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State agents kill 8 civilians

STATE AGENTS KILLED eight civilians almost in succession this past two weeks. Four of the victims are from Southern Tagalog, two from Panay and two from Compostela Valley. They add to the 14 cases of killings under the Duterte regime's Oplan Kapayapaan.

Southern Tagalog. Two indigenous men were killed by elements of the 80th IB in Sitio Dapis, Puray, Montalban, Rizal, around 10 a.m., March 2. Soldiers conducting operations shot Dumagat Edwin Agnote and his companion at their farm. To cover up the fact that the victims were civilians, the military immediately claimed both were NPA members. This was refuted by the victims' families as well as by local officials.

In this connection, troopers from the 8th IB detained a 75-person team on their way to investigate the incident in Antipolo on March 4. The group was led by Karapatan-Rizal and Karapatan-ST.

Prior to this, two motorcycle-riding men shot Gilbert Bancat, 22, a coconut farmer and peasant leader of South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula in Sitio Long Beach, Barangay San Lorenzo, San Andres, Quezon last February 25. Killed alongside him was another peasant, Angel Carabot, who happened to be sitting close to him. Both were rushed to the hospital but Bancat died on arrival.

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EDITORIAL

Demand that Duterte account for his promises

GRP President Rodrigo Duterte has been in power for more than eight months now. Despite having had enough time, he has yet to make substantial steps to fulfil his promised solutions to the big problems confronting the people and prove his claims of being a Leftist.

He has made no concrete measures to resolve the problems of low wages, widespread unemployment, landlessness, homelessness, skyrocketing prices of commodities and services and so on.

The promises which Duterte continues to dish out just add to the people's hatred of the ruling system. Mass struggles are bound to intensify in the face of continuously worsening various forms of oppression and exploitation against the workers and other oppressed classes.

The workers' anger is seething over Duterte's unfulfilled promise of ending "endo" or contractualization. For instead of stopping it, the Duterte regime has bolstered "endo" through the "win-win solution" being peddled by the Department of Labor and Employment

(DOLE) which reinforces contractualization by setting "standards" for "labor agencies." The workers have long rejected this "solution".

The workers are dismayed that Duterte has shown no support for their demand for wage increases. On the contrary, the Duterte regime's economic policies are no different from the past policies of depressing workers' wages to attract foreign capitalist investors.

The workers are also dismayed that the Duterte regime made no move to unearth the truth behind the massive February 1-2 fire at the HTI factory in the Cavite Export Processing Zone (CEPZ). He has made no steps to address the grievances of workers subjected to intense oppression and exploitation in such labor enclaves as the CEPZ.

The Duterte regime has given no priority to genuine land reform. Duterte has expressed support for distributing public lands, but has been silent on the monopoly of productive agricultural lands by landlords and big foreign-owned capitalist plantations. Landlessness and land grabbing are becoming worse. The promised free irrigation and other agricultural support remain unfulfilled.

Duterte is also completely silent over the violent armed attacks against peasants asserting their right to land. Since declaring Oplan Kapayapaan, at least three peasants have been killed every week by state armed elements. Struggling peasants in Palawan, Compostela Valley, Capiz and Negros have been subjected to armed suppression. Duterte has also stayed mum in the face of exposure of hundreds of oppressed sacadas in Hacienda Luisita.

There have been no change or steps to change the situation of the working masses, the youth, women, students, teachers, ordinary employees and other middle forces.

The fisher folk demand an end to the Fisheries Code. Students demand free education and an end to the K-12. Jeepney drivers and operators demand the scrapping of the "jeepney phase-out" plan. The urban poor demand an end to privatization of housing services. Workers and employees demand the restoration of the national minimum wage. The people demand an end to social spending cuts and demand free health service, education and other necessary public services.

All these demands are being drowned by the dominant neoliberal voice of the foreign big capitalists, big bourgeois compradors and landlord class who are the real bosses of the reactionary Duterte regime.

Even the earlier anti-US declarations of Duterte and condemnation of military interventionism have remained mere words. Not only has Duterte retracted his threat to trash the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (ED-CA), he has also allowed the US military to continue constructing its

facilities and bases within AFP camps to serve as depots of war matériel and launching pad of its operations.





