OUR COUNTRY IS IN GRAVE DANGER

 WHILE THE COUNTRY IS POLARIZED BY POLITICS, AND OUR COUNTRYMEN ARE BURDENED BY DAY-TO-DAY ISSUES, WE HAVE LOST SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT OUR COUNTRY IS IN GRAVE DANGER.

ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL AREAS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION IS THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. THIS IS MAINLY DUE TO THE CONFLICTING TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AND DISPUTED TERRITORIES. AT THE HEART OF SOUTH CHINA SEA IS THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA THAT ENCOMPASSES THE KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP OR KIG.

BASED ON RA 9522 or the baseline law of 2009, the philippine territory is composed of the main archipelago and a regime of islands that include the KIG and THE SCARBOROUGH SHOAL.

 CURRENTLY WE HAVE STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL IN 7 ISLANDS AND 2 SHOALS. VIETNAM OCCUPIES 21, MALAYSIA 3 AND TAIWAN 1. NEEDLESS TO SAY, CHINA CLAIMS THE ENTIRE SOUTH CHINA SEA BUT OCCUPIES 7 FEATURES IN OUR KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP (KIG). BRUNEI OCCUPIES NONE AS FAR AS OUR KIG IS CONCERNED. TAKE NOTE THAT OUT OF 97 FEATURES ONLY 41 ARE OCCUPIED AND THERE ARE 56 MORE THAT ARE UNOCCUPIED.

china’s invasion of the KIG ocurred in 1995 WHEN the CHINese military occuPIEd MISCHIEF REEF, AND built WOODEN structures. the philippine government protested this action. THEN IN 1998, china added more structures THAT resembled military installations. TO DATE, THIS STRUCTURE is NOW A THREE STOREY BUILDING EQUIPPED WITH SOLAR PANELS, POWER GENERATORS, WEATHER RADARS, COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT, AND heavy MACHINE GUNS.

BASED ON THIS PRECEDENT, SIMILAR construction might aLso be done in the SCARBOROUGH SHOAL OR IN OTHER AREAS IN OUR KIG. SHOWN ARE THE PRESENT FACILITIES ON OTHER CHINA OCCUPIED AREAS. (pause) AMONG THEM ARE subi reef…fiery cross reef…cuarteron reef…and chigua reef.

recently, china WAS FOUND conducting LAND reclamation AND CONSTRUCTION on FOUR of its occupied reefs namely: johnson REEF, chigua REEF, cuarteron reefs AND GAVEN REEF. (pause)AND IT IS SUSPECTED THAT THEY ARE BUILDING AND AIRFIELD AND NAVAL FACILITY AT MABINI REEF THAT WILL POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO OUR CAPABILITY TO SUSTAIN OUR GARRISONS AT THE kig.

 ANG NAKAKALUNGKOT PO DITO AY ANG PILIPINAS HINDI NAG-DEVELOP NG KAHIT ALIN MAN SA MGA ISLANG HAWAK NATIN. ITO RAW AY ALINSUNOD SA DECLARATION ON THE CONDUCT OF PARTIES IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA NA PINIRMAHAN NG BUONG ASEAN AT NG CHINA NUNG 2002. THE LATEST PICTURES ARE AS SHOWN (pause) pag-asa island… ayungin shoal… rizal reef… kota island… lawak island… likas island… panata cay… parola cay… and patag island…

with regard to SCARBOROUGH SHOAL, LOCATED 119nm FROM THE ZAMBALES SHORELINE AND within OUR 200NM EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ), ON 08 aPRIL 2012 PHILIPPINE SHIP BRP GREGORIO DEL PILAR, RESPONDED TO A REPORT OF POACHING AND STOPPED 8 CHINESE FISHING VESSELS LOADED WITH ILLEGALLY COLLECTED CORALS, GIANT CLAMS AND LIVE SHARKS. TWO CHINA MARINE SURVEILLANCE shipS intervened AND BLOCKED BRP GREGORIO DEL PILAR RESULTING in A STAND-OFF. THE PHILIPPINES LATER WITHDREW BUT CHINA MAINTAINED ITS PRESENCE AT THE SHOAL.

