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Editorial

Hound Aquino for his crimes

Benigno S. Aquino III's crimes and transgressions against the people are myriad. Over the past five years, the Filipino people have been victimized by the Aquino regime's rabid adherence to the policy dictates of US imperialism that have worsened the people's sufferings and social crisis and further relinquished Philippine sovereignty.

On July 27, Aquino is set to give his last State of the Nation Address (SONA). He will use this to brag about the false statistics of "growth". Compared with the past, Aquino needs to weave a bigger illusion in order to cover the ever stark reality of poverty and crisis.

Aquino wants to make use of his last SONA to assert the claim that he is set to leave a legacy of a "straight path" and "clean government". The reality is, over the past five years, Aquino has brought the people nothing but greater suffering, hardship and oppression.

Aquino's last SONA will be condemned and confronted with the largest protest by the people victimized by the regime that has trampled on their national and democratic interests and welfare.

This will be an opportune time to make Aquino answerable for the long list of crimes and transgressions against the people:

1. Corruption in inflating the pork barrel system and Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP). Aquino used these in order to strengthen his political influence, ensure the loyalty of politicians and control con-

gress. Despite the protests and the decision of the Supreme Court declaring the pork barrel illegal, Aquino has further expanded this in his 2016 budget, as part of his election preparations.

2. Corruption in the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) contracts gorged upon by, and satiated, a few of the biggest bourgeois compradors closest to Aquino. These include Henry Sy, Lucio Tan, Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, Manuel V. Pangilinan, the Ayalas and the Consunjis. Aquino has given them the privilege to profit handsomely from

public facilities for several decades with guaranteed returns in the budget.

3. The worsening smuggling which has trebled in the past five years. Apart from this is the worsening "legal smuggling" or all-out liberalization in the importation of rice, onions, garlic, chicken, pork and other agricultural products to the detriment of local peasants and other producers.

4. Criminal negligence to the victims of Pablo, Yolanda and other storms and calamities. Funds for calamity preparations and for setting up facilities for the rescue and evacuation of victims have been slashed. Relief and rehabilitation funds are not only sorely lacking, these are also subjected to bureaucratic corruption.

5. Signing of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) which paves the way for the reestablishment of US military bases in the Philippines using AFP



camps across the country, and for expanding US troops' presence in the Philippines.

6. Allowing US troops to launch military operations and intervene in the Philippines. US military officials have been allowed to train, fund and command police and military forces in US operations, such as the botched Mamasapano operation which resulted in the killing of close to 70 people, including 44 police officers.

7. Adopting the policy of mendicacy to US military aid on the matter of Philippine territorial defense. Chinese encroachment in Philippine waters is being used to justify the expanding presence of US military troops, warships, jet-fighters and drones in the country's territory. US military forces are given all-out freedom to conduct surveillance operations.

8. Arrogating bureaucratic powers to prevent the Supreme Court-mandated land distribution in Hacienda Luisita and to drive away peasants who have long been tilling their land being claimed by the Cojuangcos.

9. Facilitating the expansive land grabbing by big foreign corporations engaged in mining, plantations, real estate and tourism.

10. Impeding increases in workers' wages, perpetuating the absence of a national minimum wage and putting into place additional "flexibilization" policies such as the so-called "two-tier wage system" which further pulls down workers' wages.

11. Eradication of safety and environmental regulations under the so-called "one-stop-shop" policy favoring big capitalist investors resulting in increasing numbers of accidents and deaths of workers such as in the recent Ken-tex tragedy.

12. Non-stop demolition of urban poor communities to provide big compradors with land to build malls, condominiums and other businesses while the residents are driven far from their jobs and onto precarious places.

13. Spiralling fare hikes for metroraills (MRT and LRT) and railways despite the rotten services. The costs of public services have

become more and more prohibitive as a result of the all-out privatization of public hospitals, schools, as well as public transportation, highways, communications and other public utilities.

14. Wasting government funds for the deceptive cash dole-out 4Ps (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program). This is part of the counter-revolutionary psywar that seeks to draw the people away from the revolutionary path. The poor are made to believe that the government is attending to their welfare when in fact it is slashing allocations for health, education and other basic social services.


16. Inaction amid the skyrocketing prices of rice, garlic and other food and basic commodities in 2014. Aquino was also inutile amid the slow reduction of prices of petroleum products despite the sharp fall in the prices of crude oil in the international market.

17. Implementation of the burdensome K-12 program that adds two years to high school to make the educational system serve further in the training of cheap low-skilled labor needed by foreign companies and the international labor market.

18. Failure to invest in the local economy to generate local industries and develop local production, and end dependence on foreign investments in generating employment, resulting in one of the worst job crises where more than 30% are unemployed or underemployed.

19. Implementing the policy of exporting overseas contract workers (OCW) as "solution" to the local unemployment crisis while disregarding the welfare of OCWs.

