



PRESS RELEASE

Department of National Defense – Republic of the Philippines

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Statement of the Secretary of National Defense: CPP/NPA is the real peace spoiler!

THE CPP-NPA-NDF is once again playing its old game of accusing the government of the very crimes that its members themselves are committing.

Its spokesman, Mr. Fidel Agcaoili, has called me "peace spoiler." He has likewise justified their continued extortion thru intimidation as revolutionary taxation.

The leaders and members of the CPP/NPA are the real and original peace spoilers.

First, their so-called "armed struggle" to replace our democratic way of life with a communist form of government since the 1960s has consistently blocked the government's efforts to develop the countryside. *Gising na ang buong bayan sa katotohanan na naghihirap ang ating mga kababayan dahil sa kasakiman at kagustuhang maghari-harian ng CPP-NPA sa mga kanayunan.*

Secondly, Fidel Agcaoili of the NDFP claims that the money they extorted from our people (what they call revolutionary tax) are being spent on the poor. *Saan napupunta ang salaping sapilitan nilang kinukuha sa taong bayan? Ano ang maipapakita nilang katunayan na nakinabang ang bayan lalo na ang ating mga mahirap sa pangangikil nila? Ang maliwanag, ang kanilang "revolutionary tax" na sapilitang kinukuha sa mga tao ay ginagamit nila upang tustusan ang marangyang pamumuhay ng iilan.*

Alam naman po nating lahat na ang gobyerno lamang ng Pilipinas ang puwedeng mangolekta ng buwis ayon sa ating saligang batas. All others who do it, especially those using the threat of violence, as what the NPA does, are plain and simple extortionists. *Wala na pong ibang tawag diyen. Hinahamon ko ang mga NPA na mangolekta nang walang kasamang pananakot kung makaka-kolekta sila.*

Third, the DND budget is under strict scrutiny by the COA and Congress. How could it line the pockets of top officials as their propaganda claims when it is barely enough for salaries, pensions, health care and maintenance and operations of the Department, including its five bureaus? *Kaya nga po marami pa ring kakulangan sa kagamitan ang ating AFP at may pagkakautang o arrears pa tayong kailangang bayaran sa mga retiradong sundalo.* In fact, the defense budget only accounts for less than one (1) percent of GDP.

Agcaoili and the rest of the CPP-NPA-NDF's noisemakers are laying the blame on the government for the failure of the peace talks because the extent of their extortion and its adverse effects on businesses, our people's lives, and development especially in the countryside have now become very obvious to everyone.

If the CPP/NPA cannot win their so-called war of liberation at the height of their self-proclaimed successes in the 80s, how much more now that they are marginalized, with many of their fighters surrendering, and their influenced barangays are dwindling?

They have now stepped up their rhetoric because their ploy to continue talking while fighting (euphemism for continued extortion) was finally terminated by the President.

I am not the "peace spoiler" that they accuse me of. Rather, I am a defender of the Filipino people. *Tungkulin ko pong ipagtanggol ang sambayanan sa mga katulad ng CPP/NPA na gustong magpairal ng sistemang maka-komunista.* That is why I am against any "peace process" that clearly is stacked against the government and favorable only to the CPP-NPA-NDF. Consider the terms of the CASER (Comprehensive Agreement for Social and Economic Reforms) that are completely unacceptable even to a casual observer. Whatever the government panel does, it loses. If it accepts CASER, the NDF will claim authorship and ownership. If the government rejects it or part of it, it will be branded as anti-peace.

Malinaw na malinaw po. The CPP-NPA-NDF is the real peace spoiler. For how can we attain peace when the NPA continuously attacks civilians who are only trying hard to earn a living, when contractors in far flung areas implementing government projects are subject to extortion or destruction of their properties, or military/police trying to help in the countryside being ambushed and treacherously attacked?

Mga kababayan, maliwanag kung sino ang nasa panig ng katotohanan. Huwag po tayong magpalinlang sa mga gustong magpapansin dahil wala na silang kabuluhan sa buhay ng Sambayanang Pilipino. #####