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Editorial

Repudiate the Lord of Thieves!

Aquino's obduracy in defending the pork barrel system, especially the hundreds of billions of funds under his Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) has further fired up the seething sentiments against corruption in his regime and the entire ruling system.

Aquino's cloak of "anti-corruption" which he wears to conceal the rottenness of his regime and the system he administers is rapidly being shed. Nonetheless, he insists on badgering the people's minds with his illusion of a "righteous road," even if it is an illusion fraught with many cracks.

In a desperate attempt to stop the rapid decline of his "popularity," Aquino suddenly suspended regular programming in all major television stations on the night of October 30 to deliver a speech, where he ranted that he is "not a thief" and his regime would never engage in thievery.

But Aquino failed to win the people's support. The people know full well that not only is he the Pork Barrel King, he is also the Lord of Thieves.

Aquino's thievery involves the use of public funds to buy the loyalty and support of politicians. He has also used the DAP

and the President's Social Fund to push for his agenda—to the advantage of his family and clique.

He is as much a thief as the worst of the bureaucrat capitalists, the big compradors and hacenderos who have made use of their control or influence on state policy to advance their economic and political interests.

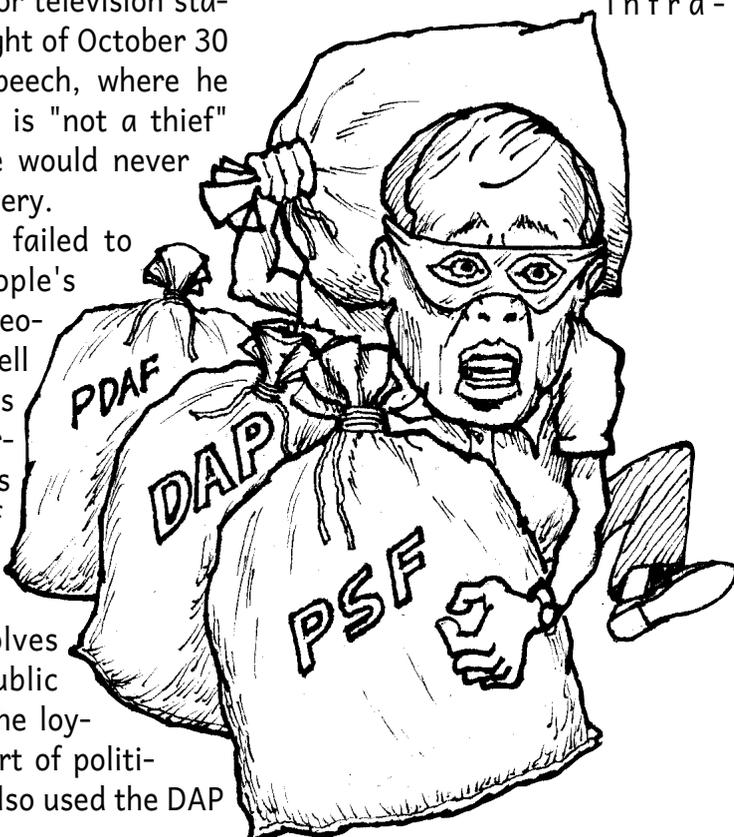
Among Aquino's biggest cases of thievery involves the use of his office to cancel government

structure contracts, such as for the construction of roads and bridges in order to renegotiate these to the advantage of his relatives and closest friends.

He considers unspent allocations for cancelled contracts as "savings," realigning these to so-called "accelerated disbursements" so that he could use them for expenditures without congressional approval.

One of the uses of Aquino's DAP was to bribe senators in 2012 into voting for then Supreme Court chief justice Renato Corona's ouster. This is thievery of the highest order, as it involved Aquino's use of the people's money to advance an agenda that is politically advantageous to him.

Aquino's approval of fat bonuses for his appointees to the Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System



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and other government agencies and corporations is likewise tantamount to thievery as these officials gorge themselves with their huge salaries and perks while the Filipino people suffer from extremely small monthly pensions, rotten health services and other public service deficiencies.

The people therefore grasp the complete accuracy of calling Aquino the Lord of Thieves.

Contrary to Aquino's expectations, the people have become even more disenchanted with him in the face of his protestations of innocence. They despised him even more when he dismissed the broad movement against the pork barrel system as merely the result of the agitation of politicians that his regime had earlier charged in court.