20. Relentless violations of civil and human rights in carrying-out its counterrevolutionary Oplan Bayanihan. Extrajudicial killings continue unabated. The number of political detainees who are all charged with trumped-up criminal charges in order to cause their prolonged detention continues to rise. Activists and unionists continue to be harassed

	
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<h2>Contents</h2>	
Editorial: Hound Aquino	1
Electoral preparations	3
Liza Maza, barred in the US	4
Harassments of employees	4
Calls to end military aid	5
Violations in Matuguinao	6
NPA attacks 85th IB	6
3 soldiers killed in Samar	6
Oplan Amianan, assailed	7
Ka Parago's funeral	7
Territorial integrity in WPS	8
Victory in Tanduy	8
Anti-mining protests in ST	9
Psywar in the internet	9
Tsipras' turnabout	11
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and terrorized. NDFP consultants and staff in peace negotiations are persecuted and detained.

21. All-out violations of international humanitarian law in the course of military operations that trample upon the welfare of civilians. These include subjecting communities and farms to aerial and artillery bombardment, using civilian infrastructure, and basing in communities to sow fear and control the population.

22. Violations of the rights of children by using their schools as barracks of military soldiers.

Failure to charge, prosecute and punish the biggest plunderers and violators of human rights under the previous regime, including Gloria Arroyo who enjoys various privileges while under "hospital arrest" and Gen. Jovito

Palparan who was granted his request to be "detained" inside Fort Bonifacio instead of an ordinary jail cell.

With Aquino's long list of crimes and transgressions, he is filled with fear that he will be dragged to court to face charges once he is out of power. Aquino is thus working all-out to ensure that elections next year will put in place a government that will guard his welfare and prevent his being charged, tried and punished.

The Filipino people are eager to make Aquino responsible for all his crimes and transgressions. They are determined to act and amplify their protests in order to oust Aquino from power as soon as possible and make him pay for causing hardship, and for his crimes and offenses against the people. AB

Aquino prepares results of 2016 elections

The upcoming automated elections in May 2016 will again be operated by the foreign company Smartmatic Inc. For the fourth time, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) forged a contract with Smartmatic to use its system and machines for the automated counting of votes in the upcoming elections.

The Comelec contracted Smartmatic despite strong accusations of various political and independent groups that it rigged Philippine elections in 2010 and 2013.

At the end of June, the Comelec signed a P1.7 billion contract with Smartmatic to rent 23,000 new precinct count optical scan (PCOS) machines in addition to the 78,000 old PCOS that it had previously rented from the company.

The renewal of Smartmatic services by the Comelec is part of the ingredients that the ruling Aquino clique and US imperialism is preparing to ensure that the results of the 2016 elections will be to cooked to their liking.

Some officials of the Liberal Party (LP) are now defending Smartmatic. In 2010, the Liberal Party was among those who condemned Smartmatic after its vice-presidential candidate Mar Roxas lost the elections.

Smartmatic is a company from Venezuela and Canada. It is currently headed by Mark Malloch-Brown, a former official of the

United Nations and a key official of the Sawyer Miller, a US political group that interfered in the 1986 elections. Malloch-Brown arrived in the first week of July and met with politicians.

Since the computerization of Philippine elections in 2010, election results have been more and more surrounded by doubt. But since fraud is computerized, it is also much harder to prove. Fraud is obscured by the dumbfounding "speed" in coming up with results.

Smartmatic's record in operating elections in the

Philippines is riddled with anomalies and violations of laws.

Smartmatic was used by the US and the ruling clique in ensuring Aquino's victory in 2010. The computerized fraud was a large-scale operation carried-out with the concomitant preparation of public opinion through manipulated surveys.

In 2010, a few days before the elections, the memory cards containing the program that runs the PCOS were replaced. The ultraviolet lamps to verify genuine ballots were also disabled allowing the use of fake ballots. The PCOS machines also did not produce vote receipts, in violation of Philippine election laws. In the post-elections auditing, PCOS machines were shown to be only 99.60% accurate (instead of the required 99.995%) which meant



hundreds of thousands of votes were either not counted or miscounted.

In 2010, Roxas asserted that he was shaved of 800,000 votes.

In 2013, it was revealed that there was a "60-30-10" pattern of vote sharing in the senate between Aquino's Liberal Party (60%), the opposition United Nationalist Alliance (30%) and others (10%).

According to professors who studied the election results in 2013, it is a statistical impossibility that such a pattern will be produced in almost all precincts and provinces in the entire country and only shows that the election results were manipulated through control of the PCOS machines. Margarita Cojuangco, aunt of the president, accused Aquino of giving P30 million to military officials to cover up the fraud.

Also in 2013, the PCOS machines failed to transmit up to 23% of all votes. On election day, it was reported that Smartmatic made changes to the server computers it was operating for the Comelec remotely.

In violation of election laws of the reactionary government, the source code of the PCOS machine operating system was not made public so that it could not be reviewed by experts.

The doubts against Smartmatic and Comelec further deepened in 2013 after Comelec secretly changed the storage facilities of the PCOS machines in violation of the laws determined by the election laws of the ruling state.

The Comelec was subjected to more doubt when it recently announced that as much as 4.7 million voters need to have their biometrics (picture, signature and fingerprint) retaken as records were lost or deleted from their computers. It said those with no biometric records will not be allowed to vote. It is feared that this will be used to prevent people in certain places to vote thereby favoring certain politicians or parties.

