

Some Fictions About the Left

Jesus B Lava and Francisco A Lava Jr

The protracted movement for national liberation and democracy, whether under the leadership of the Lavas or of Sison, has posed advantages as well as disadvantages for Filipino society. For any specific leadership, it remains to be objectively and fully assessed to which side the balance tilts. In this essay, the Lavas refute allegations made about the Philippine Left and the Lavas' role in it, and underscore the need for a principled adherence to truth and accuracy, including a principled rectification of falsehoods, in this assessment.

WE WERE GREATLY SURPRISED THAT *The Philippine Daily Inquirer* columnist Conrado de Quiros could be so careless with his facts about the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), in the book *Dead Aim: How Marcos Ambushed Philippines Democracy*.

There must be fairness and objectivity to correct fictions about the Philippine Left in general and the communist Lavas in particular. But de Quiros made no attempt at all to interview those who could have recounted the events as they actually happened. Based as it is on outright distortion and malicious gossip, and devoid of basic due process, that section of the book of de Quiros is actually 'Wrong Aim' and 'Dead Wrong'.

According to the book, 'The Huks might have mounted a formidable insurgency right after the war if they had decided not to give up their arms as the post-war government bid them to do' (p. 138). This is a reckless exercise in historical falsification.

The *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon* (popularly known as Hukbalahap or Huk) was organized right after the outbreak of the war

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by the CPP under the leadership of general secretary Vicente Lava. It was the strongest and most successful anti-Japanese guerilla force, together with the *Barrio United Defense Corps* or BUDC, another creation of the CPP. However, the Huk was dominant only in Central Luzon and some parts of Southern Luzon; it had no presence in the Visayas and Mindanao. There was no decision to surrender the arms of the Huks to the government right after World War II. The Huks themselves, along with many party cadres, were against such a surrender. The only occasion that some arms were lost was when two squadrons of Huks were forcibly disarmed by US troops.

Furthermore, the claim that a formidable insurgency could have been mounted after the war reveals an appalling ignorance of the feelings and thoughts of the vast majority of Filipinos at the time. Most Filipinos then thought of the Americans as true liberators of the country. Many also believed that the Tydings-McDuffie Law, which promised independence for the Philippines 10 years after the establishment of the Commonwealth government in 1935, was binding.

Few Filipinos knew of the American plans to re-impose colonialism in a new guise and many would not have believed it if they were so told. Their feeling of relief from the atrocities of the Japanese occupation precluded any thought of sinister plans by their ostensible 'liberator'. It was only when the Bell Trade Act with its impositions of 'free trade', parity rights and corresponding constitutional amendment, and when the US demanded the stationing of military forces in the Philippines, that the more perceptive Filipinos began to entertain doubts about the real motives of the Americans.

GOVERNMENT HOSTILITY NOT SURPRISING

DE QUIROS' book claimed that the Lavas/CPP/Huks were surprised at 'the depth of the government's hostility to their victory'; that 'they did not foresee the lengths to which the government with American prodding would go to thwart it'; and that 'the end of the Second World War would be the beginning of the Cold War when American policy would come down to one imperative which was to crush communism' (p. 139).

The *Democratic Alliance* or DA was a coalition of nationalist and democratic elements of the peasantry, workers, middle class, intellec-

tuals and communists. Among its affiliates were the party-led *Pambansang Kaisahan ng Magbubukid* (PKM), Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO), Civil Liberties Union (CLU), Free Philippines, Blue Eagles and Huks. The DA's first national executive committee was composed of Jesus Barrera (CLU member, later a Justice of the Supreme Court), president; J Antonio Araneta (CLU member), vice-president; Rafael Ledesma (CLU member) secretary; JBL Reyes (CLU member, later a Justice and acting Chief Justice of the Supreme Court); Vicente Lava (CPP general secretary from 1942 to 1944), Manuel Crudo (CLU member) and Jose Hilario, members. Six of the DA's candidates for Congress in the 1946 elections won—Jesus Lava in Bulacan, Luis Taruc and Amado Yuzon in Pampanga, Jose Cando and Constancio Padilla in Nueva Ecija and Alejandro Simpauc in Tarlac. They were unjustly unseated by the hostile pro-American government of President Manuel Roxas.