Soon after Aquino's speech, various groups announced plans for continued protests. As Aquino persists in refusing to heed the people's demands, he further angers the people and challenges them to intensify their resistance. **AB**

Anti-pork barrel protests spread

The longer Benigno Aquino III insists on perpetuating the pork barrel system in various forms and names, the more the movement against it and the Aquino regime's corruption spreads.

Despite the dismissive attitude of Malacañang minions, growing numbers of people are supporting former Chief Justice Reynato Puno's proposal of a People's Initiative to gather more than five million signatures to pass a law prohibiting the pork barrel system. The initiative is based on the reactionary constitution of 1987 which provides a system of creating laws without passing through Congress.

Progressive groups as well as the anti-pork barrel movement enthusiastically supported Puno's call. BAYAN, Youth Act Now Network, Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), PISTON, Migrante and other organizations and personalities expressed

their readiness to launch various activities to raise funds and the required number of signatures.

They view these activities as complementary to more direct ways of mobilizing the people in campaigns to abolish the pork barrel and fighting the entire system of corruption.

Meanwhile, retired generals of the Armed Forces of the Philippines recently issued a manifesto demanding the resignation or leave of absence of all those who have been implicated in the pork barrel scandal and other forms of corruption. Led by Gen. Rosalino Alquiza, the manifesto was signed by 12 former generals belonging to the newly formed Philippine Military Academy Alumni Advocacy Group. They said that the same sentiments have been expressed by the Reformist Officers United (ROU), another group composed of junior military and police officials.

On November 5, Anonymous Philippines launched a protest against the pork barrel in front of the Batasan Pambansa in Quezon City. The rally was joined by up to 200 people in masks and bearing placards saying "The corrupt fear us, the honest support us and the heroic join us." They managed to get near the Batasan despite being blocked by the police, who later picked up five of them. They were released after questioning.

On November 4, Anonymous Philippines hacked at least 38 government websites, leaving a message condemning the pork barrel. Anonymous Philippines is a clandestine group of internet experts who likewise active in resisting the Cybercrime Prevention Law and pushed the Freedom of Information Law. **AB**



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Other GOCC-related anomalies bared

Corruption and anomalies in Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations (GOCC) are relentlessly being exposed. The issue regarding the anomalous bonuses received by executives of the Social Security System (SSS) was still raging when bigger anomalies in the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Philhealth and 16 other public corporations reeked out.

In 2010, Aquino boasted that he would put an end to the system that allowed executives of government corporations to reward themselves fat bonuses. He pushed for the GOCC Governance Act in 2011 and ordered all GOCC officials to resign. He established the Governance Commission and centralized under the Office of the President the power to appoint officers of government corporations and determine their salaries, benefits and bonuses.

Aquino used the law he created to appoint his closest friends, allies and relatives that he owed a debt of gratitude to, to the vacated positions and give them huge salaries, privileges and



benefits. Three years after his clique came to power, GOCC executives are now receiving benefits that are bigger than ever.

GSIS executives were among those who received the biggest bonuses: General Manager Robert Vergara (P16.3 million), Chairman Daniel Lacson (P1.4 million) and board members Geraldine Berberabe-Martinez (P1.4 million), Gregorio Yu (P1.4 million), Karina Constantino-David (P1.5 million), Mario Aguja of Akbayan Partylist (P1.4 million) and Roman Felipe Reyes (P1.4 million).

In the case of Philhealth, no less than the Commission on Audit stated that up

to P1.5 billion went to bonuses for its executives and employees this year—a leap from the P1.245 billion in 2011 and P1.45 billion in 2012.

This is in the face of the P250.15 million debt Philhealth owes its members who fell ill and whose claims have yet to be paid. Year after year, unpaid Philhealth benefits have been mounting—P5.14 million in 2007, P93.009 million in 2008, P128.65 million in 2009, P161.21 million in 2010 and P223.46 million in 2011. It had its worst record in 2012 when only 17% of claims filed were paid.

As for the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), it was the Office of the President no less that approved the P1.5 million in bonuses given to five of its eight board members. At the National Livelihood Development Center (NLDC), even officials implicated in the P10-billion pork barrel scandal involving Janet Lim-Napoles have received bonuses. **AB**

NPA seizes 7 HPRs in North Cotabato

Red fighters under the New People's Army (NPA) Mt. Alip Command-Front 72 confiscated four M14s and three M16s after using command-detonated explosives (CDX) on a squad under the 38th IB that was aboard a military truck in Sitio Mangui, Barangay Bituan, Tulanun, North Cotabato on October 21. Seven soldiers were killed on the spot and two others were wounded. The guerrillas also seized backpacks and other military equipment.

