

# LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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January - February 2007

## Arroyo fascist terror, part two Oplan Bantay Laya II pushes intensified fascist attacks on the people

By Roselle Valerio

Security officials of the Arroyo government have announced at the start of 2007 the implementation of Oplan Bantay Laya II ("operation plan freedom watch, part two) aimed at wiping out the Philippine revolutionary movement in five years. This recycled National Internal Security Plan (NISP) of the reactionary state replaces the Oplan Bantay Laya military campaign which ran its course from 2002 until the end of 2006.

What is immediately obvious is that the fascist Arroyo regime utterly failed in its objective of destroying the revolutionary movement with the first OBL.

Despite financial, logistical and technical support from the US government and despite the deadly attacks against the legal progressive movement and the unarmed civilian population, the regime's security forces failed to destroy the armed revolutionary movement in any region in any part of the country from 2001 up to 2006. On the contrary, the revolutionary forces were able to defend and preserve themselves and launch counter-attacks against the fascist armed forces.

In the greater part of the country, revolutionary mass organizations and organs of Red political power were able to continue implementation of the land reform program, health and social services, and education and cultural programs. The total membership in underground revolutionary organiza-

*De-facto president Gloria Arroyo heaps praises on military officials like Jovito "the butcher" Palparan, accused of ordering the abduction and murder of hundreds of political activists until he retired September 2006. from Arkibong Bayan.*

tions of the peasants, workers and other allied revolutionary forces has continuously expanded despite the intensified fascist attacks.

The New People's Army is currently operating in more than 120 guerrilla fronts covering more than 9,000 villages in more than 800 towns, in 70 out of the total 79 provinces in the country. In response to the call by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the NPA launched a nationally-coordinated campaign of tactical offensives starting September 2005 which effectively frustrated the objectives of OBL.

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## Trail of blood leads to Arroyo's doorstep

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

The statement of UN special rapporteur Philip Alston on 21 February and the report of the Melo Commission made public on 22 February both confirm that elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are behind the serial extrajudicial killings of political activists and oppositionists in the country.

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines took note of this development and reiterated that Gloria Arroyo, de-facto president of the Manila government, is ultimately responsible for the campaign of extrajudicial killings against members and leaders of progressive organizations and parties.

In a statement released to the media 28 February, the CPP observed that both

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# May 2007 Elections: Political 'musical chairs'

By Bagani Dong-ilay

**E**lections to the two houses of the Philippine Congress are scheduled to take place in May 2007. The major political forces in the country are gearing up for a big battle.

For the ruling faction of Gloria M. Arroyo, it is a battle for survival. For the bourgeois opposition parties, it would be a chance to get to power through a shortcut or if not to improve their chances of grabbing the presidency in 2010.

For the revolutionary movement and progressive forces, it would be a time for fighting for some gains for the people in the short term and for continuing to build the independent strength of the people's movement for social change in the long term.

Social unrest in the country has reached boiling point. The people are suffering from the worst economic conditions in many years. They are disgusted at Arroyo's flagrant cheating to win the 2004 presidential elections. They are angry at the unbridled and brazen graft and corruption involving Arroyo, her family and her sycophants. They are outraged at the rampant human rights violations marked by extra-judicial killings, massacres, illegal arrests and enforced disappearances. These political killings have also generated international condemnation.

Arroyo is extremely isolated. A broad united front has formed composed of bourgeois political parties, progressive mass organizations and parties, several disgruntled groups in the reactionary military and church and business groups. It has the potential to oust her from power before her term ends in 2010.

In fact, this broad front nearly succeeded in ousting her through "people power" in February 2006. Although there is sufficient basis for impeachment, two attempts to impeach Arroyo failed because she tightly controls the majority in Congress. But that can change if the bourgeois opposition and progressive parties gain a majority through the elections in May 2007.

## The nature of bourgeois elections

The bourgeois elections held in the country every three years are basically a game played by the local ruling classes: a kind of musical chairs that decide which faction among the ruling classes takes its turn at holding the reins of government and enjoying the

privileges that come with power. These elections are usually decided by what is popularly known in the Philippines as the three "Gs": guns, goons and gold.

The bourgeois parties do not have any identifiable differences in their program. The usual issue that these parties hurl against each other during election campaigns is limited to graft and corruption.

