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Editorial

Reject US imperialist rule in the Asia-Pacific

US imperialism is currently focused on furthering its dominance in the Asia-Pacific region in the face of the continuing economic recession. It has been brandishing its power in the name of "America's Pacific Century," a framework for expanding and consolidating US imperialist rule in the region and defeating all perceived challenges or threats to its dominance.

No less than US imperialist overlord Barack Obama has declared that "Our enduring interests in the region demand our enduring presence in the region. The United States is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay." On the other hand, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has declared that "investing more in the Asia-Pacific region" is the "key to prosperity and security at home."

These declarations and US imperialism's corresponding actions will lead to none other than stepped up US interference in the political, military, economic and diplomatic affairs of countries in the

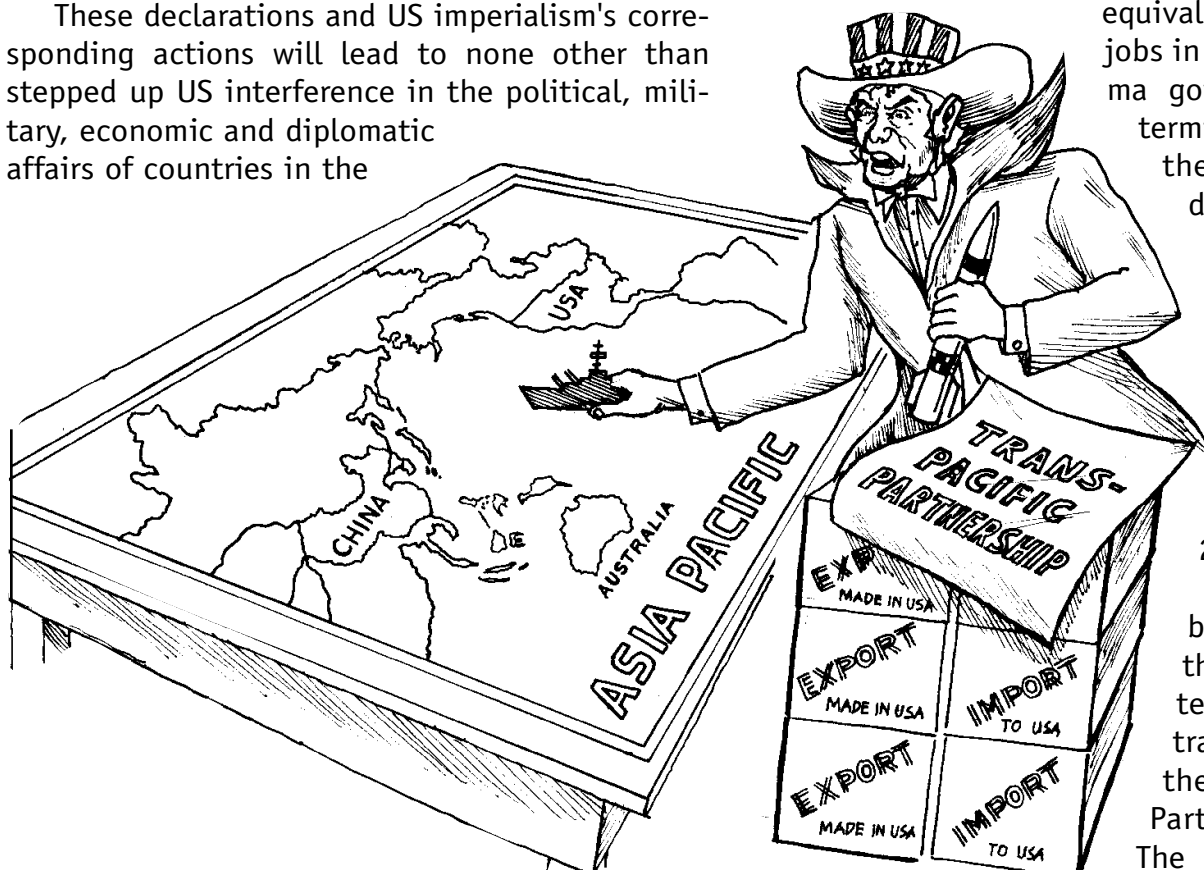
Asia-Pacific. To justify such intervention, the US claims that countries in the region eagerly seek its leadership.

US imperialism has been intensifying its intervention in the Asia-Pacific because it knows how important the region is to the US' recovery from the economic recession. US imperialism strongly covets Asia's vast markets. Clinton herself has said that "Open markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment (and) trade.... (US) economic recovery will depend on exports and the ability of American firms to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia."

Last year, the US exported up to \$320 billion worth of goods to the region, supporting an

equivalent of 850,000 jobs in the US. The Obama government is determined to go further in breaking down barriers to the influx of American products in the region's markets in order to double the value of US exports by 2015.

The US has been advancing this goal by attempting to form a trade bloc called the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The US has enlisted



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in its campaign several smaller countries, including Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. Through the TPP, the US hopes to put up an economic bloc that would back American policies, laws and desires. The US plans to use the TPP as a force to pry open the Chinese economy.

The US is now seizing all opportunities to advance the TPP. This was its main agenda when it joined the recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Hawaii and that of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Bali, Indonesia last week.

Nonetheless, the US has failed to secure the support of the bigger countries for the TPP. Countries like Indonesia and Japan have major misgivings in joining it because doing so would be contrary to their national interest. On the other hand, the leaders of Japan, China and South Korea which together comprise 20% of worldwide production agreed during the ASEAN meeting in Bali to

continue strengthening their own economic bloc.

US imperialism is aware that the only way it could maintain its dominance in the Asia-Pacific is to continue beefing up its military presence in the region. For the past six decades since the end of World War II, the US has been able to dominate the region by maintaining a large military presence. Some 20,000 American troops were stationed un-

tains more than 50,000 troops in its military bases in Japan and South Korea.

To achieve its goals under the so-called American Pacific Century, the Obama government wants to strengthen its force posture in the region by maintaining and refurbishing its military basing agreements in Northeast Asia in the face of growing opposition to their presence in Japan and Korea.

At the same time, the US wants operational access to other countries in Southeast Asia. It maintains a permanent military presence in the Philippines through the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF) to enable it to intervene in the local counter-revolutionary war. It also uses the Philippines as a base for the rapid deployment of its forces in Southeast Asia.