However, contrary to de Quiros' claim, the Lavas were not surprised by the post-war government's hostility to the victory of DA candidates for Congress in the 1946 elections.

Immediately after the victory of Roxas and the Liberal Party in 1946, Comrade Vy (Vicente Lava), who had been removed from the post of general secretary of the CPP in September 1944, wrote a memorandum arguing that with the Liberal Party's electoral victory, the CPP must prepare for fascist repression. He was branded as an alarmist by the ruling Political Bureau. Some Politburo members, among them Gerry Lacuesta, insisted on turning the CPP into a mass political movement, with all its cadres exposed and working openly. It was Comrade Vy who proposed to mobilize the armed forces of the CPP in preparation for the fascist onslaught. He was overruled by the Politburo majority.

It may be added that even as early as 1945, Comrade Vy had already warned his non-communist brother Francisco A Lava Sr, father of Francisco Jr and a founder of the CLU and Free Philippines, that the Americans were after the Lava brothers. A foiled attempt to assassinate Francisco Sr confirmed the warning and convinced him that he was being targeted because of his anti-imperialist activities. Francisco Sr concentrated on nationalist and civil libertarian activities; he was,

among other things, a key, albeit discreet, figure in the formation and development of the DA and, much later, of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism or MAN in 1967.

Furthermore, it is not true that American policy then would boil down to 'one imperative which was to crush communism'. US policy with respect to the Philippines was directed primarily against nationalism, and only secondarily against communism. What the United States wanted was to perpetuate colonial economic relations while installing certain dissembling political forms. Since Filipino communists and their mass organizations were at the forefront of the nationalist struggle, the US considered them an enemy that had to be crushed through the deceitful and repressive measures of the local puppet government.

A NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC STRUGGLE
IN THE CONTEXT OF CONCRETE CONDITIONS

ACCORDING to de Quiros, Jose Ma Sison believed that the Lavas were 'subservient to the Soviet model'; that they 'believed in a socialist revolution' as against the Chinese model of 'protracted national democratic revolution' through 'people's war'; that they failed to appreciate the 'specific characteristics of Philippines society'; that they 'followed the Soviet model mechanically'; and that they 'had derailed that movement from its historic path' (pp. 136, 140, 141).

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Had de Quiros taken scholarly pains to look for documents of the CPP during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, or even just to interview the Lavas concerned, he might not have made so grave a mistake of giving currency to such falsities and distortions. He might have fairly reported

that the Lavas were not subservient to the Soviet model; they pursued a national democratic rather than a socialist revolution, in the context of concrete conditions.

Neither the CPP nor the Lavas said or wrote that the CPP was engaged in socialist revolution. In fact, in its strategy and tactics, the CPP's main and immediate objective was to attain genuine national sovereignty and democracy. It is difficult to imagine where and how Sison and de

Quiros got their information about the alleged socialist revolution strategy. If they had taken pains to read the pamphlet entitled 'The Real Issue', they would have known that socialist revolution was farthest from the CPP's strategy then.

From 1942 to 1944, the CPP under the leadership of Vicente Lava received advice from cadres of the Chinese Communist Party in the Philippines, especially in regard to guerilla warfare in the countryside against the Japanese forces. At the 1948 Chinese Party Conference, the CPP under the leadership of Jose Lava declared that the objective of the revolution was national liberation, the elimination of feudalism, and the establishment of a new democracy; precisely upon the suggestion of Jesus Lava, the revolutionary armed forces was given the name Hukbong Magpagpalaya ng Bayan or HMB. After the 1951 elections, the CPP under the leadership of Jesus Lava took the view of protracted struggle, and adopted the policy of establishing a pro-Filipino government on the basis of the national united front. In the early sixties the Party under the leadership of Jesus Lava declared that the national democratic revolution in the Philippines necessarily implied revolutionary armed struggle. His Political Transmission (PT) 15 exposed the revisionist idea that the national bourgeoisie should necessarily lead the revolution. His PT 16 concentrated on exposing imperialism in the Philippines. His PT 19 emphasized united front and joint action, mass organizations and party leadership, in the context of the particularities of the Philippine situation.