US warships and jetfighters continue to come in and out and make use of the Philippines as a big US military base. Duterte has failed to assert the demilitarization of the South China Sea in the face of increasing military presence of the US and its rivals China and Russia. US imperialism also continue to use the AFP to push its counterinsurgency doctrine and suppress the anti-imperialist forces.

Contrary to his declarations of being a Leftist, Duterte is relentless in trampling on human rights, whether in his so-called war against drugs or in the declared all-out war of the AFP. After the hypocritical suspension of the Oplan Tokhang in the face of widespread condemnation, the police has resumed its operations, even as the 7,000 people killed, mostly from urban poor communities, by police and death squads remain denied of justice.

In the countryside, the AFP is ruthless in its all-out war to suppress the people's democratic struggles and armed resistance. From North Luzon to South Mindanao, the AFP has conducted aerial bombing and shelling, killings, illegal searches, arrests and mauling, forcible evacuation of entire villages, occupation of barangay halls and civilian structures.

In the absence of real change under the Duterte regime, the people must vigorously act to demand fulfilment of his promises. They must demand much needed measures, policies and programs to address the people's welfare. They must push him to engage in peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and forge and sign agreements on basic socio-economic and political issues at the soonest time possible.

As long as Duterte remains untrue to his Leftist and pro-poor declarations, he would himself be

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pushing the people to repudiate his government like the other past reactionary governments which represent the interests of the ruling classes and trample on the interests and welfare of the people.

Workers, peasants and toiling masses, students-youth, women and other democratic sectors must advance and strengthen their democratic, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and antifascist struggles, and echo the clamor for the revolutionary transformation of Philippine society. AB

"State agents..." from page 1

Carabot expired the next day.

Carabot was one of the leaders of the peasant campout which called for lower land rent in Vicente Uy's hacienda in Barangay Camflora in San Andres last February. He was a member of Pinag-isang Lakas ng mga Magsasaka and Anakpawis Partylist.

Compostela Valley. Military agents forcibly entered the home and shot the couple Leonela Tapdasan Pesadilla, 55, and Ramon Dagaas Pesadilla, 59, on March 2 in Barangay Osmena, Compostela Valley. The couple were members of Compostela Farmers Association which have long fought against destructive mining in the

province. They were active in the struggle against Agpet. They likewise donated land to the Lumad school Salugpungan Ta Tanu Iganugon Learning Center in Sitio Spur Dos, Barangay Ngan, Compostela Valley.

Panay. Elements of the 61st IB indiscriminately fired at a group of peasants resting on their farm land in Sitio Matnoy, Barangay Jebaca in Maayon, Capiz on February 24. Cousins Ian and Lorendo Borello were immediately felled by bullets while Andy Borres, Alimar Borres and Perto Cargo managed to escape. Ian Boress' body bore 32 gunshot wounds.

Families of the victims strongly deny the lies peddled by the 61st IB that the two were NPA members. It is not true that they were killed in an "encounter" with a certain "Ka Regan," they say. They only had "de-holen" guns (homemade guns used for hunting birds) with them and these are generally used by peasants who hunt in the area.

The Borres' family and barrio mates fear that military harassment against them will intensify. After the incident, three trucks full of soldiers arrived in the area to conduct military operations.

The military is currently conducting operations in more than 45

barrios in Panay. They simultaneously launch combat and intelligence operations and intimidate the residents. Prior to the killing, elements from another unit of the 61st IB indiscriminately fired their weapons in Brgy. Cabatangan, Lambunao, forcing the residents to evacuate to the barrio center.

Intensified militarization. On February 18, a 10-member team from the 415th Provincial Mobile Group attacked Pamalakaya-ST organizers in Sitio Dalampasigan, Brgy. Guisguis Talon, Sariaya, Quezon. They interrogated residents in the area and warned them against getting involved with Pamalakaya if they did not want to be implicated. The police went house-to-house to threaten the activists whom they accused as NPA members.

Fisher folk from Guisguis Talon and nearby barangays (Guisguis San Roque, Castanas and Talaan Aplaya) are set to be driven away due to the planned construction of a coal-fired power plant in the area. About 15,000 poor fisher folk stand to lose their land and livelihood because of the project. The fisher folk are presently locked in a struggle against the project in defense of their right to fish. AB

#Peacetalksituloy gains ground

Various sectors and organizations launched actions this past week calling for the resumption of the NDFP and GRP peace talks and condemning the AFP's all-out war.

