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Editorial

Aquino cannot restore the people's trust in the rotten ruling system

Benigno Aquino III churned out nothing but lies and half-truths in his speech before the opening of the reactionary congress on July 25. He attempted to paint a positive image of the state of the nation and of continuing change in a desperate attempt to restore the people's trust in the reactionary government. But he succeeded only in further isolating his regime and in reinforcing the people's loss of trust in the ruling reactionary system.

Aquino wanted to create the illusion of progress and change under his regime. But this failed to strike a chord among the people who daily are confronted with spiralling prices of oil products, food and other basic commodities. Unemployment is widespread and wages are low. Millions of families are without decent homes. Disease is rampant and environmental degradation is massive. A myriad social and economic ills plague the nation.

By repressing his anti-corruption rhetoric against the past regime, Aquino sought to win the people's trust and make them

cling to hopes of change under his government. Even after a year in power, however, he has failed to charge, prosecute and punish Gloria Arroyo or any of her big-time cohorts for numerous cases of plunder and corruption. The rise of the "Kamag-anak, Kaklase, Kabarkada, Kabarilan Inc." underscores the perpetuation of cronyism under the new regime.

Aquino tried to paint a rosy economic picture by citing positive reviews by foreign credit rating agencies and the US government. But he was conspicuously silent about the wretched socio-economic conditions of the vast majority of workers, peasants, ordinary employees, government workers and the unemployed.

Aquino claimed that more than a million jobs were generated last year but failed to men-



This issue's highlights...

The workers' wretched state PAGE 3

3 NDFP consultants out of jail PAGE 7

"Bungkalan" campaign in Hacienda Luisita PAGE 11

tion how and where these jobs were created. He glossed over the fact that more than a million people joined the labor force last year. The reality is that people are being kicked out of their jobs on a daily basis after the expiration of their three-month employment contracts. Aquino has failed to lay out an economic blueprint to generate mass employment for the more than 11 million unemployed and underemployed.

Aquino's IMF-trained economic managers refuse to heed demands to develop local industries and markets and reduce reliance on imported commodities. They insist on the economic policies set more than twenty years ago promoting liberalization of trade and investments, the privatization of state assets and the deregulation of the operations of private investors. In the past two decades, all measures in the 1987 constitution that sought to protect the national patrimony have all but been torn down, with charter amendments as the only other step needed to complete the process of renewed economic colonization.

Aquino boasted of increased palay production although this has in fact been

caused only by a recovery of hectareage from previous droughts and not by any increase in productivity. He bragged about reducing rice importations but failed to direct the National Food Authority to raise its local palay procurement to break down the rice trading monopoly of big comprador businesses who are in cahoots with big bureaucrats. On the other hand, he continues to ignore the demand for land reform in the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita.

The closest thing Aquino has to a poverty alleviation program is the World Bank-designed doleout scheme called the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). By doling out a few thousand pesos a month to families belonging to the "poorest of the poor," Aquino deceives the people into believing that he could lift them from their poverty even without resolving land hunger and massive unemployment as well as the other roots of their impoverishment.


Aquino failed to address the most fundamental and pressing issues being put forth by the people. They demand jobs, higher wages, land reform and respect for human rights. They

want a stop to oil price hikes and demand the nationalization of the oil industry. They call for a halt to the demolition of urban poor communities. They demand an end to US military intervention in the Philippines and US interference in the Spratly Islands problem.

Aquino failed to cite the peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) as one of his government's priorities. The commitment to expedite the release of all NDF peace consultants remains unfulfilled as 13 of them are still incarcerated in various prisons. While the Aquino regime drags its feet in the peace negotiations, its fascist troops continue to stomp their boots and trample on human rights in so-called "peace and development" operations in the countryside.

Aquino's state of the nation address is a reactionary, pro-imperialist and antipeople speech characterized by endless lies and deception. It is a desperate entreaty to the Filipino people to continue reposing their trust in the rotten and crisis-ridden semicolonial and semifeudal system. However, Aquino and his American spinmasters are completely wrong to assume that they could lead the people away from the path of national and democratic mass resistance through their empty declarations and political gimmickry.

In the face of the worsening conditions of poverty and oppression, the Filipino people are becoming acutely aware of the need to wage revolutionary struggle as the only straight path to social and national liberation. This is evidenced by the continuing growth of the New People's Army and the intensifying mass struggles under the Aquino regime's first year in power. **AB**

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Contents	
Editorial: Aquino cannot restore the people's trust	1
SONA 2011	
Workers' wretched state	3
Worst year for OCWs	3
Monthly demolitions	4
Rich-poor gap	4
3 victims before SONA	4
Protests on 2nd SONA	5
3 NDFP consultants freed	6
NPA ambushes 39th IB	8
Offensives in Samar, Pangasinan	8
NPA frees victim of injustice	9
Cordillera people	10
"Bungkalan" in Hacienda Luisita	11
Crimes of the 8th ID	12
News	13
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The workers' wretched state

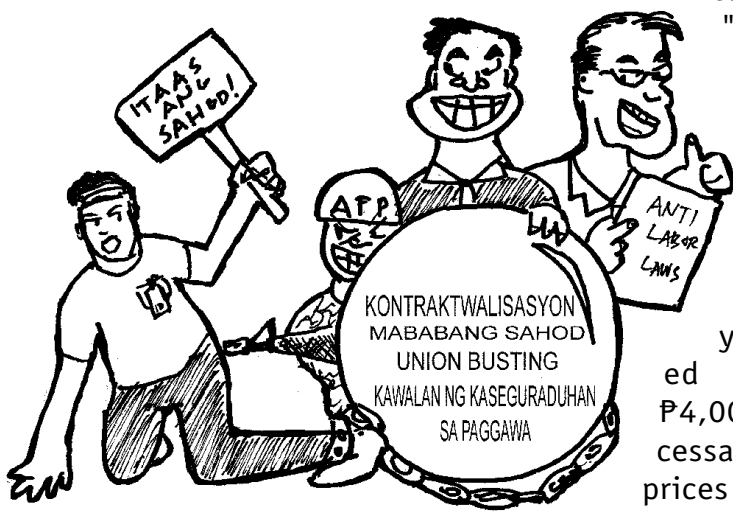
Filipino workers became even more impoverished and oppressed in the first year of the Aquino regime.