From 1967 to 1969, the CPP (with Francisco Jr as general secretary) was engaged in intensive and extensive discussions for the purpose of making a more complete analysis of the Philippine situation. The discussions reviewed party history; assessed its mistakes and accomplishments; and formulated correct strategy and tactics. On the basis of the paper submitted by Francisco Jr, the following positions were adopted, among others: The Filipino revolution is national and democratic, within the context of the particularities and peculiar features of the Filipino revolutionary struggle. The revolution is the struggle of the Filipino oppressed masses against imperialism, feudalism and imperialist-oriented capitalism. It is a protracted struggle of the masses. The strategic tasks and objectives of the new democratic revolution cannot

be fully performed and decisively achieved without armed as well as parliamentary struggle, the one strengthening and enhancing the other. The CPP must do everything to develop the revolutionary armed forces in the most revolutionary Marxist-Leninist way. The strategic slogan was: 'People's Revolution for National Liberation and Democracy'. On the international level, the CPP must take an independent revolutionary position, and at the same time struggle for proletarian internationalism and the integration of world revolutionary forces despite differences within the socialist camp. This position, embodied in Francisco Jr's *Theses on the National Situation*, is arguable. But surely it does not reflect subservience to any model, whether Soviet or Maoist, a failure to identify concrete conditions and particularities in the Philippines situation, or a departure from the historic revolutionary path.

It is therefore quite incomprehensible how Sison and de Quiros came to the false conclusion that the CPP was going to pursue 'large scale confrontations with government troops in the countryside and St.

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Petersburg-type uprisings by workers in the cities' (p. 141). CPP documents have generally pointed out the protracted nature of the armed struggle. It is true that at some point the Party thought of expanding its forces when it believed the situation was ripening, and could, if the objective and subjective situation warranted, consider the possibility of actually seizing political power. But after so many years of protracted armed struggle, the

Party realized that the geographical conditions of the country, the relation of forces in and around the Philippines, etc. militated against the Maoist protracted war theory—i.e., building bases in the countryside and encircling the cities. Sison's experience of the last 30 years has proven the correctness of this assessment.

It was for this reason that the Party, under the leadership of Jesus Lava, decided to concentrate its efforts on building an underground network, while its legal cadres would engage in parliamentary struggle.

If and when armed confrontation became necessary and feasible, this would have to take the character of insurrectionary uprising.

NO BANDITRY

DE QUIROS alleges in his book that by the 1960s the CPP's armed force 'had gone much into banditry or rented its services to politicians' (p. 108). This is another gross falsehood being peddled as fact.

Evidently, de Quiros is unaware of the fact that the HMB, the Party's revolutionary army, had ceased to exist as such by the late fifties, when the Party decided to concentrate on the building of an underground network of revolutionary cells in the cities, towns and barrios, and on the recruitment of legal cadres that could participate openly in the arena of open mass action and parliamentary struggle. Armed units still doing party work were no longer the HMB. Armed groups that degenerated into banditry and/or partisan political tools met Party condemnation.

The HMB certainly did not degenerate into banditry or politician's tools in the 1960s. While admittedly the Party had become severely weakened, it strove to formulate strategies and tactics appropriate to the concrete conditions then obtaining in the Philippines, with the immediate end in view of breaking out of isolation.

'LAVA DYNASTY', A FICTION

ACCORDING to de Quiros, 'three Lava brothers—Vicente Lava, Jose Lava and Jesus Lava—would hold on to the chairmanship of the party in succession', and that 'Sison railed against the Lavas for 'harboring dynastic tendencies' (pp. 108, 142). This assertion is belied by evidence.

As head of the 'second front', Vicente Lava became its general secretary in 1942 after the capture of Comrade Crisanto Evangelista by the Japanese. But in September 1944 he was replaced by the 'triumvirate' or 'troika' of Geruncio Lacuesta, Pedro Castro and Primitivo Arrogante, following the decision of the Central Committee (CC) that the 'retreat for defense' policy was a mistake. Vicente Lava remained an active and highly respected member of the party Political Bureau until he died of illness in 1947 at the age of 52.