BY JULY 2012, CHINA HAD ERECTED A BARRIER TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE SHOAL, AND DECLARED A FISHING BAN. SINCE THEN, CHINese SHIPS HAVE DRIVEN AWAY FILIPINO FISHERMEN BY HOSING THEM WITH WATER CANNONS. AT PRESENT, CHINA MAINTAINS ON THE AVERAGE, THREE SHIPS in the area.

OVER AT AYUNGIN SHOAL, LOCATED 108NM WEST OF PALAWAN AND 13NM FROM MISCHIEF REEF, THE PHILIPPINEs DELIBERATELY Grounded BRP SIERRA MADRE IN 1999. it is now manned by the philippine marines. china has warned THAT IT WILL NOT PERMIT THE PHILIPPINES’ OCCUPATION OF THE AYUNGIN SHOAL. CHINESE COAST GUARD VESSELS HAVE REPEATEDLY BLOCKED OR CHASED AWAY FILIPINO FISHERMEN and

MILITary supPly runS. at least eight bullying incidents were recorded from December 2013 to march this year.

KUNG TAYO PO AY MAY DUDA PA SA INTENSIYON NG MGA INTSIK, O DI KAYA DI PA NATIN NASUSUKAT KUNG HANGGANG SAAN ANG KAYA NILA UPANG MAISAKATUPARAN ANG KANILANG MGA HANGARIN, INAANYAYAHAN KO PO ANG LAHAT NA PANOORIN ITONG BIDYU NA KUHA SA PARACEL ISLANDS NUONG 1988. WALANG HABAS AT WALANG AWA NILANG MINASAKER ANG 64 VIETNAMESE SAILORS. (SHOW VIDEO)

NOW, WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE, BUT we hope and pray that SUCH INCIDENTS WILL not HAPPEN TO OUR TROOPS.

BASED ON all THESE ANTECENDENTS, IT IS CLEAR THAT CHINA WILL UTILIZE ITS POLITICAL POWER, ECONOMIC WEALTH, AND GROWING MARITIME CAPABILITIES TO IMPOSE ITS WILL OVER THE WHOLE SOUTH CHINA SEA. our SECURITY ANALYSTS BELIEVE THAT THESE MOVES ARE PART OF CHINA’S STRATEGY TO ASSERT THEIR CLAIM BASED ON THE NINE-DASH-LINE NOW TEN-DASH-LINE AND BUILD LINES OF OFFSHORE DEFENSE.

 THESE CHINESE ACTIONS HAVE ALSO BROUGHT RAMIFICATIONS TO OUR ECONOMY. BASED ON Statistics FROM THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES, we are losing APPROXIMATELY 7.1 Billion Pesos per year through poaching, AND AN ESTIMATED 19.4 Billion Pesos per year FROM destruction of corals and illegal fishing – a staggering TOTAL OF 26.5 billion pesos per year. The area OF contention is ALSO known to be rich with GAS and OIL deposits estimateD AT 1.748 Billion Barrels of OIL worth PhP 1.1 trillion pesos and 16.7 Billion Cu Ft of GAS worth PhP 2.1 trillion pesos A STAGGERING PhP 3.2 trillion pesos. if the situation is not PROPERLY ADDRESSED, THESE RESOURCES COULD POTENTIALLY BE LOST.

ON MARCH 30 2014, THE PHILIPPINES FILED AN ARBITRATION CASE AGAINST CHINA BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE LAW OF THE SEA OR ITLOS. LAST 04 JUNE THE COURT OF ARBITRATION ORDERED CHINA TO SUBMIT ITS COUNTER ARGUMENT UNTIL

DECEMBER 15 2014, HOWEVER, CHINA FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN HONG LEI REITERATED BEIJING’S NON ACCEPTANCE AND NON PARTICIPATION IN THE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

MEANWHILE, IT IS THE PHILIPPINES’ POLICY TO PROMOTE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILD TIES WITH OUR NEIGHBORS. FOREMOST OF WHICH IS WITH THE U.S. WITH WHICH WE HAVE A MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. RECENTLY, THE DEFENSE TREATY WAS STRENGTHENED BY THE ENHANCED DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT OR EDCA. THESE ACTIONS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS PROBABLE DETERRENTS TO CHINESE AGRESSION. HOWEVER, IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT THAT WE DEVELOP OUR OWN TERRITORIAL DEFENSE CAPABILITY.