Smartmatic's record in other countries is also tainted. In 2013, its subsidiary in the US was charged for changing election results in Las Vegas, Nevada. AB

Activists and employees demand end to harassments

Members of the Confederation of Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (COURAGE) trooped to the Supreme Court last July 14 to petition for a writ of amparo for Antonietta Setias-Dizon and its other members. This is in the face of the brazen threats and harassments militant activists and government employees experience from military and state agents. The petition for a writ of amparo formally seeks protection from the courts against military harassment.

Earlier, COURAGE went to the Department of Justice on July 2 to file a complaint and seek an audience with Undersecretary Jose Justiniano over the 25 cases of harassments of government employees. Justiniano did not meet with them.

The petition for writ of amparo was filed on the heels of intense military surveillance of Setias-Dizon, formerly an OWWA director and long-time COURAGE organizer. On July 14 itself, Setias-Dizon was forced to seek sanctuary inside the Integrated Bar of the Philippines office in Pasig City, after weeks of being tailed by a vehicle and a convoy of motorcycle-riding men.

continued at page 5

Liza Maza, barred from the US

Liza Maza, International Women's Alliance chairperson and former House representative of Gabriela Women's Party, was barred from leaving the country while en route to participate in the International People's Tribunal (IPT) in Washington DC last July 18.

Maza was stopped at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on the basis of an order from the Customs and Border Protection of the US Department of Homeland Defense to prevent her from boarding her flight. Maza was on her way to the US to testify on the murder of transgender Jennifer Laude by an American soldier and the return of US military bases in the Philippines under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

In addition, the IPT also conducted hearings on the Aquino and the Obama administrations' crimes. These include various human rights violations, such the killings of Leonard Co and Fr. Fausto Tentorio.

According to Maza's lawyer, the US ban against Maza violates her right to free movement, association and expression, and violates Philippine sovereignty. The US has no right to implement any of its security measures on Philippine territory.

The US Department of Homeland Security maintains a list of more than 223,000 individuals that it has arbitrarily banned from the US. In 2004, Satur Ocampo, then Bayan Muna Party's representative, was prevented from entering the US because he was deemed a "threat to national security." AB

from page 4

COURAGE fears that the harassment of Setias-Dizon, as well as of other COURAGE members, is a prelude to abduction or illegal arrest and the filing of trumped-up charges. In 2012, Raul Camposano and Randy Vegas, COURAGE organizers, were illegally arrested by the military and trumped-up charges were brought against them. They are now known as COURAGE 2 and a campaign for their freedom has long been launched. Up to now, they are still languishing in jail in Camarines Norte.

Brazen harassment of COURAGE members and other democratic forces in Metro Manila by military agents started last April. Victims include Elvie Prudencio, president of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) employees union; Rosa Navartes, union president of the National Housing Authority and fellow worker Fely Sanyo; couple Raquel and Mervin Toquero, COURAGE organizer and member of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, respectively; Erwin Lanuza, Quezon City local government employee; and Renato Asa, Kilusang Mayo Uno's public information officer. Prior to this, National Food Authority union leaders Santi Dasmaringas, Roman Sanches, Evelyn Garcia and retired employee Larry Tan, reported similar harassments in May.

The brazen harassments clearly aim to intimidate and threaten activists and unionists. According to their testimonies, each victim was approached by military agents and accused as cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines before being offered to act as "state informers" against their coworkers. They were sent letters containing cellphone numbers that they could call if they decide to take up the "offer."

Before the confrontations, they received calls on

their cellphones, had their activities photographed and recorded in video, were subjected to monitoring and received visits in their offices. On the Toquero's case, they were harassed inside their own home.

Most of the letters sent to the employees contained the malicious accusation that they are cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the intrigue that such information came from the COURAGE 2.

On July 15, a military intelligence agent impudently harassed Lea Fullon, a Bayan Muna staffer, while in a protest-action. Fullon was approached by a certain Joey Fabrigas along Monumento's LRT station and was told to inform him via text messages about upcoming protest actions in and outside Metro Manila. The agent left her a cellphone number. Two other military agents took pictures of the rallyists at the same time.

Meanwhile, the military filed trumped-up charges of kidnapping, illegal detention and human trafficking against 15 leaders of progressive groups and churches in the Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) who rescued hundreds of Talaingod Lumads that were forced to evacuate at the height of militarization in their area.

Among those charged are leaders of Karapatan-SMR, Promotion of Church People's Response-SMR, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas-SMR, Gabriela-SMR, RCPA Productions-Broadcasting, PASAKA, PANALIP-DAN-Mindanao, Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns, Save our Schools Network, Children's Rehabilitation Center-SMR and SAMA-AKO-KMU.

The said leaders are aware that the cases were filed to intimidate them and disrupt their work. According to Hanimay Suazo of Karapatan-SMR, they have no intention of abandoning their duties and are ready to file counter-charges against the military. AB

Still no justice for victims of the military ni Matuguinao

It was in December 9, 2014 when the military abducted Tino Loberando, Cesar Loberando and Lando Loberando of Barangay Libertad, Matuguinao, Samar. Their corpses were found only after a month. Until now, not a single perpetrator has been punished.

The primary suspects in the abduction and summary execution of the Loberandos are troops of the 43rd IB based in Barangay Sto. Nino, Gandara, Samar and their paramilitary lackeys led by Eulogio "Laloy" dela Cruz, Roberto "Ombo" dela Cruz and Luis dela Cruz. Laloy had been arrested before by the police but was released to the cus-

tody of the 43rd IB.