Less than an hour later, another NPA team harassed reinforcement troops from the 57th IB aboard a six-by-six truck in Barangay Luna Norte, Makilala, North Cotabato. Another soldier

was killed and three others were wounded when the Red fighters detonated another CDX.

These related actions are a “whopping



blow to the AFP” which has been forcibly constructing CAFGU detachments under the 38th IB near civilian communities, causing fear and terror and violating the residents' human rights, said Ka Efren, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF)-FSMR. Residents of the area have long been complaining about the soldiers' abuses. **AB**

5 CAFGU captured, 5 soldiers killed in Agusan del Sur

Five CAFGU elements were captured when guerrillas from the Compostela Valley-North Davao-South Agusan Subregional Command of the New People's Army (NPA) raided the detachment of the abusive 26th IB troopers in Barangay Mansanitas, Loreto, Agusan del Sur on October 24. The NPA also seized two shotguns and a .357 revolver.

After this, another NPA unit ambushed a platoon sent to reinforce the battalion, killing five soldiers. No casualties were reported on the NPA side.

These tactical offensives were launched against the 26th IB and its paramilitaries for their responsibility in the heinous murders of Gabriel Alindao and Benjie Planos, both Lumad peasant leaders of the Kahugpungan Alang sa Kalamboan (KASAKA); the detention, torture and forcible use of two civilian Lumad minors as guides; and the severe repression of the peasant masses in Loreto to pave the way for the entry of destructive large-scale oil palm plantations and mining companies in the area.

Meanwhile, two soldiers of the 58th IB were killed in a harassment operation by Red fighters under the NPA Eastern Misamis Oriental-North Eastern Bukidnon Subregional Command while the troopers were on patrol in Sitio Dalaoay, Minalwang, Claveria, Misamis Oriental on October 25. The guerrillas were able to make a safe retreat. AB

NPA ambushes 61st IB in Capiz

Two soldiers of the 61st IB Bravo Coy were seriously wounded in an ambush by a unit under the Jose Percival Estocada Jr. Command of the New People's Army (NPA)-Central Panay in Sitio Malangsa, Barangay Abangay, Tapaz, Capiz on October 9.

The soldiers were sent to reinforce troops that had been ambushed earlier by guerrillas near the Pan-ay River along the village boundaries of Barangay Nawayan and Barangay Tacayan in Tapaz on October 7. Seven soldiers were hit in the first volley of fire and fell into the river along with their firearms. Six soldiers were killed (not three, as reported earlier by *AB*) and several others were wounded in that firefight.

The successive ambushes were launched to support the Tumanduk minority people's resistance to two megadam projects to be constructed at the Jalaur and Pan-ay rivers. These destructive projects are being protected by the military. AB

Fr. Jose Dizon, revolutionary priest

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) hailed Fr. Jose Dizon as a revolutionary priest, hero and martyr. Fr. Joe passed away at the age of 65 on the night of November 4 due to complications arising from diabetes.

The CPP rued Fr. Joe's death as a big loss. He was a noted activist priest known for his active role in the national-democratic mass movement, in defending human rights and advancing the interests of the workers and the toiling masses.

Fr. Joe was among the pioneer organizers of the Basic Christian Community in the

1960s and 1970s in the thick of martial rule. He put into practice the progressive Catholic social teaching of having a preferential option for the poor. The same standpoint was then being advanced by the Christians for National Liberation (CNL) against the traditional leadership of the Roman Catholic Church. Like many other priests



imbued with the spirit of serving the people, Fr. Joe helped organize urban poor and workers' communities.

By being with the workers and peasants, Fr. Joe knew firsthand their travails and sought to change their situation and work for their wellbeing. He stood in solidarity with their democratic aspirations and be-

came tempered in their struggles.

Confronted with the people's enemies, Fr. Joe was militant and courageous. He organized workers defying the threats of the big capitalist compradors. He founded the Workers' Assistance Center in 1995 based in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The WAC extended help to the workers inside the Cavite Export Processing Zones, who were among the most oppressed and exploited. Fr. Joe was a trailblazer in building various types of workers' associations and unions within the EPZs which were run like Nazi prison camps by big foreign capitalists in collaboration with the military, police and government bureaucrats.