The US has been taking efforts to strengthen its influence on the doctrines and directions taken by local military forces by conducting joint military exercises with the Philippine, Thai, Indonesian, Singaporean, Malaysian and Brunei armed forces. The US also wants to exercise bigger influence on the armed forces of India which has had a long history of alliance with Russia.

The US is likewise strengthening its military presence and alliance with Australia, signing a recent agreement to station 2,500 American troops in the country's far north. Indonesia and China have raised serious concerns about this move.

The US is stepping up its



til 1991 in US military bases in the Philippines which were used as launching pads for US wars of aggression in Korea, Vietnam, the Middle East and other areas in the Asia-Pacific. It still main-

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military presence in bridges connecting the Indian Ocean and the China Sea. It is fomenting diplomatic and political tension on the Spratly Islands issue to use it as a pretext for strengthening its presence in the South China Sea in the name of "keeping the sea lanes free." Relatedly, its warships have been making their strength and presence felt through frequent dockings in the Philippines and Singapore. The US has also been selling its warships to the Philippines.

For the Filipino people, the US' assertion of its military and economic might in the Asia-Pacific portends the worsening national oppression of the Philippines by US imperialism. As a "reliable ally," the Philippine puppet state will surely serve as a willing instrument of US imperialism in pushing for the formation of a US-controlled economic bloc and stronger US military presence in the region.

In support of the US-backed TPP, the ruling regime is now pushing for amendments to the 1987 constitution that would pave the way for fullblown trade and investment liberalization in the Philippines. Such a move can only result in the thorough destruction of the local economy and worsening poverty in the country.

The US and the puppet regime will also be using the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) to enable the US to continue utilizing the Philippines as a base for projecting US military power in the Asia-Pacific. The US is set to further strengthen its military presence in the country by ordering ever growing numbers of American troops to set foot on Philippine soil by invoking "humanitarian missions" and conducting joint military exercises in the name of cooperation. There will be stepped up inter-

Protests greet Hillary Clinton visit

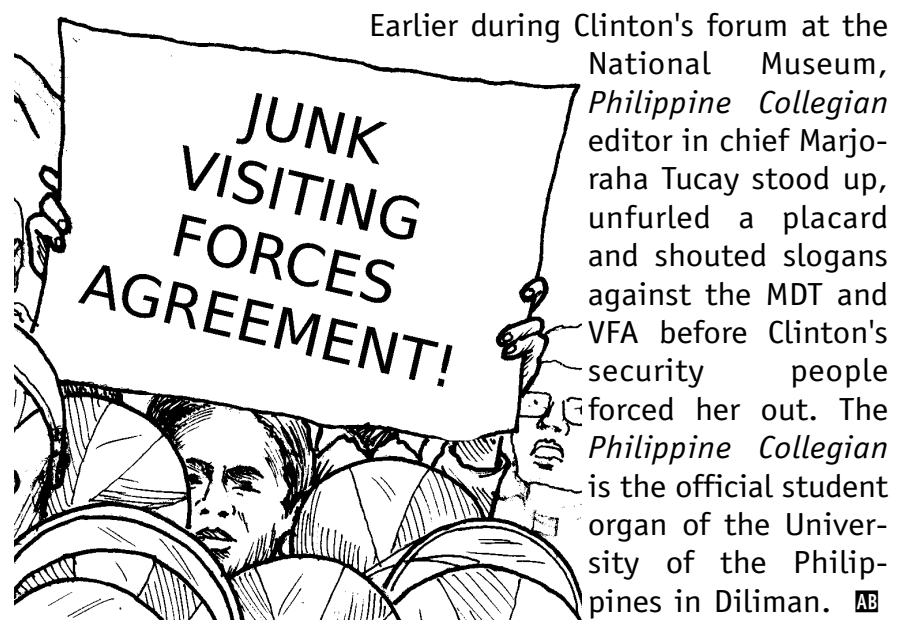
US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to the Philippines on November 15-16 was met with a series of protests.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) led other progressive groups in protest actions near the US Embassy in Manila. BAYAN said Clinton's visit was meant to reinforce unequal treaties between the US and the Philippines. It cited the Mutual Defense Treaty's 60-year existence, saying this has made it possible for the US to maintain its military presence in the country.

BAYAN also assailed Aquino's inaction over his promise to subject the Visiting Forces Agreement to a review.

More than 50 youth from Anakbayan, League of Filipino Students and other militant youth groups staged a lightning rally in front of the National Museum in Manila on November 16 where Clinton held a forum attended by selected youth leaders and students.

The youth also rallied at the Ayala Bridge, blocking Clinton's convoy on its way back to the US Embassy. They pelted one of the vehicles with paint, forcing the convoy to retreat and look for another route.



Earlier during Clinton's forum at the National Museum, *Philippine Collegian* editor in chief Marjoraha Tucay stood up, unfurled a placard and shouted slogans against the MDT and VFA before Clinton's security people forced her out. The *Philippine Collegian* is the official student organ of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. **AB**

vention by American troops in the local counterrevolutionary war.

For as long as the MDT and VFA are in existence, the Philippines will continue being held hostage by US foreign policy and will never have the freedom to choose its own course in its dealings with other countries.

In the face of intensifying US intervention, military presence and economic domination in the Asia-Pacific, the Filipino people must stand firm and struggle for national freedom

and independence. Currently, its most striking expression is the anti-chacha struggle and the continuing struggle to abrogate the MDT and VFA.

It is of the utmost importance to form a broad patriotic front among the Filipino people to assert the patriotic agenda in the economic, military, political and diplomatic arenas. The patriotic front must be formed, expanded and consolidated to serve as the people's weapon against the worsening blows of US imperialism. **AB**



In Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte

NPA thwarts 10-day attack by AFP

Fighters of the Pulang Diwata Command of the Northeastern Mindanao Region (NEMR) are putting up heroic resistance against an ongoing attack by forces under the 4th Infantry Division on the towns of Jabonga and Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte and Gigaquit town in Surigao del Norte that began on November 1.