Among the items in the long list of human rights violations are the theft of farm animals and forced evacuation of 100 families in Barangay Mahayag and Barangay Libertad last June 5 and June 11. (See Ang Bayan, June 21, 2015.)

Troops of the 43rd IB are also behind the abduction of Jose

Opiniano of Barangay Libertad last June 10. Fascist troops killed Otoy Micol of Barangay Maduruto, Alfredo Diaz, Barangay Tanod of Bagotan, and Vicente Sorio of Barangay Bagotan on March 21; Janito Micol of Barangay Mahanud last April 4; Joseph Royandoyan of Camonoan last May 1 and Janito Diaz, chairman of PANGUMA and barangay captain of Nagpapacao, last May 3. On June 18, Perlita Diaz, captain of Barangay Mahayag, was threatened and harassed. Threatened during the same month were Teresita Suarino, barangay captain of Libertad, the barangay treasurer of Diit, and the barangay captain of Del Rosario.

In assemblies called by the mil-

itary, residents were being forced to admit they are members of the NPA. They were also being coerced to sign a resolution stating their consent to the presence of soldiers in the barangay. Village watchmen were being made to render guard duty in the military encampment. The soldiers destroyed many crops such as vegetables, sweet potato, rice, corn and others. Children were being forced to fetch drinking water for the soldiers and serve as guides during military operations.

The Municipal Peace and Order Council (MPOC) made a resolution last May 22, 2015 requesting different reactionary government agencies to take steps to maintain peace and order in Matuguinao. This was used as pretext by the AFP to deploy peace and development teams (PDTs) in barangays Diit, Mahayag and Libertad last May 20-21, and in barangays Libertad and Mahayag last June 5-10. From 36, the number of AFP troopers swelled to 70 last June 19.

Before this, the military had already wrought damage on Matuguinao. Last August 15, 2014, soldiers killed Bodoc Coreche in Barangay Hamton. **AB**

Activists call for an end to US military aid

UP to 18 US-based groups called on the US Senate to stop extending military aid to the Philippines as long as the Aquino government fails to address the rising number of human rights violations in the country. Groups who sent a formal letter to the US Senate include the Human Rights Watch, Bayan-USA, church people and defenders of human and civil rights.

In 2008, the US cut short its military aid to the Philippines due to the strong campaign of US-based groups against the then Arroyo regime's human rights violations. But in 2014, the US reversed its decision and provided \$50 million as military aid after the staged arrest of Jovito Palparan Jr. This year, the US vowed to provide an additional \$40 million military aid.

The Philippines is the biggest recipient of US military aid in the Asia-Pacific region. From 2001 to 2010, it received up to \$507 million (P22.8 billion at P45=\$1). **AB**



NPA-Quezon attacks mercenary 85th IB

Red fighters of the NPA-Quezon (Apolonio Mendoza Command) raided the headquarters of the 85th IB in Barangay Villa Ibaba, Atimonan, Quezon last July 12. Three soldiers were killed and two others were wounded.

The said soldiers were serving as guards of the Atimonan One Energy and the construction of its 1,200 megawatt coal-fired power plant.

The soldiers were busy getting drunk in a house beside the barangay hall when they were attacked by the Red fighters. The house was being rented by an engineer of the plant's contractor.

The tactical offensive was launched by the NPA in response to the appeal of the people in the province to stop the construction of Atimonan One Energy's giant power plant. Various sectors including the church and other people's organizations are against this project. The power plant is expected to cause damage to the environment and the livelihood of the

farmers and fisherfolk not only along the Atimonan coastline but even to residents of neighboring towns. Around 139 hectares of farm land and coast lines will be affected.

The NPA's military action was also a punishment of the mercenary elements of the 85th IBPA who serve as guards for the power plant. They are instruments for the Atimonan One Energy's violence to suppress the people's opposition.

An ambush was also launched last July 20 by a squad of the NPA-Quezon in Ulong Tao, Macalelon against another unit of the 85th IB. Rifle fire rained and M203 exploded on eight soldiers aboard a weapon carrier from the camp in San Nicolas. The Red fighters withdrew safely after the firefight. **AB**



3 AFP troopers killed in Samar

Three soldiers were killed and seven wounded in a tactical offensive by the NPA in El-Empon, Las Navas, Northern Samar last June 15.

At around six in the morning, a unit of the NPA ambushed a platoon of the 20th IB patrolling a road from Barangay Poponton of this town. In the 12-minute firefight, three soldiers were killed and five were wounded. A Red fighter died a martyr in the battle.

A day earlier, residents in the area relayed the news about the presence of the soldiers. They closely monitored the movements and routes of the military and regularly reported these to the nearby NPA unit. This enabled the Red fighters to plan the battle and lay out command-detonated explosives along the site.