Five unionists became victims of extrajudicial killing during this period.

Mass leaders and workers' rights advocates continued to suffer from persecution. Among the 72 Southern Taga-

log leaders and activists who were slapped with trumped-up murder charges was Atty. Remigio Saladero, a well-known trade union lawyer. This was after a court dismissed another manufactured murder case against the "ST 72" in 2009.

The real value of the workers' already grossly inadequate wages for the year was eroded further by ₱4,000 due to incessant hikes in the prices of commo-



ties. Despite this, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) approved a mere ₱22 raise in the Cost of Living Allowance of private sector workers in the National Capital Region. The ₱1,800 increase in the monthly salaries of government employees is way below their demand for a ₱6,000 monthly hike.

The number of unemployed rose by 11.3 million and the underemployment rate continues to worsen despite relentless efforts by the government to water down the definition and categorizations of the unemployed. An SWS survey has shown that Aquino registered the worst unemployment rate in his first year as president compared to other presidents. Sixty percent (60%) of the employed are part-time workers and almost half of those who have jobs are in the informal sector—with no security of tenure, no benefits and no union rights.

Aquino's "straight path" clearly favors capital over the rights and interests of workers. Akbayan, a partylist group closely allied with Malacañang is currently pushing a bill that aims to legalize contractualization in up to 20% of the industrial workforce instead of demanding job security for all workers.

Workers do not enjoy any protection from dangers in their workplace. According to the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights and the Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development, 214 workers have died in various work-related accidents since January 2011.



Worst year for Filipino migrant workers

Filipino migrant workers are hailed as "modern-day heroes" but they continue to suffer neglect under the Aquino regime.

The Aquino government slashed almost half of the budget allocation for migrant services this year (from ₱19.5 billion to only ₱10 billion).

The previous year was marked by the Aquino regime's failure to resolve various problems faced by migrants. It failed to repatriate 90% of Filipino stranded in Libya, and provide enough support to thousands of migrants facing various problems overseas.

Despite the political turmoil in foreign lands, Aquino continues to encourage Filipinos to work abroad, attracted no doubt by the prospect of shoring up his regime with an estimated \$22 billion in remittances by the end of this year. The labor-export policy remains the center of Aquino's employment generation program. There are now almost 15 million Filipino migrant workers.

AB

AB



Monthly demolitions

An urban poor community was demolished every month during Benigno Aquino III's first year as president. Up to 27,000 families or 103,555 individuals lost their homes in 14 violent demolitions conducted in various parts of the country since July 2010. Three activists from this sector became victims of extrajudicial killing in the same period.

The demolitions, which were undertaken to give way to national projects show that the urban poor have no place in Aquino's Private-Public Partnership (PPP) program. They are forcibly evicted from their communities even in the absence of relocation sites for them. Even if relocation sites are available, these are often devoid of livelihood opportunities and social services. AB

Yawning gap between rich and poor

The rich are getting richer under the US-Aquino regime.

According to a survey by *Forbes Magazine*, the richest Filipinos were able to expand their businesses by 39%, from US\$16.4 billion in 2010 to US\$22.8 billion this year.

On the other hand, another survey has revealed government reductions in the poverty threshold from ₱54 to ₱46 in order to understate the number of poor Filipinos. The number of impoverished Filipinos stayed high at 23.1 million, nonetheless.

The Aquino government slapped the public at large with high taxes and fees, while it went easy with taxing the oil companies despite the superprofits the latter raked in from the series of hikes in the prices of petroleum products.

Oil prices have been raised 27 times since January 2011. AB

3 victims days before SONA

Three persons became victims of political killings days before Benigno Aquino III's State of the Nation Address.

They come on top of the 48 victims of extrajudicial killings recorded in Aquino's first year.

On the night of July 10, two masked motorcycle-riding men killed Roque Laputan, 59, a member of Anakpawis in Davao del Sur. Laputan was at a store in Barangay Tagansuli, Malalag, Davao del Sur when he was shot. One of the men held his neck in a stranglehold and pulled him away for the other man to shoot him twice in the head. Laputan died on the spot.

Laputan was one of the leaders of protest actions against the operations of the foreign-owned Xstrata-Sagittarius Mines Inc. in Davao del Sur. The company also plans to put up a coal-fired plant in the same area.

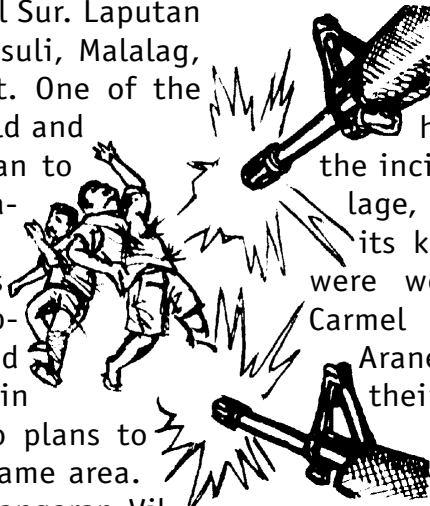
Meanwhile, two residents of Pangarap Village in Caloocan City were killed after armed guards opened fire at them. The victims were among the residents protesting the demolitions in the area. Aside from the fatalities Soliman Gomez and Rommel Fortadez, six other resi-

dents were wounded in the shooting.

Witnessed said that the armed guards watching over a lot owned by Gregorio Araneta III were drunk at the time. Araneta is a son-in-law of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and a close relative of Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, the newly appointed secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano has called for an investigation of the incident. Particularly in Pangarap Village, the shooting was not the first of its kind. On April 28, three residents were wounded when armed guards of Carmel Development Inc. owned by the Araneta family indiscriminately fired their weapons.

Said Cristina Guevarra, secretary-general of HUSTISYA, an organization of relatives of human rights violations, political killings continue without letup under Aquino even as justice continues to elude the victims of human rights violations under the previous administration. AB



Protests greet Aquino's 2nd SONA

Protest actions within and outside the country greeted Benigno Aquino III's second State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25. The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) and its allied organizations led the mass mobilizations.

