

# **On the NPA's Alleged Mass Recruitment of Child Guerillas**

**Military Commission, Central Committee  
Communist Party of the Philippines**

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The revolutionary movement considers children and youth as social sectors that should be aroused, organized and mobilized for the revolution. Millions of children and youth, sons and daughters of workers, peasants and other exploited and oppressed people, are condemned by the decadent ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system to extreme poverty, slavery and a dark future.

They are further made to suffer by the current rabidly reactionary, puppet, anti-democratic and anti-masses US-Estrada regime. Under the policies of imperialist "globalization" and all-out denationalization, deregulation and liberalization — they and their fathers and mothers are brutally abandoned to the voracious appetite for superprofits of foreign monopoly capitalists and extortion by the local big comprador bourgeoisie and landlord classes. They are victimized by the widespread military operations of the AFP-PNP that are marked by forced evacuations, food and population control, indiscriminate bombardment and firing, illegal searches and arrests and other forms of fascist abuse and intimidation.

The revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army in particular, is a young movement.

It is the youth who are at their prime that constitute the vast majority of the revolutionary movement's cadres, members, officials and fighters. This is as it should be. It has been repeatedly proven by the country's history that it is the youth who are most open and interested in revolutionary change and advance. There is likewise a need for the youth's enthusiasm and their resolute faith in the future for perseverance in the struggle despite a myriad of suffering and trials. One significant victory of the Second Great Rectification Movement has been the revitalization of the youth's participation in the revolutionary movement and the noticeable growth in the number of new blood among the movement's full-time forces.

Along with this, the Party, the NPA and the movement as a whole are conscious of the particular status and needs of minors, especially children.

The movement is made up of various types of organizations as well as military and non-military forces and participates in different types of activities and struggles both armed and unarmed, legal and illegal in the political, economic, cultural, organizational, health, military and other fields. Thus, even as they are tirelessly mobilized to participate in the revolution, minors are purposely removed from combat and military activities. Children are organized under the aegis of the revolutionary women's movement to provide special attention to their health and educational needs that have been grossly neglected by the reactionary ruling classes.

The revolutionary movement consciously abides by international laws and rules of war that prohibit the recruitment of children below 15 years of age for combat work. More, in 1988, the Political Bureau of the Party's Central Committee issued a clear decision stipulating that the NPA may only recruit persons who are 18 years old and older for its combat units.

This issue, along with other issues related to the respect for human rights were included in the first phase of the peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) that has been approved and signed by both parties but which the Estrada regime has refused to implement.

While the Marcoses and the worst violators of human rights in the Philippines are being exculpated and allowed to return to power, the Estrada regime and its minions in the AFP and PNP are fabricating issues about supposed NPA violations of human rights through the alleged mass recruitment of child guerillas. Up to now, they have had nothing to show except for isolated cases in a few places, most of whom are victims of illegal arrest and have been falsely accused of being NPA members. The AFP and PNP have long had the practice of falsely accusing as NPA and planting firearms as "evidence" even on members of unarmed and nonmilitary mass organizations, including elements of the legal democratic movement. The Party and the NPA do not expect the reactionary and fascist US-Estrada regime to cease, but rather, to step up such vilification and intrigues while intensifying its militarist Oplan Makabayan that aims to end the armed conflict in the country with an iron fist.

Data prove that the NPA on the whole abides by international laws and rules on war that include the prohibition of the recruitment of children for combat. The Communist Party and the NPA have their own clear internal rules to implement this. On this occasion, the Party's Military Commission and the NPA National Operational Command once again remind all commands and units of the NPA in different areas of the country to strictly ensure the implementation of the Party's policies and the NPA's rules on this matter.

Expose and resist the unbridled oppression and exploitation of the youth by US imperialism and the ruling comprador bourgeoisie and landlord classes!

Further arouse the youth for the revolution!