The NPA forces had long retreated when helicopters came to rescue the soldiers at around 5 pm. A UH-1H "Huey" with tail number 494 malfunctioned and made a forced landing. To cover its substandard quality, Philippine Air Force officials announced that the helicopter was hit by NPA fire, forcing it to land. **AB**

Multitudes join Ka Parago's funeral in Davao City

Giant red streamers emblazoned with "Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines" and "Long live the New People's Army", and red flags with the hammer and sickle and the symbol of the NPA fluttered as no less than 10,000 people joined the funeral march of Comrade Leoncio Pitao, known more as Ka Parago, last July 10 in Davao City.

The multitudes of peasants, Lumad, workers, students and common people, as well as politicians and other personalities who joined the funeral show widespread recognition of Ka Parago as a revolutionary and NPA leader.

Commander Parago became renowned for his leadership of the 1st Pulang Bagani Battalion. He served as a Red fighter and commander of the NPA for the past 37 years, led in numerous operations and battles, trained so many commanders, and was a comrade, an inspiration and a humble servant of the masses.

Ka Parago, together with Ka Kyle (Vanessa Limpag, an NPA medic), were brutally killed by the fascist troops of the First Scout Ranger Regiment last June 28 in Barangay Pañalum, Paquibato District, Davao City. They were mowed down with bullets even though they were incapable of fighting and despite Ka Kyle's shouts identifying herself as a medic so that her rights under humanitarian law

would be recognized.

On the eve of the funeral, a eulogy-tribute was held in the Al-mendras Gymnasium. Hundreds of trucks, buses, jeeps and other vehicles carried mourners. Thousands gathered and crowded inside the gym. Seats were not enough. Many people patiently lined-up to get a view of Ka Parago. In front of the casket, many saluted by raising their fists. Many stood or sat on the floor. Thousands remained outside.

Testimonials and recognitions of the various organs of the CPP and commands of the NPA were read in the tribute. Ka Siegfried M. Red of the CPP Regional Committee in the Southern Mindanao Region described Ka Parago as a "radiant

Red star of the revolution." The CPP, NPA, NDF, Ka Jose Ma. Sison, Ka Luis Jalandoni and other regional committees of the CPP in Mindanao



and many others paid tribute.

Participants remained throughout the tribute until past midnight. Mass leaders and personalities gave speeches and paid tribute. People did not tire of shouting "Long live the CPP! Long live the NPA! Long live Ka Parago!"

Before the funeral march for Ka Parago, the mourners first demonstrated in front of the headquarters of the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Panacan to condemn the brutal killing of Ka Parago and Ka Kyle. The walls of the Eastmincom were splashed with red paint as a show of indignation against the fascist soldiers.

The funeral march started at 1 p.m. Ka Parago's casket draped with the red flag of the CPP was carried atop a truck to be seen by the throngs who wished to get a glance. Ten activists wearing red shirts and green Mao caps served as honor guards and stood around the casket throughout the march to the cemetery.

The march passed through Roxas Avenue where walls were painted with the image of Ka Parago with the slogan "Join the NPA!". It also passed by the Freedom Wall, a big wall where artists painted a large image of Ka Parago. Ka Parago was depicted as a father and revolutionary to serve as an inspiration and challenge to the youth. AB

NDF assails Oplan Amianan in Ilocos

The Joint Security Plan Amianan of the US-Aquino regime was assailed by Rosa Guidon, National Democratic Front-Ilocos Region spokesperson, last June. The security plan is the local version of Oplan Bayanihan. Units of the 81st IB and the Philippine National Police (PNP) conduct military operations against the people and the revolutionary movement in accordance with this plan.

According to Guidon, the militarization of the Ilocos Sur second congressional district, base of most of the 81st IB's forces and the police' Regional Public Safety

Battalion, is conducted under this plan. In these areas, soldiers and police encamp in public places near private residences, and continually sow terror among the people.

The troops serve as protectors of big businesses such as the Phillip Morris-Fortune Tobacco Corporation, mining operations in Quirino and eucalyptus plantations in Sta. Cruz. In Barangay Bugbuga, Sta. Cruz, the 81st IB built a camp a few meters away from the barrio's private residences. This is in violation of the rules of war. AB

Stand for Philippine territorial integrity

The International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) reiterated its stand against China's claim on Philippine territorial waters and its reefs and shoals.

This statement was released by the ILPS in relation to the start of the hearing of the case filed by the Philippine government at the Permanent Court of Arbitration of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) at The Hague, Netherlands last July 8.

According to the ILPS statement, "In viewing the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) takes a position in the light of and within the framework of the UNCLOS." The International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) is expected to make a decision concerning the rights of the Philippines under the UNCLOS.

The UNCLOS entitles every coastal state full sovereignty over 12 nautical miles or about 22 kilometers from its coastline as territorial waters. An exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 200 NM (around 370 km) from the coastline is defined as an area wherein the state can use exclusively for its livelihood and other economic activities but can not prohibit the passage of international sea and air transport.

An additional area of 150 NM (at least 270 kilometers) from the outer limits of the EEZ is the Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) where the state still has rights over the area's mineral resources. Although it is against the UNCLOS, China has done reclamation on seven islets of Scarborough Shoal and has built some permanent structures on them to bolster its claim on this territory and to assert its own EEZ which is 80% of the Philippines' EEZ and 100% of its ECS.

The ILPS explained that the

Filipino people must rely on their own strength and not only on the tribunal. "The oppressed and exploited peoples can achieve national and social liberation by relying on their own strength and capabilities and by fighting against any imperialist power and local reactionary force that oppress and exploit them."

