



Paninindigan

Ang pahayagan ng Bayan

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AQUINO'S FIRST 100 DAYS:



No major achievements, no meaningful change, many failed promises



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Aquino's first 100 days: No major achievements, no meaningful change, many failed promises

The first 100 days of the Aquino government were marked by the continuation of many of the policies of previous governments, the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation and the failure to make any headway in the prosecution of former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In his *Ulat sa Bayan*, President Benigno Simeon Aquino III again did not address crucial issues such as human rights violations, the prosecution of Arroyo and her cohorts, land reform, migrants welfare and the plight of other marginalized sectors. The 20-minute speech was big on rhetoric but fell short of actual meaningful results.

Aquino's superficial efforts to make himself appear different from Arroyo cannot cover up the lack of any meaningful reforms in his government. He gets failing marks in many key areas of governance such as justice, human rights, economic reform and foreign policy.

The Aquino government finds comfort in survey results which it believes are unusually high. History, however, has shown that even the most optimistic survey results are fleeting if there are no fundamental changes in place.

Former presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada during their first 100 days had higher scores than Aquino but both ended up as very unpopular regimes.

The president's first 100 days saw the following developments:

1. The failure to hold Arroyo and her cohorts accountable for gross corruption, human rights violations, and sellout of national interests. Despite the formation of the so-called Truth Commission (TC), no charges have been filed by the Aquino government against the former president. The TC, in fact, has slowed down the process of accountability. Even the Department of Justice cannot conduct its own investigations because it will have to defer to the TC. Aquino has gone after some tax-evaders and over-paid officials of the past government, but it has miserably failed to make any headway against Arroyo.
2. Human rights violations continue with impunity throughout the country. There are now 16 activists who have become victims of extrajudicial killings during Aquino's first 100 days. There are continuing reports of harassment, abductions, illegal arrests, trumped-up charges and torture aimed at critics of government. There have been no charges filed against the known human rights violators of the Arroyo regime. The Aquino government, despite the abuses of the past, has continued the bloody counter-



- insurgency policy of its predecessor.
3. Aquino has continued the failed neo-liberal economic policies of past governments. Like his predecessors, Aquino has relied on foreign investments, foreign loans and OFW remittances to prop up the ailing economy. He has not shown any plan for genuine land reform and national industrialization as basic requirements for national development. Aquino has slashed the budget for social services (education, health) and plans to impose added burdens on the people such as the MRT fare hike. He has made "conditional cash transfer" (read: dole-out) as the centerpiece program in addressing, nay covering up poverty.
4. The current government has remained subservient to foreign dictates. It has not delivered on its promise of reviewing the VFA. It has expressed unqualified support for the US war on terror and US intervention in Southeast Asia. It has not protested the indefinite stay of US troops in Mindanao.
5. The Aquino government is wracked by internal squabbles and intensifying rifts between different reactionary factions. These warring factions out to corner the spoils of power have severely hampered the functions of government. Aquino remains indecisive in addressing this reality as evidenced by his stubborn refusal to fire his friend and shooting-buddy Interior and Local Government Undersecretary Rico Puno.

With the current state of affairs, the people must rely on their own strength, initiatives and struggles in achieving justice and meaningful change. 🌿

A most devious scheme: HLI retains control even over distributed land under compromise agreement

The deal is devious through and through.

Under the so-called settlement between Hacienda Luisita's management and the farmers and farm workers, those who will chose land distribution over stocks will be given land that is equivalent to their stock holdings. The actual equivalent of stocks to land area and how viable it would be is not clear in the agreement. The scope of land distribution is also questionable since lawyers have argued that it is the entire estate which should be subjected to land reform, not just 33% of the land that is devoted to agriculture.

What is most disturbing and downright onerous is that under the agreement, Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) retains virtual control even over distributed land. In the agreement, HLI has the right of first refusal should farmers decide to "lease, sell, transfer or enter into joint venture or any other mode of business relations or transaction that would involve the land given to them". HLI is also given 360 days to match any offer from third-parties as regards the use of land.

Clearly, HLI would still be very much in control of land use even under this sham settlement agreement. HLI has a big say on the types of transactions entered into by the farmers. HLI can very well dictate the terms of land use. Given these conditions, farmers are pressured or forced to sell their land back to HLI and thus HLI management would be able to re-concentrate and monopolize land once more.

The settlement also seeks to legitimize the ongoing land conversion by the HLI management. A provision in the settlement states that "farmers herein support and/or interpose no objection to the further development of HLI lands for non-agricultural use," and that "the parties hereby respect and will no longer question the validity of the conversion of lands to non-agricultural use."

Huge tracts of land can be converted to commercial and industrial use and the farmer can no longer object, even if such conversion would be inimical to agricultural production and will cause unemployment among farmers. The farmers and farm workers are given the vague and token assurance that they will be given "preference in employment" after land has been converted.

