

DEVELOPMENT DIVERGENCE

Reformism in the Philippine NGO Community

DEVELOPMENT WORK are words to watch in the dictionary of those who strive for meaningful changes in Philippine society.

Since the February 1986 uprising that marked the end of dictatorship and the ensuing fall of "socialist" states, words such as these have taken on different shades of meaning that bear consequences for the Filipino people's movement for economic and political emancipation. NGOese, like "sustainable", "people empowerment" and other developmental jargon culled from the so-called third sector, the PO-NGO community, have been liberally adopted as their own by governments after Marcos in their unceasing doublespeak to deceive and perpetuate neo-colonial rule.

The defining line of development work is a debate even among the progressive sector of the local PO-NGO community. For some, the people can be empowered and their interests advanced by working with the ruling system and instituting reforms from within. For others, to pin hopes on reforms without overhauling the ruling system responsible for the people's miseries is a myopic frame that courts duplicity. Development work, to be meaningful, must be solidly anchored and linked to the needs and dynamics of the people's movement.

In this article, PEASANT UPDATE PHILIPPINES examines these diverging tracks toward development that currently grips the Philippine NGO community

The Philippine NGO Movement in Retrospect

Philippine Non-Government Organizations or NGOs were formed in the 50s when poverty and underdevelopment stalking Third World nations became a major concern the world sought to decisively address, a distinct entity from other self-organized civic clubs and social welfare groups of the middle classes working for marginalized sectors.

They evolved in a time when the "development of poor nations" were deemed imperative by global power brokers of capitalism to meet the growing challenge of liberation movements sweeping various parts of the world. Maintaining colonies, with their increasingly burdensome financial, social and political costs, ended with the war and emergency relief/development aid were dangled by industrialized countries and global funding facilities on poor and underdeveloped nations to foster a development path complementing with the interest for liberalized markets and economies fixated to resource-based exploitation.

The Philippines was a beneficiary and had a fine sample of the North's newfound benevolence in 1946 when the United States asked government to enforce

parity rights and the Military Bases agreement before granting war relief aid and agreeing to Philippine independence. In later years, aid in whatever form, became a system which allowed the world's have-nots to partake of crumbs generously extended by developed countries to placate social unrest and foster the world capitalist purview of development. To paraphrase a prominent Filipino journalist, aid was an effective

history, NGOs closely linked with the people's movement opted for a self-defined orientation radically different from the framework set for NGOs in the 50s and 60s. They took on a more radical approach to social change, viewing underdevelopment as a result of structural imbalances and inequity. Moreover, these groups actively participated in the people's struggle for social transformation, working directly with

years of the Aquino administration. Government, business and donor organizations also began to set up their own NGOs, cashing in on the popularity of being labelled as such to devise an acceptable mechanism that will act as tools to advance their reactionary development framework among the genuine NGOs and POs and railroad the people's movement along reformist lines of struggle.

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Development work by early NGOs in the Philippines thus had no purpose of changing structures that bred the phenomena of poverty and underdevelopment in a country of rich resources and a people capable of meeting this challenge. They extended relief and facilitated welfare activities for the poor and needy, functioning along the lines of the North's philanthropy. Some even served as branches of Northern relief agencies for missions of mercy and aid extended to the Third World. These organizations likewise assisted government in reaching the grassroots to implement various community development projects. Efforts to organize communities also began in the fifties during the Magsaysay administration's war against leftist guerillas. NGOs worked along with government in initiatives to set up cooperatives that addressed varied concerns as agriculture, health, education and other areas of development. But it was evident that these initiatives had no intention of decisively addressing the challenge of Philippine underdevelopment and was more a part of government's efforts to undermine the people's protest movement and thwart the growing insurgency.

It was in the seventies and eighties, at the height of the people's anti-dictatorship struggle, that a different breed of development workers sprouted and the term "NGO" gained prominence. In this turbulent period of Philippine

marginalized sectors and advocating policy changes around social equity concerns, taking the critical stance on important development issues. Under these new breed of NGOs, development work took on the character of a political movement.

The intensity of the people's movement led the other mainstream NGOs, including those from the conservative church hierarchy and reactionary business groups, to blend in with the people's struggle. These groups aligned and coalesced with NGOs directly linked with the people's movement and assumed the progressive posture in a bid to evade being identified with the ruling system being championed by the Marcos government. The dictatorship's extreme isolation eventually facilitated the United States' policy shift from one of full and unequivocal support for their strongman in Asia to engagement in Low-Intensity Conflict (LIC) to simultaneously stem the surging people's movement and institute mechanisms to preserve US economic and political interests in a post-Marcos scenario. Reactionary mainstream NGOs that mingled within the people's movement were more than willing to accommodate US' designs.