Meanwhile, different groups decried the attendance of almost 50 Aquino officials in the tribunal hearing at The Hague. The government spent an estimated P25 million for this although only a few were needed to present data for the Philippines' arguments. They also criticized why an American company of lawyers represented the Philippines at the tribunal.

The week-long presentation of data is over and the decision of the

tribunal is set to be released at the end of this year. China did not attend the hearing which it has refused to recognize from the start.

The UNCLOS was ratified in 1982 by 165 states that comprise 85% of the entire membership of the United Nations, including China. The USA is not a signatory.

In condemning China's aggression into the territorial waters of the Philippines, ILPS declared that China "has become a full-fledged imperialist power by its acts of aggression on the basis of its monopoly capitalist character that resulted from the Dengist anti-socialist counterrevolution soon after the death of Mao."

The ILPS also denounced the US which it said "has taken advantage of the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China and has further entrenched itself in the Philippines in many ways, especially militarily by reestablishing military bases under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) and selling military junk to the Philippines directly or through Japan and Israel." AB

Tanduary workers' victory

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region IV-A ordered Tanduary Distillers Inc. to regularize 103 contractual workers last June 26. Though more regularized workers were demanded, the order was the fruit of the workers' collective strength.

TUDLA (Tanggulan Ugnayang Daluyang Lakas ng Anakpawis sa Tanduary Distillers Inc.) led the strike which started last May 18. They demanded the regularization of 397 contractual workers, wage increase, humane working condition and benefits. (See *Ang Bayan special issue, June 1 2015.*)

Tanduary workers have long suffered from the lack of job security. Most workers are contractual despite having worked for the company for more than five years. Some of them have been with Tanduary for more than 15 years. Wages are low at P315 per day and are in danger of being cut to P255 due to Aquino's "floor wage" policy under the two-tier wage system. They lack Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and worse, PPE and medicines are deducted from their wages.

Prior to the DOLE-CALABARZON June order, workers had earlier filed a petition last April. The DOLE sided and defended the company's contractualization scheme at that time. After the workers filed their first pe-

continued at page 9

tition, Tanduay's management forced workers to go on leave, made them sign papers withdrawing from the struggle for regularization and planned to lay off 200 workers.

Because of this, the workers went on strike. They were greeted with water cannons but the workers' firm resolve endured.

According to the DOLE, among the company's violations are the failure to assign a trained first-aider in the work premises, non-payment of a five-day incentive leave, unauthorized deduction of medicine from the workers' salaries and non-compliance with Department Order No. 18-A on job contracting. **AB**

US and UK wage psywar through the internet

A peculiar war is now being waged by various military forces of the US and the United Kingdom (UK) over the internet and social media wherein modern interactive information technology and communications is being utilized in an intensive, sustained and thorough manner to shape public opinion favorable to the imperialists. This was among the latest documents disclosed by Edward Snowden, a former staff of the US National Security Agency (NSA). He revealed thousands of documents exposing the NSA's violation of privacy rights through the surveillance measures conducted over the internet.

One of these documents coming from the UK's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), a partner agency of the NSA, discussed the use of behavioral science to "manipulate public opinion, understand human thinking and behavior, and encourage conformity."

According to the document exposed by Snowden, the Joint Threat Research and Information Group (JTRIG) of the GCHQ undertakes the uploading of video to Youtube containing "persuasive communications", starting Facebook groups and Twitter accounts, and creating fake online personalities and supporters "to discredit, promote distrust, dissuade,

deter, delay or disrupt."

JTRIG's expertise is not only in online intelligence gathering but also in "effects operations" to influence social thinking. The document reveals how the UK government employs an elite spy unit to conduct psychological operations (or psyops) against "extremists" by creating fake accounts and videos to promote conformity and obedience.

However, the practice is not exclusive to the UK. Psyops are used by nations around the world, including the Philippines. A US Army Special Forces manual points out how to utilize psywar *continued at page 10*

Thousands protest against mining in Batangas and Mindoro

Up to 3,500 Batangas residents gathered last June 29 in the town of Lobo to urge the local government here to ban destructive mining in the province and stop the entry of Mindoro Resources Limited-Egerton Gold Philippines (MRL-Egerton), a mining company owned by Australian and Canadian capitalists.

The assembly was led by Bukluran para sa Inang Kalikasan (Bukal-Batangas). The Lobo Resorts Owners Association and Lobo Water District were among the groups who submitted a petition to the Lobo local government calling for the withdrawal of the resolution allowing MRL-Egerton to mine gold in the area.

According to the organization, mining operations will destroy the Verde Island Passage, a critical biodiversity center, and Mt. Lobo, where Batangas' remaining forests are located. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) allowed the company to conduct open-pit mining in the area, in violation of its own declaration that that the marine and forests of Lobo and Verde Island are protected areas.

Meanwhile, about 5,000 Mindoreños held protests last June 12 to call for the nullification of DENR's per-

mit granted to Intex Resources, a Norwegian company, to conduct its billion-peso-worth nickel mining project.