At the same time, they condemned the successive killings of ordinary civilians and peasants, illegal arrests and harassments of activists and numerous legal maneuvers of the Duterte regime to suppress the legal mass movement and NDFP consultants.

On February 25, on the 31st anniversary of the EDSA uprising, rallies were launched in different parts of the country for the immediate

continuation of the talks. Thousands went to the streets carrying the call "Struggle for genuine change and just peace."

In Metro Manila, members of Bayan, together with church people, students and others rallied around the People Power Monument. They then proceeded to Camp Aguinaldo,

carrying signs of "AFP, a bane to the people," and "Military troops, out of the countryside now!"

Simultaneously, around 5,000 urban poor, students and workers marched to the US embassy to call



for the continuation of the peace talks, stop killings of the poor and assert the right to free and mass housing. There have been no fundamental changes in the people's plight due to the continuing US domination and exploitation, the workers and urban poor say.

In Camarines Sur, hundreds marched in the streets to call for the revival of the EDSA spirit and highlight the national-democratic struggle.

In Cebu, hundreds converged in the city's center to call attention to different national issues that need to be taken up in the NDFP-GRP peace talks.

In Bacolod, progressive organizations took action to emphasize the need for the peace talks to tackle people's issues. Among these

is the call to junk the Fisheries Code of 1998 which gave gross advantage to foreign and big commercial fishing operations and the RA 18654 which worsened this situation. A similar protest action was held in Capiz.

In Surigao City, a Lakbayan Caraga was undertaken with 5,000 people to call for the peace talks to continue, to end destructive mining and military operations. Together with Kasalo-Caraga, the rallyists called for the respect of the Lumad's right to self-determination. A broad anti-mining alliance, Caraga Watch, on the other hand, supported DENR Sec. Gina Lopez' cancellation of mining operations in watersheds.

Last February 7, protest-actions were held in 16 cities and town

centers in Mindanao to demonstrate to Duterte the people's support for the peace talks. Church leaders from different denominations announced the participation of 30,000 people.

Prior to this, on February 23, students staged a walk-out in the University of the Philippines to call for free education, defense of human rights and just peace.

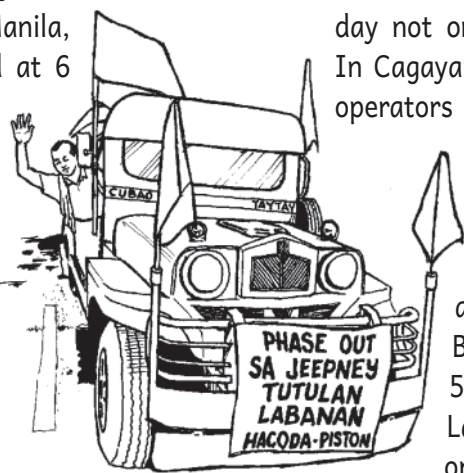
On February 21, national-democratic organizations picketed in front of Ateneo de Manila where Gen. Eduardo Año was scheduled for a visit. They condemned the AFP's all-out war and called for the immediate release of leader-activist Ferdinand Castillo. Castillo was arrested by joint forces of the police and military last February 12 on trumped-up charges. AB

Group launches transport strike

Transport groups successfully launched their planned national strike last February 27. In addition to Metro Manila, thousands of drivers and operators participated in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, in Baguio; Laguna, Bulacan, Cavite and Rizal; Sorsogon, Albay and Camarines Sur in Luzon; Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Cebu and Leyte in the Visayas; Cagayan de Oro City, Bukidnon, General Santos City and the Socksargen region in Mindanao.

In Metro Manila, the strike started at 6 a.m. in the morning in the following protest centers: Monumento in Caloocan City; jeepney terminal in Alabang, Muntinlupa; Airport Road and Quirino Avenue and Roxas Boulevard in Baclaran; Pedro Gil and Agoncillo St in Manila City; Aurora Boulevard in Cubao, Quezon City; and in the intersection of Bonifacio and Shoe Avenue in Marikina; Philcoa; in Novaliches and Taytay, Rizal.