In 1946, the 'triumvirate' was dissolved, and George Frieneza was elected general secretary. Jose Lava was among the minority of the

Politburo (PB) who opposed appeasement, parliamentarism and bourgeois legalism. The 1948 CC meeting suspended or expelled those found guilty of appeasement, and elected Jose Lava as general secretary. An enlarged meeting of the Politburo (December 1949 to January 1950) created a 'Politbureau-Out' ('PB-Out') based in the countryside, composed of Jesus Lava, Castro Alejandrino, Luis Taruc and Mateo del Castillo. 'PB-Out' was also designated as the second front that would take over in case anything happened to immobilize the 'PB-In' that was based in the city and environs.

In October 1950, Jose Lava was arrested along with the other members of the 'PB-In'. He and other party leaders were kept in prison for 20 years even if the offense he was charged with (rebellion) carried the penalty of only 10 years.

A meeting of the CC was called to analyze the situation, discuss policies, and elect the new PB and general secretary. Jesus Lava was elected general secretary in March 1951.

Evidently, the claim that there was a Lava dynasty within the CPP is absolute fiction. During the time of the Lavas the Party was not a comfortable place in which cadres sought to obtain personal perks and privileges. It was not enjoyable privilege but a sacrifice for the Lavas to have risked their lives, as well as those of their families and friends, in the militant struggle against feudalism, fascism and imperialism, through an outlawed, suppressed and persecuted Party. Before the outbreak of World War II, during the Japanese imperialist invasion and occupation, and after American imperialist re-occupation of the Philippines, Vicente, Jose and Jesus did not 'hold on' to any position in the party for the sake of enjoyment. They simply discharged their duties and responsibilities as communists and nationalists as best as they could in the face of numerous perils and adversities. The party secretary-generalship was not something to 'hold on to'.

COMPETENCE, NOT SUBSERVIENCE

IN a quite careless, subjective and partisan way, de Quiros claims that 'when Sison finally joined them, the Lavas thought they had made a catch, a bright young man with no small following among students, who

would help them recover their former luster', and that while 'they were right about his abilities, they were wrong about his subservience' (p. 108).

That claim is highly imaginative, wildly fantastic and outrightly malicious. Presuming to know the motivations, emotions, visions and hopes of revolutionaries like the Lavas, it reveals a lack of understanding of what revolutions are all about. Revolutions demand integrity, conviction and sacrifice, not a search for luster and glory. Revolutionary leaders do not desire the quality of subservience in their recruits. Anyone who demands subservience from everyone else is not and cannot be a true revolutionary.

Revolutions demand integrity, conviction and sacrifice, not a search for luster and glory.

The Lavas were not interested at all in recovering former luster, much less through Sison whom they considered competent but not subservient. Indeed, the Lava brothers were never known for egotistical self-projection. They never much cared for image-building, leaving it to others to appreciate what they did or did not do. Francisco Jr himself (their nephew) maintained a very low profile for a very long time, his main concern then being to help in fulfilling the task of breaking out of the Party's isolation from the masses, and re-building the Party itself, which goal was achieved soon enough in the 60s.

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS OF PARTY CADRES AND ALLIES

DE QUIROS further claims that 'with Sison's successes on the youth front, the old Party found a new lease in life', and that 'those gains were important because they opened up fresh opportunities on the labor and peasant fronts' and 'allowed the Left its first inroads to organizing students and intellectuals' (p. 111). Again, another gross distortion of truth.

The Party broke out of isolation through the establishment of various mass organizations, and the KM (Kabataang Makabayan), albeit the most militant, was only one of them. Ignacio Lacsina, who was recruited in 1960 or 1961, strongly politicized the National Association of Trade Unions (NATU) and was a key figure in the organization of the Lapiang Manggagawa (LM). Domingo Castro (Alambre), Felicisimo Macapagal and Felixberto Olalia were instrumental in establishing the MASAKA among the peasantry. Francisco Nemenzo Jr, who also

strongly attracted the youth to the movement, organized students and intellectuals into the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) in the Philippines. Antonio Santos organized the unemployed and other civic elements and groups into the Aksiun. Merlin Magallona was the key cadre for the Nationalist Lawyer's League.