In the National Capital Region, 14,000 rallyists marched along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City before Aquino began his speech at the Batasang Pambansa. They burned a 14-foot effigy of Aquino as a symbol of the failing grade given to him by the people.

Delegations of peasants from Hacienda Luisita joined the protest action. They called for the immediate distribution of the Cojuangco-Aquino family's vast estate and demanded that Aquino stop his family from pretending to be pro-peasant.

Aquino is a failure as president, said BAYAN. The people did not feel any changes in the previous year as prices of commodities and transportation fares continued to rise, poverty and unemployment worsened and services like housing, education, health and the like continued to deteriorate.

BAYAN added that human rights violations continued to grow under Aquino's presidency. The government still refuses to release many political prisoners. BAYAN also assailed Aquino's failure to punish Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for her crimes.

Meanwhile, Aquino's SONA was likewise greeted with protests in other parts of the country.

Outside NCR, the biggest mobilizations were in Mindanao. More than 10,000 peasants from all over the island launched protest actions, said Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipi-

nas-Southern Mindanao secretary-general Pedro Arnado. The rallyists burned an effigy of Aquino showing US imperialism and a comprador clinging to him to symbolize the people's disappointment over his rule. They also slammed the continued demolitions of urban poor communities in Davao City and other parts of the country, intensifying militarization in the countryside and the pro-imperialist Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program.

In Panay, up to 3,700 attended gatherings in three provinces to assail the SONA. In Iloilo City, 2,500 people massed up in front of the University of the Philippines in the Visayas and St. Clement Church and marched to the provincial capitol where they held a rally and concert. Meanwhile, some 500 persons rallied at Crossing Banga and New Washington in Kalibo,

Aklan while in Capiz, 700 protested at the Roxas City plaza.

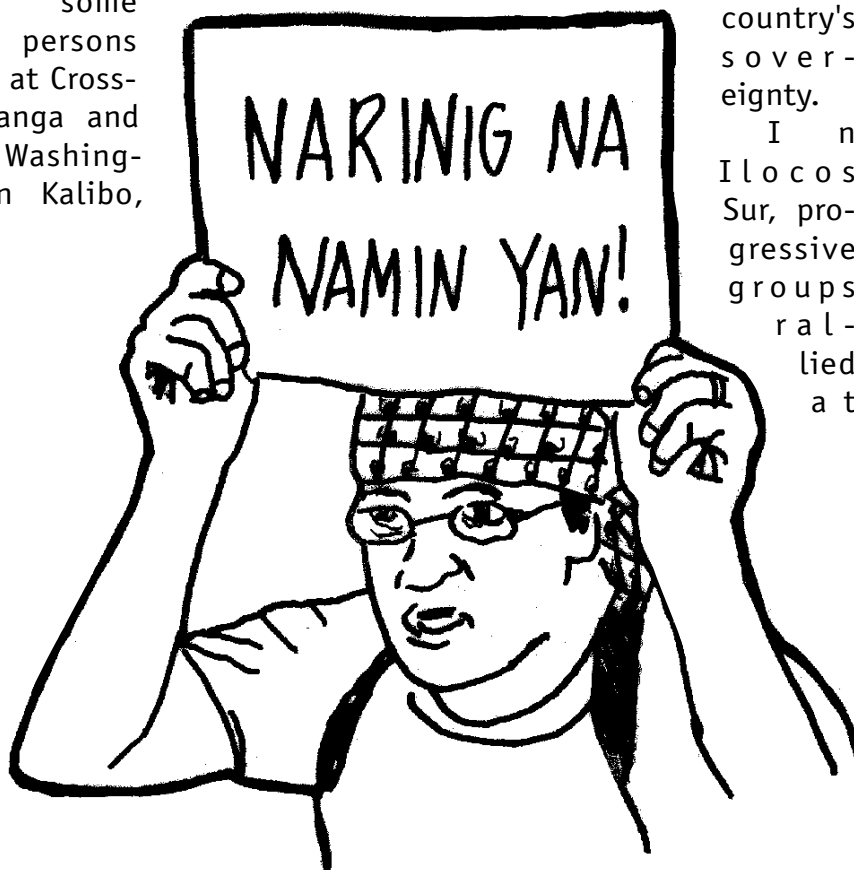
In Southern Tagalog, up to 2,000 persons were mobilized for the "people's SONA" launched in the region's various provinces. This was after a series of mass actions the previous week. Protesters in Laguna burned an effigy of Aquino after their rally.

In Bicol, some 1,000 people led by BAYAN and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas marched towards the Ninoy Aquino Park in Daraga, Albay before proceeding to Peñaranda Park in Legazpi City. BAYAN-Bicol assailed Aquino for perpetuating the globalization policy under the Philippine Development Plan.

In Cagayan de Oro, urban poor residents staged street plays at Cogon Market, the city's biggest. The rallyists portrayed the difficulties of a family forced to make ends meet with a meager budget due to low wages and high prices.

In Zamboanga City, protesters held a picket-rally to demand the ouster of US military troops and respect for the country's sovereignty.

In Ilocos Sur, progressive groups rallied at





Plaza Burgos in Vigan City. They brought with them two "giants" symbolizing Aquino and Arroyo to underscore the fact that there was no difference between their two regimes.

In Baguio, activists held a "workers' lunch," eating only rice and chayote to dramatize the people's continuing hunger and poverty.

In Bacolod City, protesters gave Aquino a failing mark and burned an effigy portraying him as a US puppet. One of their bases for the failing mark was the Conditional Cash Transfer dole-out program which they called an insult to the poor.

In Cebu City, the Nagkahiusang Drayber sa Sugbo-PISTON led protests along Colon Street, the metropolis' biggest thoroughfare. They expressed their disappointment at Aquino's failure to order the repeal of the 12% Value Added Tax on petroleum products and put a stop to the endless series of oil price hikes. They also hit him for his deceptive "Pantawid Pasada Program" for drivers.

In Leyte, up to 500 people protested at the old bus terminal in Tacloban City.

There were also anti-SONA mass actions overseas.

In the US, BAYAN-USA led a protest in New York City where Aquino was roundly criticized for being a US lackey.

In Canada, a rally was launched in Quebec slamming Aquino's failure to resolve poverty and the country's other problems.