However, the steady advance of the revolutionary movement and the participation of some progressive parties in recent years have made a significant change in the bourgeois electoral game.

The political strength and influence accumulated by the revolutionary movement through the years have forced bourgeois politicians to make approaches to the revolutionary movement come election time. The revolutionary movement's mass base currently runs in the millions. In many areas of the country, candidates for municipal, provincial and congressional seats have to negotiate with the revolutionary movement for permission to campaign in guerrilla areas. Candidates at the national level also seek out the movement to negotiate for some



*The fake president: Gloria Arroyo is desperately fighting for political survival, and has variously resorted to bribing and coercing politicians, cracking down on legitimate opposition, and killing those who can't be bribed and cowed. artwork from migrante.org.*

favorable terms. The revolutionary movement gives the candidates concessions as long as the people get some concrete benefits in return.

But the revolutionary movement explains to the people that they cannot rely on these bourgeois elections if they hope for the necessary socio-economic reforms that will give them a better life in the long-term. Only a revolution will do that. But since these elections will go on anyway because the revolution has not yet succeeded in overhauling the system, they can vote for progressive candidates.

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The reactionary security forces simply do not have the capability to cover and control even 10% of the population at any given time. They can concentrate on a few guerrilla fronts and make life difficult for the people. But the NPA units can evade them in every guerrilla front or shift to another area for guerrilla front development. In scores of other guerrilla fronts, the NPA operates freely because of the overconcentration of enemy forces on a few guerrilla fronts elsewhere.

## Fascist terror, part two

Oplan Bantay Laya has two equally ugly aspects. First, it concentrates military and police forces on a number of guerrilla fronts at every given time in order to perpetrate massacres, mass intimidation, arbitrary arrests, torture and forced evacuations of entire communities through bombings, artillery fire, machine gun fire, arson and bulldozing. Second, it engages in the extrajudicial killing, abduction and torture of legal activists, including local progressive party leaders, workers, peasants, women, youth, religious, journalists, lawyers and human rights advocates.

OBL II promises to be the same animal with a more vicious bite. Gloria Arroyo in January released an additional 1 billion pesos for her fascist security forces, ostensibly to increase their combat capabilities. About P300 million out of this budget has been allocated for intelligence operations, including for the assassinations and attacks against the legal progressive movement.

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In recent years, a number of progressive parties have succeeded in winning seats in parliament through the party list system. They have become the voice of the workers, peasants and other working people in the parliament dominated by political representatives of the ruling classes of compradors and landlords. They expose the inhuman working conditions suffered by the workers in factories. They expose the widespread poverty in the countryside and the atrocities committed by the reactionary armed forces in their counter-insurgency operations. They fight for better wages and benefits for the workers and rank-and-file government employees and better prices for peasant farm products.

Combat operations under OBL II aim for battles of quick decision against the main guerrilla units or main encampment of specific guerrilla fronts. When successfully carried out, such combat operations hope to cripple major parts of the revolutionary armed forces. In contrast to previous military operation plans in which a criteria for success is the number of "cleansed" villages, OBL II measures its success by the number of dead bodies it can yield.

Arroyo's official policy of political assassinations continues under OBL II. Under the direct supervision of her Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security (COCIS), special funds are allocated for the general command of the mercenary Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). These funds are then accessed by local commanders to implement specific assassination missions targeting members of opposition parties and legal activists. Military officials higher up in the chain of command (brigade, division and area commands) have full knowledge of these missions, and they play a prominent role in sowing intrigues and in covering up the death squads' trails.

The extrajudicial killings, abductions, torture, misrepresentation of children as NPA fighters in order to kill or detain them, forced mass evacuations and other gross human rights violations by the military and paramilitary forces of the regime have outraged the people of the world and respected institutions, organizations and personages concerned with human rights. It has come to the point that even governments friendly to the Philippine government have called on the Arroyo regime to take

## The need for revolution

The inroads that have been made by progressive political parties into an arena formerly monopolized by bourgeois parties have struck fear among the reactionary ruling classes and their US imperialist masters.

Because the progressive parties fight for similar fundamental reforms as those espoused by the revolutionary movement such as land reform, national industrialization and an independent foreign policy, the reactionaries have tagged them as "communist fronts" and have launched a campaign of vilification and violence against them.