According to Kaisahan ng mga Mindoreño laban sa Dayuhan at Dambuhalang Pagmimina (Kalasmina or Mindoreño against Foreign and Largescale Mining), Intex mining operations will cause massive damage to the island. The Mangyan people, and even the local government have not agreed to it. Provincial governments of Oriental and Occidental Mindoro have imposed a 25-year moratorium on foreign and large-scale mining.

Intex Resources invested up \$2.8 billion (P126 billion) on what is called the Mindoro Nickel Project. More than 200,000 Mangyan people will be displaced by the three island projects owned by ADEBCO, Pitkin Petroleum Ltd., and Intex Resources.

The three projects will cover 35% or more than a third of entire land of Mindoro. According to Katribu KAMP, "the destruction of the environment and the displacement of the people is not development but the rape of our sovereignty for foreign benefit."

Kalasmina is an alliance of church-people, organizations of minorities, environmental defenders, peasants and women. **AB**

to influence emotion, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the objectives of the US. As a cover to the cunning psywar and psyops objectives, such military operations are now called Military Information Support Operation (MISO).

The US labels as “extremist” its own population as they oppose increasingly flagrant imperialist maneuvers. Particular focus of propaganda efforts are the youth, activist organizations and ordinary citizens within and outside the US in a deceptive ploy to cover the real intent of the US government and ruling class.

The document instructs on how to instill “obedience” from the civilians to the government. As an illustration, the creation of mass hysteria or fear of an impending “threat” of “terrorists” (that in most cases are imagined) instills support for the Patriot Act, an oppressive US law contrived in the name of counter-terrorism, or to the president.

To achieve compliance, techniques include getting the “foot-in-the-door” (i.e., getting compliance to a small request or issue first), such as eliciting support to the administration that is then followed by larger requests or issues such as the conscription of troops to be deployed in wars, higher taxes, or austerity and wage cut measures.

These techniques are also used to encourage conformism. The US military and other reactionary agencies target social media to influence these as additional instruments to divide and rule the people.

Through various social media platforms, the sly use of trolls is clearly evident. Trolls are fake internet identities created by the dozen to participate in, grab attention

and disrupt the flow of discussion to favor their agenda. Scores or hundreds of trolls can be handled by one or a few individuals. In social media, these take various personalities to support an opinion.

In the Philippines, the use of trolls has been intensively used by the Aquino regime, the Aquino “yellow army” and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP). They monitor the social media and news websites around the clock. Whenever protest action news, statements from progressive leaders or revolutionary organizations or related to the New People's Army take place, bitter commentaries are hastily posted often using virulent terms.

Recently, Aquino used trolls to recover from negative publicity arising from the case of Mary Jane Veloso, who was saved from execution in Indonesia through people's actions led by the group Migrante, despite the inaction of Aquino's officials who towed the line that nothing further could be done other than to accept the death sentence. After Mary Jane's mother criticized the Aquino regime, Malacañang flooded Facebook pages with commentaries attacking the “ingratitude” of the Veloso family. This was used the next day by the pro-Aquino Philippine Daily Inquirer to report on the “change in public sentiment” and that the Velosos have lost public sympathy.

Social network is also used by imperialist

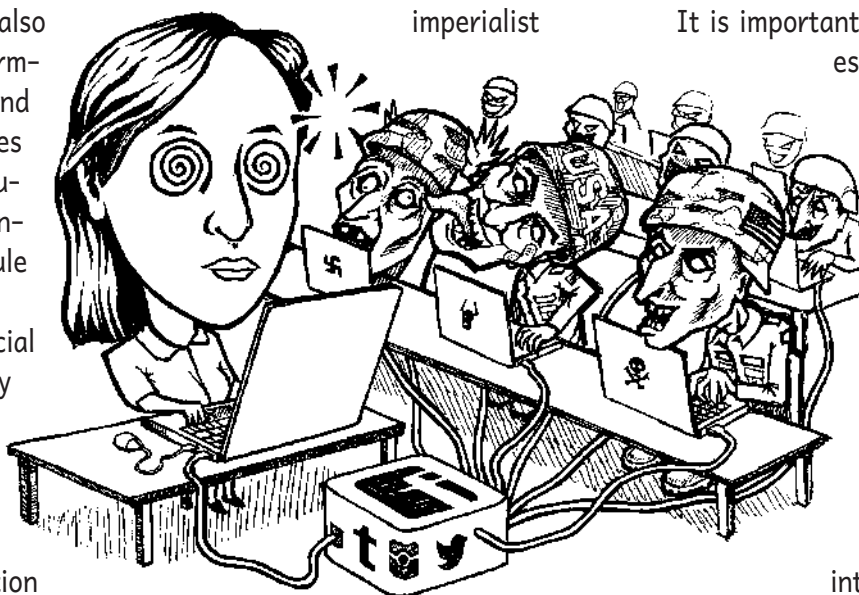
countries to sow discord among nations opposed to the US, including Iran, China, Syria, Afghanistan, North Korea and Ukraine. For instance, when violence erupted during a dispersal of protesters in Iran, photos of the injured were immediately taken and uploaded to YouTube to incite emotion among the viewers. The US Special Forces mandates that operators must be prepared at all times “for an information operation opportunity” and that “assets must be placed in a position to capture the incident” in order to be used in social media.