In the first ten days of the attack, the AFP suffered at least 56 casualties—26 killed and more than 30 wounded. The figure does not include the number of soldiers killed during a mis-encounter among the fascist troops. Among the wounded was a captain from the Scout Rangers. On the other hand, the NPA has not suffered even a single casualty.

The AFP poured in more than a battalion-strong force composed of combined elements from the military, police and paramilitary units to attack peasants and Mamanwa Lumad in Jabonga and Kitcharao opposed to the massive entry of mining companies. The assaulting enemy forces come from the 5th and 6th Scout Ranger Companies (SRC) that were brought in from Compostela Valley and Davao; the 42nd Division Re-

connaisance Company (DRC); the PNP Regional Mobile Group; and the CAFGU. The fascist troops enjoy artillery and air support.

In a span of ten days, the military unleashed 30 air to surface rockets aside from 1,200 rounds from cal .50 machine guns and 29 shells from 105 mm howitzers. The attacks, which have been concentrated in Zapanta Valley in Bangayan, Kitcharao and nearby villages of Jabonga have terrorized residents and caused serious damage to farms, crops, wooded areas, livestock, rivers and streams and the entire environment.

Nonetheless, the Red fighters have been using daring and creative tactics in fighting the enemy. Scout Rangers on the attack had just barely entered the guerrilla zone at Ticlan, a moun-

tainous area of Baligyan, Jabonga when they were ambushed by Red fighters on November 2. Three soldiers were killed on the spot and nine wounded. The AFP cordoned off the area and refused to allow any civilian in to hide the extent of its casualties.

On the same day, another NPA team harassed a DRC column in Barrio Magtangale, Surigao City. The enemy suffered one casualty.

In retaliation, the AFP sent MG520 and Huey helicopters to rain rockets and machine gun fire on Ticlan and nearby areas in the morning of November 4, aside from launching an artillery attack. The onslaught destroyed farms and caused fear not only among residents of mountainous areas but on those living along the highway in Jabonga and Kitcharao. Peasants and Lumad from the interior villages were forced to evacuate.

More than 270 persons fled to the Kitcharao town center. Seventy percent of the evacuees were children. On the other hand, in Sitio Banban, Barangay Camam-onan in Gigaquit town, two columns of fascist troops figured in a misencounter. Four of the soldiers were killed and several were wounded. Thus, on November 4 alone, eight AFP personnel were killed—four in gunbattles with the NPA and another four from “friendly fire.”

From November 6 to November 8, six enemy columns advanced toward Zapanta Valley in a search and destroy mission against the Red fighters. But the fascist troops had to contend with NPA harassment wherever they went.

On November 6, eight Scout Rangers were killed and another eight were wounded due to the combined effects of command-detonated explosives and gunfire from the NPA. The casualties belonged to two Scout Ranger





columns that were attacked by the NPA in Pulang Lupa and Katorotombuan in Kitcharao. It was in this firefight that the Scout Ranger captain was wounded.

On November 7, in Maribuhok, Zapanta Valley, the NPA harassed another column from the 5th SRC, killing two and wounding two other enemy soldiers.

By November 8, the enemy was bombarding Pulang Lupa with artillery fire as early as 6 a.m. to "soften the ground" for the ascent of its troopers. By 9 a.m. that day, Red fighters harassed an enemy column, killing a soldier and wounding two others. At 5:30 p.m., another column was harassed by the NPA, killing another trooper and

wounding several others. Many of the wounded troopers rolled down the slope. The fascist enemy launched a retaliatory artillery attack until night time.

Up to November 10, the military had not relented in raining artillery and rockets on the area, but without hitting a single Red fighter. At this point, the 4th ID decided to send other troops under its command—the 29th, 30th and 36th IB. But because the NPA uses guerrilla tactics, neither the additional AFP troops nor its modern weapons could rout the Red fighters.

With the AFP 4th ID's failure to annihilate the NPA, its forces have been mercilessly harassing the peasants and Lumad and de-

stroying their livelihood. The military has accused civilians of being NPA guerrillas and opened fire at them, just like what happened to a group of copra makers in Gate 1, Barrio Bangayan, Kitcharao.

Such violations of human rights are but a continuation of the long list of abuses suffered by the people under previous regimes.

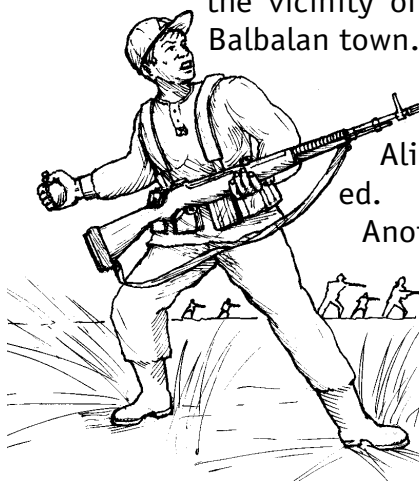
It is evident that the current regime's promise to respect human rights is an empty one. In the face of worsening military abuses, the peasant and Lumad masses must step up their struggle to expose and oppose the relentless terrorism and oppression being inflicted on them by the fascist military. **AB**

NPA metes blows on soldiers protecting big mining firms

Red fighters under the Marcial Daggay Command of the New People's Army (NPA) in Northwest Kalinga Front struck twice against the Philippine Army 21st IB which protects several big mining firms in the Ilocos-Cordillera Region. The Marcelo Daggay Command is under the Lejo Cawilan Command (LCC-NPA-Kalinga).

The two tactical offensives which were launched on November 12 and October 19 yielded two high-powered firearms, killed three soldiers and wounded a number of other troopers from the 21st IB. The NPA, on the other hand, did not suffer any casualties.

At 9:25 a.m. of November 12, a unit under the Marcial Daggay Command ambushed a platoon under the 21st IB along a slope in the vicinity of Daoangan and Pinukpuk villages in Balbalan town. The NPA seized an M16 and an M203. Killed in the firefight were Cpl. Jeffrey de los Santos and Pfc. Nichol Alipio. A number of others were wounded.



Another unit under the same NPA command earlier staged an ambush on operating troops of the 21st IB at 5:10 p.m. in Sitio Kabiil, Barangay Poswoy, Balbalan. Killed on the spot was a Corporal Bagasin, the fascist troopers'

guide. Aside from suffering gunshot wounds, other soldiers sustained injuries from hitting rocks and thorns as they fell off a cliff.

