

Official view and analysis of the Revolutionary Workers Party-Mindanao or RPMM on the current problem of the party-list Anak Mindanao or AMIN

Friday 19 October 2007, by [RPM-M](#) (Date first published: October 2007).

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Brief Background

After the debates within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in the early nineties, those who have rejected the paradigm of the Maoist protracted peoples' war and the Stalinist concept of organizational principles of the CPP in the current revolutionary project in the Philippines, have evolved a new paradigm. This paradigm shows that revolutionary mass movement and its intensification is an effective and appropriate way in building Socialism in the country like the Philippines today. It also defines that this kind of revolutionary struggle led by the proletariats does not only mean the armed struggle but is inclusive of other appropriate forms as it principally based its various types of struggles on the objective development of the neo-liberal led capitalism in the country as well as to the subjective capacity and potentiality of the working class to lead.

The Revolutionary Workers' Party-Mindanao or the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Mindanao (RPMM) has been engaged in launching the revolutionary mass movement which is democratic and anti-imperialist using both the armed and unarmed, legal and underground, domestic and international means of struggle in fulfilling its socialist tasks in the current context of capitalist offensive in the world and in the country.

The RPMM has maximized the different development works, peace talks and peace building works, social movements and the electoral and parliamentary forms of struggles in effecting concrete reforms and social transformation in different areas in Mindanao.

The RPMM continues to provide political leadership to the Revolutionary Peoples' Army or the RPA which has its political works within and among the working class of the three peoples in Mindanao namely; the Indigenous Peoples or the Lumads, the Moro and the majority nationality of the Christians in Mindanao.

The RPMM has been one of the leading revolutionary Parties in engaging into electoral struggles where it maximizes the democratic spaces opened up by bourgeois politics to lead the working and

marginalized classes to struggle and win concrete reforms within the framework of the state of the ruling class. It has been doing its political works within and without the bourgeois machineries while simultaneously it provides political leadership in development works and social movements engages the government of the Republic of the Philippines in peace talks while maintaining its ideological guidance with the Revolutionary Peoples' Army and fulfills its proletarian tasks in building world socialism.

It was on this context that in the last quarter of 1997, the RPMM led the launching of the first national electoral consultation on the party-list of all revolutionary and progressive groups in the country except the CPP. Such consultation gave rise to the formation of the first party-list groups by the different civil society as well as progressive and revolutionary groups in the country which engaged in 1998 elections.

The RPMM then was also engaged in the unification of all territorial bodies for the formation of a National Party of the workers in the Philippines or the RPMP, the first Congress was held in Mindanao.

It was also during the last part of 1997 when the party-list AMIN or Anak Mindanao was formed thru the launching of its first Congress. Among its elected officials and nominees were from the revolutionary groups like the Moro National Liberation Front or MNLF, Moro Islamic Liberation Front or MILF and from the RPMM. But it has also officers and members from the different civil society and marginalized groups from the three peoples of Mindanao.

The concept has evolved through the years while it has gained seat in the House of Representatives until today. In fact it has won a seat in Congress for the third term now.

AMIN-Ten Years After

The RPMM has engaged in electoral and parliamentary struggle in its different fields and in different levels. It believes that to effect electoral reforms in the country one has to engage in supporting and influencing national candidates like in the Senate. Concrete reforms in peace and development works are easily facilitated if you have supporters and allies in the local government units (from village to the province). And if you have an electoral party and machinery for the marginalized sectors of the society then their interests can be specially given attention by the progressive Party-List in the bourgeois politics and concrete reforms can be gained.

The RPMM's engagement in electoral and parliamentary struggles has been part of its paradigm shift where it has continued to learn and relearn new fields and new methods. Working within and without the formal bourgeois state machineries where the ground rules are laid down and parameters are fixed is not only very dangerous but it can be destructive to a revolutionary group which has to adjust its methods and set new rules to guide those who are directly and indirectly engaged in the bourgeois politics.

We have very limited experiences and lessons to learn from and in our very short period of engagement with the bourgeois politics, in the past it had influenced more our ranks rather than we had made our influence in the bourgeois field.