The most rabid among the reactionaries like Norberto Gonzales are calling for the disenfranchisement of these progressive

parties. They use the vilest propaganda and threaten people with violence to discourage them from voting for these parties. Members and leaders of these progressive parties have been the main targets of extrajudicial killings, forcible abductions and enforced disappearances.

## Revolutionary counter-attack

OBL II and the NISP are coercive instruments of the reactionary Arroyo regime to preserve and defend its anti-national, anti-people and repressive policies. They serve to protect the reactionary rule of the local comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord classes and of US imperialism, as well as the Arroyo regime's desperate attempts to stay in power.

The regime has incurred the hatred of the broad masses of the Filipino people and has become extremely isolated because of its illegitimate electoral victory in 2004, scandalous corruption, subservience to the US and other foreign monopoly interests, and gross human rights violations. The new battle plan of the regime to defeat the national democratic revolution will be defeated the same way as its predecessor battle plans.

OBL II can succeed only if the revolutionary forces surrender without a fight. But Philippine revolutionaries have been tested and steeled in more than three decades of life-and-death struggle. The CPP, NPA and all the allied organizations of the NDFP have continuously expanded and strengthened themselves over the years and are now in a much more favorable position to defeat the reactionary regime's latest counter-revolutionary military plan. ■

parties. They use the vilest propaganda and threaten people with violence to discourage them from voting for these parties. Members and leaders of these progressive parties have been the main targets of extrajudicial killings, forcible abductions and enforced disappearances.

This only confirms what the Filipino revolutionaries say about these bourgeois elections. That the ruling classes will not give up power without a fight. That these elections, run and controlled by the ruling classes, are mere exercises to decide which faction of the ruling classes take their turn in oppressing the people. That for fundamental social reforms to be carried out, a revolution is necessary. ■

## Abductions, enforced disappearances of NDFP Consultants increase

Arroyo security forces blamed

The list of consultants and personnel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines Negotiating Panel abducted by the military is growing longer. Evidence and testimonies of witnesses on the abductions point to elements of the reactionary security forces as the perpetrators of these crimes.

The latest victim of the Gestapo-type operation is Leo Velasco, who was abducted 19 February in Cagayan de Oro, in southern Philippines, by armed men who introduced themselves as government agents. Witnesses were able to describe the abductors and write down the plate number and make of the vehicles used in abducting Velasco. A police officer reported that one of these matched the description of the vehicle being used by military intelligence agents in its "special operations".

The abduction of Velasco shows the brazenness of the military in committing crimes against the people – even while UN Special Rapporteur Prof. Philip Alston was in the

Philippines conducting an investigation on extrajudicial killings and summary executions. Such brazenness and arrogance stem from the gleeful appreciation of Manila's de-facto president Gloria Arroyo and her top officials for these crimes, and their refusal to stop the killings and other gross violations of human rights.

The list of duly-accredited NDFP consultants abducted and disappeared by the forces of the military and police include the following:

- Philip Limjoco - abducted last 8 May 2006 in Dau, Pampanga.
- Rogelio Calubad and his son Gabriel - abducted on 17 June 2006 in Calauag, Quezon.
- Leopoldo Ancheta was also enforcedly disappeared 24 June 2006 in Guiguinto, Bulacan.
- Prudencio Calubid and members of his staff Celine Palma, Ariel Beloy, Gloria Soco and Antonio Lacno -- abducted near Sipocot, Camarines Sur last 26 June 2006 by soldiers in uniform.

Lacno escaped the following day and gave written testimony of the abduction. But his companions are still missing.

On 29 May 2006, NDFP political consultant Sotero Llamas was killed after being threatened by an AFP intelligence agent who visited him. After the agent left, Llamas told his wife that if anything should happen to him, he should remember the name and face of this agent.

These abductions and enforced disappearance are gross violations of the Joint Agreement on Security and Immunity Guarantee (JASIG) and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), which the NDFP and the Manila government both signed. Luis Jalandoni, Chairperson of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, demanded the immediate surfacing and release of the NDFP consultants and personnel, punishment of those who perpetrated, sanctioned, or condoned these gross violations, and indemnification for the victims and their families. ■

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reports attributed the killings to the mindset within the reactionary security forces which considers legal progressive activists and their organizations as "enemies of the state" who should be "neutralized". Both reports "tore to shreds claims by the Arroyo regime and its top security and military officials that the ongoing extrajudicial killings are part of an internal purge within the revolutionary movement," noted the CPP.