Said LCC spokesperson Ka Tipon Gil-ayab, the 21st IB serves as the protector of several big mining corporations in the region. In Kalinga alone, there are eight big mining firms: Facets Mineral Inc.; Cordillera Exploration Co., Inc.; Asia Pacific Basin Mining Corp.; Vegas Exploration and Mining Corp.; Malibato Mining Co., Inc.; Makilala Mining Company; Philippine Mining Development Co.; and Wolfland Resources, Inc.

Aside from guarding mining sites, the 21st IB also serves as security guards for various hydro-electric plant projects that will ravage the ancestral lands of the national minorities, said the LCC. **AB**



Red fighters in Catanduanes punish AFP for being a bane on the people

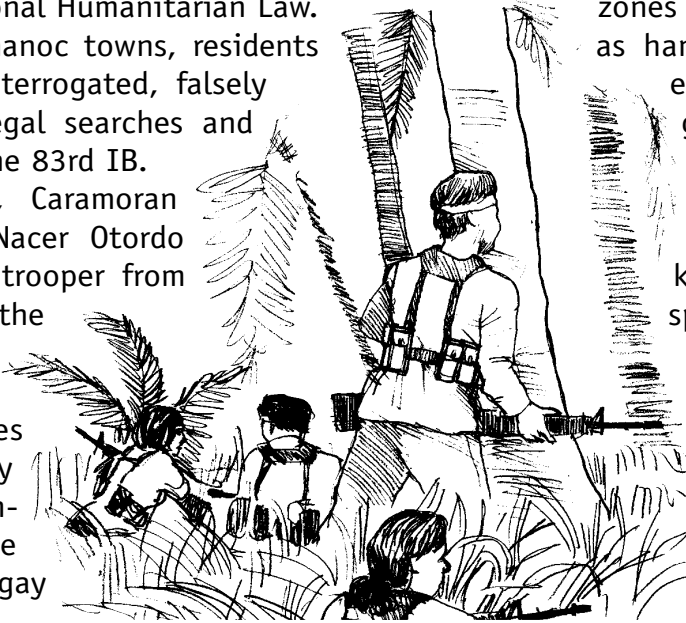
Three soldiers from the 83rd IB Alpha Coy were killed and a number of other troopers wounded when a team of Red fighters opened fire on them in Oga, Pandan town in Catanduanes at 6 p.m. of October 14.

The harassment operation was a punitive measure against the 83rd IB for wreaking havoc on the lives of the people of Catanduanes. In accordance with their Community Organizing for Peace and Development (COPD) operations, the soldiers have been basing themselves in barangay halls, schools, chapels and civilians' private homes in violation of Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions and International Humanitarian Law. In Panganiban and Bagamanoc towns, residents have been intimidated, interrogated, falsely accused, subjected to illegal searches and beaten up by soldiers of the 83rd IB.

In Barangay Mliaviga, Caramoran town, a civilian named Nacer Otorido was arbitrarily shot by a trooper from the same battalion while the victim was resting outside his house. In Barangay Mayngaway, San Andres town, a boy in his early teens was beaten up by intelligence operatives of the 83rd IB based in Barangay

Lictin of the same town. Leaders and members of progressive groups that have been advancing the people's democratic interests continue to be harassed and threatened.

The 83rd IB has also been concocting stories in order to win the people's support and isolate the NPA. It has been falsely alleging that Ricardo Momongan, a murder victim with a notorious record was connected to the NPA. Momongan, an agent of the Intelligence Service of the AFP, had long been posing as either an NPA member or someone with links to the Red fighters. He had made several attempts to penetrate guerrilla zones using various fronts such as handicraft or women's projects. Momongan was gunned down on November 9 by Ernesto Tabor because of an altercation over a woman. He was killed during a drinking spree near the Philippine Coast Guard headquarters in Catanduanes' capital town of Virac. Momongan had also been involved in holdups and was formerly employed as a politician's goon. **AB**



NPA-Rizal harasses PNP detachment

Guerrillas under the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command (NAAC-NPA-Rizal) opened fire on a detachment of the PNP Special Action Force 82nd Coy in Sitio Toyang, Barangay San Isidro, Rodriguez, Rizal at 2:45 a.m. of November 6. The detachment was under fire for ten minutes.

In a statement, NAAC spokesperson Ka Macario Liwanag explained that the harassment operation was the

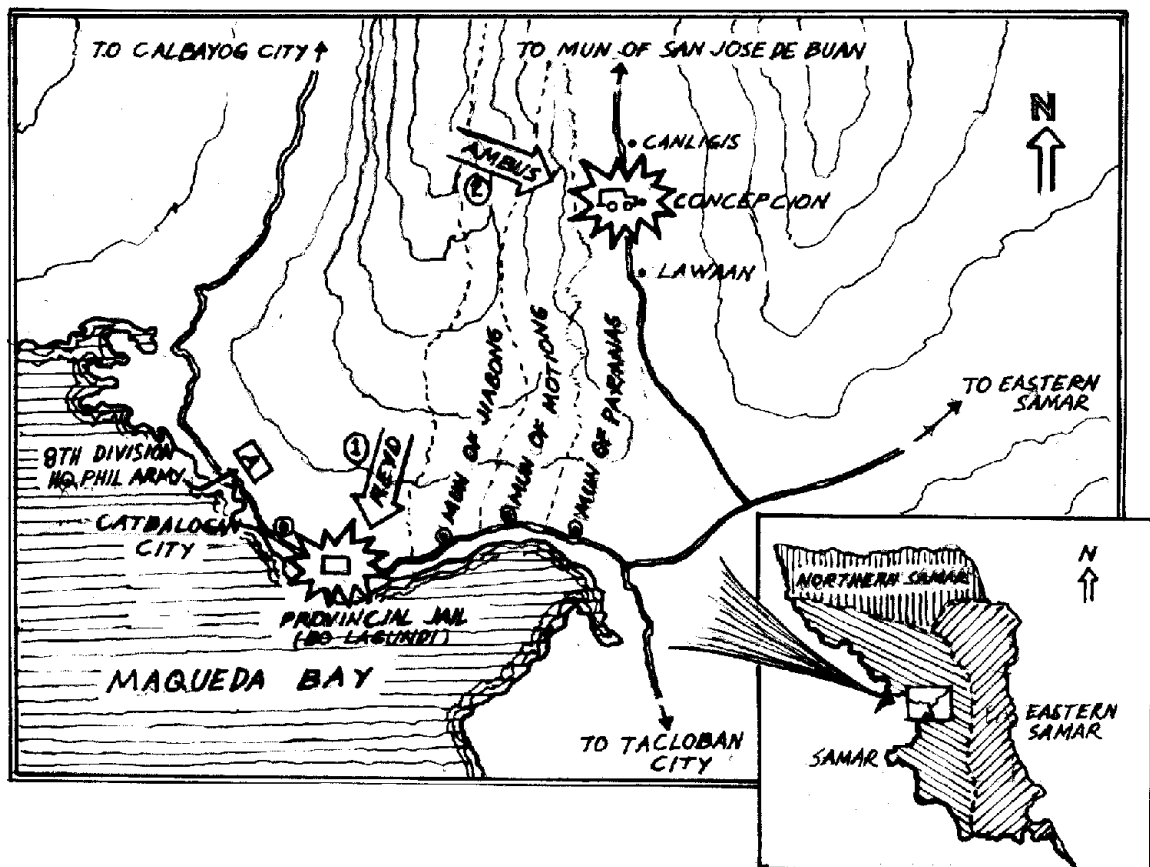
NPA's response to the local residents' longstanding demand to punish the SAF for multiple violations of human rights. The policemen were responsible for killing three Dumagat activists in Barangay San Isidro, Rodriguez in July 2010 and two woodsmen in Barangay Puray of the same town in September 2010. They are also involved in extortion activities.