After Marcos' downfall as a result of the February 1986 people's uprising and Corazon Aquino's ascendance in the seat of political power, NGOs proliferated further due to several factors: the unprecedented increase in financial support from industrialized nations for development activities and the opening of "democratic space" during the early

Context of the Development Divergence

The euphoria of the Marcos downfall did not precipitate into a change of the ruling system. For while the fascist state retreated in the face of the popular uprising, the Aquino government quickly set in to consolidate the ruling class' hold on political and economic power and quash any attempts to advance the people's bid for revolutionary governance. For the latter task, Aquino adeptly utilized a two-pronged approach to stifle the people's movement: by means of deception targeting the middle class and outright aggression against basic sectors.

The "democratic space" Aquino opened only allowed the de-clamping of institutions like media, non-crony businesses and church groups and the reinstatement into the political mainstream of throngs of anti-Marcos reactionaries. This "democratic space" was a calculated compromise of the ruling class to fizzle popular dissent from exploding into a full-scale revolution. It was thus not wide enough to accommodate the people's movement.

The ruling elite's recognition of the influence, role and limitations of the NGOs in transforming the social fabric was inevitably used to prop up the Aquino regime's democratic pretensions, stamp a measure of acceptance and respectability for the newly-installed reactionary government and dupe the general population on its true character.

The concept of development work attuned with prevailing reactionary interests was again foisted vigorously among the ranks of the Philippine NGO community.

The 1987 Constitution which gave the go-signal for people to organize themselves and Aquino's policy agenda specifically calling for greater involvement of the people in the decision making, planning and implementation of programs through community organizations and NGOs were among the compromises dangled by the government to prop its pro-people facade. When Congress passed a new Local Government Code that aimed to consolidate the local elite in local government units, it also allotted at least one fourth of all seats in local development bodies to NGOs to give them the opportunity to be represented in governance at the provincial, town and city levels, and to articulate the NGO position on current development issues before local government units.

NGOs organized by government, business or donor organizations are among those who will contest these coveted seats. At present there are more than 20,000 NGOs registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Of these, only 2,000 are groups that devote their activities to social development on a full-

time basis. This number can be further scaled down to count those NGOs with genuine development projects working with and alongside the people in various communities.

polices and, after a hypocritical attempt to silence the guns of war in the countryside by a ceasefire call and peace talks with revolutionary forces, waged a Total War policy that ravaged the rural landscape and continued to suppress the people's democratic rights.

This liberal democratic facade with the iron-fist-behind track is being maximized to the hilt by the present government of West Point-bred and psy-war expert General Fidel Ramos. His conscientious handling of the popular pulse and adept use of the mass media has made Ramos an effective LIC operative. Like Aquino, Ramos has made high-profile peace overtures with revolutionary forces and even came up with a program to dismantle private armies while relentlessly carrying on the Total War Policy and incorporating dreaded CAFGUs in the active service of *hacendados* (big plantation owners) and agricorporations. Ramos even surpassed his predecessor in subservience to IMF-World Bank economic policies, packaging these in his much-ballyhooed Philippines 2000 industrialization scheme that is proving to be a formula for tightening the monopolistic grip of landlords, compradors and multinational corporations over the local economy.

The Philippine experience with US-

resulted in the re-emergence of capitalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as well as rightist errors undertaken by some reformist elements in the people's movement was also maximized to engender growing disenchantment and cynicism among progressive sectors on the directions of the popular struggle.

Funding institutions likewise became active in dictating a development paradigm for NGOs to follow. Using their clout as conduit of resources, they began to discourage NGO involvement in political activities and pushed for socio-economic and environmental projects that followed a dictum of self-help and sustainability for local communities. NGO projects and programs had to assume a pluralist or non-political character to win the nod of funding agency (FA) approval. It became such that some NGOs had to re-orient their mission and vision to conform to FA demands or else face the consequence of folding up as an institution. Some NGOs eventually doubted the sincerity of their partners in offering solidarity for the people's movement especially when they gleaned that the bulk of some FA's resources come from their country's funds allocated for official development aid, thus began research on the role of these FAs in promoting their countries' foreign policy agenda.