The settlement is also a waiver on all past and future claims of farmers and farm workers versus management.

The parties to the agreement "waive and agree to withdraw any and all claims, including those arising from employer-employee relationship, complaints, petitions filed, or to be filed, with the DAR (Department of Agrarian Reform), PARC (Presidential Agrarian Reform Council), administrative, quasi-judicial and/or judicial bodies, or any other matter arising from or incidental to the MOA (Memorandum of Agreement), or any dispute between HLI and the farm workers, and hereby release and hold harmless each other from any and all other liabilities or claims, of any form and kind, which one may have against the other and its officers, or which may arise now or in the future between HLI and the farm workers, or as a result of or incidental to the implementation of the MOA."

Simply put, with this agreement, farmers and farm workers can no longer question any violation that may have happened in the past, or that may arise in the future. The 1989 MOA on the stock-distribution option (SDO) will be considered unassailable. Even past issues concerning employer-employee relationship can no longer be pursued. HLI wants to operate on a clean slate, as if none of the grave violations of the past ever happened, and that even if these happen in the future, there is nothing the farmers and farm workers can do about it. The compromise agreement absolves HLI from any past and even future liability in relation to the 1989 SDO.

At the end of the day, the settlement only seeks to legitimize the discredited SDO, preempt the Supreme Court ruling on the SDO, have HLI retain full control of the land, implement a deceptive 'land distribution' scheme, and erase all the previous and future liabilities of management.

Ultimately, it would be the farmers and the farm workers and their struggle which would be the decisive factors in rejecting this patently onerous settlement in favor of real land distribution. One need not be a lawyer to understand why this deal is so one-sided; one only needs to know the half-century history of oppression in Hacienda Luisita. We are confident that the farmers and farm workers will see through this grand deception and continue their fight. 🌾

HUWAG IPASA ANG UTANG SA COMMUTER

Sa kanyang unang State of the Nation Address (SONA), nilantad ni Pangulong Benigno Simeon Aquino III ang mga “katiwalian” sa Metro Rail Transport (MRT) Corp. at iba pang mga ahensya ng gobyerno na naganap noong nakaraang siyam na taong panunungkulan ni Gloria Macapagal Arroyo bilang pangulo. Ayon sa kanya, ang pondo ng mamamayan ay nasasayang sa pagsubsidyo sa mga serbisyong pampubliko.

Kaugnay nito, ilang araw matapos ang SONA, ay pinaghahanda ng Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) ang mamamayan para sa napipintong pagtaas ng pasahe sa MRT. May plano ring itaas ang pasahe sa LRT para umano sa “operation and maintenance costs”.



Ang MRT at LRT ay ang pinakamura at epektibong moda ng mass transport sa Metro Manila sa ngayon. Sa pagtaas ng pasahe sa mga pampublikong transportasyon, tinatayang mahigit 1.2 milyong Pilipino na regular na sumasakay sa MRT at LRT araw-araw ang maaapektuhan ng panukalang ito: mga estudyante, manggagawa at empleyado. Lalo nitong paliliitin ang kakarampot na kita ng mahihirap na mamamayan ng bansa na gumagastos na ng humigit kumulang 10% ng kanilang minimum na sahod sa transportasyon. Sa P10 pagtaas, aabot sa P400 ang karagdagang gastos ng mga kompyuter sa bawat buwan.

Hindi makatarungan ang desisyon ng DOTC. Ipinapasa nito ang mga utang ng gobyerno sa mga kompyuter.

Sa katotohanan, ang sinusubsidyuhan ng mga mamamayan ay hindi ang aktwal na pasahe ng mga gumagamit ng MRT at LRT, kundi ang pambayad sa utang, kita at interes ng mga kumpanya na nagsimula ng mga proyektong ito. Pinapasan ng mamamayan ang utang ng contractor ng MRT na MRT Corp. at MRT Development Corp., at ang 15% return-on-investment (ROI) kada taon nito sa ilalim ng 25-taong kasunduan na build-lease-transfer (BLT) simula noon pang 1997 sa pagitan ng MRT Corp. at DOTC.

Ang subsidyo, sa gayon, ay napupunta sa ilang dayuhan at lokal na bangko tulad ng Export-Import Bank of Japan, Sumitomo Bank, at iba pa mula sa Japan at Czech Republic, at ng Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI).

Isang dahilan kung bakit nababaon sa utang ang pamahalaan ay ang sovereign guarantee na ibinigay ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas sa mga namuhunan sa MRT. Bukod dito, inako din ng gobyerno ang “commercial risks” ng operasyon ng MRT. Tiniyak ng gobyerno na makukuha ng mga pribadong kumpanya ang 15% ROI kada taon, may pasahero man o

wala ang MRT. Ang pagbabayad ng ganitong mataas na ROI ay lalong nagbaon sa gobyerno sa utang.

