

## Group of 77's Manila Meeting

# Struggle for New International Economic Order

The Group of 77 of the developing countries held its Third Ministerial Conference in Manila, capital of the Philippines, from February 2 to 7. About 700 representatives from Asia, Africa and Latin America attended the conference which adopted a declaration and a programme for action. Romania, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Surinam and Malta were approved as full members of the Group of 77 to bring its membership to 110. A commentary entitled "Unite to Smash the Old and Establish the New" published by "Renmin Ribao" on February 10 follows. — Ed.

THE third world countries and people have shown more and more concern over the question of how to further strengthen unity and co-operation among the developing countries in the international economic field. The Third Ministerial Conference of the Group of 77 held in Manila once again showed the developing countries' proud spirit of unity in struggle.

The Group of 77 was born in the struggle by the developing countries to safeguard their economic rights and interests. For many years it has used its united collective strength to struggle against imperialist and superpower exploitation, plunder and control and has won positive results. It has grown steadily in the course of struggle and has become an important force in the developing countries' struggle against hegemonism in the international economic field. The useful consultations and discussions and the proposals for further strengthening unity and co-operation among these countries at the Manila conference are of positive significance in pushing ahead the anti-imperialist and anti-hegemony struggle of the third world countries in the international economic realm.

It is the strong desire of the third world countries and people to thoroughly change existing international economic relations which were set up on the basis of inequality and exploitation. The declaration adopted at the Manila conference emphatically points out that it is necessary to "eliminate the inequitable economic structures imposed on the developing countries," that international economic relations should be established on the principle of equity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and that each country has the right to exercise full and permanent sovereignty over its natural resources and in all its economic activities. These proposals fully reflect the developing countries' firm determination to persevere in smashing the old and establishing the new in the international economic field.

Imperialism and the superpowers are strongly opposed to establishing a new international economic order; they are making every effort to preserve the

old international economic relations so they can continue their control, exploitation and plunder of the numerous developing countries. The two superpowers in particular, in their intensified contention for world hegemony, resort to all kinds of tactics — from the big stick to the carrot and causing bad blood between the developing countries in a vain attempt to undermine their unity and weaken the third world peoples' struggle against imperialism and hegemonism. Such things can only arouse high vigilance by the people of the Asian, African and Latin American countries. The declaration and programme for action adopted by the Group of 77 at the Manila conference as well as the speeches by delegates of many countries to the conference all reiterated with emphasis the need for "identification," "solidarity" and for "closer and more effective co-operation" among the developing countries.

The third world countries and people have come to see more and more clearly that the struggle for the establishment of a new international economic order cannot possibly amount to much if there is no solidarity and unity in the struggle. Although specific social and economic conditions in the various developing countries are different, they all face the common task of consolidating national independence, safeguarding state sovereignty, protecting national resources and developing their national economies. Their fundamental interests are identical. Thus there is a solid basis for third world unity and co-operation.

There are broad vistas for the developing countries to strengthen mutual co-operation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Co-operation as such will not only enable them to exchange what they have for what they don't have, support each other and help promote the advance of the national economies in these countries along the road of self-reliance, but also will strengthen the hand of the many developing countries in their struggle against imperialism and the superpowers. The Group of 77 proposed at the recent Manila conference that an appropriate permanent agency of the developing countries be set up to strengthen mutual co-operation and that specific measures be taken in various spheres to help bring about economic self-reliance and progress in these countries. It can be confidently predicted that this proposal will play a positive role in promoting economic co-operation among the developing countries.

The struggle to smash the old and establish the new in international economic relations is protracted, arduous and the road is tortuous. However, as long as the third world countries and people close ranks; steadily increase their strength and carry on the fight indefatigably, they can certainly frustrate imperialist and superpower sabotage and obstruction and continually win new victories.