The Party also said that the Alston statement delved deeper into national policies that fundamentally sanction the killings, including a "counter-insurgency" program that targets the suspected mass base and the legal Leftist structures, and includes a campaign by the military to vilify and intimidate progressive organizations.

Alston rejected as a fabrication and disinformation the document called "Oplan Bushfire" – purportedly an

internal CPP document which Arroyo's military officials presented to him as evidence of the "purge" theory. The Melo Commission report also pointed out the self-contradictoriness of the military's simultaneous insistence on its "purge" theory and claims that the victims were "enemies of the state". It found "more telling" that General Palparan himself does not believe this "purge" theory and is even skeptical of reports about this.

Citing that both reports spared Arroyo herself, the CPP said: "Arroyo is, in fact, the mastermind and overall director of these fascist attacks. She is the highest-placed individual responsible for the brutal and antipeople Internal Security Operational Plan Bantay Laya (freedom watch), now in its second phase.

"Despite Gloria Arroyo's protestations of innocence in the extrajudicial killings of activists and efforts to sweep the evidence under the rug, the verdict is clear. Her hands are stained with the

blood of an unprecedented number of victims of extrajudicial killings in the country. Their cry for justice resounds. The Filipino people rightfully demand that she and her henchmen be held accountable for their role in these murders, in the shameless effort to cover up these dastardly crimes and in the continuing massacres, abductions and brutal suppression of the people's struggle for national and social liberation."

Shortly before Alston arrived in the country for his 10-day investigation on extrajudicial killings, Dalmacio Galdinao, provincial chairperson of a militant peasant organization was shot dead in his home in Misamis Oriental in southern Philippines. While Alston was conducting investigations in Manila on 15 February, student leader Farly Alcantara was gunned down by motorcycle-riding men. And while Alston was consulting with witnesses and relatives of slain

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# Bush caught in a huge storm

By Ed Ladera

Opposition to US President George W. Bush's Iraq war policy has intensified greatly after his decision to send 21,500 more troops to Iraq. The US House of Representatives voted 246 to 182 on 16 February 2007 -- with 17 Republicans crossing party lines -- to oppose the troop buildup.

The Democrats who control both houses of Congress are set to oppose Mr. Bush's request for \$99.6 billion in emergency spending for Iraq and Afghanistan. If they cannot stop it, they can set stringent conditions on such spending. If conditions are imposed, Bush may find himself in the dilemma of vetoing a bill that provides money for the troops. Among the conditions being proposed by anti-war progressives is the closing down of Guantanamo Bay prison and the bulldozing of Abu Ghraib prison.

After the symbolic House vote, Tom Daschle, the former Senate Democratic leader said, "What the president is getting is a real indication that the weather is going to get worse. He's going to be in the middle of a huge storm."



*Anti-war protesters join Martin Luther King parade in Los Angeles, January 2007. photo from la.indymedia.*

Polls indicate that nearly 70% of Americans oppose the Bush decision. General John Abizaid, the US CentCom Commander until February 4, 2007, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and former Secretary of State Colin Powell all oppose the Bush plan. On November 15, 2006, Abizaid, speaking before the Senate Armed Forces Committee, declared: "I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the core commander, General Dempsey, we all talked together. And I

said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no."

Pressure is also building up in state legislatures. In California, Iowa and Vermont, legislatures have passed resolutions opposing the troop buildup. Similar resolutions are being prepared in at least 19 more states. The Maryland General Assembly sent a letter to its Congressional delegation urging opposition to the increase in troops in Iraq. Senator Edward M. Kennedy called for pressure from the states: "Your voices, your calls, your e-mails and your resolutions have an impact on the debate." The president of the Iowa Senate, democrat John P. Kibbie has said that, "The end of this war has to start sometime and somewhere. And stopping the expansion of these troops needs to happen now."

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activists in Davao City on 19 February, Hernani Pastolero, 64, editor of a weekly paper in southern Philippines was shot dead in front of his house.

