

Justice to the Victims of the Hacienda Luisita Massacre!

A Manifesto of Unity of the Students, Teachers and Members of the UP Community

Illusions, they say, are hard to shatter; yet just a single wave of state-military terror was enough to dissolve all our naïve fetishism of dialogue, of harmony, of neutrality. The November 16 mass murder of 14 unarmed striking peasants and the strafing of a hundred more shook and woke us up from our slumber in the comfortable academic environment. Such savagery calls not for pseudo-objective analysis but for outright intervention and partisanship on the part of socially-concerned academics.

The horrible incident is a product of a long historical conflict between the Cojuanco-Aquinos and the Hacienda's landless tillers which the bogus Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program failed to resolve. It must be recalled that the Aquino-sponsored CARP allowed the conversion of the hacienda into a corporate Stock Distribution Option instead of a re-division of lands to the peasants. This scheme theoretically considered the tillers as 'stock holders' but in reality gave the peasants a measly sum of P194.50 a day, which, minus all the deductions, leaves them with a net wage of only P9.50. Hence, what the striking peasants were demanding was a simple redress from such inhumane conditions.

Therefore, we – the members of the UP community – express our unconditional support to the striking peasants who braved the combined muscles of the Cojuanco-Aquinos, the PNP and military, and, of course, that shameful institution we call 'the State.' We unconditionally voice our alignment with the beleaguered toilers who have no other demand but a decent wage and a genuine land reform. We unambiguously say these words: their demands are our demands!

Our apolitical friends as well as the defenders of the moneybags may cry and protest: 'biased interventionism' and 'what strange bedfellows.' To them we answer back: the academics, the students, and the peasantry.

History is witness to their comradely relations. We believe that this is the right time to recount how countless members of the UP community had left the Palma Hall for the rugged terrain of the countryside.

Indeed, we take this opportunity to renew and reinvigorate our ties with the toiling peasants. These ties based on the common interests of academics, students, and the working masses have long been cemented in our unceasing struggle for political and economic changes. Hence, we affirm the steel-strong alliance of the wretched in order to carry on the fight until victory.

We therefore reaffirm our social commitment and partisanship. We were educated by the sweat and blood of the working people and thus we had said that we would work for them and uplift them in the future. That time has come. Today, those who labored for our education want to hear us say: we are disturbed, we are appalled, we are angered! We therefore say to them that we are not blind, deaf, nor powerless to intervene.

We, too, are forging our swords.

Justice to the victims of Hacienda Luisita Massacre!
Just wage for the workers! Land to the tillers!
Human rights for the dehumanized! No to militarization!

UP-Ugnayang Makabayan Laban sa Masaker sa Asyenda