Talibang Anakpawis

Supplement "Ipagtanggol ang inaapi; labanan ang umaapi" 1 October 2026

Pax Silica: Trump Colonialism

Build the Anti-Imperialist RESBAK!

With the United States on the offensive to reverse the rise of China, Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his business allies are scrambling to promote a U.S. economic security zone in New Clark City with bold promises of jobs growth, new industries and technological progress.

The initial development of Pax Silica means a land grab spanning 1,620 hectares of farms and Ayta ancestral sites in Tarlac, over which U.S. President Donald Trump demanded extra-territorial rights in April this year. The Marcos-backed initiative will displace 20,000 farmers and indigenous Ayta, on top of the economic and environmental costs due to diversion and exploitation of water, energy and mineral resources for the U.S. confrontation with China.

In 2022, Marcos rode to power on a promise of improving living standards by attracting more foreign investments. Instead, the Marcos strategy of prostrating before the imperialists led to national disaster. Why should anyone believe Marcos Jr? He says his development schemes will benefit the whole nation, but his government busts unions and keeps wages low to please foreign investors like DHL and Kawasaki. Under Marcos, the Shell, Caltex and Total oil giants are allowed to dictate fuel prices, political cronies mercilessly plunder public funds, and the growing U.S. military presence threatens to drag the country into a conflict over Taiwan and the South China Sea.

While Pax Silica investments might result in some jobs and a level of industrialization, is it worth the cost of being chained to the decaying United States empire? The national development model imposed on us by the United States and institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank has not lifted the country from misery.

Foreign Investment but Under Whose Terms?

The Philippines remains underdeveloped, and the economy needs to grow. To achieve this requires massive outlay for production of steel, energy, fertilizer and machinery necessary to build the backbone of a modern economy. The cancellation of the imperialist debt and reversing the deregulation of the oil and power-generation industries can be our first steps towards national industrialization. But in an impoverished country like the Philippines, foreign investment is necessary.

Chanting the mantra of "complete self-reliance" in response to the depredations of international capital, some leftists respond by opposing foreign investment altogether. However, socialists who totally reject foreign investment will fail to win the hearts and minds of the people, whose desire for jobs and development is correct and progressive. The burning question is how the country can secure the necessary investment on terms that will benefit the Filipino masses, not just to deliver super-profits to a handful of imperialist countries or kickbacks for the oligarchs.

Contrary to the expectations cultivated by the liberals, the trade union officialdom and the Social Democrat politicos of AKBAYAN, playing by the rules of the status quo is not going to get the investment terms needed to improve the lives of the people. We cannot rely on American lackeys like Marcos to curb the abuses by U.S. or Japanese investors or on the political dynasties in Congress to do an honest investigation into the deals and shenanigans surrounding Trump's colonial Pax Silica. Any political association with the bourgeois liberals and the hangers-on who refuse to break the alliance with the United States will only discredit the left in the eyes of the masses who are fed up with the betrayal and corruption under every U.S.-loyal regime to date.

To win better terms and protect the national interest requires an anti-imperialist movement of the proletarian, peasant and plebeian masses. This broad movement of the masses must defend the country and demand better terms from international capital. Foreign investors may respond by withdrawing investment from the country. But we should not live like neocolonial slaves. Instead, the working masses can appeal to the working class and peasant masses of China. It is in China's interests to help develop the Philippines and free it from imperialism. A sovereign Philippines will be a huge blow against the U.S. strategy of using the archipelago to threaten China's cities and shipping routes.

How to Build the Movement

The National Democrats of BAYAN are correct to build a campaign to oppose Trump's Pax Silica and to defend national sovereignty and the oppressed masses. The rest of the Philippine left should help make this movement a success! ***So how can we build the strongest opposition possible? What is to be done?***

Firstly, we solidarize with the National Democrat activists who argue that the fight against imperialism needs socialist perspective. In order to extract the best terms from the U.S. empire,

Spartacist Group Pilipinas, Committee of Correspondents Overseas, International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)
iclfi.org/phl • sgpil@proton.me • SpartacistPH • SpartacistGroupPilipinas

an anti-imperialist strategy demands that militants think outside the box of bourgeois respectability. This means bringing the masses of the people to their feet. But this can't be done with a strategy based on building an alliance with the reformist "business sector." While it rings true that this "business sector" can appeal to the masses and claim to represent the interest of the entire nation, the Philippine bourgeoisie exists in its entirety as a middleman between the masses and the imperialists, and serves as the overseers and labor contractors of the neocolonial social order. As an exploiting class the Philippine bourgeoisie will ultimately seek to restrain, divert and crush the independent mobilization of the masses.

To build unity between the proletarians who demand better jobs and the indigenous Ayta and peasant communities who make a living from the land, the anti-imperialist movement must, first and foremost, defend the collective interests of the common *tao*. This means that the movement has to fight, tooth and nail, to ensure the leading conglomerates come under the control of the working masses in order to harness the resources for our development needs rather than the greater enrichment of the *ultra-bilyonaryos* like Ramon Ang of San Miguel Corp., the Ayalas, the Sy-blings, etc. and their foreign partners. The moment the anti-imperialist struggle starts to infringe on the wealth and security of the "progressive"-minded business sector, even the "anti-Yankee nationalist"-posturing bourgeoisie in fear and loathing of the masses, will flee into the arms of their protector Uncle Sam.