The KM itself was not organized by Sison alone, though he was admittedly the strongest cadre for the youth. Francisco Jr was also involved in the organization. More importantly, Francisco A Lava Sr, dean of graduate studies at Lyceum University, was the 'grand old man' of KM. With his militant nationalist, anti-imperialist and democratic stand, expressed through his analyses of postwar and current national and international developments, he attracted and befriended many students, intellectuals and professors at Lyceum, among them Carlos (Charlie) del Rosario, Arthur Garcia, Perry Palma and Sison, who were known to be very close to him. Indeed, Francisco Sr and Francisco Jr were among the planners, organizers and participants of the very first national anti-imperialist demonstration of October 2, 1964 at Malacañang, together with Joma, and Rudy del Rosario of NATU (who was hit on the head with the rifle butt of a palace guard) and others. When Sison split the Party, the KM was split, and many student and peasant youth joined in organizing the party's Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP).

Accordingly, the CPP broke out of isolation through the collective efforts of party cadres and allies, not due to the successes of Sison alone among the students and intellectuals.

SISON NO THREAT TO THE LAVAS

ACCORDING to de Quiros, Sison 'spelled trouble for a family that had gotten used to having its way with the left', such that he 'had to be taught revolutionary manners' (p. 140). The book further claims that 'Sison, upon request of the PKP (CPP) leadership, wrote a review of the communist movement' wherein he 'criticized the leadership'; that 'the Lavas naturally protested this 'distortion' of history'; that 'Francisco Lava Jr, a nephew of Jesus Lava, who aspired to the leadership of the PKP (CPP), promised to produce a draft that would correct it', but 'he never did'; that 'instead of refuting his (Sison's) charges, the younger Lava

sowed intrigues against him (Sison)'; and that 'the final straw came when Francisco Jr crowned himself secretary-general of the PKP' (p. 141-142). Again, these are blatant falsehoods.

It is normal that revolutionary members of a family would attract some other family members by direct approach or by sheer exposure and example. Francisco Jr was politicized at an early age during the late 30s. Francisco Sr and colleagues held many meetings at the family house, and Francisco Jr would hear intense discussions on patriotism, anti-fascism, united front, boycott of Japanese goods, etc. During the war, Francisco Jr learned about the greed and cruelty of the Japanese soldiers and their local puppets, and about the resistance, especially of the CPP and the Huks. After the war, Francisco Jr saw that elements of the CPP, Huks, CLO and PKM were at the forefront of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. He attended mammoth rallies, helped organize student groups and conducted teach-ins without any direct persuasion from his father and uncles. He found himself in touch with such ardent cadres as Celia Mariano (Pomeroy), George Frieneza, Pacifico Puti and Bayani Alcala who introduced him to the basics of revolutionary philosophy, history, political economy, strategy and tactics, etc. He experienced the ruthless and violent reprisals inflicted by imperialist and feudal puppets on the militant masses and their leaders, from the onset of the Roxas regime and during the early phases of the Cold War and McCarthyism.

In early 1950 Francisco Jr was recruited into the party by Fred Bautista, without the knowledge of Jose and Jesus Lava (Vicente Lava died in 1947). He was ready to go to the countryside, but this was frustrated when the PB-In was arrested in late 1950, cutting contact between him and the Party. However, he helped Francisco Sr carry the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal line. A united front of sorts was forged with Senator Claro M Recto. Francisco Jr also helped his father form a secret *Kapatiran* or Brotherhood mainly composed of radicalized middle class elements, a united front strategy group for the development of correct political lines, propaganda and organizational activities.

Party connection was re-established in 1958 when Jesus Lava came to the city. Despite the government's intense efforts to track down Jesus Lava (who had a very large price on his head), numerous party cadres

were reactivated, new cadres became involved, party groups and organs were established, mass organizations were formed, and mass actions were undertaken. The nationalist, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal line was intensified and projected. Francisco Jr often acted as *de facto* coordinator and chairman by consensus.