Ang problema sa pagkakautang na kinakaharap sa kasalukyan ng MRT, gayundin ng Napocor at iba pang ahensya ng gobyerno ay sanhi ng tinatawag na Public-Private Partnership (PPP), ang iskemang ibinabandera sa kasalukuyan ni Aquino na siyang tutugon sa depisito sa badyet ng pamahalaan at sa pangangailangan ng sambayanan. Sa karanasan, ang PPP ay hindi naman talaga “partnership” kundi isang paraan ng pagsasapribado ng mga pampublikong imprastruktura at serbisyo habang papasanin ng gobyerno ang pangmatagalang problema ng utang.

Hindi na bago ang PPP: Sinimulang ipatupad ito noong panahon ni dating Pangulong Corazon Aquino sa pamamagitan ng Republic Act No. 6957 upang aprubahan ang pagpopondo, konstruksyon, operasyon at pagmementina ng mga proyektong pampublikong imprastruktura ng pribadong sektor, lalo na ng pinakamalalaking dayuhan at lokal na kumpanya. Sa panahon ni Pangulong Fidel Ramos ay pinakilala ang iba’t ibang iskema ng PPP tulad ng build-lease-transfer (BLT), ang iskemang ginamit sa pagtatayo ng MRT.

Sa laki ng utang ng gobyerno ay nahirapan itong bayaran ang 15% ROI, at napilitang bilhin ang 76% ng MRT Corp. sa halagang US\$800 milyon sa pamamagitan ng Landbank of the Philippines at Development Bank of the Philippines. Syempre pa, taumbayan din ang papasan ng gastos na ito, habang sa kabilang banda ay tiyak na ang kita ng mga namumuhunan.

May mga malaking gastos din ang MRT Corp. na maituturing na kwestyunable. Isang halimbawa ay ang buwanang maintenance nito. Isang pribadong kumpanya din - ang TES

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Second “Morong 43” mom gives birth

news
feature

BAYAN Research



Mercy Castro (left) and Judilyn Oliveros are now under hospital arrest at the Philippine General Hospital

Mercy Castro of the Morong 43 gave birth on October 18 to a healthy baby girl according to the health workers campaigning for her release. Castro is one of two pregnant women arrested in Morong, Rizal last February 6 together with 41 others who are now collectively known as the Morong 43.

Judilyn Oliveros was the first to give birth last July 22. Through a court order, she was to breastfeed her baby at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH), but not before she was brought back to Camp Bagong Diwa on a wheelchair and in handcuffs. Judilyn's baby boy is now three months old.

Castro is now also staying at the PGH. Lawyers have moved that she be given the same treatment as Oliveros in so far as breastfeeding her baby is concerned.

Eight months of detention and two babies later, we are reminded of the continuing injustice faced by the 43 health workers. Despite President Aquino's admission that the arrests and searches done in Morong were not in

accord with the law, the government has still not acted to release of the 43. Aquino said that any rectification of the situation will need the sanction of the courts. But before the court can act, government first needs to withdraw the cases filed against the 43. These include cases of illegal possession of explosives, which are non-bailable offenses.

There is no reason why government should not act and act with dispatch on this case.

Aquino can order DOJ to withdraw cases against the Morong 43

President Aquino's apparent acknowledgement that the search, arrests and detention of the Morong 43 may not have been in accordance with the law because of a defective search warrant is a welcome development. It underscores the long-recognized injustice inflicted against the 43 health workers.

Department of Justice (DOJ) Sec. Leila de Lima has submitted a review to Malacañang. It awaits approval by the President.

President Aquino need not leave the matter entirely to the courts. If he wants to “rectify the situation” as he said in his interview, he can order the DOJ to withdraw the cases filed against the 43 so that the Morong RTC can immediately order the release of the detained health workers. 🌿

Planong pagtaas ng pasahe...CONTINUED

Philippines na subsidiary ng bangkong Hapon na Sumitomo na namuhunan sa MRT - ang namamahala sa pagmementina ng MRT at binabayaran ng US\$2 milyon kada buwan.

Hindi rin malinaw kung ang mga malalaking negosyo tulad ng mga malls na pag-aari ng Ayala (Trinoma sa North Ave. at Ayala Mall sa Makati) ay nagbabayad ng sapat sa kabila ng malaking pakinabang nila sa MRT at mga komyuter na dumadaan sa kanilang mga establisimyento.

Sa pagtataas ng singil sa pasahe sa MRT at LRT ay nakaamba na rin ang posibilidad ng muling pagsasapribado ng MRT.