Simultaneous anti-SONA mass actions were launched and statements issued by migrants in New Zealand, Hongkong, Taiwan, South Korea, the Middle East and Europe. AB

3 NDFP consultants out of jail

Three political detainees, all of them consultants of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) are now free. Advocates of human rights and a just and lasting peace hailed the release of Jovencio Balweg of Abra, Maria Luisa Purcay of Agusan del Norte and Jaime Soledad of Leyte. The Aquino regime had pledged to release all detained NDFP consultants as early as February 21.

First to walk out of prison were Balweg and Purcay who were released on July 22. Balweg had even joined the four-day simultaneous hunger strike of 230 out of the 354 political detainees nationwide that began in the morning of July 22. Soledad was released in the afternoon of July 25.

Fourteen other NDFP consultants continue to languish in jail. Among them are Alan Jazmines, Eduardo Sarmiento and Eduardo Serrano who are detained at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame and Randy Malayao who is incarcerated at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Tuguegarao City. They are among more than 300 political prisoners detained in various detention facilities of the reactionary government.

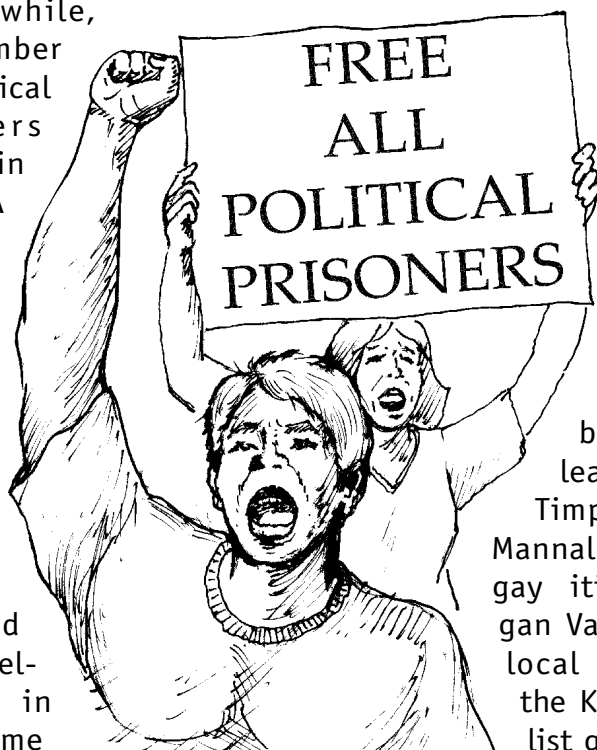
Meanwhile, the number of political prisoners grew in July. A day before Balweg was freed, a former activist was arrested by police and military elements in her home

in Naguilian, La Union on July 21. Gloria Quiñones Floresca, 57, who was arrested in front of her four-year old grandchild was formerly an organizer of the Solidarity of Ilocos Associations of Women (Silaw), an affiliate of GABRIELA-Ilocos.

On July 23, a leader of the Aggay tribe was arrested by soldiers from the 17th IB Charlie Coy and elements of the PNP Regional Mobile Group on suspicion that he was a member of the New People's Army. Vicente Agbayani, 48, was arrested without warrant while he was working in his swidden farm in Barangay Masi, Rizal, Cagayan. According to his wife Salomea, Agbayani was beaten up and blindfolded. His relatives searched for him for

days before finding him detained at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Tuguegarao City.

Agbayani is the leader of the Timpuyog Dagiti Mannalon nga Aggay iti Zinundungan Valley and the local chapter of the Katribu party-list group. AB



4 Moros fall victim to military atrocities

Four Moro civilians fell victim to grave human rights violations in June and July.

In a report, the Mindanao People's Caucus said operatives of the Special Operations Task Force of the Philippine Army 1st Infantry Division (SOTF-PA) arrested Abdul Ajid Balanting, 39, in his house in Barangay Libug, Sumisip, Basilan on July 23. The operatives were forcing him to admit to being a member of the Abu Sayyaf and involvement in the mass kidnapping and attack on Lamitan town in 2001.

Balanting was stripped, doused with gasoline and set on fire by Capt. Sherwin Guidangan, S/Sgt. Elmer Magdaraog, Sgt. Edgardo Santos and Sgt. George Aging, all elements of the SOTF-PA. Balanting's ears, face, abdomen and genitals were burned.

The victim's relatives only came to know about his horrendous experience when they filed a writ of habeas corpus and the military was compelled to transfer Balanting to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Isabela City.

The AFP had no choice but to order the arrest of the four soldiers after the case was exposed in the media. Many believe that the severe torture suffered by Balanting was done in revenge for the death of seven elements of the Philippine Marines and the wounding of 25 other soldiers in an Abu Sayyaf ambush in

Patikul, Sulu on July 28.

Still another case of torture was disclosed to the media on August 2. Asrap Musa, a 17-year old student was arrested without warrant by SOTF-PA elements on June 23 and brought to the military unit's headquarters in Isabela City where he was beaten up and immersed in a drum full of water to force him to admit that he was an Abu Sayyaf member. He is now detained at the Basilan Provincial Jail and has been charged with illegal possession of explosives, which he denies.

Earlier, on June 8, Philippine Army Special Forces elements shot at Moner Esmael, 30 and Gayla Sabtal, both Moro fishermen.

The victims were aboard a dugout canoe and fishing a few kilometers off the coast of Kaliantana in Naga, Zamboanga Sibugay when Special Forces members opened fire at them at around 4 a.m. Esmael was wounded in the calf and brought to a hospital. Sabtal remains missing and is feared dead.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) assailed the slander and abuse being inflicted on Moro civilians by the Aquino government's armed forces, saying these were clear violations of human rights, of the ceasefire agreement between the MILF and the Philippine government and of International Humanitarian Law. **AB**



NPA in 2nd punitive action vs Masbate mining firm

For the second time around, the New People's Army (NPA) Jose Rapsing Command punished the Filminera Mining Corporation (FMC) in Sitio Guimobatan, Barangay Syndicate, Aroroy, Masbate.