MOVING TO OUR AIR SPACE, BOUNDED IN YELLOW IS THE PHILIPPINE territorial airspace THAT INCLUDES all space above our territory, WHICH IS 12 nm from our archipelagic baseline. BOUNDED IN BLUE IS THE FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION THAT IS DELINEATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (icao) FOR CONTROL AND SAFETY OF CIVIL AND COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS. BOUNDED IN GREEN IS THE CURRENT PHILIPPINE AIR DEFENSE IDENTIFICATION ZONE (padiz) “WHERE ALL AiRCRAFT ARE REQUIRED TO IDENTIFY WHEN ENTERING OR TRANSITING THE PHILIPPINE AIRSPACE”.

IN THE PAST FROM (1950s to 1980s), WE WERE ABLE TO PROTECT OUR AIR SPACE AND MARITIME DOMAIN. WE HAD AN AIR DEFENSE ALERT CENTERS IN BASA AIR BASE, pampanga AND PALAWAN. THERE WERE 3 OPERATIONAL RADARS in MINDORO; ILOCOS NORTE AND CAMARINES NORTE and a U.S.A.F. RADAR AT LA UNION that WE LATER TOOK OVER. IN THE 50’S, WE HAD 3 SQUADRONS OF 69 F-86 DAY FIGHTERS, 29 F-86D ALL-WEATHER interceptors AND A JET FIGHTER TRAINING SQUADRON OF 28 T-33. IN THE MID-60s, WE GAINED A SQUADRON OF 25 SUPERSONIC F-5. IN 1978, ANOTHER SQUADRON OF 25 F-8 MARITIME FIGHTERS, REPLACED ALL THE F-86Fs. WE EVEN HAD PRECISION AEROBATIC TEAMS. WE even SENt AN EXPEDITIONARY SQUADRON OF F-86s to CONGO, AFRICA. WE WERE PRACTICALLY NUMBER 1 IN ASIA IN TERMS OF AIR POWER. iN A SIMILAR NOTE, OUR NAVY WAS ONCE THE ENVY OF OUR NEIGHBORS. OUR FLEET WAS ONCE COMPOSED OF DESTROYERS, FRIGATES, CORVETTES, MIDGET SUBMARINES, MINE

SWEEPERS and LANDING SHIP TANKS with SURFACE, SUB-SURFACE, ANTI-AIR WARFARE, NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT AND AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS, capabilities hOWEVER, THROUGH THE YEARS, OUR CAPITAL SHIPS HAVE LOST THEIR ABILITY. OUR MIDGET SUBMARINES ARE NOW DISPLAYS IN THE MUSEUM. OUR CURRENT FLEET IS COMPOSED OF SMALL BOATS that LIMITED THE ROLE OF THE NAVY TO PROTECTING OUR INTERNAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS ONLY.

NAKAKAPANLUMO PO NA GALING SA PAGIGING NUMERO UNO SA ASYA NUNG DEKADA-70, TALO NA TAYO NGAYON KAHIT NG BANSANG BANGLADESH NA MAY MAS MABABANG gROSS dOMESTIC pRODUCT KEYSA PILIPINAS PERO MAYROONG 77 MULTI-ROLE FIGHTERS AND 89 surface ships.

TODAY, OUR AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY IS PRACTICALLY zero. WE HAVE ONLY ONE OPERATING RADAR WITH VERY LIMITED RANGE AND NO HEIGHT FINDER DETECTION. AT PRESENT, WE ONLY HAVE 3 S-211 JET TRAINER AIRCRAFTs. COMPARED WITH A FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT, IT IS SUBSONIC AND DOES NOT HAVE AIR TO AIR MISSILE WEAPONS.

WITH THIS TOKEN CAPABILITY, OUR AIRSPACE IS OPEN TO INTRUSIONS. WE CANNOT ENFORCE OUR PADIZ. WE CANNOT PATROL OUR TERRITORIAL WATERS, AND OUR Eez. WE CANNOT PROTECT OUR TERRITORIES MUCH LESS DETER INTRUSIONS.