Mabibigyang katwiran kasi nito ang tuluyang pag-aalis sa subsidyo ng pamahalaan, gayundin ay pinapaganda ang imahe ng MRT bilang isang kumikitang negosyo para sa mga dayuhan at lokal na mamumuhunan. Tuluyan nitong tatalikuran ang konsepto ng sistema ng pampublikong transportasyon at ng pampublikong imprastraktura at serbisyo.

Hindi dapat ipasa sa mamamayan ang bigat ng mga utang na hindi naman tayo ang may kasalanan. Dapat ding tingnan bilang leksyon ng gobyerno ang bigong modelo na ito ng PPP bilang patunay na ang pribatisasyon ay hindi solusyon. 🌿

No reciprocity nor mutual benefit from the VFA

Malacañang should move to cancel or hold in abeyance all upcoming joint military exercises and ongoing US military operations while the review of the Visiting Forces Agreement is ongoing.

If Malacañang is saying that there are questionable or problematic provisions in the agreement, why allow US troops unhampered entry into the country?

Executive Secretary Jojo Ochoa has been quoted as saying the Palace review of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) will focus on the provisions on custody of erring US troops. This was spurred by the Philippine's experience with the case of US Marine Daniel Smith who was accused of rape, convicted by a regional trial court, detained in a Philippine facility then transferred to the US embassy.

The Supreme Court ruled that such transfer was not in accordance with the VFA. Before the Executive Department complied with the court ruling, Smith was acquitted by the Court of Appeals. The Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo regime did not show any signs that it would comply with the SC order to begin with. When Smith was acquitted, the government lawyers asked the court to declare the issue of custody moot.

On a side note, the government official who conspired with the United States embassy officials to transfer Smith to the US embassy, Alberto Romulo, was reappointed by Aquino as Foreign Affairs secretary.

Mr. Ochoa has said that the VFA provisions on custody are problematic. He voiced concern that should a similar incident such as the Subic rape case happen, there would again be legal controversies.

It stands to reason that while the review is ongoing, ALL joint exercises and ALL US military operations in the country should be put on hold or cancelled. What is the sense of allowing US military operations to continue when we know that when violations occur, the Philippines will again be at the losing end? How can a repeat of the humiliating experience in the Smith case be prevented?

Should there be another violation of Philippine law? How do we ensure our national interests are upheld given the problematic VFA provisions on custody?



We can't. The VFA was designed such that US troops will always be given special treatment. This alone is reason enough for the government to suspend all US military operations in the Philippines. This should include the operations of the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines based in Zamboanga and other areas in Mindanao. These overstaying troops have a string of violations, gross misconduct and disrespect for Philippine laws.

The US recently held the annual Cooperation and Afloat Readiness Training exercises involving US warships like the USS Essex and USS Halsey. This activity is part of "US power-projection" meant to strengthen US control and influence in the region.

We believe that the VFA is beyond redemption. It is not just the provision on custody of erring US troops which is problematic. The agreement itself is full of vague provisions that allow an unlimited number of US troops to enter the Philippines, stay here for an indefinite period of time, and engage in unspecified activities. The VFA is a legal framework for the unhampered and unregulated stationing of foreign troops on Philippine territory, sans any actual basing treaty.

It is untrue that the VFA can be mutually beneficial to the US and the Philippines and that a mere review can make it so. Those who are saying that the VFA can be mutually beneficial are living in a dream. The VFA was designed as a one-sided agreement that benefits mainly the US. The past 11 years have shown that the agreement is patently one-sided. We are given US military junk in exchange for the unlimited use of Philippine territory for US basing operations.

I got to talk to a former member of the Armed Forces of
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No reciprocity...CONTINUED

the Philippines (AFP-Air Force) who experienced training under the VFA. While this officer learned some “skills” during the Balikatan exercises (night flying), the “skills” could not be used because the equipment needed were with the US. The Philippines did not have equipment for night-flying. He also said that other officers who learned new skills soon applied for jobs at commercial airlines. He said that there is no way the AFP will modernize under such as system. The training exercises were “just for show”, he said.

The stark reality is that no amount of fine-tuning can save this one-sided military pact.

The VFA was not even ratified by the US Senate, in direct contradiction to the requirements of the Philippine constitution. US officials say they “recognize” the VFA as a treaty even if the official actions of the US Senate show otherwise. This was argued extensively by the lawyers of various anti-VFA groups and personalities. Even then Chief Justice Reynato Puno, in his dissenting opinion, said that “The circumstances present in the case at bar and recent case law in the United States’ policy on treaty enforcement further expose the anomalous asymmetry in the legal treatment of the VFA by the United States as opposed to the Republic of the Philippines. This slur on our sovereignty cannot continue, especially if we are the ones perpetuating it.”