Demands by Filipino militant organizations and opposition parties as well as increasing political pressure from abroad for the Arroyo regime to stop the political killings have prompted even the US government to issue a statement, with its Manila ambassador offering assistance to solve the killings.

The CPP slammed the offer of help as "duplicitous". CPP spokesperson Gregorio Rosal asserted that "as the representative of the world's Number One terrorist, (ambassador Kristie Kenney) was in no position to act as if her government's hands are clean."

"The Arroyo regime's campaign of killing activist patriots and democrats is, in fact, being carried out under the guidance and tutelage of the US. Extrajudicial

executions are in line with the US' so-called global war on terror and primarily targets advocates of national liberation and democracy, and those who wish to put an end to US imperialist domination of the country," said Rosal. ■

*Bishop Alberto Ramento of the Philippine Independent Church resolutely fought for the rights of poor peasants and farm workers, and demanded a stop to extrajudicial killings. He was himself stabbed and hacked to death in his home 3 October 2006. photo from Arkibong Bayan.*



# Nepal People's War at the crossroads

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

Before 1990, only a few have taken notice of developments in Nepal, a small landlocked country high up in the Himalayas, until an armed revolution began in 1996 and a popular urban uprising in April 2006 forced the Nepali king to restore parliamentary rule and pave the way for the establishment of a republic.

With the signing of a peace accord between the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M), the armed revolution has entered a new phase that is fraught with challenges and dangers. Nevertheless, the people's war in Nepal has become a source of encouragement and inspiration for other struggling and oppressed peoples of the world.

Nepal is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial nation that was an absolute monarchy until 1990 when a powerful people's movement forced then king Birendra to abolish the Panchayat system – his authority to appoint government officials. It shares borders with China to the north and India to the south, east and west. Its more than 22 million people are Hindus. Besides its tourist attractions, Nepal has attracted corporate and foreign governments' attention because of its potential oil reserves and as a source of huge hydroelectric power for the Indian sub-continent.

Despite converting to constitutional monarchy after 1990 with the establishment of a parliament, the king as head of state retained control of the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) as commander-in-chief, in an attempt to guarantee that no genuine democratic reforms or radical change would take place in the semi-feudal and semi-colonial society.

In this situation, the CPN-M, founded in 1994, launched the people's war in 1996 aimed at overthrowing feudalism and its institutions, including the monarchy, liberate the oppressed peasant masses from landlessness and the nation from foreign domination, and establish a people's democratic state in Nepal.

Like other revolutionary struggles following Mao's protracted people's war strategy, the CPN-M took root and developed its strength in the



United Nations monitors in Kailali, in western Nepal, register the weapon of a Maoist combatant before it is stored in a container, seen in background. photo from International Nepal Solidarity Network.

countryside, initially concentrating attacks on local governments and police, and in 2001, with the formation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), against mainly the monarchy and the RNA. In areas where the CPN-M is strong, the peasant masses benefited from land reform and other social services provided by the guerrillas. It is estimated that PLA forces number around 30,000 to 35,000 armed guerrillas that operate and control nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the country.

Early on, despite the growing intensity of the people's war, king Birendra refused to unleash the RNA against the CPN-M guerrillas and instead blamed the parliamentary parties for the underdevelopment in the countryside because of unbridled corruption. Birendra's refusal led to the massacre of his entire family in June 2001 which many believe was at the instigation of the US.

When Gyanendra, the king's brother and stooge of the US, became king, he unleashed the RNA against the PLA and waged a dirty war against the CPN-M, after a short-lived ceasefire. Many suspected sympathizers and supporters of the CPN-M were tortured, extra-judicially executed and disappeared while tens of thousands were forced to leave their villages. But CPN-M launched one tactical offensive after another, hitting RNA district and regional headquarters, sometimes simultaneously. In 2005, Gyanendra declared a state of emergency, abolished the parliament, and assumed all state powers. A massive clampdown ensued even against the parliamentary parties and all opposition to his one-man rule.

Meanwhile, with the massacre of king Birendra's family, the CPN-M shifted its tactics to combine armed insurrection in the urban areas with the people's war in the countryside. It also called for a united front with the parliamentary parties against the monarchy. In November 2005, the SPA and the CPN-M signed an agreement to work jointly for the removal of the monarchy and the formation of a republic.