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Aquino also placed cronies and other members of the ruling class in key government positions, continued and magnified IMF-dictated economic

sponsored LIC has made maintaining open dictatorial rule passe and propping "liberal" governments the current state of the art in maintaining an inequitous status quo and keeping the middle class at bay.

The "democratic space" rendered some NGOs confused on how to deal with government. The ideological offensive of the United States against socialism that

The pluralist concept of democracy and theories on the role of civil society also began to crystallize to further subvert the self-defined concept of development work adapted by NGOs.

Civil society, a concept based on the premise that society consists of three distinct sectors namely government, business and civil society or voluntary

associations, groups and movements freely formed by citizens not for profit but to advance group interests or the common good, "mediating between private citizens on the one hand and state and corporate interests on the other" (1), has been utilized to disregard the prevailing dynamics of class conflict in society. Suppositions such as "civil society should be supreme in governance of society" (2) and "the state should be accountable to civil society" (3) was emphasized to twist the relationship between government and the third sector and to draw another assumption that "NGOs, voluntary associations and citizens initiatives play an important role in ensuring the accountability of the state to civil society" (4).

As a result, some NGOs began to perceive of their role in social transformation as a major player alongside government and the business sector in the development arena. With these as base in theory, some NGOs put stock on the assumption that "societies that are democratic and prosperous and governments that are accountable to civil society can be achieved by consolidating and expanding the scope, functioning, accountability and effectiveness of organizations representing and supporting

and rendered some NGOs disoriented on their accountability to the oppressed and exploited masses as they began to preoccupy themselves with this new perception. Actions undertaken by some NGOs along this line eventually led to some conflicts with the grassroots, giving birth to a problem derisively described by some as "NGOism".

The Malady of NGOism

The confluence of these factors resulted in a malady that has struck the Philippine NGO community — the malady of NGOism. It is defined by sectors from the people's movement as "a state of being engrossed in unholistic developmentalism leading to bureaucratic tendencies in dealing with people NGOs have sworn to serve."

NGOs afflicted with this malady have a concept of development segregated from the people's movement, focused on welfare, productivity and sustainability concerns and unmindful of challenging the base structures responsible for the people's immiserization. Victims of NGOism magnify the NGO position in social transformation. They seek to widen their influence by strengthening their position vis-a-vis the government even if

rather than ~~the funding agency~~ ~~rather than~~ ~~the funding agency~~. Rather than attuning development programs to the actual needs of the people, some NGOs master the art of what programs will click with the FA and how FAs would want such projects to be implemented. A number of NGOs have amassed fortunes from funds generated for a variety of projects and in keeping their good standing with their partners. They become stewards of a development paradigm advanced by FAs and their strict compliance with FA demands give rise to bureaucratic tendencies. Of late, a number of NGOs have even assumed the role of financial intermediaries, acting as link between fund sources and grassroots communities in the implementation of various types of socio-economic-environmental projects, becoming an appendage or another bureaucratic layer for funding facilitation.

~~the socio-economic~~ ~~the need for~~ ~~the socio-economic~~ ~~the need for~~ ~~the socio-economic~~ ~~the need for~~ in the structure. A number of NGOs have engaged in various "small but beautiful" community projects that aim to alleviate poverty and empower the community without attacking the unjust relations prevailing among the basic masses

The Philippine NGO community is stuck with the malady of NGOism -- the state of being engrossed in unholistic developmentalism leading to bureaucratic tendencies in dealing with people NGOs have sworn to serve.

the poor."(5) -

With these notions, confusion on the nature of the state as an instrument of the ruling classes to thwart the development aspirations of the exploited masses arose and became an excuse for not changing the ruling system. These beliefs likewise diverged from basic principles governing the people's movement, particularly on the primary role of the exploited masses in effecting genuine change. The embellishment of the NGO role undermined the people's struggles against the structures that kept them in poverty

it means an overstretching of their capabilities that at times bring them in conflict with their mission and their members. These NGOs work with government, private sector, funding agencies and even such entities as the World Bank, in the belief that they are patching holes left by government neglect and corporate greed or complementing services rendered by the two sectors.

NGOism is manifested in various ways and degrees.

and the ruling elite. These socio-economic projects follow a dictum of self-help and self-reliance divorced from existing political realities. The quest to advance socio-economic work into integrative scopes has come to mean economic stability arising from co-existing with or finding a niche within the system. It has become a venture into reformism and economism that only benefit the NGO and a name few and has not transcended into genuine empowerment for the larger community that advances the people's struggle against forces responsible for the

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country's backwardness and the people's oppression.