Unfortunately, the SC did not see it that way. The SC averred that the VFA was merely an implementation of an existing treaty, the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1951 which was approved more than half a century ago. Sen. Miriam Santiago asked how the MDT could contemplate something such as the VFA which was entered into more than 40 years after the MDT was signed. The two agreements are decades apart.

The Presidential Commission on the VFA should also

examine the legal basis for the continuous, uninterrupted and permanent presence of US troops in Mindanao since 2002. The US troops under the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines are indefinitely stationed in Mindanao following a unilateral announcement by US Defense Secretary Robert Gates last August 2009. Former Navy Lt.SG Nancy Gadian testified that before the Philippine Senate that US forces have built permanent structures and have remained stationed in Mindanao since 2002. This no longer falls under the definition of “visiting”.

While we have no illusions on the outcome of the touted review, it is necessary to take a position on the VFA review being conducted by Malacañang. It’s important that the public be made aware of the serious flaws of the VFA. The illusion of mutuality and reciprocity under the VFA should once and for all be demolished. The review is an opportunity to revive the national debate on sovereignty and an independent foreign policy.

The biggest stumbling block to an honest and objective VFA review is the Aquino government’s subservience to US impositions and interests. So long as the Aquino government remains dependent on US investments, loans and grants, and on American military junk, it is not likely that it will move to terminate the VFA on its own. Such is the effect of having a mendicant foreign policy.

During the review period, the people’s actions will play a crucial role. As in the rejection of the US bases treaty in 1991, the people’s protest will be the decisive factor in pushing the Philippine government to terminate the VFA. 🇵🇭





A serious failure of leadership

On the day he was to leave for the United States, President Benigno Simeon Aquino III announced that he was releasing to the public the contents of the report of the Incident Investigation and Review Committee (IIRC) for the August 23 Manila hostage crisis. However, the IIRC recommendations were withheld by the Aquino government until a review was conducted by the Palace “legal team”.

Among those the IIRC found liable for the August 23 fiasco are Manila mayor Alfredo Lim, Vice mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso, Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Jesus Verzosa, Manila Police District chief Rodolfo Magtibay, National Capital Region Police Office chief Leocadio Santiago, Ombudsman Mercedes Gutierrez, Deputy Ombudsman Emilio Gonzales, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) undersecretary Rico Puno, broadcasters Erwin Tulfo, Michael Rogas and the three major television networks.

When the recommendations did come out, many were surprised at the modifications made by Aquino. Malacanang’s legal team modified the original recommendations of the IIRC which said Puno and Verzosa should be investigated for possible administrative and criminal liabilities.

Aquino merely admonished Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo and Undersecretary Rico Puno for their roles in the hostage crisis. Aquino also cleared former Philippine National

Police chief Jesus Verzosa from any liability. These actions drew sharp and widespread criticism

That Aquino refuses to fire Puno raises questions on the leadership values of the president. That culpable national officials got away with a slap on the wrist is not consistent with the pledge of accountability made by this administration.

In its original leaked recommendations, the IIRC said that:

“Against Police Director General Jesus A. Verzosa, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for Less Grave Neglect of Duty in his failure to execute lawful orders from higher authority when he failed to implement the order of the President to use the PNP SAF-CRG in the assault of the hostaged bus and for his failure to monitor the crisis situation at the NCMOC as provided in the CMC Manual and as such respond adequately and give effect to decisive actions as may have been needed, but instead proceeding to Cagayan De Oro in the middle of the hostage crisis.”

“Against Undersecretary Rico E. Puno, the initiation of the corresponding administrative proceedings is recommended for gross negligence under the appropriate civil service laws, rules and regulations for neglecting to disseminate and ensure the implementation of the

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order of the President to utilize the PNP SAF-CRG in the assault of the hostaged bus and for failure to exercise with due diligence his supervisory powers over the PNP as ordered by the President.”

The original report is a damning assessment of the readiness of government in dealing with hostage and other situations that need immediate attention. There was apparent failure from the moment the government failed to constitute a proper CMC, the necessary sub-committees including intelligence and psychology and when it failed to deploy the supposedly capable elements of the PNP that can effectively respond to the crisis.

One of the most interesting parts of the IIRC report appears on page 52, a section called National or Local Crisis. It says:

The authorities considered the crisis a local crisis and therefore handled by the local CMC of Manila. The basic parameter being that the locality where the crisis is occurring will determine which CMC has jurisdiction. Thus, the crisis was handled by Mayor Lim as the Chairperson of the Manila CMC. It appeared that at no point was the elevation to the status as a national crisis considered even while practically all the hostages were foreign nationals and even while representatives from foreign embassies or consular offices were already involved. The hostage crisis was prolonged and the site so volatile it quickly deteriorated into the killings of 8 hostages and wounding of many others.