He joined the people in mass demonstrations and immersed himself in workers' picket lines and peasant communities. Under martial law, he was among those who joined the struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship. He was a stalwart of the

people's uprising of 2001 which brought down the Estrada regime. He was also a vocal critic of the Arroyo regime, vigorously denouncing it for widespread corruption and cheating in the 2004 and 2007 elections.

Fr. Joe was among the convenors of the group Kontra Daya which exposed various forms of electoral fraud through the automated counting system, including the 2010 elections which brought the current Aquino regime to power. Recently, he was among the leaders of the broad movement against the pork barrel system.

Fr. Joe was an advocate of human rights and social justice. He firmly opposed US interventionism in the Philippines and actively joined efforts to bring progressive and patriotic thought into the Catholic Church. He was among the convenors of Solidarity Philippines and the Clergy Discernment Group, which sought to encourage priests, nuns and church

workers to advance the cause of social justice.

Fr. Joe was among those who carried forward the revolutionary tradition among the Filipino clergy, pioneered by Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora (GomBurZa) who stood up against Spanish colonialism, and carried forward by the likes of Fr. Pops Tentorio who dedicated and sacrificed their lives to serve the masses, and revolutionary martyrs like Frs. Frank Navarro, Zacarias Agatep and Nilo Valerio who trod the path of people's war and offered their own lives as armed fighters of the people.

With his death, Fr. Joe Dizon's name will be etched into the granite marker of the Filipino people's Gallery of Heroes and Martyrs. His name and memory will forever inspire future generations to dedicate their lives to the people's struggle for national and social liberation and to the struggle to end oppression and exploitation. **AB**

Mass leader slain in Hacienda Luisita

A farm worker-leader in Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac became the latest victim of extrajudicial killing. In Bukidnon, two Lumad were killed after leaving an anti-communist bandit group. Meanwhile, the AFP continues to harass and terrorize civilians in Capiz and Misamis Oriental.

In Tarlac City. Assailants suspected to be armed goons of the Cojuangco family brutally murdered Dennis dela Cruz, an officer of the Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA). Dela Cruz's body was found inside a hut he had been repairing in Barangay Balete, Tarlac City. He is believed to have been bludgeoned to death.

Dela Cruz was among those who exposed the fake land distribution in Hacienda Luisita being perpetrated by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in connivance with the Luisita Realty Corporation and Tarlac Development Corporation (TADECO), which are both owned by the Cojuangco-Aquino clans.

Days before Dela Cruz's killing, TADECO and the Luisita Re-

alty Corporation deployed armed guards to fence off a 100-hectare lot in Barangay Balete and a 400-hectare lot in Barangay Cutcut, which are both within the hacienda. The move was meant to drive away farmers who have been tilling these plots.

The armed guards repeatedly harassed and threatened Dela Cruz. They also blocked residents who were repairing their houses and ordered them to stop planting rice and vegetables in the hacienda's vacant lots.

Eighty-two farm workers from Barangay Cutcut have also been slapped with criminal cases.

In Bukidnon. In connivance

with the 8th IB, the NIPAR (New Indigenous People's Army for Reforms) bandit group brutally killed Mabini "Toto" Manobia and Zaldy "Onggo" Ambayot on October 17. The victims were both Matigsalog Lumad from San Fernando town. NIPAR is led by Butsoy Salusad, a notorious CAFGU element who owes many blood debts to the Matigsalog people.

The victims' bodies were riddled with close to a hundred bullets. A big rock was dropped on Manobia's head, while Ambayot's eyes were gouged out. Their wrists were severely lacerated after being tightly bound.

Manobia and Ambayot were former members of NIPAR who left and fought Salusad after the latter failed to make good on his promise of giving them half of all the revenues from mining and other businesses within their ancestral lands.

After the victims' murder, the 4th ID claimed that they were Red fighters killed in an encounter with the military.

In Capiz. Elements of the 61st IB beat up Dario Gilbaliga, a pastor and Ered Gilbaliga, an elderly village councilor of Barangay Abangay, Tapaz. They were accused by the military of belonging to the New People's Army (NPA) unit that ambushed them on October 7 and 9 in Barangay Nawayan of the same town. The soldiers also mauled Henry Diaz, a civilian who was on the way home to Nawayan after bringing his child to school in the neighboring village of Tacayan in Tapaz.

In Misamis Oriental. Thirteen civilians from

three barrios in Lagonglong town were harassed by the 58th IB and accused of the being NPA supporters.

