

On the Concept of the “Pol-Mil” Struggle

CPP (Executive Committee)

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1. The pol-mil (political-military) orientation that puts emphasis on the integration of military struggle with political struggle in the cities was explained as an effort to clarify the orientation of partisan warfare in the light of the problem that has arisen regarding the lack of sufficient consideration of the bases and political effects of partisan operations. In the said clarification, however, the correct relationship of military and political struggles in the cities still was not grasped. The negative experience in the general strike and people’s strike (of October 1990) can attest to this.

2. Partisan warfare is an extension of the people’s war in the countryside. At the same time, it serves the mass movement and the political struggle in the cities. It should not be directly merged or openly linked with open and legal mass struggle in the cities, otherwise the mass movement could become an open target of the enemy’s intrigue and military attack and be deprived of space for maneuver in the legal arena. Directly combining illegal military struggle and open political struggle in the cities over a long period of time is not feasible.

It is a basic guideline for partisan warfare to strictly consider and observe the primarily legal and defensive character of the revolutionary struggle in the cities. As one form of urban struggle, it is only secondary to the legal struggle.

The overall intensity and level of partisan operations in the cities should be strictly based on, and scaled in accordance with, the needs of the overall situation and political battle, the level and intensity of mass struggles, and the intensity of the conflict among the reactionaries. Intensified partisan warfare that does not suit the overall mood of the masses and the needs of the political situation, that is vulnerable to the enemy’s intrigues, and that cannot muster the sympathy and support of the masses should be avoided. More than this, partisan warfare should not be allowed to become the principal form of struggle and militarize the conflict in the urban centers.

It should be ensured that operations aimed at sabotaging the war machinery of the enemy, punishing the most hated enemies of the people, and other blows to weaken the whole camp of reaction, serve the open mass movement, or are not injurious to it.

3. In reviewing the conduct of the struggle in the National Capital Region (NCR), the following should be noted:

a. The politico-military concept employed in Mindanao was inspired by the Vietnamese experience, and not the Latin American. Even before the launching of people’s strikes in Mindanao, the pol-mil concept had already been formulated and was being implemented. The main content of this concept was the use of armed propaganda units in the countryside in

building and expanding the underground movement, the mass organizations and the mass base of armed struggle in urban communities.

As a result of pol-mil work, the mass base of armed partisans in the cities of Mindanao rapidly expanded, and partisan warfare quickly spread and intensified there. The peak was reached when people's strikes were held simultaneous with raids on AFP detachments in the cities and putting up of NPA checkpoints in the city's thoroughfares. When it reached this stage, however, the struggle in the cities became very militarized. Several battalions of Marines were concentrated in Davao City, military detachments and checkpoints mushroomed and communities known to be the bases of the partisans were raided several times daily. Not only the units of armed partisans find it hard to maintain their base of operations, open mass organizations also found it hard to maneuver.

There are positive and negative lessons that can be drawn from the experience in the pol-mil struggle of the cities of Mindanao.

b. The establishment and advance of armed partisan units in the NCR was an important development in the overall conduct of the struggle in the region. However, the limitations, errors and shortcomings of partisan operations in the region should be made clear. It is important to ascertain the main errors and shortcomings that are linked to the basic orientation and policy on partisan operations. On the basis of these, the correct orientation and handling of partisan operations can be more fully understood.

c. The 1986 EDSA uprising was a major development in the conduct of the struggle in the NCR, but it was not mentioned (in the article).

d. In the paper and in other articles of Taliba ng Bayan, the emphasis given to the insurrectionary direction, when the overall direction/handling of the struggle in the NCR is being discussed, is very noticeable. In discussion such as these, Taliba ng Bayan should give equal or more emphasis to the pivotal role of the NCR in advancing the political struggle nationwide.

4. Making our forces in the NCR understand both political work and military work is important if the correct dynamics of the two forms of struggle is clearly established. At the current stage (of the struggle), the high premium given to military struggle should primarily be shown through the readiness for, and the enthusiastic support and participation in, the armed struggle in the countryside.

[From: <http://www.philippinerevolution.net/documents/on-the-concept-of-the-pol-mil-struggle> (downloaded on Feb. 24, 2012)]