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) on Crisis Situations does not have clear parameters on when, or under what circumstances, should a crisis be elevated to national status.

It is also not clear as to which agency, or who in the bureaucracy, will initiate the elevation of the crisis to national status. Will it be by endorsement or initiative of the local CMC or will the elevation be through a “take over process” initiated by the national agency concerned?

It is also not clear on what is the scope of the authority of the CMC. Is it advisory or does it make a decision based on consensus of the members of the CMC which decision is then to be implemented by the Ground Commander?

The above-mentioned section appears to absolve Malacañang of any direct liability simply because of the absence of “clear parameters” on when a crisis is elevated from local to national status. The absence of “clear parameters” in the government crisis manual has been invoked by President Aquino himself in trying to explain his and his cabinet’s failure to immediately intervene. The same has been used to absolve Robredo, Puno and Verzosa from any kind of liability.

The IIRC report was a detailed exposition of official incompetence on many levels. The apparent failure of the national leadership was made even worse by the President’s refusal to make his top officials accountable. 🐾



Manila Police District SWAT assault the bus at the Luneta Grandstand. Eight Hong Kong nationals and the hostage-taker were killed.

Till her death, Joan Hinton struggled for socialism

As an American scientist, Joan Hinton did not embrace socialism through a brief flash of inspiration. But her commitment to socialism would be for an entire lifetime.

While working as a cutting-edge physicist involved with developing atomic energy, Joan Hinton was influenced by her sister who gave her reading materials on the political developments in the world that time, most especially the rise of revolutionary forces in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and China. Joan had been part of the Manhattan Project that developed the first atomic bomb.

After the United States (US) eventually dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki signaling the defeat of Japan and the end of the Second World War, Joan opposed the use of nuclear energy as a weapon of mass destruction. When she learned that the US military wanted to develop bigger bombs, she gave up a promising career in the US government and went to China to join its masses in their revolution against the three evils of imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. She would go on to help build socialism in China under the leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong.

Joan was impressed with the Chinese masses who were building a 'New China' - a radical departure from the centuries-old feudal China that saw millions of peasants lose their land, become mired in poverty and debt, and go hungry and die. The New China saw its people put their country's welfare first above self so that they could overthrow the system that bred the three social evils. Ingrained in the Chinese masses was the revolutionary slogan, Serve the people! Mao said: "Without the masses, we are nothing. Without the masses, how can we have food?"

Joan and her brother Sid became part of a collective composed mostly of peasants. They not only assessed their daily work in the field but also studied the history of China and other countries. These studies gave them a vision and an understanding of the relations between the people and how their society worked. They learned the importance of class struggle.

The Chinese masses were self-reliant in producing their own food, their own machines, in building political structures in the grassroots, in making their own laws relevant to their needs, in providing education to the youth and the rest of the Chinese people, in promoting their own progressive culture and formulating foreign policies. Self-reliance meant to rely on the masses' collective wisdom and will.

Joan saw for herself that under socialism, there was no hoarding or starving to death. There was for a time belt

tightening and rationing of food and clothes, but there was no stealing, hoarding, raids, nor even widespread deaths. Under socialism, the workers enjoyed shorter hours of work and had time for leisure and cultural shows. They could give their opinions and criticized their leaders. Land was distributed to the peasants who then formed cooperatives and communes for collective production.

Joan, Sid and her husband Bill supported the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" initiated by Chairman Mao that sought to advance socialism by fighting modern revisionism and capitalist restoration.



But alas, the modern revisionists in China, led by Deng Xiao Peng and his cohorts were able to gain the upper hand and reversed the victories of the Chinese masses. His "Chinese-type socialism" was characterized by the supremacy of private ownership, building of massive industries in the coastal areas for imperialist and bureaucrat-comprador profits, grabbing of peasants' collectivized farms for imperialist plunder, corruption among party bureaucrats, hunger for the urban poor, low wages for workers and huge profits for the monopoly capitalists, and the dismantling of the revolutionary grassroots political structures.

Joan witnessed all the reversals of socialist gains and the undermining of the self-reliance and power of the masses in China. Despite the setbacks in building socialism, Joan did not waver in her belief in and commitment to socialism. She had been a participant in the new democratic revolution and in socialist revolution. She knew that it was modern revisionism which gained the upper hand in China. She knew that it was the capitalist-roaders in the Party, and not socialism, which failed the people.

In the remainder of her full and colorful life as a proletarian revolutionary and internationalist, Joan shared her experiences in socialist construction. She shared the lessons in the struggle against modern revisionism and capitalist-restoration. Such lessons proved to be a beacon of hope for the struggling masses worldwide who continue to aspire for socialism. Her writings, along with those of Bill, were studied by Filipino progressive and revolutionaries. These were important

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Pagpupugay kay Kasamang ALEXANDER MARTIN REMOLLINO

tribute

BAYAN



pagmamahal sa bayan.