In a report submitted to the Ang Bayan, a large number of jeepneys did not ply their routes on the



day not only in Metro Manila. In Cagayan Valley, drivers and operators joined the strike in Claveria, Aparri and Sanchez Mira in Cagayan, and in Cauayan and Santiago, Isabela. In Baguio City, a rally of 550 was repeated. In Laguna, drivers and operators from the first district participated. In Bicol, there was a 100% paralysis of jeepneys and an 85% paralysis of tricycles and buses.

The strike also hit Iloilo (75%), Capiz (98%) and Aklan. Paralysis in Bacolod and nearby towns reached 99%, and in Dumaguete, a 100% paralysis was achieved in the South Terminal. Around 80% of the jeepneys in Cebu City and Mandaue

City stayed put. In Tacloban City and nearby towns, drivers and operators also joined in the strike as there have been many issues with the regional LTRFB office.

Strikes in Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental and Cagayan de Oro City were also held. In General Santos City, the strike was made to coincide with the Tuna Festival, since the local government is leading efforts to phase-out tricycles. Drivers, operators and sympathizers launched a rally in Davao City.

In Metro Manila, around 2,000 drivers and operators gathered in protest centers, terminals and other strike converging points. Workers and supporters from KMU, Gabriela, Migrante and other sectors participated in the protest centers. From 7-9 a.m., jeepneys in the streets rapidly disappeared. There were areas where drivers of UV Expresses and tricycles joined the strike.

They are not against modernization of the public transportation per se, the drivers say. What they are against is its corporatization, because once the Jeepney Modern-

ization Act is passed, only big companies will be able to operate jeepneys.

"This is not a simple phase-out but a corporate take-over of the jeepney," George San Mateo, PISTON head, says. More than 650,000 drivers and 250,000 small operators will lose their livelihood due to this scheme.

After the drivers and operators showed their numbers, Duterte promised to tackle the issue with the leaders of the strike. At the same time, the LTFRB summoned those who

participated in the strike to a hearing.

Drivers and operators are now preparing for the next collective actions. The group is confident that they will prevail by continuing to study the phase-out scheme and linking this to the basic issues of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, expanding the alliance in additional routes and provinces and reaching out to drivers and operators of other public vehicles that are sure to be affected by the phase-out. **AB**

Peasants' bungkalan succeeds in Batangas

PEASANTS from the Hacienda Roxas in Nasugbu, Batangas successfully reclaimed land that had been usurped by landlord Don Pedro Roxas. They were able to launch a bungkalan (collective farming) to plant food crops. They succeeded after rejecting false leaders who deceived them and diverted them from the struggle for genuine land reform.

Prior to this, a dialogue between peasants from eastern Batangas and the Department of Agrarian Reform was held with more than 200 peasants in attendance.

Offensives continue in Luzon and Mindanao

A total of 20 soldiers of the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) were killed in encounters with the New People's Army in various areas of Southern Mindanao last February 25 and 26. Attritive actions were also staged by NPA units all over the Bicol region and some parts of Southern Tagalog.

According to statement by Rigoberto F. Sanchez, NPA-Southern Mindanao spokesperson, NPA units in the region launched daily tactical offensives and effectively thwarted attack operations by AFP troops in Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Davao City, and North Cotabato.

On February 25, 10:30 a.m., units of the Mt. Apo Subregional Operations Command engaged combined troops of the 39th IB and 73rd IB CAFGU in Sitio Balotakay, Barangay Managa in Bansalan, North Cotabato. Casualties reached 11 enemy elements killed with some other soldiers seriously wounded.

The next day, nine soldiers of the 60th IB were killed in an encounter with Red fighters of Com-Val-North Davao-South Agusan Subregional Operations Command in Sitio Madgao, Barangay Sagayen in Asuncion, Davao del Norte. Two Red fighters were martyred in the fight.



After two days of fighting, the AFP launched massive shelling and bombardment which caused 500 families to flee in the towns of Bansalan and Asuncion.

Units of NPA-Far South Mindanao Region meanwhile conducted four harassment and sniping operations in the municipality of Alabel in Saranggani against operating troops of the 73rd IB. From February 6-11; seven enemy personnel were killed and at least three were wounded. In panic, the AFP shelled and bombarded Barangay Datal.