The anti-monarchy and pro-republic movement gained strength in Kathmandu and other urban centers. The king imposed martial law in February 2006. In April 2006, the people held daily protests and defied shoot-to-kill curfew imposed by the king and the RNA. The protests, which at its peak drew about 500,000 people, or more than 10 percent of Kathmandu's population, eventually evolved into a people's uprising.

On April 21, 2006, the king relented and restored parliamentary rule, asking that fresh elections be held. The SPA and CPN-M rejected the king's proposal and called instead for elections to a constituent assembly that would decide the monarchy's fate and the formation of a republic. They also announced that peace negotiations would be held between the SPA-caretaker government and the CPN-M. But the SPA government would have to pass a law putting the supervision and control of the RNA to the caretaker government so the CPN-M could declare a unilateral ceasefire with the SPA.

After several meetings and negotiations, the SPA government and the CPN-M

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## Grassroots movement

At the grassroots, the movement to oppose Bush's war of aggression is rapidly building up. International A.N.S.W.E.R. is calling for a Global Day of Action on the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. It is mobilizing for a massive March on the Pentagon on March 17. "Time to turn up the heat!" it declared. On September 24, 2005, International A.N.S.W.E.R. and United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) jointly organized a massive protest against Bush's wars of aggression. About 300,000 joined the mass action.

The biggest group of new volunteers and activists for the March on the Pentagon are U.S. Marines who have returned from Iraq whose families are also organizing to march on the Pentagon. The March on the Pentagon has already drawn more than 1,500 endorsers, including prominent individuals and national and grassroots organizations. Among them are Cindy Sheehan and former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark. The Muslim and Arab American community is organizing throughout the country. Students from high schools and colleges are coming in large numbers.

Last 27 January, in Washington, a huge demonstration condemned the Bush Iraq war policy. United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), a coalition of more than 1,300

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signed a comprehensive peace agreement on November 22, 2006. Among other items they agreed upon was the promulgation of an interim constitution that would allow CPN-M members to assume seats in the interim parliament and government, which would in turn be tasked to prepare for the constituent assembly elections in June 2007.

Political observers sympathetic to the CPN-M have however expressed concerns over certain provisions of the peace agreement. They point to provisions such as the registration and locking up of the weapons of the PLA; the virtual demobilization of the PLA and the reappointment of the reactionary police to take charge of law, order and security; and the dismantling of the revolutionary organs of political power in most areas of the country, which might result in the defeat of the people's war and the revolution.

The people's war in Nepal is indeed at the crossroads. ■

international and US-based organizations, announced that the massive turnout reached 500,000. Police estimates, as expected, said it was less than 100,000. Yet it was widely covered in the media, including international media. Prominently played up in the media was the active participation of film stars Jane Fonda, Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn. Jane Fonda, famous for her anti-Vietnam War activism, raised her voice for the first time in 34 years: "Silence is no longer an option!" Two days after, on 29 January, at least 1,000 people lobbied with Congressional representatives in 47 states.

## CIA rendition flights condemned by European Parliament

Another indication of criticism of Bush's policies is the February 14 European Parliament condemnation of rendition flights made by the US Central Intelligence Agency using European airspace and airports. Bush had admitted to and justified the flights as necessary for combating terrorism. The EP condemned rendition "as an illegal instrument used by the United States in the fight against terrorism...and the acceptance and concealing of the practice, on several occasions, by the secret services and government authorities of certain European countries. The EP criticized 14 member states for collaborating with the CIA or "turning a blind eye" to the human rights violations.

On 16 February, a judge in Milan, Italy, indicted 26 Americans, most of them CIA officers, for the abduction and illegal detention of a Muslim cleric. Included with those charged were the former heads of the CIA in Rome and Milan.

This will be the first trial of the American program of secretly kidnapping and torturing individuals suspected of having links to terrorism. The indictments are for abducting an Egyptian cleric, Hassan Mustafa Osama Nasr near a mosque in Milan on 17 February 2003, whisking him to the Aviano US airbase in Italy, then to the US base in Ramstein, Germany and finally putting him in jail without legal charges in Egypt where he was tortured. Nasr was finally released from the Egyptian jail on 11 February 2007.