 “WITH AN AIR FORCE THAT CAN’T PROTECT OUR AIR SPACE AND A NAVY THAT CAN’T PROTECT OUR MARITIME INTEREST,” CLAIMANT COUNTRIES HAVE ACCELERATED THEIR CREEPING OCCUPATION OF OUR ISLANDS.

TO SECURE OUR territory, THE IDEAL joint CONCEPT TO ADOPT IS DEFENSE- IN-DEPTH WHICH IS ANCHORED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF PRESSING THE BORDER OUT BY ENGAGING THE ENEMY AS FAR OUT AS POSSIBLE. The system incorporates A sequence of lines: detection line, decision line and interception line, AND REQUIRES four basic steps: 1. detect the presence of airborne objects, aircraft, or missiles; 2. identifY them as friendly or hostile; 3. intercept and examine those not identified as friendly; and 4. neutralize those identified as hostile.

THIS joint CONCEPT, applies IN TANDEM WITH OUR NAVY’S ACTIVE ARCHIPELAGIC DEFENSE STRATEGY. SITUATIONAL AWARENESS WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE AIR DEFENSE RADARS, LONG RANGE PATROL AIRCRAFT AND OVER THE HORIZON RADARS. HOSTILE FORCES ARE HELD TO A “NO GIVE ZONE” WITHIN THE RANGE OF ATTACK CRAFT AND GROUND-BASED MISSILE. MANEUVER FORCES COMPOSED OF FRIGATES CORVETTES, AND FIGHTER aircraft, SHALL SIMULTANEOUSLY ATTACK FROM DIFFERENT LOCATIONS TO SWARM THE OPPOSING FORCE IN MULTIPLE DIRECTIONS.

TO DEVELOP THE AFP’S CAPABILITY AND TO IMPLEMENT OUR TERRITORIAL DEFENSE STRATEGY, REPUBLIC ACT 7898 THE “AFP MODENIZATION ACT” WAS PASSED INTO LAW IN 1995. BUT OF THE PHP 331 BILLION ORIGINALLY ALLOCATED FOR THE 15-YEAR PROGRAM FROM 1996-2011, THE AFP RECEIVED ONLY PHP 33 BILLION PESOS. THE ALLOTMENT WAS HARDLY FELT BY THE PHILIPPINE NAVY AND THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE.

AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, OUR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE ENACTED ANOTHER LAW THAT EXTENDED THE AFP MODERNIZATION PROGRAM FOR ANOTHER 15 YEARS. THE PRESIDENT ON APRIL 21, 2014, APPROVED THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM MADE UP OF 24 PROJECTS AMOUNTING TO PHP 85.2 BILLION. IN FACT, TWO PROJECTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONTRACTED, FIRST WITH CANADA FOR THE 8 COMBAT UTILITY HELICOPTERS AND SECOND WITH KOREA FOR THE 12 FA-50 LEAD IN FIGHTER TRAINER AIRCRAFT. THE REMAINING TWENTY-TWO (22) PROJECTS ARE, IN VARIOUS STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION, MOST OF WHICH ARE JUST WAITING FOR FUNDS IN ORDER FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE NOTICES OF AWARDS TO BE ISSUED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT OUT OF THE PROGRAMMED AMOUNT OF 24B FOR THE 2014 ONLY 10 BILLION WAS RELEASED. THIS WILL CAUSE A DELAY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE 14B BALANCE FOR 2014 BE ADDED ON THE 2015 APPROPRIATION. THE REVISED YEARLY CASH PROGRAM IS AS SHOWN. ALL THESE WILL REQUIRE APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE HONORABLE SENATE AND CONGRESS. THESE EQUIPMENTS ARE EXPENSIVE, BUT IT HAD BEEN SAID THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PRICE TAG FOR SOVEREIGNTY.

THE P26.5 BILLION WE LOSE YEARLY FROM POACHING, DESTRUCTION OF CORALS AND ILLEGAL FISHING, AND THE ESTIMATED P3.2 TRILLION WORTH OF OIL AND GAS DEPOSITS IS WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE WITHOUT OUR NEEDED CAPABILITY, THE PhP85.2 BILLION INITIAL REQUIREMENT FOR A TERRITORIAL DEFENSE IS THEREFORE A VERY MODEST ONE. IT IS IN FACT A WORTHY INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE.