Bureaucratism. Some NGOs began to regard people and people's organizations as wards that need to be educated, trained and mobilized to implement their development vision and as forces that will strengthen the NGO movement. The role of the exploited masses as the prime mover for social change was undermined, their development framework and their struggles set aside and their participation in developing alternative structures for genuine empowerment curtailed.

Overemphasis on electoral politics. The fixation with developmentalism and bureaucratism began to take its toll on the NGO service orientation. Rather than developing programs and projects attuned with the people's actual needs and struggles, NGOs began to impose and/or find ways of asserting their own vision and framework for community development. The forays in financially rewarding development ventures spawned anomalies that began to pervade in the NGO movement. Cases of ghost projects and/or programs that cease to reflect or complement with the situation at the grassroots or sometimes even worked against the people's interests became common, widening the gap between the struggling masses and development workers.

Professionalism. Some NGOs began to value efficiency in terms of strict compliance with programs at the expense of flexibility anchored on dynamic and genuine service to the people. They adopted systems familiar with mainstream business corporations that grassroots organizations found hard to comply with and bred the employee mentality on development workers, leading to the loss of their commitment and spirit of volunteerism. It became such that skilled volunteers began to demand for higher pay and other benefits only rich NGOs and

business institutions could offer.

Adoption of corporate practices and standards. Some NGOs began to function more like a corporation rather than a non-profit, non-stock organization. They stick their fingers on a wide variety of development programs more for the sake of financial access and accumulation. The wealth they amass usually serve to support their burgeoning NGO bureaucracy rather than to provide service for genuine communities' development.

Turfing. Some NGOs incurse on the constituency or communities of other POs and NGOs whom they regard or treat as "rivals" in the development "business". Some have even gone to the extent of bribing and corrupting local PO leaders and/or development workers of the people's movement for the purpose of widening their influence and gaining clout in their dealings with government, FAs or the private sector. The thrust for media projection and image-building likewise became a self-serving obsession.

All these manifestations of NGOism strengthened the reformist influence among the ranks of the PO-NGO community and eventually brought some NGOs at loggerheads with the people's movement. The resulting backlash on the penchance for reforms is now the crux of the current division among the ranks of the third sector.

NGO Overtures in Reformism

NGOs' incursion in reformist endeavors gave credence to the democratic postures of a government that perpetuates a system of exploitation and violence in Philippine society.

In the May 1992 synchronized national and local elections, NGOs explored the possibilities of political contestation and opted for active participation. Thinking that people are conscientized enough to effect a victory for NGO-endorsed candidates and

facilitate a replication of the people's outrage over electoral anomalies in 1986, NGOs ventured into the electoral gambit with much fanfare. But the resounding failure of these candidates is a lesson on the vast hold of traditional politicians over the electoral exercise, a hegemony based on their economic dominance and political savvy that NGOs could not match. Not daunted by this, a bloc within the NGO community came up with an electoral strategy called Project 2001 which hopes to strengthen the NGO movement and consolidate its gains to be "in the position to catapult pro-people and pro-development leaders to positions of political power both at the national and local levels by the turn of the century".

The overemphasis on the electoral track merely reinforced the mindset being used by traditional politicians of reliance on personalities rather than on people's collective actions in bringing about genuine change and confined the people's struggle to change the system to the electoral frame. It likewise brought a semblance of legitimacy to the seasonal circus of the ruling elite over who holds the reins of state power.

NGOs also explored high-level cooptation with the ruling classes thru the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (NIPA) project. The NIPA aim to assist government's Department of Environment and Natural Resources and international and local institutions, particularly the Global Environment Facility and its trustee the World Bank, in implementing the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 in ten environmentally endangered areas in the country. It is funded with a whopping \$20 million grant, 70% of which will be channeled to NGOs who are taking part in the program.

Lured by a "common" objective to conserve biodiversity, NGOs acceded to

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take part in this program albeit to "check" government and the World Bank's actions and ensure the achievement of these noble aims despite the intense opposition of indigenous peoples who will be booted out of their ancestral lands in these protected zones. Wittingly or unwittingly, these NGOs have become part of government and World Bank's design to transgress into the ancestral domain of indigenous peoples residing in these protected areas and may well serve as smokescreen to the bioprospecting intents of these institutions.