Before the harassment oper-

ation, ten CAFGU elements were intercepted by Red fighters at a checkpoint in Sta. Inez, Tanay on November 2. The paramilitaries were on an intelligence gathering mission in territory controlled by the People's Democratic Government. They were released after they promised to resign from the CAFGU.

The NPA regularly conducts checkpoints to prevent military agents from penetrating revolutionary territory. **AB**

Back to back tactical offensives in Samar in July



Red fighters under the Efen Martires Command (EMC) in Eastern Visayas and the Arnulfo Ortiz Command in Samar province successfully launched back to back tactical offensives in two towns of Samar in July. The Red fighters raided the subprovincial jail in Catbalogan City on July 13 and ambushed operating troops of the 34th IB in Paranas town on July 20.

The guerrillas were able to seize firearms and office equipment from the prison raid. The raid also served to divert the enemy's attention from a planned ambush. The ambush would be a first in the region, because it was to be conducted at night and against the biggest number of vehicles so far in the history of revolutionary warfare in Eastern Visayas. The two tactical offensives were the NPA's response to a call issued by the regional Party leadership in March to overcome the obstacles to launching tactical offensives.

Raid on the subprovincial jail. The NPA had completed the intelligence information it needed on the subprovincial jail in Barangay Lagundi, Catbalogan as early as April. Although the guards at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology were not heavily armed, the prison was still considered a difficult target because a big number of enemy troops were based in surrounding villages and it was near the national highway. Nonetheless, by the second week of July, this problem was resolved and a plan was laid out on how the NPA guerrillas could

bypass these barangays during their retreat. The NPA planned a ruse against the enemy that would conceal their objective of conducting an ambush in Paranas where they had already zeroed in on their target that month.

A squad under the Arnulfo Ortiz Command immediately left to accomplish the mission. At 9 p.m. of July 13, an NPA team raided the subprovincial jail while another team was positioned as a blocking force along a path that the enemy would likely take. As it happened, the four BJMP personnel who were guarding 28 detainees at the prison surrendered without a fight. Seized

from them were a 9 mm pistol, a .38 pistol, a .38 revolver, two laptops, a printer and other military and office equipment.

During the offensive, however, which lasted 20 minutes, the Red fighters accidentally opened fire, slightly wounding a BJMP element.

The NPA was able to make a quick and safe retreat.

Caught by surprise and thinking that the soldiers nearby would be the next target, the 8th ID ordered its troops to withdraw from the surrounding villages. Unknown to the 8th ID, that decision favored the NPA which was planning a bigger offensive: an ambush on the notorious 34th IB troops.

Night time ambush on the 34th IB. The NPA had noticed for some time that the 8th ID had altered the pattern of its



movements in San Jose de Buan and nearby towns. Military vehicles began to travel only at night. The NPA believed that this was because the military wanted to avoid becoming a target of tactical offensives, which had never been conducted at night anywhere in the region. All this changed during the tactical offensive launched in the dead of night in Barangay Concepcion, Paranas on July 20.

The 34th and 87th IB were in the process of shifting their troops that month. The 34th IB was being transferred out of its area of responsibility and its headquarters at the San Jose de Buan town center and the 87th IB was to replace it. With NPA intelligence operatives determining the regular movement of military vehicles every night since the beginning of July, a night time ambush was jointly planned by comrades from the Efren Martires and the Arnulfo Ortiz Commands.

The comrades carefully studied the terrain and the enemy's movements. The necessary ordinance was readied—command-detonated explosives composed of 11 anti-tank and six anti-personnel bombs. The explosives were planted within the 200-meter killing zone some six kilometers from San Jose de Buan. It was in an area between Barangay Canligis and the bridge going to Barangay Concepcion in Paranas.

The NPA was already in ambush position as early as the evening of July 19. Under the bright moonlight, a military convoy passed by on its way to San Jose de Buan. But the ambush was not launched because there were too many vehicles involved and the guerrillas had not yet completed planting all of the

explosives. The following evening, July 20, the NPA was in position and everything had been prepared. The NPA intelligence team sent word that a military convoy had just left San Jose de Buan and was on its way.

At a little after 10 p.m., the military vehicles' headlights suddenly pierced the darkness. In front were three motorcycles followed by two six by six trucks and three owner-type jeeps. At the NPA commander's signal, the bombs were detonated, immediately hitting the military trucks and one of the jeeps. The three motorcycles and the other jeep had escaped the killing zone, speeding away and leaving the other soldiers behind. The soldiers who had evaded the ambush later stopped at Barangay Concepcion and mindlessly opened fire at no particular target. Meanwhile, at the killing zone, the military vehicles had turned turtle from the impact of the blasts. One of the trucks ended up in the nearby river.