At 7 a.m. of October 23, two men who wore ski masks to conceal their faces barged into the home of Rosalia Lutawan in Barangay Umagos, Lagonglong. With her then was Rosalie, her blind and crippled daughter. The men threatened to kill them if they refused to cooperate with the reactionary government.

Rosalia is the widowed, sickly and elderly mother of "Ka Jerboy," an NPA member who was martyred in an encounter between the NPA and armed escorts of former Gingoog City mayor Ruthie Guingona in April.

Seven other civilians from Gaston, Lagonglong were similarly harassed. They are Barangay Capt. Jenny Dagala, Kagawad Meme Dagala, Jennifer Dagala, Zaldy Dagala, Inday Sinatao, Ramon Oblitos and Jun Balabag.

In addition, Kagawad Bobong Salvania and Angelito Alingbayon, both from Barrio Kabulawan of the same town, were similarly threatened.

On the other hand, Rico Dablo and Ernesto Ahay, both from Barangay Umagos were threatened for the second time. Ernesto Ahay is among several farmers who have been charged and issued arrest warrants after the military implicated them in the encounter between the NPA and Guingona's bodyguards. Three of them have already been unjustly arrested and detained for months due to the trumped-up cases against them. AB

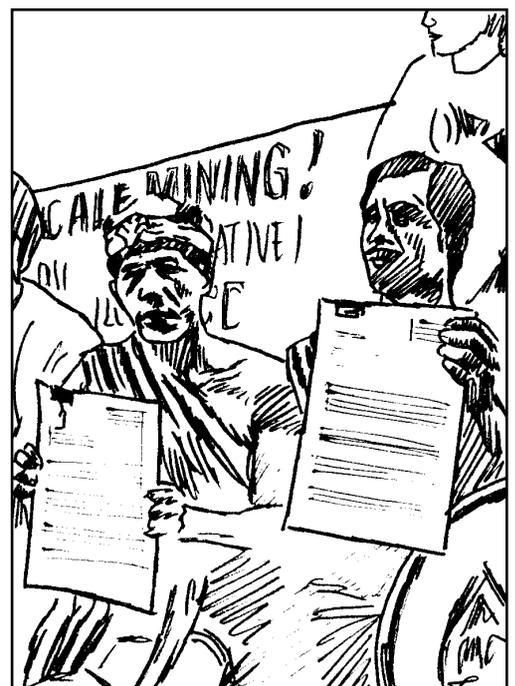
Cordillera peasants assail foreign mining

Hundreds of peasants from various provinces of the Cordillera rallied on October 20 at the offices of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to assail the entry of large-scale mining companies and energy projects which have resulted in the destruction of their livelihoods.

The peasants condemned the collusion between the US-Aquino regime and Chevron, the country's biggest energy producer to construct a geothermal power plant on vast expanses of the Cordillerans' land. Three

Chevron projects are set to be built in the entire region: one in a 26,000-hectare area in the towns of Pasil, Lubuagan and Tinglayan in Kalinga province; one in Sadanga, Barlig and Bontoc in Mountain Province; and one in the villages of Buguias in Benguet and Tinoc in Ifugao.

The peasants slammed the the foreign companies' widespread seizure of their land and resources. In Benguet, 60% of the land area is being claimed by big mining companies. The remaining 40% is likewise owned by energy com-



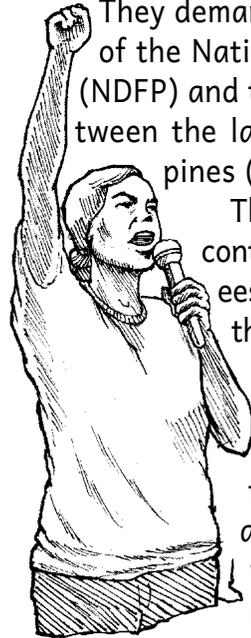
panies and other privately owned projects. The rampant entry of mining and energy capitalists has been facilitated through, among others, the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 and the Renewable Energy Act of 2008 which provide several incentives to foreign companies.