We need Powerful Allies! Where do we find them?

The Chinese working masses are a natural and obvious ally in this struggle. China is the main target of the imperialist military-industrial build up in the Philippines. The Chinese masses have every interest in defending their country and the state founded by the revolution, which led to unprecedented leaps in economic development.

It is the material interest of the Filipino workers, the toiling majority of the archipelago, to form an anti-imperialist alliance with the Chinese workers, peasants and PLA soldiers. Through alliance with China, the Philippines might benefit from mutually beneficial terms of trade and investment and the surplus of Chinese industrial products, such as affordable machinery and solar technology, in order for the country to make rapid strides towards development. But the country's neocolonial subordination to the United States prevents that.

To begin with, we must recognize the obstacles to building this fighting alliance. An obstacle is the Communist Party of China. Their policy of building a socialist civilization exclusive to China and appealing to international law won't deter the U.S. imperialists. The imperialists exploit the anti-China resentment generated by the Beijing Stalinist regime's policy in the South China Sea, where Chinese authorities harass fisher folk from neighboring countries who have shared these fishing grounds and safe harbors for countless generations. China's support for hated authoritarian regimes like that of former President Rodrigo Duterte does not make Beijing any more popular among the working people. Only by a revolutionary change in direction can China unite and bring the peoples of Southeast Asia over to its side in the anti-imperialist fight.

In the Philippines, we can open the road to such an anti-imperialist alliance with the Chinese workers and peasants, but the Philippine left has to stop capitulating to the U.S. war drive by misrepresenting China as an imperialist power. China does not oppress any country outside its borders while the United States tramples the Philippines under its boots. China's massive development is the product of specific and unique conditions. Its high growth and coexistence with capitalism were possible only because the pressures on the regime were at an ebb. As the U.S. pursues its aggressive drive against China, growth is stagnating and internal tensions are on the rise.

For the Philippine left to change their line and tie the defense of China to our national liberation struggle would be the best possible refutation of the CPC's nationalist perspective and the strongest incentive to win the assistance and solidarity of the Chinese masses and PLA soldiers, who can wield enormous pressure and force the CPC government to take action. ***For Anti-Imperialist Alliance of the Workers and Peasants of the Philippines and China!***

Turn to the Masses for Resbak!

The National Democrat rank-and-file have displayed physical courage in facing down the Marcos government in the campaign against Pax Silica. Importantly, we must call the attention of the left that the opposition to Pax Silica has almost exclusively been concentrated among students, intellectuals and NGO activists. Meanwhile, there is a creeping trend among workers, peasants and urban poor to look to right-wing populist Dutertista politicians and socially conservative forces, like the Roman Catholic Church and Iglesia Ni Cristo, for their political salvation.

To turn back the reactionary tide, the left must take our posts in the living movement of the toiling masses. Unless anti-imperialist and communist-minded militants are able to base themselves in this movement, we will fail at combating the political influence and manipulation by pro-Washington labor politicos like Sonny Matula of FFW, right-wing Gen Z charlatans, and a salad of liberals masquerading as friends of the working people.

There needs to be a political fight to cleanse our own organizations of the people who alienate the masses, such as eco-liberal elements who think reversing climate change should come at the expense of jobs and development for the working people, or those leaders who flatter and conciliate the bourgeois politicians like Leni Robredo, BAM Aquino and Sandro Marcos, in early preparation for the 2028 national elections. We must eject these pro-liberal, bourgeois-friendly elements from the left if we want our ***resbak*** to succeed in making the imperialists and the oligarchs pay.

At present, the left is totally divided. To sort out this mess and win the support of the masses is imperative. Recently, AKBAYAN Social Democrats, BAYAN National Democrats and Partido Lakas ng Masa "socialists" competed for public attention on the first anniversary of the September 21 anti-corruption upsurge with three separate marches. This is not the only political campaign in which the various blocs in the left have literally "marched separately," never to strike at the enemy together.

In the eyes of the broad masses, the fragmentation of the Philippine left makes the movement appear unserious and incapable of fightback. Disunity among leftist tendencies, sometimes leading to physical altercations, sets a bad example. Sectarianism on the left is an absolute obstacle to advancing the anti-imperialist movement of the masses, not to mention the confusion of many left tendencies who have differences within their own organizations on whether or not to even support the anti-imperialist struggle, much less how to take the fight forward. Sooner or later, the hammer of state repression will come down, hard! ***Unless we learn to work together against the common enemy, we will be crushed separately.***

What is needed is a political struggle within the ranks to set the movement on a different course. The *atin-atin* and *kanya-kanya* mentality and practice of political censorship within the left must come to an end. A positive step for the left would be a united front for fightback against Pax Silica, not just as unity in action, but as a test of competing programs through comradely discussion and debate. ***Simulan natin!*** ■