After the explosion, the NPA assault squad opened fire and maneuvered. The enemy soldiers who sustained major casualties and were completely caught by surprise were unable to return fire or maneuver.

Meanwhile, another squad assigned to seize firearms and other military equipment from the enemy approached the targets.

It was the first time the guerrillas encountered difficulty during the ambush. In the pitch-black darkness, the squad was unable to confiscate all the firearms. The NPA was unable to prepare for this possibility because there was enough moonlight the previous night, which was the original date for

the ambush. Because it was too dark, the guerrillas were able to confiscate military equipment from only one of the vehicles. Nonetheless, the NPA was able to make a cleaning and leave the area in half an hour.

The NPA confirmed that at least 17 soldiers were killed and six were wounded from the 34th IB Bravo Coy. The 8th ID admitted to suffering only one casualty. But farmers reported that aside from the three dead soldiers retrieved by the military from the ambush site, nine other bodies were deposited in Barangay Canligis and another five in Barangay Concepcion.

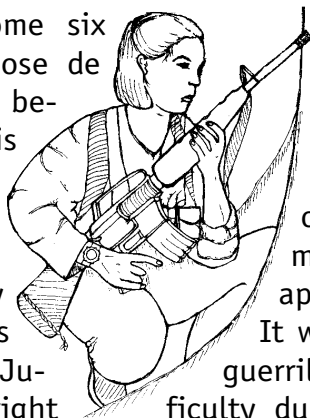
The NPA seized a K3 machine gun, two M16 rifles and a .45 pistol. The guerrillas also carted away 526 M16 rounds; 1,950 M14 rounds; 400 K3 machine gun rounds; and a box of mortar rounds. This is aside from other military equipment and documents confiscated.

The ambush in Barangay Concepcion was a major breakthrough, shattering the 8th ID's confidence. Through it, the NPA was able to prove that it was capable of using the dark of night to its advantage and put the enemy at a disadvantage. It was also able to seize weapons and military equipment for the advance of guerrilla warfare.

The ambush was a severe blow on the military and has derailed its plans to shift the 87th and 34th IB. The masses hate the 34th IB, a battalion notorious for its many violations of human rights in Samar province.

The NPA also proved once more the effectivity of correctly using explosives against the enemy.

Comrades and the masses were gladdened with yet another victory in the armed struggle, leading to the further intensification of tactical offensives in the entire region. AB



NPA-Batangas cadre summarily executed

Elements of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) 740th Combat Group mercilessly killed Hernando "Ka David" Sabiya, a cadre of the Edgardo Dagli Command of the New People's Army (NPA) in Batangas. Sabiya was killed on November 7 in Barangay San Rafael, Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

In a statement, Edgardo Dagli Command spokesperson Ka Apolinario Matienza strongly denied military reports that Sabiya shot himself when the car he was riding was stopped at a checkpoint.

Matienza said Sabiya was on his way to Manila for medical treatment. He had been suffering from severe headaches after being tortured during his arrest in January 2010. When his vehicle was blocked at a checkpoint, the military immediately seized the driver and handcuffed him and ordered Sabiya's other companion to lie flat on the ground. Sabiya was taken from the back seat of the car and brought in front of the vehicle, where he was gunned down. He was unarmed.

Even the policemen who responded to the shooting were incredulous at the military's account and refused to sign as witnesses to Sabiya's alleged suicide.

Sabiya's murder was but the latest in a long list of human rights violations by the 730th and 740th Combat Groups which are both under the PAF Special Operations Wing.

The day after Sabiya's killing, the military shot civilian Louie Gonzales in Barangay Lucsuhin in Calatagan town. He was the brother of Willy Gonzales, who was also summarily executed by the military in February 2009. Mass leaders like Jommel Iganaray of Barangay Bali-bago, Calatagan are also being relentlessly harassed and accused of being NPA members or supporters.

Said Matienza, "The government only succeeds in teaching the people to bear arms when it violently suppresses them whenever they struggle for their rights." AB

Peasants mark 7th year of Hda. Luisita Massacre

Peasants from Tarlac commemorated on November 16 the 7th anniversary of the Hacienda Luisita Massacre. The incident saw seven farmers killed when soldiers attacked a picket line manned by striking peasants and farm workers from the hacienda in November 2004.

The protest action was launched inside the Azucera de Tarlac by members of the Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA) and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU). The protesters, who burned an effigy of Benigno Aquino III had earlier rallied in front of the Northern Luzon Command headquarters which is located right across the hacienda.

AMBALA said it continues to demand justice for the seven peasants killed in the massacre and the other victims of extrajudicial killing in the hacienda. Not a single perpetrator has been punished and they continue to be deprived of justice, added the farm workers' alliance.

They are likewise demanding genuine land reform through the distribution of the hacienda's lands. Meanwhile, they have embarked on a campaign to collectively till idle lands within the estate to enable the peasants to exercise their right to land. They demand the junking of the Stock Distribution Option and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program with Reforms for being anti-peasant and prolandlord.

The peasants are opposing the imminent seizure of the hacienda's lands located in Barangay Balite which has already been sold by the Cojuangco-Aquino family to the Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation. AB





AFP violations of children's rights

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has been camping inside school grounds, unmindful of the danger this poses to the students and in violation of existing local and international laws on the protection of the rights of children amid armed conflict.

In Sadanga, Mountain Province, soldiers have been occupying at least three schools—the Sadanga Elementary School, Sadanga National High School and the Belwang Elementary School. The occupying troops belong to the 54th IB and are led by Lt. Joseph Sabas.

The troops have remained despite being informed of their violation by Robert MacTavish who led a group from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that visited the area in June. MacTavish told the soldiers that they had to remove their camp because it was endangering the children, but the military refused to listen.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides guarantees against the establishment of military camps and barracks inside school campuses. The Philippines is obliged to comply with these provisions because the Philippine government became a signatory to the

convention on July 26, 1990. To implement it, the government passed Republic Act 7610 which provides protection to children against abuse, exploitation and discrimination. Among those protected by this law are children amid armed conflicts. But the AFP brazenly violates this.