Meanwhile, members of the Sagada Weaving Workers Union (SWWU) have complained about company repression. They charged that they have been harassed by their employer since their union was established. Five of them have already been indirectly terminated. The victims were given job orders that they were supposed to accomplish at home, but they never received any work. The management wants to wear down and push the workers to the wall to force them to resign voluntarily, in order to avoid giving them separation pay and other benefits. AB

Rights groups launch Caravan para sa Kalayaan

THE Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainee Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA), KARAPATAN and other justice and freedom advocates launched Caravan para sa Kalayaan on October 25. The activity involved visits to prisons holding political detainees in Metro Manila and a rally at the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

They demanded the release of detained consultants of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the resumption of stalled peace talks between the latter and the Government of the Philippines (GPH).



The Caravan para sa Kalayaan assailed the continued denial of justice to political detainees who are ailing, elderly, of minor age or those who were only minors when arrested but have suffered prolonged detention. In its latest report last August, there were 449 political detainees nationwide. Fourteen of them are NDFP consultants, and 30 are women, minors, ailing and elderly who were supposed to have been released in accordance with a 2004 agreement.

Massive strike launched in Indonesia

MORE than 100,000 Indonesian workers joined a nationwide strike on October 31 to November 1 to demand a 50% hike in the minimum wage. Thousands of workers took to the streets during the strike, which was preceded by weeks of workers' actions that led to several factory shutdowns.

Aside from a minimum wage hike, the workers also demanded universal health care, an end to contractualization especially in state enterprises and the enactment of laws to protect domestic helpers. Indonesia currently does not have laws guaranteeing minimum wages for domestic workers or the right to have a day off from work every week.

The massive strike marked intensifying unrest and discontent among Indonesian workers.

CPP slams use of Philippines as US spy post

THE Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) assailed the US for building espionage facilities in the Philippines as part of its international intelligence network. The CPP likewise slammed the Aquino regime for its silence in the face of the widespread flak the US has been receiving for its espionage activities in various countries.

In a recent revelation by the Australian news agency ABC, the US has been using its embassies and consulate offices in Manila, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Phnom Penh, Bangkok, Yangon, Hong Kong, Taipei, Shanghai and Beijing as listening posts, where it monitors and gathers all cellphone and internet exchanges. The disclosures were made amid the rapid expansion of the US embassy along Roxas Boulevard.

The information was based on the latest stockpile of information exposed by Edward Snowden, a former contractual employee of the US National Security Agency (NSA) who offloaded the data from the NSA's servers.

The CPP charged that the US' espionage activities are a violation of Philippine sovereignty. It is a great shame to the nation that the Aquino regime has kept quiet while Philippine sovereignty was being trampled on. It would not be farfetched to assume that the US has likewise been monitoring the country's government officials and political leaders and may use whatever information has been gathered to more easily push the government into implement-

ing laws and policies favoring US interests.

Prior to this, revelations of US espionage activities against other governments and heads of state had emerged, among them the monitoring by the US of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's cellphone since 2002 through the Special Collection Services based at the US Embassy in Berlin. The US had also spied on the presidents of France, Mexico, Brazil and Italy.

In related news, the government of the United Kingdom (UK) has been heavily criticized by the British media for having its own espionage program dubbed Tempora (the UK's counterpart of the US' Prism program). Tempora, whose existence has been recently revealed is currently being investigated by the British parliament for violations of law. Both Tempora and Prism gather, stockpile and evaluate millions of telephone calls, email and internet searches.

The countries that have been victimized by the US' illegal spying activities plan to ask the United Nations to include internet activities in the coverage of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. **AB**

Saudi Arabia cracks down on undocumented OFWs

Thousands of undocumented Filipino migrant workers are currently stranded in various cities of Saudi Arabia after authorities enforced a law on undocumented foreign workers.

The crackdown was implemented in accordance with the Saudization program that was spurred by the economic crisis and worsening unemployment problem in Saudi Arabia. Under this program, Saudi citizens are given priority in employment, to the disadvantage of hundreds of thousands of migrant workers.

According to Migrante International, there are still some 5,000 undocumented Filipino workers in Riyadh, Al Khobar and Damman who have not been repatriated and have not been assisted by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Even those who have been able to return to the Philippines experienced severe cruelty and neglect. On November 4, scores of repatriated OFWs recounted to the media how they were treated like animals by Saudi Arabian authorities before they were deported. They were held in cramped prison cells, manacled at the ankles and paraded in public.

To bring their demands to Philippine officials to assist them in their repatriation, thousands of undocumented Filipino workers camped out in front of the Philippine embassy and consulate buildings. The difficult situation in the makeshift camps led to the deaths of a number of OFWs and their family members. Out of desperation, many of them fell victim to prostitution, human trafficking and sex slavery.