On August 1, an NPA special unit detonated explosives on a huge water reservoir that the giant mining company has been using to process gold. The operation paralyzed and stopped FMC's operations, said National

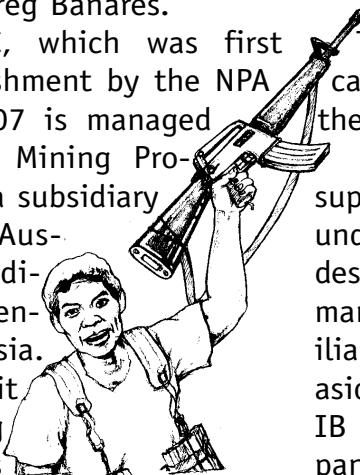
Democratic Front-Bicol spokesperson Ka Greg Bañares.

The FMC, which was first meted punishment by the NPA in April 2007 is managed by Masbate Mining Project and is a subsidiary of the Australian-Canadian-owned Central Gold Asia. Its open pit gold mining operations

have led to grave crimes against the people such as widespread environmental destruction, the plunder of the province's natural resources and the murder and manhandling of small miners and residents of the area.

These were all being done in cahoots with 9th ID troops and the Philippine National Police.

Due to the people's ardent support, the NPA was able to undertake the punitive action despite the presence of a 20-man Special Civilian Armed Auxiliary (SCAA) under the 22nd IB, aside from a company of the 9th IB based near the mining company. **AB**





NPA ambushes 39th IB in Davao del Sur

Four soldiers of the 39th IB were killed and many more were wounded in an ambush in Barangay Tikulon, Malita, Davao del Sur on July 29 by Red fighters of the Valentin Palamine Operations Command (VPOC) of Far South Mindanao Region.

To cover up their military failures and court the people's sympathy, Lt. Col. Oliver Artuz, 39th IB chief immediately accused the NPA of conducting a "treacherous" ambush due to its alleged use of banned land mines.

VPOC spokesperson Ka Dencio Madrigal explained that the NPA did not violate human rights or the rules of war because it used command-detonated explosives (CDX) and not contact-detonated land mines that do not have defined targets and explode upon contact with any person or animal.

Madrigal added that compared to bomber aircraft like the Toratora, OV10, Sikorsky, MG520 and the like used by the Armed Forces of the Philippines that indiscriminately rain bombs in the countryside and other communities, the CDX used by the NPA are controlled and detonated only in the presence of legitimate military targets. The NPA commander and blasting officer make sure that no civilian is hurt during the detonation.

The NPA used the CDX against the armed enemy to defend the territories of the National Democratic Front in Malita, said Ka Dencio Madrigal. Soldiers of the reactionary government have been on the attack for months in the area to pave the way for large-scale foreign mining operations. Using civil-military operations as

cover, the commanders of the 27th, 73rd and 39th IB met at Little Baguio to oversee the

military operations. Their objective was to ensure the unencumbered operations of mining companies in the vast ancestral lands of the B'laan and Tagakaolo tribes.

Prior to this, a soldier from the 73rd IB was killed in another ambush staged by the people's militia on July 26 in Sitio Malbag, Barangay Little Baguio. AB

NPA ambushes military convoy in Samar, attacks CAFGU detachment in Pangasinan

RED fighters of the Arnulfo Ortiz Command (NPA-Samar) ambushed a military convoy on the night of July 20 in Paranas, Samar.

Soldiers of the 34th IB were on the way back to their headquarters in San Jose de Buan town aboard five six-by-six trucks when they were hit by command-detonated explosives and fired upon by the NPA between Barangays Concepcion and Canliques in the same town.

According to the NDF-Eastern Visayas Information Bureau, a sergeant was killed and six others were wounded in this attack. The Red fighters seized all the firearms of the fascist soldiers.

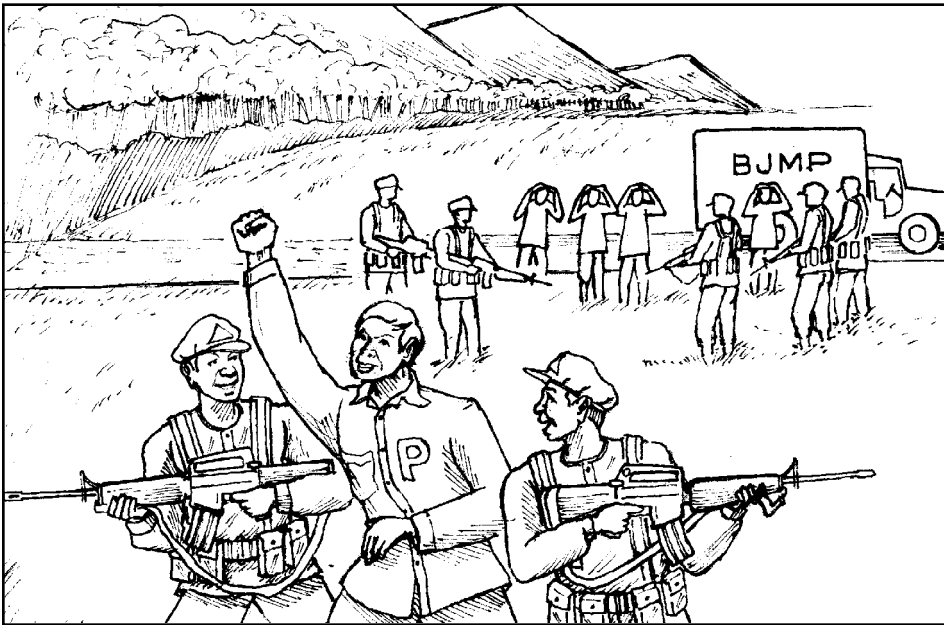
That same day, a unit under the Mt. Amandewin Command (NPA-Leyte) launched a counter-offensive on troops of the 19th IB who were on the attack in Carigara, Leyte. Two soldiers were killed, said NDF-EV spokesperson Fr. Santiago Salas in a statement. There were no casualties on the NPA side.

Meanwhile, an NPA team daringly closed in on a CAFGU detachment in Barangay Bachelor East, Natividad, Pangasinan to hurl two grenades at around 10 p.m. of August 2. The CAFGU elements were unable to return fire until the NPA operatives had reached a safe distance. It took almost 10 minutes before a vehicle bearing the enemy wounded zoomed out of the camp. It also took almost half an hour before the paramilitary forces began to fire their weapons, aiming at no particular target.