In this aspect, the psychology of disobedience to authority is also used towards the overthrow of governments, including the technique of “exposing them to examples of disobedience; encouraging them to question authority and educating people about the adverse consequences of compliance.”

Meanwhile, last June 23 the AFP through its Civil-Military Operations School held its second Social Media Summit. The AFP Civil Relations Service has long been noted for engaging in psywar work. Among the topics discussed were “using analytics (ie. the science of logical analysis) to predict social media opportunities” and “radicalization in social media”.

Psywar operators continue to study social network warfare, and aside from Snowden other whistleblowers have come forward to expose the tactics utilized in these. It is important that the people and especially all activists

must make special effort to study not only how to combat such, but also how the mass movement can plan and intensively use this to express the truth and the people's stand through the internet.



Turnabout of the Tsipras government

Protests in Greece erupted again after the parliament ratified last July 15 a new series of anti-people measures in exchange for an 86 billion euro (P5.84 trillion at the exchange rate of P68=1 euro) loan from the “troika” – the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU) and the European Central Bank (ECB). This blatant betrayal by the Greek government of Alexis Tsipras further pushes the Greek people into a deeper chasm of indebtedness and impoverishment.

Among the harsh conditions accepted by the Tsipras government is the reduction by up to 50% of the pension for retired workers and employees; wage cuts; increased taxes by up to 23%, including that for processed food; and the privatization of public utilities and facilities such as airports and seaports. The Tsipras government also agreed to reduce by 13 billion euros the fund for public service. Alongside this, Greece will undergo strict governance by the troika.

Compliance by the Tsipras government to these conditions is tantamount to betrayal and treason to the Greek people. A few days before this, the Tsipras government itself led the “OXI” (“No” in Greek) campaign in a referendum last July 5 to vote against the troika conditionalities. The “No” vote garnered 61% from the Greek people reflecting support for the anti-troika stand.

A few days later, however, the Tsipras government turned its back on the people and colluded with the troika negotiators to impose additional austerity measures. It can be recalled that Tsipras was elected as prime minister of Greece after Syriza garnered the majority of the parliament seats last January. The Syriza (“Radical Left Coalition”) is a coalition of Left-leaning organizations and parties that first came together to fight austerity policies in the country. The coalition won the 2015 election on a platform opposing the austerity conditions of the troika that had

been implemented for the past five years in Greece.

Greek crisis

Greece is a country in the European Union that has experienced spiralling economic crisis since the start of the prolonged global recession in 2008. The country is heavily indebted, exacerbated by an austerity program in 2010 and 2012. The debt in Greece this 2015 has reached 175% of its Gross Domestic Product. General unemployment is at 26%. More than half (50%) of its youth ages 18 to 34 have no jobs.

When the Tsipras government stepped into power, it immediately engaged in negotiations with the troika to ask for new loans in order to pay for old debts. Within the past five months, it stood against the privatization and austerity conditions (such as the reduction of pension funds and social services). However, the Tsipras position in the negotiation was weakened

when it rejected the path of “Grexit” (or the withdrawal from the European Union) and stated that it will stay in the eurozone at any cost.

Inept and treasonous

The Tsipras government did not prepare any serious alternative outside of debt restructuring with the troika. It did not take steps to find other sources of funds or loans such as the BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) Development Bank. With the lack of alternatives, Greece was blackmailed until the European central bank cut off the flow of funds into the Greek banks in a matter of three weeks.

The Tsipras government perpetuated the illusion that an “honest compromise” between Greece and the troika could be found and thus disarmed itself, as well as the Greek people, from seriously considering other options within and outside the EU framework. In the end, it weakened its own position and failed to escape from the imperialist stranglehold.

Since no alternative was prepared by the Tsipras government, the troika easily hardened its position to impose conditionalities in exchange for debt renegotiation with Greece. The Tsipras government failed to use the opportunity to jolt the European imperialists by refusing to enter their framework,



thus forcing them to present more favorable debt preconditions and rescheduling of debt payments. It would have been a tremendous relief to the Greek people if the Tsipras government had stood for a moratorium on payment of previous debts to the Troika, even for a set period.

The Tsipras government furthermore failed to use to its advantage the overwhelming vote of the Greek people against austerity and did not give due importance to the tremendous political goodwill accumulated internally and internationally for their struggle. There was time for progressive Greek leaders, including Tsipras, to over-

come adverse consequences of debt default and moratorium on debt payments.

Aggravating crisis

According to Jose Ma. Sison, chair of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS), a split within the ranks of Syriza is expected under the weight of the EU-Greek austerity deal and the excruciating economic hardship. The Tsipras camp has proven itself to be pro-capitalist EU, neoliberal, and pro-austerity - reversing the platform that swept it into power in the last election.

With correct and astute leadership of a unified progressive Left,

the Greek people can grasp the opportunity of intensifying their resistance and create the conditions for their social, economic and political liberation. Alongside this, we must be vigilant against Right-wing groups waiting in the wings to exploit "Greece out of EU" calls to place themselves into power.

Greece is only one of several countries on the verge of economic collapse. Many more countries in the peripheries of Europe and in other continents are sure to fall into similar crises. The effect will surely be felt worldwide as a new convulsion of economic and financial crises far worse than in 2008 breaks out. AB