## U.K. and Denmark withdrawing troops from Iraq

While Bush is sending 21,500 more US troops to Iraq, Prime Minister Tony Blair announced on Feb. 21 that the UK is reducing its 7,100 troops to 5,500 by May and down to less than 5,000 before the end of the year. Denmark announced on the same day that it is withdrawing its 500 troops in Iraq by August, while Lithuania announced that "it is seriously considering withdrawing its 53 troops by August." This trend of withdrawal has strengthened especially since Slovakia's withdrawal (January 2007), Italy (Nov. 2006) and Japan (July 2006). ■



The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace. It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

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**NDFP International Information Office**  
Postbus 19195 | 3501 DD Utrecht  
The Netherlands  
Email: [ndfp@casema.nl](mailto:ndfp@casema.nl)  
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## CPP calls for protests & NPA offensives vs passage of anti-terror law

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) condemned the approval into law last 19 February of the reactionary government's anti-terror law, euphemistically dubbed the "Human Security Act of 2007". In a statement distributed to the media, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the new anti-terror law "will embolden and give license to the regime of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to commit worse acts of state terrorism against the people with greater impunity, ruthlessness and brutality", in line with its counter-revolutionary war and campaign of suppression.

"With this all-encompassing fascist law in her hands, we anticipate the advent of a heightened reign of terror. The Arroyo regime is bound to commit more crimes of murder, terror and cruelty against the people in a desperate effort to suppress protests and resistance and perpetuate her corrupt, puppet and antipeople rule."

Rosal disputed as "pure baloney" claims by the law's apologists that it includes safeguards to protect human rights. He said the "overly broad definition of terrorism" will surely be interpreted by

Arroyo's security and military officials as a license to tag protesters, rallyists and all oppositionists as "terrorists" and order their arrest.

He also cited provisions where suspects could be arrested and detained



*Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines. file photo.*

indefinitely upon orders even of non-judicial bodies. He cited provisions that allow suspects to be detained incommunicado in violation of the bill of rights in the 1987 Philippine constitution as well as internationally guaranteed civil rights.

The "Human Security Act" was hastily passed on third reading on 19 February by the House of Representatives in a special session called by Malacañang. Rosal said that the anti-terror law was passed with dispatch by the Arroyo regime as a boost to its imperialist master now suffering extreme political isolation, both at home and abroad.

"We call on defenders of human rights and civil liberties, fighters for democracy and the entire Filipino people to carry out all possible forms of protest to repudiate and fight Arroyo's latest fascist law," the CPP spokesperson said. The CPP has likewise instructed all units of the New People's Army (NPA) to step up tactical offensives nationwide to punish the Arroyo regime and its minions for its continuing campaign of political killings and other acts of violence and terrorism against the people. *from Ang Bayan.* ■

## NPA punish enemy troops in 4 ambushes in February

At least eight enemy elements were killed in four separate ambushes launched by the New People's Army in central Philippine provinces during the month of February. The ambushes were launched in the provinces of Oriental Mindoro on 16 February, in Northern Samar on 6 February, in Batuan town in Bohol on 3 February, and in Mataguinao town, Samar province, on 2 February.

On 16 February, at least two elements of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, Philippine Army, and one element of the paramilitary Citizens Auxiliary Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) were killed while several others were seriously

wounded when they were ambushed by a squad of the Rodante Urtal Command of the NPA. The combined elements of the army and CAFGU were patrolling in a village called Patucua in Catarman town when they were fired upon by the NPA. A Red fighter was injured in the firefight which lasted more than 30 minutes.

The 52<sup>nd</sup> IBPA is known as the recruiter and controller of the CAFGU in Northern Samar. It actively recruits criminals and other bad elements, organizes and arms them, and deploys them to sow fear among the civilian populace.

Meanwhile, two M-16 rifles were voluntarily turned over to the Eking

Balacuit Command of the NPA in Misamis Oriental in southern Philippines, when a CAFGU element defected to the NPA, 19 February. The defector was previously assigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, Philippine Army, in Alipuaton village, Salay town.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has called on the NPA to intensify tactical offensives on a nationwide scale in order to complement the popular and legal movement to oust the hated US-Arroyo regime and to punish the fascist masterminds and implementors of the extrajudicial killings, campaign of terror and other heinous crimes against the people. ■