The harassment operation against the detachment formed part of a series of attacks by various NPA units on enemy patrol bases that have dotted the Caraballo mountains since last year. First to be harassed was a camp in Barangay Namulandayan, Lupao, Nueva Ecija. Detachments in Sitio Lingkupan, Barangay Cabangaran, San Quintin and in Barangay RA Padilla, Carranglan were each peppered with bullets twice, on separate occasions. AB



NPA frees victim of injustice in daring operation



The New People's Army's (NPA) rescue operation that freed Dennis Rodanes while he was being transported by personnel of the Philippine National Police/Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (PNP/BJMP) to the Davao Penal Colony (DAPECOL) to serve a life sentence meted by a reactionary court of the Philippine government was an act of revolutionary justice.

Thus said Ka Rigoberto F. Sanchez, spokesperson of the Merardo Arce Command of the New People's Army (NPA) in Southern Mindanao Region. In a statement dated July 30, he hailed the Red commanders and fighters of the Herminio Alfonso Command (HAC) even as the revolutionary forces and

masses rejoiced at the daring military action and the implementation of revolutionary justice.

On July 21, at around 4 a.m., Red fighters under the HAC blocked a BJMP vehicle at a checkpoint they set up in Sitio Maluos, Barangay Sinuda, Kitaotao, Bukidnon. The vehi-

cle had come from Ozamiz City in Misamis Occidental and was on its way to DAPECOL in Davao del Norte, said HAC spokesperson Ka Isabel Santiago.

The NPA immediately freed Rodanes, who had been meted a life sentence by a repressive and antipeople court that based its judgment mainly on the false evidence planted by the Philippine Army 1st Infantry Division, said Santiago.

Out of the 11 PNP/BJMP personnel, four of its officers were arrested and placed in NPA custody. The Red fighters also seized the 13 firearms of the BJMP escorts consisting of four M16s and nine pistols and revolvers.

The remaining seven BJMP personnel and the other prisoners were allowed to proceed to DAPECOL.

The NPA said the four PNP/BJMP officers were armed, active and regular officers of the counterrevolutionary and repressive machinery of the reactionary government of the Philippines.

They undertake police functions in prisons of the reactionary state that serve as important instruments of the government's counterrevolutionary war. Thus, they are legitimate military targets and were arrested by the NPA. They are now under investigation.

Nonetheless, Sanchez clarified that their continued custody is guided by NPA rules and is under the authority of the people's democratic government. Their basic rights are being respected and their welfare ensured. They are being treated well by the NPA and are in the care of the revolutionary masses, added the MAC spokesperson. AB

Philippine revolution on the internet

The Philippine Revolution Web Central (PRWC) is back online. The PRWC is the official website of the Communist Party of the Philippines and can be accessed at www.philippinerevolution.net. It was inaccessible for close to two months due to technical problems. The PRWC is managed by the CPP Information Bureau.

In its pages can be found copies of *Ang Bayan* and all statements issued by the CPP and other revolutionary organizations. In the next several weeks, it will also be carrying various other documents, publications, songs, videos and photographs featuring the different aspects of the Philippine revolution.

Oppression and poverty in the Cordillera

The Cordillera people's poverty and oppression mirror the wretched state of the people nationwide. This is despite the fact that their region is one of the richest in terms of natural resources.

Proof of the region's wealth is the sheer number of mining applications that now encompass up to half of Cordilleran territory. Among the companies planning to operate in the region are Phelps Dodge with pending applications in Patiancan, Quirino, Ilocos Sur and Batong Buhay, Pasil, Kalinga; nine front companies of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. to cover 311,853 hectares in 29 towns in six provinces; and Nickel-Asia which is slated to take over the 194,640-hectare concession of Cordillera Exploration/Anglo-American Exploration. There are likewise 33 mining applications covering 292,600 hectares in various parts of Abra, and plans to put up five geothermal and 38 hydroelectric power plants in the region.

But only imperialist and bourgeois comprador companies have benefited from the region's wealth. The Cordillera is a victim of grave neglect by the government. The national budget alloca-

tion for the entire region is equivalent to that of the lone province of Pangasinan. Five of its six provinces are among the 15 poorest nationwide. The region also has the least number of paved roads and the least number of concrete and permanent bridges. This is in spite of the presence in the Cordillera of huge rivers and tributaries feeding the five megadams supplying electricity to most of Luzon.

The Aquino regime's only response to the Cordillerans' poverty is the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) which is being implemented in 49 areas in the region. There has been no improvement at all in these areas, whose health and educational facilities continued to deteriorate despite the massive funding purportedly provided.

Worse, the Cordilleran people's struggles to assert their right to life, land and livelihood is being repressed through military brutality. Under Oplan

Bayanihan, the abusive

Reengineered Special Operations Teams (RSOT) of Oplan Bantay Laya notoriety have been renamed Peace and Development Operations Teams. But there has been no change in the operating soldiers' abusive ways. They

continue to occupy schools, day-care centers, barangay halls, clinics, private residences and places sacred to the people—all of which violate the rights of civilians and endanger their lives. The soldiers' abuses have spared no one—young or old, woman or man.

The AFP has clearly been targeting the people because of their growing organized opposition to the entry of destructive mining and other corporations that enjoy the military's protection.

Another counterrevolutionary maneuver by the AFP is its resuscitation of the moribund and fractious Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA). The Office of the Presidential Assistant for the Peace Process is reportedly allotting a ₱400 million livelihood fund for a new organization comprising the "reunited" factions of the CPLA to project the illusion that the peace process has been advancing in the region. In fact, as far back as 2008, CPLA elements had already been integrated into the AFP as a special paramilitary force.

This maneuver has no other purpose than to sabotage and obstruct the peace negotiations between the Aquino government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. The CPLA will also be revived as a private army at the beck and call of local warlords or even Malacañang, and used against the revolutionary forces.

