

A Short Critique of the Philippine ND/MLM Vanguard

Anarchipelago Kollektive

2018

Filipinx National Democrats/Marxist-Leninist-Maoists have leveled so many accusations at us that it's begun to look formulaic — from the hollow accusations of us being counter-revolutionary, to calling us cowards for not revealing our identities, to the argument that the ND movement in the Philippines is correct merely because of how long it's been in existence, to gaslighting our knowledge and experiences, to outright fabrication and character assassination, to demands that we submit to their party line under the guise of forging Filipinx “leftist unity.”

At the end of the day, our commitment to practicing non-hierarchical and intentional modes of organizing and community building is in direct contradiction to the rigidly hierarchical, vanguardist, and mass-oriented/mile-wide-yet-inch-deep methods by which NDs and MLMs organize.

The NDs/MLMs claim to practice self-criticism but refuse to reflect on any of the ways in which their organizing has caused harm. Because of their commitment to hierarchy they downplay, silence, ridicule, or expel any members that don't conform to the party line. We know this because we've been there. We're the ones who were broken by an ableist burnout culture demanding an unquestioning commitment to “Serve the People” at the cost of our health, relationships, and personal autonomy.

We're the ones who spoke out against the fascism of Duterte when the NDs/MLMs were supporting his presidential campaign, insisting every which way that he was a “leftist” and “anti-imperialist,” and chose to engage in “peace talks” with his regime. We pointed out the hypocrisy in ND members taking cabinet positions in Duterte's administration while simultaneously accusing it of being a fascist tool of American imperialism. Only now — more than two years after Duterte was elected and tens of thousands of killings later — are the NDs/MLMs launching a lukewarm protest against his regime.

We're the ones who have branched out and engaged in material, intersectional, multi-racial, and multi-tendency organizing throughout the diaspora while the NDs/MLMs were primarily concerned with the single issue of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines — a myopic focus which led them to ally with fascists.

As a global network of autonomist Filipinxs, we have been repeatedly attacked and harassed by NDs and MLMs. Our anonymity as Anarchipelago Kollektive allows us to be critical of their predatory organizing methods and opportunistic behavior without being directly targeted by them as we have so often been already. We've tried to call them in, but it's long been time to call them out.

Moreover, this page is an attempt to carve out even a small space for autonomous Filipinxs to safely engage in conversation. It is important to us that it remain such a space. Over and over we have heard from and connected with other autonomist Filipinxs who have left ND/MLM groups due to the problems that we mentioned above. We also continue to build with other anarchists of color who resonate with our values and have had similar experiences with the dominant MLM groups in their communities. We know we're far from being the only ones who are navigating these waters.

This is NOT a page where NDs and MLMs can feel free to repeatedly spread their propaganda. They have plenty of spaces for that already. We are not obligated to debate MLMs or entertain their defenses of abusive organizations. This is a safe — and brave — space for autonomous Filipinxs, and we intend to keep it that way.

We will assert our autonomy over and over again when the NDs and MLMs attempt to gaslight and discredit us. We've saved the receipts.

Our positions are valid, and we will not be silenced.

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