Doing political leadership in the electoral and parliamentary struggles in the initial stages of the paradigm shift of the RPMM had been tasked to a select group of young cadres who had learned the ropes while actually doing them. This group had focused their political works in the newly introduced party-list system while the territorial cadres of the RPMM had focused on the local

elections and the Executive Committee of the leadership body focused on the national elections. All these efforts had been unified in a regular Party Electoral Conference. It was on one of these conferences where it was decided that the current member of the Philippine Congress from the Anak Mindanao was elected. At that time he was a member of the Party Electoral Committee. In the electoral engagements during this period we were able to place hundreds of comrades and allies in the local elected post and also in the Congress. We had relatively succeeded in combining the development and electoral works with that of social movements and in building and strengthening of the organ of political power in both the urban and rural areas. The role of the RPA and its command has been that of defensive actions mainly for the protection and hastening of consolidation works of the RPMM.

Through the years (it's the third term of Anak Mindanao in Congress now) the concept of our electoral and parliamentary works has developed. It has broadened itself among the three peoples of Mindanao. It has been observed however that comrades tend to give more emphasis on the form rather than the substance of the composition of (3 people) party-list.

The political leadership of the Party in this particular line of work has been manifested and implemented by the comrades working within the Party-List. Democratic pluralism where democratic consultations and discussions within and among the three peoples have been strictly observed and encouraged. The Political Council of the Party-List which is a constitutional body tries to unite different tendencies and consensus of all the constituencies of the Party-List. It has been observed that the Political Council was given the task of maintaining the unity of the Party while the National Council of AMIN from 2004 to February 2007 had not been active. But the former could not be the latter in terms of tasks and role as policy maker. And therefore the Party-List was weak during this period. Weaknesses of comrades and allies have been manifested during this term. Collective methods of implementation of political tasks have been replaced by individualism. Systems and methods of checks and balances have become rare and have actually disappeared. Democratic pluralism has been misconstrued as anarchism. Opportunism has been manifested by the nominee which has been fully discovered in the later part of 2006. The principle of accountability and transparency has been set aside. Nobody has been consulted or informed within the Party-List and even in the RPMM about the status and methods of distribution of the Countrywide Development Fund (CDF) except the Party-List representative. The Project Committee of the Party-List which is to be the body in charge of such task was just informed and not consulted with regards to how much and where were the project were allocated. The Party leadership learned later on that a very lopsided distribution of such fund was done by the Party-List representative favoring his province with more than forty percent of the total amount received in four years. Worst is that initial findings of the Party investigation is that most of the projects were not implemented.

Some leading cadres of RPMM have been alarmed and tried to find out what really happened but the person concerned has repeatedly refused and evaded to sit down giving all kinds of alibis. Later on the big discrepancy of the funds allocation has been revealed. Plans to correct such weaknesses and opportunistic tendencies in finance have been initiated within the party-List and in its own organizational dynamism. The RPMM has never intervened directly with the legal dynamism of the Party-List since its split with the CPP the RPMM has respected the independent and autonomous function of the legal machineries and the Party cadres who work within the organization or institution have to work within the structure and organizational dynamism of these machineries. The RPMM has rejected that the legal machineries are transmission belts of the Party not only in the party-List but in all the legal machineries it finds itself in.

In the last Congress of Anak Mindanao all the cadres and allies who have been involved in the electoral works participated from its preparation to its actual launching and the preparations for the May 2007 elections. Everybody has been fixing their eyes on winning in these elections while

conscious to seriously institute corrections on the past errors and weaknesses. In fact there is already a resolution on transparency and accountability in the first council meeting after the Fourth Congress just before the elections of May 2007.

And as we have expected we won a seat for another term in Congress (17 Party-List won out of 95 which participated) 2007 to 2010.

Almost everybody did not expect however that the nominee with all the former AMIN officers and members, anti-AMIN and anti-RPMM elements have united to unleash their attacks on the Congress which have been attentive on the correction of the past weaknesses but ultimately their concerted attacks have been against the RPMM. At first it was incoherent as to what issues they imputed against RPMM but surely their attacks in the legitimacy of the Fourth Congress of the Party-List is very weak. They could not just attack the works which they have been part from its planning up to its actual launching and even gave the legitimacy of the nominees. And the timing of the attack was so malicious because they did it after the proclamation of the Party-List as winner.