Sa kolehiyo nakapag-organisa at nakapagmobilisa si Alex ng kapwa niya mag-aaral. Napilitan siyang lisanin ang unibersidad dahil sa pinansyal na suliranin ng kanyang pamilya. Hindi na niya natapos ang kursong Legal Management sa kanyang ikaapat na taon.

Noong 2002 nagsimula ang kanyang gawain bilang isang manunulat sa Ibon Foundation. Nang taon ding iyon ay naging bahagi si Alex ng noo'y bagong tatag na alternatibong pahayagan, ang Bulatlat, at naging associate editor ng sumunod na taon ng Tinig.com. Miyembro si Alex ng National Union of Journalists of the Philippines.

Masasabing sa halos isang dekada ni Alex bilang manunulat at mamamahayag ay naging mas malalim ang kanyang perspektiba sa mga isyu ng lipunan dahil sa kanyang pakikinig sa mga kuwento ng buhay ng at pakikisalamuha sa mga karaniwang mamamayan. Ang kanyang pagiging aktibista ay nagbigay sa kanya ng balangkas sa pagpapahayag ng mga riyalidad ng lipunan, lalo't kung ang mga ito ay hindi tumatagos o nailalathala sa mainstream media. Ilan sa mga madalas isulat ni Alex ay ang mga isyu ng karapatang pantao, usaping pangkapayapaan at kalagayan ng mga kapatid nating Muslim at katutubo.

Kilala at iginagalang hindi lamang bilang mamamahayag si Alex, kundi bilang isang makata, sa wikang Pilipino man o Ingles. Isa siya sa mga nagpatatag at naging Secretary General ng Kilometer 64, isang grupo ng mga makata't manunulat. Katulad ng kanyang mga artikulo, sapul ng kanyang mga tula ang mga "kanser ng lipunan." Marahil hindi na kataka-taka ang ganito lalo't sinasabing mula siya sa angkan ni Gat Jose Rizal.

Ang kanyang mga tula ay matatagpuan sa iba't ibang publikasyon. Isa sa kanyang mga akda, ang "Tuparin Natin ang Banta ng Ating Panahon," ay nilapatan ng musika at ginamit sa bidyo ng ARREST Gloria. Ang bidyo na ito ay

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Maiksi man ang 33 taon na ating nakapiling si Alex, ito nama'y naging makabuhulan para sa kanyang kapamilya, kaibigan, kasama, at kapwa manunulat at makata. Hindi matatawaran ang kanyang dedikasyon at sinseridad sa pakikibaka at sa pagsisilbi sa bayan sa pamamagitan ng kanyang panulat.

Sa University of Santo Tomas sa Maynila unang nahubog si Alex bilang aktibista. Kasapi siya ng militanteng League of Filipino Students. Una siyang sumama sa mga protesta upang tutulan ang pagtaas ng tuition at iba pang bayarin sa kolehiyo. Mula noon ay namulat si Alex sa iba't ibang isyu hindi lamang ng mga estudyante, kundi maging mga manggagawa, magsasaka, katutubo at iba pang aping sektor ng lipunang Pilipino. Ang presensya ni Alex sa halos lahat ng aktibidad ay testamento sa kanyang tunay na

Till her death...CONTINUED

weapons against the imperialist ideological offensive after the collapse of the revisionist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Bayan pays the highest tribute to Joan Hinton for their unwavering dedication to the proletariat and people, to class struggle and to the socialist cause. The proletariat and people of the world, including the Philippine mass movement, are forever grateful for their contributions

and sacrifices. Joan's and our own hope lie in the enduring truth that so long as there are exploitation and oppression, there is no other way but for the people to resist, to fight, and to once again build a socialist society.

Long live the memory of Joan Hinton!

Long live the peoples' struggle against imperialism, for national liberation and socialism! 🌻

Pagpupugay kay Kasamang... CONTINUED

nagwagi ng ikalawang puwesto sa ika-18 Gawad Cultural Center of the Philippines para sa Alternatibong Pelikula at Video.

Marso 2010 nang naging bahagi si Alex ng pambansang opisina ng Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) bilang bahagi ng Public Information Department nito. Si Alex ay sumabak agad sa gawain noong eleksyon bilang researcher at manunulat ng Kontra Daya. Malaking bahagi ng paglalantad ng mga bogus party-list noong eleksyon ay mula sa matiyagang pananaliksik niya. Inaral din nya ang automated elections at naging abala sa election monitoring ng Kontra Daya noong Mayo 10.

Si Alex din ang nakatutok sa isyu ng tropang Amerikano sa Mindanao at sa pagkamatay ni Gregan Cardeño.