BAGO PO AKO MAGTAPOS, UULITIN KO LANG NA ANG PAG-DEPENSA NG ATING TERITORYO AY NAPAKAHALAGANG ASPETO NG PAMBANSANG SEGURIDAD. It is absolutely essential to secure our airspace AND MARITIME DOMAIN IN ORDER TO uphold our sovereignty AND protect oUR core national interests. KAPAG HINDI PO NATIN SINUPORTAHAN AT PINUNDOHAN ANG PAGKAMIT NG KAPABILIDAD NA ITO, MAWAWALA PO SA ATIN ANG ATING MGA ISLA, MGA SHOALS AT REEFS NA TAYO NAMAN ANG MAY KARAPATAN TALAGA. FREEDOM OF PASSAGE IN THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA MIGHT BECOME RESTRICTED AND WE MAY LOSE OUR EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO FISH THE RICH MARINE AND AQUATIC RESOURCES AS WELL AS TO EXPLORE NATURAL GAS AND OIL.

wE HAVE SEEN HOW THE EVENTS IN HISTORY SHAPED THE PRESENT DAY TERRITORIAL DEFENSE FORCE. WE HAVE STARTED AT THE TOP AND DETERIORATED THEN ON. OUR GREAT EFFORT OF FIGHTING OUR INSURGENTS DREW AWAY OUR ATTENTION FROM TERRITORIAL DEFENSE.

i am reminded of events in the 1930’s, and of a great man named winston churchill. DURING THAT TIME, HE WAS CONSIDERED “OUTSIDE THE KULAMBO” AND “IN THE WILDERNESS” OF BRITISH POLITICS. BUT Churchill took the lead in warning about NAZI GERMANY’S REARMAMENT AND in campaigning for STRENGTHENING THE DEFENSES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, ESPECIALLY IN THE FACE OF A FUTURE GERMAN AGRESSION. WHEN THE GERMANS OCCUPIED THE SUDETENLAND, IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, BRITAIN’S RESPONSE WOULD BE APPEASEMENT.

CHURCHILL ONLY SAW FOLLY IN THIS, EVEN REMARKING THAT **“An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile—hoping it will eat him last.”** OUR RESPONSE, AS ESPOUSED BY THE DFA, IS ALMOST THE SAME. ARE WE HOPING THAT THIS NEW CROCODILE IN COLOR

RED WILL EAT OUR ISLANDS LAST? AS EVIDENCE PROVES, THIS CROCODILE IS EATING UP OUR TERRITORY AHEAD OF ALL THE OTHERS.

TODAY WE ARE FACED WITH THE CHALLENGE OF REBUILDING OUR MUCH NEEDED DEFENSE CAPABILITY. IN THE FACE OF THESE PRESENT THREATS, WE CANNOT SIMPLY BUILD A STRONG TERRITORIAL DEFENSE FORCE OVERNIGHT. THE TASK OF DOING IT SHOULD HAVE STARTED A LONG TIME AGO. DAPAT PONG MAGPATULOY ANG SUPORTA NG PAMBANSANG LIDERATO, AT KALAKIP NITO AY ISANG PLANO PARA SA PROCUREMENT OF WEAPONS AND SENSOR SYSTEMS SA DARATING NA PANAHON NA MAGBIBIGAY KASIGURUHAN SA IMPLEMENTASYUN NG ISANG EPEKTIBONG ISTRATEHIYA. (PAUSE)

KAILANGAN NILA ANG ATING SUPORTA… PARA ANG ATING HUKBONG SANDATAHAN AY MAGPATULOY NA MAGING SOURCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE, PERO LALUNG-LALO NA ANG MAGING INSTRUMENTO NG PAMBANSANG LAKAS

LET US HEED WINSTON CHURCHILL’S WARNING, THAT ***“If you will not fight for right when you can easily win without blood shed; if you will not fight when your victory is sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. [OR WORSE] You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves.”***…………..