In September 7, 2007 Circular issued allegedly by the Party-List President who has been inactive for all his expired term. One could see more their issue against RPMM is its presence which they termed as infiltration to the Party-List. How can one infiltrate the machineries that it has created? They even used Maoist and Stalinist to describe the RPMM. It should be noted that those who were involved in writing the Circular had been anti-Party or we even call them liquidationists. There were once members of RPMM but who have been expelled because of mainly financial opportunism and careerism.

It is very ironic that what these liquidationists are accusing the RPMMS strong intervention to the Party-List is actually the weakness that many comrades have seen as weakness of the Party because of its weak political leadership within the party-List.

The RPMM's Problems in its Political Works within the Party-List

The process of uniting all the members and officers of the RPMM in the new ideological framework has been met with difficulties especially in translating it into political actions. Doing political works within the framework of bourgeois machineries and its own playing field made doubly the difficulties of the RPMM cadres as well as allies. What has happened is that political option had been made on a case to case basis because the strategic direction of weakening the bourgeois state from within seems so difficult and almost impossible task to fulfill within the current subjective capacity of the RPMM and its machineries and the intensifying nature of bourgeois political offensives. There has been painful realization from among the RPMM cadres that the collectives within the Party-List has been seriously weakened and almost did not function. In such context strong influence from bourgeois politics and lifestyle has its field day with our comrades assigned in such task. The perks and the privileges have gone into the head of our leading person in the Party-List. In effect he has been acting as if he owns the Party-List and lately you can not identify the difference between him and other traditional politicians.

The minimal presence of RPMM in the main urban/city center has contributed to its weak grasp of the mass movements and the rule of the Party-List in these works. Such situation led to the difficulties in linking the struggles on different issues in the main city and Mindanao which in effect made the nominee of the Party-List to decide and act on his own.

At present, these opportunists and Party liquidationists have banded themselves and set out a well funded campaign against the RPMM threatening even to expose the personalities and cadres of the

Party within and without the party-List. They spare not even those RPMM cadres working in the different fields like development works, social movements, the RPA and even those in the peace process. Their accusation of the RPMM as Maoist and Stalinist is paving the way of their traitorous way of giving away RPMM to the reactionary state. It is an application of the state's anti-terror law or the Human Security Act of these liquidationists against the RPMM and its cadres.

In fact, it is a matter of time now that they are going to convince their handlers in the reactionary state to use the term terrorists on the cadres and personalities of the RPMM.

The RPMM leadership believes that this is the only remaining option that these opportunists and liquidationists will use to seize control and monopolize the multi millions of pesos of development projects in the RPMM areas and the Party-List multi million fund including the perks and privileges provided by the bourgeois machinery for their own selfish interests.

The RPMM's Urgent Task

The RPMM's leadership is calling all its cadres and members to consolidate themselves in the light of the development and organized attacks initiated by the opportunists and liquidationists hiding behind the so called movement shouting to save the Party while in deed they are in an all out mode of destroying the prestige of the Party and its leadership in every opportunity they find themselves in.

The Party leadership calls for the summing up of the Party's experience in the electoral/parliamentary struggle so as to avoid similar mistakes and move forward with its aim to institute electoral reforms within the bourgeois political system.

The Party leadership works for the balance integration of the different fields of revolutionary engagement in its intensification of the revolutionary mass movements and consolidates the concrete gains and victories it has reached and corrects the mistakes and weaknesses it has encountered. The Party shall work doubly on balancing of new ideological framework and paradigm shift to that of its development of its machineries and political works and the continuous organizational development.

The Party leadership is opening up itself for criticism and self-criticism and at the same time calls for those who have been confused of these fast developments of the problems created by a few opportunists and liquidationists to approach any Party branch in their area or field of works and request for an in-depth and thorough discussions of the situation confronted by the Party.

The Party leadership calls for those who have created these problems to immediately stop their counter-revolutionary works.

The Party leadership calls for international solidarity for all the sections of the International to give us Ideological guidance in resolving these contradictions and reach a situation favorable to the promotion and development of the interest of the proletariat and the toiling masses in Mindanao, the Philippines and the world.

Executive Committee of the

RPMM Central Committee

October 2007