In Bicol, from February 6 to 11, one ambush, 10 harassment and three sniping operations resulted in five enemy soldiers killed and four wounded in action. These offensives were conducted by units of the Celso Minguez Command in Casiguran, Barcelona, Gubat, and Magallanes in Sorsogon; Jose Rapsing Command in Aroroy, San Jacinto, Cataingan, and Claveria, in Masbate; Edmundo Jacob Command in Baao and Bato, Camarines Sur; and Santos

Benamera Command in Ligao and Daraga, Albay. Targets were the 93rd DRC, 507 PPSC, 2nd IB, and 22nd IB.

In Southern Tagalog, three were killed in a series of sniping operations by the Apolonio Mendoza Command in Barangays Dau and San Francisco in Lopez, Quezon against the 85th IB on February 19 and 21.

Meanwhile, National Democratic Front-Mindanao spokesperson Ka Joaquin Jacinto declared that the NPA is ready to release the six POWs (prisoners of war) presently in its custody as a goodwill measure for the continuation of the peace talks between the NDFP-GRP.

PFC Edwin Salan, Sgt Solaiman Calucop, Pfc Samuel Garay, PO2 Jerome Natividad, Paramilitary Rene Doller and Paramilitary Carl Mark Nucos were arrested by the NPA in checkpoints in set up in various areas of Mindanao from January 29 to February 14. According to Jacinto, "the actual safe release of these abovementioned POWs can only be realized if and when the AFP, the PNP and the Local Government Units (LGUs) give their full and undivided cooperation. Without which, the lives of these POWs and those who will receive them will be put in danger." **AB**

Women in the October Revolution

The celebration of International Working Women's Day marks both the victories working women have gained and the rights they still have to fight for.

History has proven that whatever improved conditions women now enjoy have been gained solely through struggle and remain at risk of recapture while capitalism and the vestiges of feudalism exist to oppress them.

Advancing rights

The victory of the October Revolution of 1917 generated a historical leap in advancing the women's struggle. For the first time in class society, equality among sexes could exist not just in formal legislation. With the overthrow of capitalism in their country, concrete conditions were created to gain real equality between women and men. The whole world was shown the capacity of the proletarian class to advance women's liberation through a socialist revolution.

The new socialist government issued "The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia" which ended centuries of feudalism's patriarchal and religious domination and inequality in all spheres of social life. It removed restrictions based on nationality or religion and established equality for women and the equality of all the nationalities of Russia. This was the first state that prohibited discrimination of homo-

sexuals, although at that time, they were not yet at the level of recognizing same sex marriages.

Just over a month after the revolution, two decrees established civil marriage and allowed for divorce at the request of either partner. These were further strengthened upon the ratification of a complete Code on Marriage, the Family and Guardianship, ratified in October 1918. It added provisions on the rights of children to be supported by their parents till age 18, and the right of spouses to individually own their properties.

The government established social and cultural facilities and communal services for women workers to encourage them to participate in educational and training programs. The new government ensured that women received the same wages as men. Women's rights to equal education and employment were upheld.

The Labor Code of 1918 provided a paid 30-minute nursing break at least every three hours to feed a baby, a fully paid maternity leave of eight weeks, factory rest facilities, free pre- and post-natal care, and cash allowances.

It was administered through a Commission for the Protection of



Mothers and Infants headed by Dr. Vera Lebedeva. It had networks of maternity clinics, consultation offices, feeding stations, nurseries, and mother and infant homes.

For their protection, pregnant women and nursing mothers were banned from night work and overtime. In the 1920s and 1930s women were commonly allowed a few days' release from paid labor in the form of menstrual leave, a benefit never provided by any other state. To lessen working women's domestic burdens, public dining halls where children up to 16 years old could eat for free were established. By 1920, Petrograd, the biggest industrial center, was serving one million people in public cafeterias; and 93 percent of the population in Moscow, the Soviet Union's capital.

Street children were provided homes and prostitutes were integrated into productive social labor.

The role of women

Women workers did not simply wait for the government to "award" them laws and mechanisms. Before, during and after the revolution, women invested muscle and effort for their, class, country and gender.