Jesus Lava established a second front and appointed Francisco Jr in charge of its organization department (OD). Before his capture in May 1964, and believing that a measure of decentralization was necessary, Jesus Lava appointed Pedro Taruc (who was in the first front) as secretary for the peasantry and Lacsina as secretary for labor. Francisco Jr took the initiative in developing a Greater Manila Area (GMA) centralized working group which included Lacsina, Francisco Nemenzo Jr, Sison, Edong Mallari and Macapagal. While Pedro Taruc was supposed to have taken over as general secretary, the GMA group could not establish a working relationship with him, as he was effectively a 'captive' of the Sumulong group that had deteriorated into non-revolutionary and even criminal activities. Francisco Jr acted as chairman at the meetings of the GMA working group, and for some time he functioned as *de facto* OD and coordinator for its activities.

In 1965, a cadre suggested to Francisco Jr that a chairman be formally chosen, and that it should not be him. Sison was suggested. Francisco Jr replied that such matters should not be discussed individually—an act tantamount to factionalism; and that he would accept by the decision of the GMA working group majority. Nothing else happened in that direction.

In the meantime, Francisco Jr had been emphasizing the need for a national united front consistent with his pertinent activities and experiences as far back as the 50s, as well as with the special emphasis Jesus Lava (as general secretary) had placed on a national front. Sison was quite emphatic about it as well. At first, the task was assigned to Lacsina, but nothing came of it, perhaps because he was very busy in labor struggles. It was next assigned to Sison, but he limited his tasks to only a united front of students and the youth. Francisco Jr then volunteered to do it. Thus, Horacio Lava (another nationalist but non-communist Lava brother), Francisco Sr, Renato Constantino and Fran-

cisco Jr initiated talks with Senator Lorenzo Tañada who was persuaded to head the national united front.

In December 1966 the GMA party working group was engaged in preparing not only for the united front's organization and inauguration but also for an enlarged conference to rebuild the Party. After a meeting one evening, Nemenzo warned Francisco Jr that Sison was planning a *coup d'etat* against him. Francisco Jr referred the matter to the older party cadres who simply said that Sison be carefully watched.

It is significant that this did not prevent the Lavas (Francisco Sr and Jr) from convincing Senator Tañada that Sison was the best person for the position of secretary-general of the broad-based united front organization—the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism or MAN. Thus, there is no basis for Sison's mischievous rhetorical question: 'Is it my fault that I get voted into office?' (p. 140).

Sison began taking what were perceived to be erroneous positions on the rebuilding of the Party. He proposed the creation of a worker's group, a peasant's group and a youth group that would meet separately, and the Party would be an 'alliance' of such groups. The overwhelming majority, seeking to avoid factionalism, wanted a meeting of all CC cadres, or a meeting of composite groups. Sison also proposed that 'prestigious' cadres be chosen as chairmen of party organs, regardless of competence, so that the Party may use them. Again, the overwhelming majority could not accept such a proposal, viewing it as inimical to correct principles of Party organization.

In January 1967, Sison and Nemenzo proposed that Francisco Jr should come out in the open in MAN by standing as delegate-at-large (the people's representatives were to be sectoral, regional and at-large). Francisco Jr argued against it: he was not interested at all being under the spotlight of public life and the 'luster' that goes with it; his interest was merely that Party work be done, and done correctly and effectively, for the sake of the national democratic movement. But when Nemenzo argued that membership of Party cadres in mass organizations was considered a 'must' worldwide, Francisco Jr reluctantly agreed. Francisco Jr took sixth or seventh place as delegate-at-large, in a field of about 30, after Tañada, Constantino, Sison, Lacsina, Nemenzo and Alejandro

Lichauco, probably due to Party solidarity as well as his active militancy on the floor.

After the formal establishment and inauguration of MAN, the old cadres of the GMA working group pressed for the creation of the provisional PB that would pave the way for the CC conference. A meeting was called for March 26, 1967, where the provisional politbureau was formally established. Francisco Jr, Mallari, Nemenzo and Sison were chosen general-secretary, OD (Organization Department), ED (Education Department) and YD (Youth Department), respectively, without opposition. Sison in particular accepted the results without any objection whatsoever.