The Aquino regime has merely perpetuated the oppressive and exploitative policies and laws that have paved the way for the plunder of the region's natural resources by foreign and local exploiters. The Cordilleran people's hopes of rising from their poverty and oppression lie not in the Aquino regime's empty promises but in launching people's struggles and advancing armed revolution. AB



"Bungkalan" as a form of political and economic struggle

The peasants and farm workers of Hacienda Luisita have been asserting their right to land and livelihood by undertaking a campaign to till idle lands on the vast estate. The campaign, called "bungkalan" (collectively tilling the land), continues to expand. From 200 peasant and farm workers (see Ang Bayan's *July 21, 2011 issue*), the number of participants has now doubled to 400.

Among those who have joined the campaign are peasants and farm workers from the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA) and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU). They enjoy support from the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL), Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Tarlac (AMT) and KARAPATAN-Tarlac. Also throwing in their support are Fr. Greg Obejas of the Luisita Peasant and People's Alliance (Luppa), the barangay council of Balite, Tarlac City and the Tarlac City Council.

The lands they are tilling had long been idle. On the other hand, the chronically unemployed farm workers of Barangay Balite have long wanted to till these lands in order to have a source of income.

Up to ten hectares of land was surveyed, with each hectare assigned to a group of peasants and farm workers to till. A camp has been built to serve as a "cultivation center" to ensure that the tilling is done collectively. Here, there are seed beds planted to okra, gourd, squash and string beans. Some of the farm workers also brought tree saplings for planting.

The "cultivation center" also serves as a guard post against attempts to dislocate

and evict the participants and as a receiving area for supporters from other sectors. Discussions, consolidation programs and other activities are also held here.

They have two hand tractors to plow the land at present, and are waiting for more. The hand tractors have been crucial in fast-tracking land preparation to enable the participants to till a bigger area.

The various unions and groups that have been spearheading the campaign have called on all sectors for support and encourage visits to their camp at Hacienda Luisita. All political, moral and financial support received will surely strengthen the peasants' struggle.

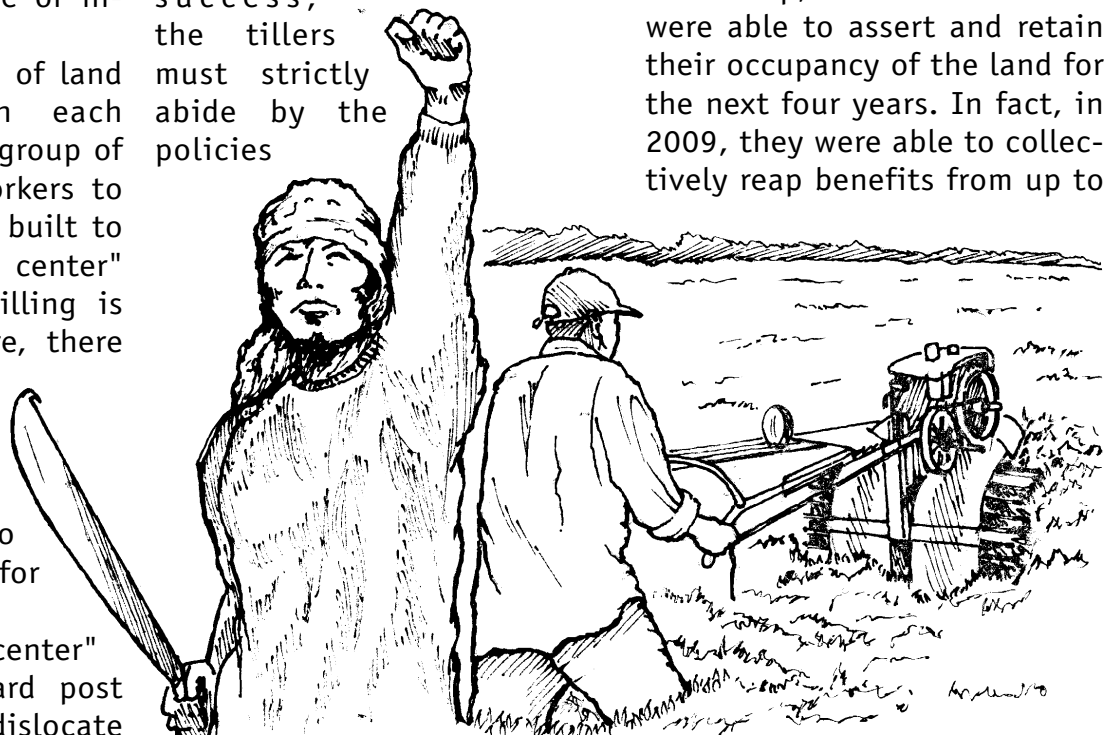
To ensure the campaign's success, the tillers must strictly abide by the policies

adopted by the members of ULWU and AMBALA. One of the most important is that they themselves must till the land, which must never be rented out to others.

The peasants are called upon to defend the lands from the goons of the Cojuangco-Aquino family and the latter's banker-business partners who are both poised to use violence as well as political and economic power to evict the tillers. Aside from violence and deception, the Cojuangco-Aquino clan will likely enlist the help of financiers and other landlord allies to reclaim the land. In fact, a number of farm workers have already been served notices of eviction.

Nature of the "bungkalan" campaign. "Bungkalan" is a form of direct people's action to assert their right to life and livelihood. The campaign was first begun in 2005 as a source of food and other sustenance for the peasants who were then in the thick of a strike. When the strike ended, the campaign was further expanded, providing the peasants relief from their wretched lives when nothing but sugarcane was planted in the estate.

Under ULWU's militant leadership, the farm workers were able to assert and retain their occupancy of the land for the next four years. In fact, in 2009, they were able to collectively reap benefits from up to



2,000 hectares of land cultivated in various parts of the hacienda. Many farmers have also begun putting up small piggeries and poultry farms, which was strictly prohibited by the hacienda management.

All this became possible at the height of the strike because of the latter's extraordinary strength and resonance, the landlord family's isolation due to the Hacienda Luisita Massacre and the fascist marauding of the Philippine Army's Northern Luzon Command and the PNP Special Action Force, and exposés on the miserable conditions of the farm workers on the estate. The campaign continued even after the strike because of the long delay in the issuance of the Supreme Court decision on the peasants' petition against the stock distribution option. The masses also maintained their strong fighting spirit and enjoyed broad political support.