To cover up its own violations of children's rights, the AFP has flung the same accusations against the revolutionary movement. It has come up with another pack of lies, charging the New People's Army of extensively recruiting child warriors.

The military cites as “proof” the ages of those who allegedly surrendered on November 14 in South Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon, since almost half of them were between 11 and 17 years old. It was the military's reply to an earlier accusation by Human Rights Watch that the AFP was fabricating evidence against children in military custody in order to misrepresent

them as NPA child warriors.

Meanwhile, in Barangay Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur, residents have been demanding the pullout of soldiers of the 29th IB from their community. The soldiers, who are led by Lt. Col. Henry A. Robinson Jr. have been imposing themselves on the community as part of the Community Operations for Peace and Development (COPD), the new monicker for the Reengineered Special Operations Team (RSOT).

The soldiers arrived on October 23 and have been staying in the villages of Han-ayan and Km. 16 despite opposition from the residents. They have been occupying civilians' homes without permission, and plan to do the same in Km. 15 and Km. 9.

On October 25, Caroline Khoubesserian, a representative from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived in the area. Khoubesserian told the military that it was a violation of the rules of war for soldiers to occupy civilians' houses, but the military ignored her.

The residents have warned the soldiers that if they continued their COPD operations, they would evacuate to show their opposition to the military's presence. AB

Gloria Arroyo arrested

Former president Gloria Arroyo was arrested on the night of November 18 in her room at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Taguig City. She was placed on “hospital arrest” after Judge Jesus Mupas of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 112 issued an arrest warrant for her after charging her with sabotaging the 2007 elections. The case is unbailable.

It has been 17 months since Benigno Aquino III was elected on a platform of holding corrupt officials of the previous regime accountable for their crimes. Arroyo should have long been arrested and charged. Electoral

sabotage is but one of the many cases she should have been charged with. Progressive congressmen have, in fact, already filed cases against her for large-scale corruption and violations of the people's human rights.

It was only in the morning of November 18 that the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) discussed in an en banc meeting the complaints that have been filed regarding the 2007 elections. Only then did the commissioners decide to file a criminal case against Arroyo for sabotaging the election results in Maguindanao. Her husband Mike Arroyo was not charged, allegedly due to lack of evidence.

The case was filed on the basis of sworn statements from Norie Unas, a close aide of for-

mer Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr., former Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan of the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao, and former COMELEC Provincial Supervisor Lintang Bedol. The case was immediately filed at the Pasay City Regional Trial Court.

Aside from the former president, arrest warrants were also issued for Ampatuan Sr. (currently held in custody at the Bicutan Detention Center) and Bedol (now detained at Camp Crame).

Before she was charged and arrested, Arroyo and her husband Mike had tried to leave the Philippines purportedly to enable Gloria Arroyo to seek medical treatment abroad. This was after the Supreme Court approved the Arroyos' petition for a temporary restraining order on the implementation of a travel ban against the couple. The Supreme Court argued that the Arroyos had the right to travel because no cases had been filed against them.

The Department of Justice defied the Supreme Court order, saying that it had yet to file an appeal against it. Personnel of



the Bureau of Immigration at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport stopped the Arroyos from leaving the country.

Upon appeal, the Supreme Court merely affirmed on November 18 its decision to allow the Arroyos to travel abroad. But the order was rendered moot when the COMELEC filed its case against Gloria Arroyo and the Pasay City Regional Trial Court ordered her arrest.

Nonetheless, it is too early to rejoice at these developments. There is no assurance that Arroyo will stand trial for electoral sabotage. She could still get off the hook on a technicality. Arroyo's lawyers immediately filed a motion to quash

the arrest warrant on the grounds that the Sandiganbayan should have jurisdiction over high-ranking government officials who have been criminally charged and not the regional trial courts.

It would not be far-fetched for Arroyo to evade justice on a technicality. As early as the 2010 elections, talk was already rife that Arroyo and Benigno Aquino III had made a deal that would allow an Aquino victory in exchange for leniency for the Arroyo camp once they are criminally charged. The Aquino regime just had to make it appear that it did everything in its power to try and punish the Arroyos.

The Filipino people must remain vigilant to prevent Aquino and Arroyo from putting one over them and to ensure that justice will prevail.

Meanwhile, a number of rallyists managed to slip through the tight security cordon at the St. Luke's Medical Center on November 20 to demand Arroyo's transfer to a regular detention facility instead of holding her at an expensive hospital. They said Arroyo must be held accountable for her crimes against the people and not be given special treatment. AB

Protests greet new governments in Greece and Italy

Huge protests met the newly installed governments in Greece and Italy. The protesters assailed plans to implement austerity measures dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Central Bank (ECB) and European Commission (EC).

On November 17, more than 50,000 Greeks marched against the austerity measures in the streets of Athens and Thessaloniki, Greece's two biggest cities. The march was also launched to commemorate the "Bloody Student Uprising" against the US-backed

military junta in 1973.

The marchers cried "EU and IMF get out!" A protester sustained head injuries after police truncheoned the marchers and blocked their path. More than 50 people were arrested and detained, including members of a group that had stormed the Goldman Sachs building.

Meanwhile, workers' unions threatened to wage a series of strikes until the end of the year should the new prime minister refuse to change the policies that they said were leading



Greece to perdition.

In Italy, tens of thousands of students also marched on November 17 in various cities to show their loathing for the new prime minister who was not chosen through an election and was advocating antipeople policies. Buses, trains, taxis and airplanes stopped their operations in a simultaneous strike waged by transport workers.

