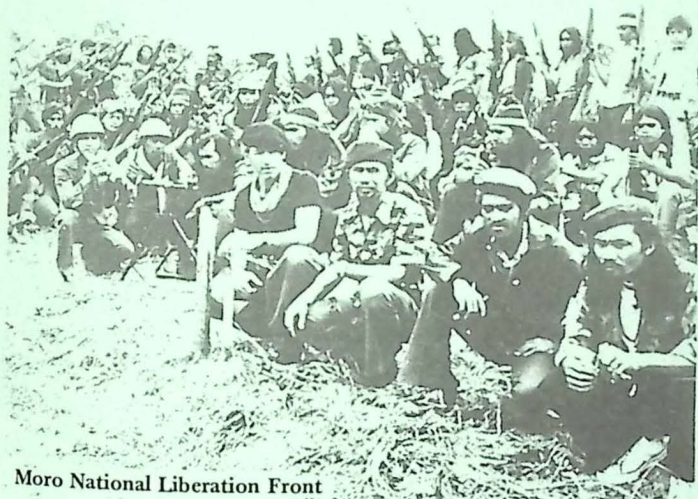
4.4 What is more ominous, however, is the fact that as a result of a revised US-Philippine military bases agreement concluded early this year, aside from assuring huge amounts of military aid to the reactionary Marcos regime for the next five years, the United States may now participate in security activities such as counter-insurgency operations, providing a legal justification for direct US troops involvement of a Vietnam-type war in the north and central parts of the Philippines and more so in the Bangsa Moro homeland.

I strongly request that this appeal be heard by the Tribunal; that the Marcos regime and US imperialism be tried and condemned before the bar of world public opinion for their crimes against our people and humanity; and that the Tribunal recognise the inalienable right of our people to national self-determination as well as their legitimate aspiration for nationhood like other free nations of the world. I would like to add that the Bangsa Moro people today is a cohesive national group, with its own history and culture, customs, traditions and habits distinct and separate from the Filipino people, with a contiguous territory historically recognised as their own.

Most Respectfully Submitted, for Nur Misuqri, Chairman, Central Committee, Moro National Liberation Front; by, Abdurasad Asani, Director MNLF Relations Office.



Moro National Liberation Front



Moro National Liberation Front

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Alliance for Philippine National Democracy (UGNAYAN)

The Alliance for Philippine National Democracy (UGNAYAN) is a broad coalition of various groups and individuals in North America opposed to the U.S. - Marcos dictatorship. Its chief task is to rally the peoples of the world in support of the National Democratic Front in the Philippines and its Ten Point Program.

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