Participation in government and World Bank's dubious and selective protection of a few areas from environmental destruction have inhibited these NGOs from struggling against the root cause of the environmental crisis. While legitimate in itself, campaigns to save endangered species or ecosystems have failed to mobilize the masses because it has not become part of a comprehensive movement directed against monopoly capitalism and its exploitation of people and resources. Incursions in such programs as the NIPAs have pitted the NGOs involved in this tripartite endeavor against the indigenous people and made them part of the state's discriminative environment conservation scheme that grants protection of a few selected areas and leaves the rest of the country's fragile environment for abuse.

The "Empowerment of Civil Society" Evolutionary against Revolutionary Change

Anchored on the belief that the state is accountable to civil society, some NGOs have put stock on their role as "mediators" and the opening of "democratic space" in the post-Marcos era as a means of empowering the PO-NGO community to facilitate development from below. This "opportunity" can be harnessed so that civil society can be consolidated and strengthened, effect changes by a multiplicity of means provided by the positive aspects of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial system and establish parallel structures of governance that can check state policies that run counter to the people's interests. Some NGOs believe that social transformation can thus be achieved in an evolutionary manner by empowering sufficient numbers of communities until such time when a state

that truly advances the people's interests can be established.

The Myth of a Third Force. The belief that the PO-NGO community is a third force that governs society is an illusion for the state is accountable not to civil society but primarily to the class(es) responsible for its coming into being. Any state is a creation of existing power relations in society. The present Philippine reactionary state is an instrument of those who wield economic and political power — the landed class, big compradors and foreign multinational corporations, formed for the purpose of preserving their rule, utilizing the art of deception and outright aggression to thwart a people's movement advancing an alternative system.

In the past, third forcing used to be the domain of clerico-fascists and church-based reactionaries — unscrupulous critics of government policies and programs but whose workings are reassertions of the prevailing unjust system. They work alongside the poor and marginalized sectors but inhibit the people's liberation by refusing to recognize the dynamics of class struggle and from distorting church doctrines to accommodate the system. They have also challenged traditional politicians by fielding their own candidates, some of which have ascended to various positions of political power. Civil society as the third force which emerged in the LDC regimes after Marcos is a distortion of the NGO role in the people's movement and a characteristic figment of middle class methodologies for social change.

The state that is accountable to the people can only be established by the people themselves thru their own collective efforts in dismantling the social, economic and political structures that allow the ruling elite to maintain their dominant role in society.

Misrepresenting Civil Society

Social transformation rests on the advance of the people's movement which upholds the interests of the exploited and oppressed masses. NGOs are an important part of the people's movement but some have unfortunately tread the heights of arrogance when they arrogate unto themselves the claim of representing civil society. Most of those who propagate this embellishment of the NGO role suffer from an obvious detachment from the people's movement or have fallen prey to

the reactionary state's schemes to sway and pit the middle classes against the people's struggle.

Most of the NGOs who harbor the illusion of their primary role as agents of social change and undermine the people's movement have little or no mass base to speak of and merely dangle their development projects and programs to peoples organizations or networks of other NGOs with genuine links with grassroots communities. These NGOs use networking and coalescing with POs and service-oriented NGOs for their own ends — to obtain information and solicit support for their advocacy and socio-economic programs and thereby project their illusory strength at the grassroots level, blot their initiatives or even claim and plagiarize initiatives already undertaken by other POs and NGOs, encroach on grassroots organizations and meddle in the people's affairs to promote their distorted views and project themselves as leading forces in the people's movement.

These NGOs are averse to militant struggles but are quick on the draw when it comes to media hyping their opposition and criticisms of government policies and programs to project their political affiliation with the people's movement. They are likewise prompt in developing socio-economic projects from initiatives undertaken by the people's movement. These actions have alienated NGOs fixated with the third force mania from the people they claim to represent. Where before, the masses regarded NGOs as their allies, they are now more cautious and discerning of the particular development institutions they deal with.

The "richest" NGO in the Philippines who is also the leading proponent of the third force dementia recently incurred the ire of indigenous peoples fighting the World Bank-funded Casecan Dam project in the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and Nueva Ecija when they meddled in the people's struggle and proposed a dialogue with World Bank representatives. Their detachment from the people was markedly obvious as the people wanted no less than the abolition of the project and this NGO instead made recommendations for an upgrading of the Bank's remuneration package to appease the the people living in the area. This NGO have since been banned by the people from further

intruding on their affairs.