"Bungkalan's" success. According to assessments conducted by the unions and members participating in the campaign, "bungkalan" has afforded them more room for initiative, maneuver and flexibility in their mass struggles. It has provided income to strikers and support for their picket lines, thus strengthening the masses' unity and will to fight. Their collective resistance and organized initiatives to assert their democratic rights to life and livelihood instead of relying on doleouts from the landlord and the reactionary state can no longer be easily banished from the masses' consciousness.

Another measure of success is the revitalization of the environment. From lands exclusively planted to sugarcane, which the peasants could not eat, the countryside has come alive with greenery and crops that now serve as sources of livelihood.

The Cojuangco-Aquino clan can be expected to foist all kinds of deceptive and repressive maneuvers to maintain its feudal land monopoly. Thus, the benefits attained through "bungkalan" are constantly in danger of being lost either through violence or legal maneuvers by the landlord family. So long as landlord power is not sufficiently eroded by the advance of armed revolution, there will be many serious limits to the consolidation of the political and economic victories attained through the campaign. The peasants must attain expertise in conducting legal struggle, continue to gather broad political support, further strengthen their unity and raise their fighting spirit.

They must continue strengthening their political and organizational unity. They must avoid the economism trap, where they become content with the immediate fruits of the land and neglect the struggle for genuine land reform. They must firm up their unity regarding policies on how to divide the land and distribute its benefits and how to continually improve the collectivization of labor and farm implements to develop the land. They must also persist in their consciousness-raising efforts to maintain the solidity of their life and death struggle for land. AB



Crimes of the 8th ID against the people of Samar

The 8th Infantry Division has gone all out in implementing the Aquino regime's Oplan Bayanihan in Samar island this year. In many barrios of Northern and Eastern Samar, stark violations of international humanitarian law have been committed in the course of military campaigns in addition to causing added hardships to the people.

The New People's Army has reported that Aquino's troops have been encamping right in the middle of civilian communities. To evade accusations of violating international humanitarian law, the soldiers claim that their encampments are tactical in nature. They set up so-called "tactical command posts" and "tactical patrol bases." In fact, their camps are practically permanent in nature due to the sheer frequency and number of their operations. This has angered the peasants who have had to suffer many restrictions on their movements and whose livelihood and security have been affected.

Investigations by the Silvio Pajares Command (SPC) revealed that the 87th IB's Bravo Coy has been staying in the villages of Bangon, Bagacay and Capacujan in Palapag, Northern Samar. Its Charlie Coy is focused on Barangay Potong, Lapinig town and in Barangays Silhagon, Hubasan, Naparasan and Burgos in Mapanas town. Local government units have been made to sign memoranda of agreement with the military and peasants are being coerced to attend town meetings called by the fascists. In the affected barrios, the soldiers have been conducting censuses and calling for surrenders. Some villagers have also been beaten up.

The SPC added that the 14th and

63rd IBs have divided among themselves the area comprising San Vicente village in Catubig and the barrios of San Miguel, Perez, Quirino and Imelda in Las Navas. The soldiers enter and leave these villages at will, maintaining an almost permanent presence. They have set up their headquarters in Barangay Imelda, where the fascists had conducted a census and announced that other villages would follow suit.

The 14th IB is also focused on an area in Eastern Samar and has



a company that shifts base among San Roque village in Jipapad and Buko, Pandol and Balagon villages in Canavid town. While based in its tactical command post in a village, it also sends troops to scour surrounding barangays. The fascists interrogate the peasants on the whereabouts of the NPA and also conduct recruitment drives. They likewise guard evacuation centers during calamities, gather wood for their camps and

conscript civilians to construct detachments. They have introduced gambling by running a cockpit that is open every Saturday.

The peasants affected by this militarization have already assailed the restrictions on their mobility and the deleterious effects on their farming activities. They scoff at the soldiers' claims that the military is in the area to protect the people, as they, in fact, pose a danger to the civilians. The peasants have also called on the NPA to punish the fascist troops whose presence not only imperils but weighs heavily on them. **AB**

CPP condoles with Norwegian people

THE Communist Party of the Philippines and the entire revolutionary movement condoled with the Norwegian people after two successive terrorist attacks killed close to 80 people on July 22.

The first was a bomb attack near several government buildings in the Norwegian capital of Oslo that killed eight people and injured several others. Two hours later, 69 youth were shot and killed by a gunman in the island of Utoya. The attacker, Andres Behring Breivik, shot 14 to 18 year olds who were then attending a youth camp sponsored by the ruling Labor Party. The Labor Party is known for its policy of tolerance towards the country's migrant population. Breivik is an anti-communist, anti-Muslim and antimigrant Norwegian. Investigations by the Norwegian police and a manifesto published by Breivik have revealed that he was also responsible for the Oslo bomb attack.

Breivik's acts earned widespread condemnation even as sympathy poured in for the victims, their families and the Norwegian people as a whole. Among those who condemned the attacks was the International League of Peoples' Struggles (ILPS). In a statement, the ILPS said that the biggest and worst forms of terrorism in the world today do not come from believers of Islam or even such notorious organizations as the al-Qaeda but from the imperialist powers that whip up chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry and fascism, oppress and exploit the billions of working people and launch wars of aggression to kill people in the hundreds of thousands and millions.

Health workers slam privatization of hospitals

NURSES and other employees of the National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) in Mandaluyong City and the Philippine Heart Center (PHC) in Quezon City waged protest actions against plans to privatize their hospitals.

On July 29, nurses, employees and health workers rallied at the NCMH compound to oppose the facility's impending privatization and transfer to Antipolo City. The government plans to sell the NCMH's 48-hectare lot to pave the way for the construction of residential and commercial buildings in the area. The protesters said more than 5,000 patients will be affected by privatization because most of them are poor and could not afford to pay for medical treatment. Also at stake are the jobs of the hospital's 1,700 employees and workers.

Meanwhile, hospital employees staged a picket-rally in front of the PHC on July 8 to demand a higher budget for the facility instead of putting it up for sale. The hospital, which owes more than ₱46 million in debt because of its small budget has been put on the auction block by the Quezon City government..