On April 2, 1967, a Sunday, at Nemenzo's house, Sison advised Francisco Jr and Nemenzo that he was considering joining the Socialist Party of Lacsina (which he himself had earlier branded as 'rightist'). Sison was reminded that the matter should first be discussed and decided by the Party, and a meeting of the provisional PB was set for a Wednesday, April 5, but Sison did not show up. The meeting was reset to a Saturday, April 8. At that meeting, Sison was criticized for joining the Socialist Party without party consultation or decision. Instead of confronting the issue, Sison proposed that the provisional PB be dissolved; that a Party commission be created to evaluate the competence of all cadres; and that all cadres should write down all their activities and accomplishments since 1962. These proposals were overwhelmingly rejected, after Sison failed to give any valid reason for the dissolution of the provisional PB. It was also pointed out that he had taken part in and accepted the results of the March 26, 1967 proceedings; that his proposal for cadres to write down their party work from 1962 onward was dangerous and risky under the still outlawed condition of the party; and that the cut-off date 1962 (the year that he was recruited) was arbitrary and unfair.

At a subsequent meeting (where Sison was absent), Nemenzo finally reported that on a Monday, April 3, Sison and his youth group held a meeting where he launched vicious attacks on the leadership of Vicente, Jose and Jesus Lava. Sison no longer attended any meetings of the provisional PB. He challenged the party and was suspended. When he found out about the suspension, he commented that splits

were fashionable all over the world. He was then expelled. That is how Sison left the Party.

It bears emphasis that since June 1964 (after Jesus Lava was captured in May), Francisco Jr was completely on his own, discussing and planning with such serious intellectuals as Sison, Nemenzo, Mallari and others. (Jose Lava was still in Fort Bonifacio; he was released in 1970. Jesus Lava was in Camp Crame; he was released in 1974.) But in 1965 and most of 1966 Francisco Jr knew nothing about Sison's real attitude and plans concerning the Lavas. Assuming, *arguendo*, that Sison already had a 'review' of the movement in 1965 or 1966 that was critical of the Lavas, Francisco Jr was not given a copy of it. As late as April 7, 1967, Francisco Jr was not aware that Sison had already launched a vicious and unfounded attack on Vicente, Jose and Jesus Lava on April 3, 1967. Even after Nemenzo told the provisional PB about such attacks, Francisco Jr was not given a copy of any corresponding document emanating from Sison. Thus, Francisco Jr could not have promised to produce a draft to correct Sison's 'distortions of history'. Nevertheless, Francisco Jr 'produced' his *Theses on the National Situation* that was refined and approved in a painstaking collective process which entailed intensive and extensive discussion within the CPP from late 1967 to 1969. One of the features of that document was a statement of the perceived weaknesses and errors of the Party from its establishment up to the 60s regardless of whether a Lava or non-Lava was general-secretary at any given time.

In the summer of 1968, Francisco Jr was elected to the regular PB by the CC. Shortly after, the regular PB almost unanimously elected him general-secretary. From about November 1969 to July 1970, Francisco Jr took the initiative in intensifying discussions on current party weaknesses and mistakes in theory and practice, party education and organization, party finance, relations with fraternal parties, etc that permeated all party organs. Francisco Jr submitted corresponding critical

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Francisco Jr's criticisms of past and current party weaknesses and mistakes were based on facts, and were intended to improve party work instead of destroy the Party. But Francisco Jr was removed as general-secretary on October 3, 1970, and very soon thereafter expelled. This underlines the reality that there was no 'dynasty', no reliance on 'family', as far as he was concerned. Lacking a revolutionary party, not wishing to return to the CPP, not wanting to complicate an already complicated situation of competing leftist organizations, having no means of livelihood except his profession, and faced with zero income, Francisco Lava Jr went into private practice in 1973.

Evidently, the Lavas, who were not used to having their way with the Left, were not worried about Sison's successes, and Francisco Jr did not campaign to discredit Sison or to continue a non-existent Lava dynasty in the CPP. On the other hand, it is Sison's black propaganda against the Lavas that has been maliciously and unjustly projected by the book of de Quiros.

NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST DISSENTERS

ON top of everything, the book of de Quiros gives currency to Sison's intrigues that Carlos del Rosario disappeared 'by the hand of... Sison's political foes on the left'; that, because of the rivalry, Sison complained that 'someone tried to knife him—once while he was walking home and another time while he was riding a jeepney'; and that when Carlos del Rosario disappeared in 1971 and later Sison's elder brother Francisco also disappeared, 'Sison believed the Lavas were behind the murders' (p. 108, 143). To Francisco Jr, such charges are the most unkind, baseless, illogical, conjectural and vicious of all.

In 1971, Francisco Jr was no longer the Party general secretary (he was removed *in absentia* on October 3, 1970). The new CPP leadership was in the hands of Macapagal aided by political theorists and analysts Nemenzo and Magallona, et al. No one remotely 'loyal' to Francisco Jr

was in the leadership, as indeed he had never bothered to cultivate such 'loyalty' when he was general secretary.

Francisco Jr's long-standing attitudes and convictions made him stand firmly against the killing or 'liquidation' of comrades and ex-comrades who had different and opposing ideas and positions. Ideas cannot be 'killed', and resorting to violence against dissenters is a counterproductive manifestation of gross incompetence, as well as vindictive malevolence. True revolutionaries would do well to win the masses to their side, as against dissenters and oppositionists, through arguments based on truth and reason rather than through physical violence and fear.

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Francisco Jr's record confirms his position against incompetent, malicious and counterproductive violence. For instance, when Felixberto (Bert) Olalia went over to Sison's side after the split, members of the nine-man regular PB of the PKP suggested and argued for his 'liquidation', but then general-secretary Francisco Jr vehemently and successfully argued against it. (He was later informed that Jose Lava as general-secretary had also prevented the 'liquidation' of Bert Olalia on an earlier occasion.) In another instance, some members of the Secretariat proposed to Francisco Jr the 'liquidation' of a prominent cousin who went with Sison in the split, and again Francisco Jr strongly reiterated that comrades or ex-comrades should never be 'liquidated' on account of their dissent. In still another instance, a member of the Secretariat proposed that a regular PB member be 'liquidated' for being pro-Maoist and pro-Sison, and again Francisco Jr vehemently rejected the idea.

Additionally, Francisco Jr had absolutely nothing against Charlie del Rosario, who was in fact one of the close political friends of Francisco Sr. After Sison had split from the CPP, the position of YD was in fact offered to Charlie del Rosario in light of the latter's experience and competence. Moreover, Francisco Jr did not know that Sison had a brother named Francisco. In any event, there would have been no revo-

lutionary reason whatsoever to inflict violence on this brother. As for the alleged unsuccessful 'knifing' of Sison on two occasions, Francisco Jr had nothing to do with it. There was no revolutionary reason to physically harm Sison, nor could there be any gain from a clumsy attempt to harm him through petty 'knifing'.

In the light of all the foregoing, it should be quite obvious that Francisco Lava Jr did not and could not have ordered or authorized the use of violence against Carlos del Rosario, Sison and Sison's brother, Francisco.

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Finally, according to de Quiros, 'the most dangerous enemy... was the one who ardently believed in the rightness of his cause' (p. 143). The most sinister and insidious enemy, however, could be the one who compulsively and habitually utters falsehoods in order to give a veneer of rightness to a cause. Even so, sooner or later, it is truth that would and should prevail.

THE NEED FOR PRINCIPLED ADHERENCE
TO TRUTH AND ACCURACY

THE protracted movement for national liberation and democracy, whether under the leadership of the Lavas or of Sison, has generated plusses and minuses for Filipino society. For any specific leadership, it remains to be objectively and fully assessed to which side the balance tilts. In the process, the factors of truth and accuracy are found on the positive side, while the factors of falsity and distortion are on the negative side.

Even from the standpoint of a desirable and theoretically achievable unity of all progressive elements in Filipino society, which is necessary to the complete success of the national democratic movement, a principled adherence to truth and accuracy, including a principled rectification of falsehoods, is an essential pre-condition.