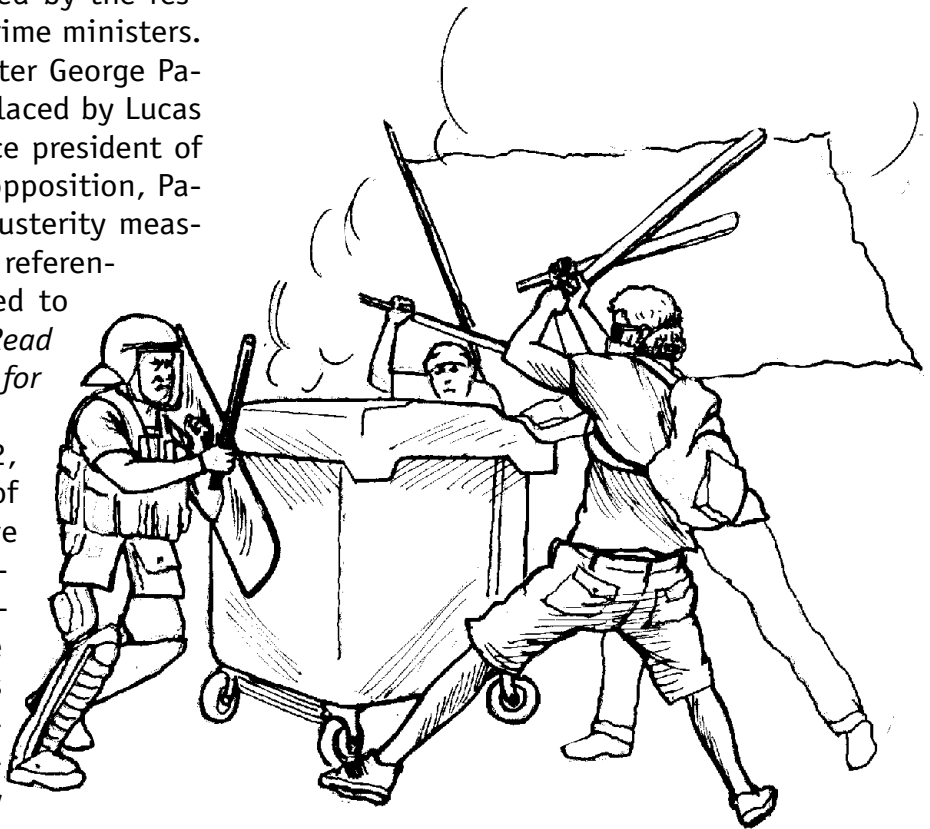
The protesters called the interim administration a "government of banks" especially since the new cabinet is entirely composed of technocrats.

The protest actions were triggered by the resignations of the Greek and Italian prime ministers. On November 10, Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou stepped down. He was replaced by Lucas Papademos, a banker and former vice president of the ECB. In the face of widespread opposition, Papandreou failed to implement the austerity measures and proposed to subject to a referendum the bailout program he acceded to during the EU Summit in October. (Read the November 7 issue of Ang Bayan for more details)

Meanwhile, on November 12, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy resigned after failing to receive a vote of confidence from parliament. But before he resigned, parliament had already approved the measures being pushed by Italy's partners in the EU that would supposedly help the country's economic recovery. He was replaced by Mario Monti, a former EU commissioner, economist and president of Bocconi University.

In Spain, the ruling Socialist Party (SP) was ousted in parliamentary elections held on November 20. The SP's failure to win a majority resulted from the enforcement by former Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's government of austerity measures amid Spain's descent to crisis.

The Popular Party, which won the majority of parliamentary seats has already announced that it would implement the austerity measures imposed by the European Union. AB



Confrontation in Greece: Protesters fight attacking policemen using a big trash bin as shield

Justice demanded for Kananga 3

IT has been a year since the Kananga Massacre took place, but the victims have yet to be given justice.

The massacre occurred on November 15, 2010 when soldiers from the 19th IB opened fire on a group led by renowned scientist Leonardo Co that was collecting plant samples from a forested area in Kananga, Leyte. Aside from Co, the soldiers also killed his companions Julius Borromeo and Sofronio Cortez.

The military claimed that the victims, who had come to be known as the Kananga 3 were caught in the crossfire in an encounter between

soldiers and the New People's Army (NPA). Witnesses and the results of a fact-finding mission belied the AFP's claims. In a later statement, the NPA also said that there were no Red fighters in the area when the massacre took place.

In a picket at the office of the Department of Justice (DOJ), Dr. Giovanni Tapang, the convenor of the Justice for Leonard Co movement assailed the Aquino administration's failure to solve the case. Instead of giving justice to the victims, the DOJ and the National Bureau of Investigation cleared the 19th IB elements who killed the Kananga 3.

Women oppose fare, power rate hikes

GABRIELA strongly opposed the latest fare and power rate hikes. In a protest action on November 7, members of the progressive women's group from various communities demanded that the Aquino government put a stop to oil price hikes and plans to raise electricity rates this month.

GABRIELA picketed the Meralco branch at EDSA-Kamuning Road in Quezon City to condemn the 44-centavo per

kilowatt-hour (kwh) hike. Its members said the increase would add P44 to the electricity bills of families with a monthly consumption of 100 kwh. These families, said GABRIELA, will be at their wit's end trying to make do with their meager budgets since the power hike will further reduce funds for food and other basic needs.

The militant women later trooped to the office of the

Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board to express their opposition to a petition for a fare increase filed by a number of transport groups (excluding PISTON). They said that instead of asking for another fare hike, the transport groups should condemn Benigno Aquino III's collusion with the oil cartel and call for a stop to oil price hikes or the removal of the 12% Value Added Tax on gasoline.

"Occupy" movement persists despite repression

THE US government attempted several times to dismantle protest camps set up by the "Occupy" movement in various parts of the country from November 11 to 17. The Office of Homeland Security has been coordinating the demolition of what it considers to be the strongest camps in 18 cities across the country, including the movement's first—Occupy Wall Street (OWS) at Zucotti Park in New York City. The police used violent methods to dismantle the camps, including the use of pepper spray against the rallyists and bulldozers to tear down their tents.

Instead of suppressing the rallyists, however, more people have been heeding the movement's calls. On November 17, OWS called on all the "Occupy"

movements worldwide to fight state repression.

In New York City, more than 30,000 students, workers and other sectors launched a protest action in Manhattan, the center of the metropolis and the base of Wall Street which hosts the biggest banks and financial centers in the US and around the globe. The protest action was timed to coincide with debates by a US Congressional super-committee on an additional \$2.5 trillion reduction in the government budget for 2012. It was the biggest mobilization mustered by the two-month old movement.

The rallyists succeeded in blocking all five routes going to Wall Street. They also at-

tempted to storm the New York Stock Exchange and paralyze it, but were attacked by several layers of riot police who lobbed pepper spray, beat up and arrested several demonstrators.

Thousands of people also launched simultaneous protest actions in more than 30 cities in the US and other countries.