This NGO has likewise been criticized by a leader from the health sector for offering sums of money and corrupting their network's community health workers and volunteers. The NGO made this overture so that the volunteers of this health organization would take part in the NGO's projects in the area. Farmers and fisherfolk in Central Luzon have likewise begun to regard this NGO with distrust and even abhorrence for entering into partnerships with government agencies on projects that work against their interests.

Reasserting the system. NGOs' fixation with non-political developmentalism and their track of capitalizing on the "positive aspects of the system" to make it accountable to the people is a trap that clears a path for collaboration and capitulation.

It diffuses the people's initiative by derailing the focus of their struggle towards the achievement of temporal gains that pose no challenge to the prevailing system. Instead of directing the people's struggle towards effecting basic changes in the present social structure, it becomes confined to a limited frame that maintains and reasserts existing power relations. In the end, the state even utilizes those who fall into the reformist trap to prop their rule, inhibit and even work against the people NGOs have sworn to serve.

Non-political developmentalism is economism and reformism by another name for it assumes that social transformation can be achieved without attacking the structural base of the people's underdevelopment. The people's rich experience with socio-economic struggles have proven that any economic activity or struggle undertaken by the people immediately assumes a political character.

The KMP's own experience in the trivial pursuit of a P5/kilo palay (unhusked rice) support price in 1989 was immediately challenged by the ruling system and necessitated an arduous and militant campaign before Aquino buckled down to the peasantry's demands. Even after giving in, the state still found means to appease the grains cartel and preserve the status quo by buying grains only from NFA-accredited farmers cooperatives, the majority of which are controlled by traders and millers of the grains mafia. More so

in the community level where peasants face the threat of confronting the full strength of the reactionary state machinery in even the slightest economic undertaking.

Some non-political economic endeavors achieve nominal success only because it is fuelled by development aid courtesy of government or a funding agency as in the case of erstwhile NPA commander Bernabè "Ka Dante" Buscayno. Buscayno and his cooperators' success was the result of millions of pesos infused by the Aquino government for the cooperative in order to utilize "Ka Dante"'s stature in projecting its pro-farmer facade. The funding and other support generously provided to make the Buscayno cooperative workable is comparable to a grain of palay in a warehouse of palay grains stocks for Aquino's investment in deception reaped political gains in terms of maintaining a status quo which siphons unimaginable surplus from feudal and semi-feudal exploitation.

The successful struggles of the peasantry to reduce land rent, which sometimes pit them against military and civilian goons employed by the ruling classes threatened by this outright political action translates into vast economic returns for the sector which no NGO/FAs flaunting the "non-political socio-economic development project precondition" can conceive, not even in their wildest dreams.

The Development Mission

The mission of poverty alleviation and development must be recognized as a political mission and NGOs/FAs can only succeed at achieving this only by supporting and taking part in the people's struggle.

The people's movement is not merely a political movement but has always been a comprehensive movement addressing all aspects of development — people's political empowerment, economic welfare, social and cultural development. Divorcing development work from the people's struggles and initiatives effectively prevents the NGO movement from looking for viable alternatives to the prevailing development paradigm espoused by government and big business. Development work extended under this pre-condition wipes

out whatever gains the people achieved thru their relentless political struggles.

The political realities still prevailing in the country demand nothing short of militance and the state-induced options for NGOs to work within the ruling system is a reformist gambit that grants the ruling system opportunities to maneuver, sow confusion and weaken the ranks of the people's movement. The development divergence is a state-induced aberration. NGOs should be wary of falling into.

A democratic government that is accountable to the people can be achieved not by working within the bounds of the ruling system but by liberating the poor from the unjust structures that continue to disempower them. The role of the so-called third sector is to take part in this process of liberation by working to articulate, support and participate in the people's efforts to forward the people's development vision.

1.) Serrano, Isagani, "Civil Society in the Asia-Pacific Region", Civicus, 1994 page 3-2-4.) Tandon, Rajesh, "Civil Society, The State and Roles of NGOs", Institute for Development Research (IDR) Working Paper No. 9, August 1991, page 2-8

5.) Institute for Development Research, "NGO and Grassroots Policy Influence: What is Success?", page 2-3,20

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The KILUSANG MAGBUBUKID NG PILIPINAS (Peasant Movement of the Philippines) or KMP is an independent and democratic organization of landless tenants and farmworkers, peasant women and rural youth in the Philippines. It works for the implementation of a genuine agrarian reform complemented with national industrialization, genuine democratization of Philippine society and for a sovereign nation.