Before the revolution, women composed one-third of Russia's industrial labor force. They raised demands for equal pay for equal

State pushes on with contractualization

Workers under the Kilusang Mayo Uno stormed the Department of Labor and Employment office last March 7 to protest the drafting of a new order that is sure to defend various contractualization schemes in the country. They held the protest to coincide with the Tripartite Peace Council meeting, which has been instrumental in numerous anti-worker programs and schemes.

The workers are dismayed that after eight months, Duterte has yet to fulfil his promise to end contractualization. He didn't even have any alternative during his much-vaunted dialogue with labor groups last February 27. Instead of directly resolving the issue, he passed on the responsibility to the DOLE, which has been against the workers' demand to end all forms of contractualization from the start.

work, paid maternity leave and childcare facilities at factories. Hundreds of women joined the Bolshevik Party, participating in all aspects of party work, both legal and underground, serving as officers in local party committees, couriers, agitators and writers.

Women in Petrograd launched vigorous mass actions against steep prices of commodities and against the war, and these were featured in *Rabotnitsa* (The Woman Worker). The First All-City Conference of Petrograd Working Women, called by *Rabotnitsa* for October 1917, adjourned early so that the delegates could join the insurrection.

In 1919, the Zhenotdel, the women's section under the Communist Party's Central Committee, was established. Under the leadership of Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand, it coordinated different commissions, mobilized women behind the struggle for socialism in Russia, campaigned against illiteracy among women and launched education about the new laws, organized women peasant cooperatives, and improvement of Muslim women's conditions in Soviet Central Asia.

Women workers in every factory elected their deputies to the Zhenotdel for terms of three to six months. They served as observer-apprentices in different branches of public activity such as the factory, soviet, trade union, schools, hospital or catering center, to monitor the practical implementation of laws and services for women.

The *Kommunistka* (Woman Communist), a magazine for working women, was published in 1920 to discuss issues of women's liberation not only in legislation or theory but in the practical daily life of family and society. It also ad-

ressed issues such as sexuality, marriage and divorce, love, morality, and the liberation of women from the slavery of men. The women workers became its correspondents.

Women volunteered in their numbers to defend the socialist government during the Second World War. Up to 800,000 women joined the Red Army, comprising 3% of the whole force. Most of them were medics and nurses, but there were also pilots, snipers, machine gunners, tank crew and partisans. Almost 200,000 of them received

citations and awards. By 1935, women constituted 42% of the industrial labor force.

But upon the full restoration of capitalism and the break-up of the Soviet Union in August 1991, workers are mired in intense oppression and exploitation, and benefits women have struggled for have been taken away. There is widespread poverty and chronic unemployment. The extensive system of childcare and help for mothers is gone, the street children are back, and prostitution flourishes. AB

This article is the fourth of the series in commemoration of the October Revolution's centennial anniversary.

The First March 8

IN COMMEMORATING March 8, the national democratic movement in the Philippines treads the traditional road of militant struggle of the first International Working Women's Day since 1911.

Before this, women's movements celebrated the occasion separately in different parts of the world. On August 1910, a hundred socialist women from 17 countries who were delegates to the International Women's Conference in Denmark agreed to establish an international women's day to highlight the struggle for equal rights, including the right to suffrage. This was proposed and initiated by two German socialists Luise Zietz and Clara Zetkin.

Come March 19 the next year, more than a million women held protest actions in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. More than 300 demonstrations occurred in the Austro-Hungarian Empire alone. This was celebrated in Russia and London on March 8, 1913.

On February 23, 1917 (March 8 in the Julian calendar), thousands of women poured out on the streets of Petrograd in Russia, calling for "Bread and Peace" against hunger, war and tsarist oppression. City-wide workers strikes supported the call and gained strength until it became a general political mass action that culminated in the Russian Tsar's downfall in the February Revolution of 1917.

At the victory of the October Revolution of 1917, the government declared March 8 a public holiday in the Soviet Union. This signalled other socialist countries to also celebrate the day. Communist women in China started to celebrate it on from 1922 and communist women in Spain from 1936. Upon victory in 1949, the Communist Party of China, without delay declared March 8 a public holiday where women workers were afforded a half day paid rest. The United Nations diluted the militant tradition when it declared March 8 International Women's Day in 1977 and other non-socialist countries joined in commercialized and trivialized themes of celebration.