Siya rin ang inasahan ng mga abogado ng Morong 43 sa pagsusulat ng mga legal updates sa kasagsagan ng mga pagdinig at lugal na labanan. Patunugot din siya ng ilalabas sanang chapbook para sa Morong 43. Noong SONA 2010, siya ang sumulat ng "SONA ng Bayan" at tumutok sa "live updates" sa rally. Huling gawain sana niya ang pamamatnugot sa Paninindigan, ang opisyal na publikasyon ng Bayan.

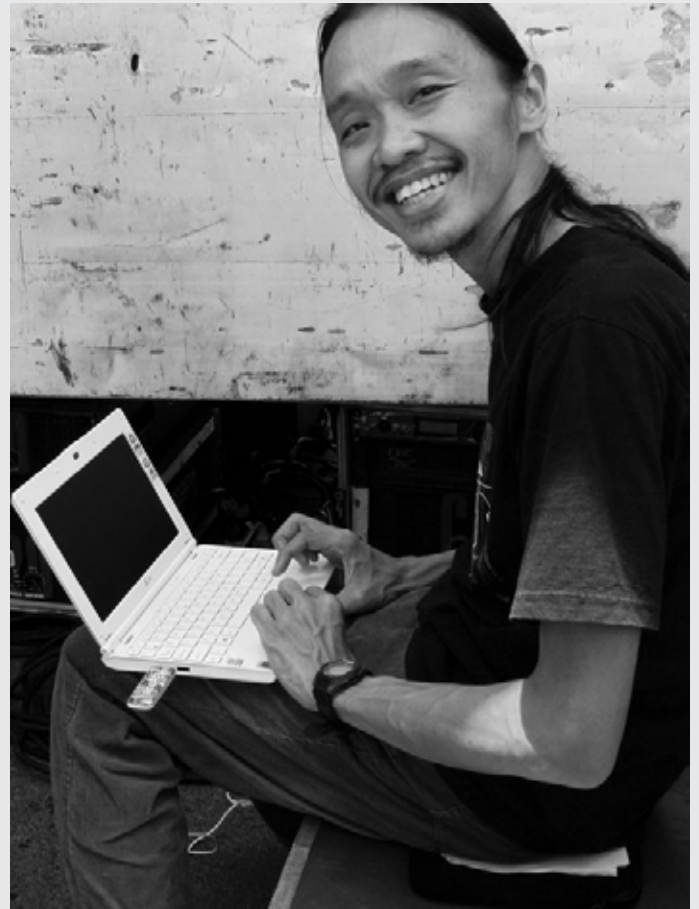
Sa pagitan ng mga gawain niya sa Bayan ay pana-panahong nagbibigay si Alex ng workshop sa pagsusulat ng tula.

Agosto 27 nang ipasok sa Philippine General Hospital si Alex dahil sa panghihina ng katawan. Doon nalaman na may diabetes pala siya. Nakita rin na may impeksyon siya sa baga. Ang dalawang bagay na ito ang matinding kumplikasyon sa kalusugan ni Alex.

Setyembre 3, ikapitong araw ni Alex sa ospital, ay nagsagawa ng isang fundraising activity ang mga malalapit na kaibigan niya, para sa kanyang mabilisang paggaling. Ito na din pala ang huling gabi ni Alex. Bagama't naagapan ang bugso ng diabetes ni Alex, hindi na kinaya ng katawan niya ang lumalalang impeksyon sa kanyang baga. Sa oras na 9:42 ng gabi pumanaw si Alex.

Naulila ni Alex ang kanyang inang si Zen, kapatid na si Aris at kasintahang si Rebecca Lawson.

Kalahati ng maikling buhay ni Alex ay inilaan niya sa pagkilos para sa masang api. Sa kabila ng posibleng mga



karamdaman ay hindi siya tumigil sa pagkilos. Mataas ang respeto sa kanya ng mga kasama dahil sa husay at dedikasyon niya sa gawain. Malalim ang pag-unawa niya sa kalagayan ng mamamayan at sa pangangailangan ng puspusang paglaban para makamit ang pagbabago. Ginamit niya ang kanyang husay at talas sa pagsusulat para mag-ambag sa pambansa demokratikong kilusan sa kabuuan.

Kami sa Bayan, kabilang ang mga balangay at kasaping organisasyon nito ay lubos na nagdadalamhati sa pagpanaw ni Alex. Kami ay nagpupugay sa kanyang makabuluhang buhay at malaking ambag para sa kilusang pambansa demokratiko. Kami ay namamanata na patuloy na bibigyang parangal si Alex sa pamamagitan ng puspusang pagsusulong ng pambansa demokratikong pakikibaka ng mamamayan hanggang sa ganap na tagumpay.

Mabuhay ang alaala ni Alexander Martin Remollino!

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