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Editorial

Resist US imperialist intervention in the South China Sea

The Filipino people must thoroughly expose and resist US schemes to foment conflict in the South China Sea among the Philippines, China and other countries claiming the Spratly Islands in part or in whole. The US' interference has no other objective than to justify the deployment of military forces in the region in the name of "defending Philippine sovereignty."

The people must also thoroughly expose and condemn the Aquino regime for allowing itself to be used by its imperialist overlord to exacerbate discord over the Spratlys. With US prodding, the Aquino regime has been whipping up disputes over the Spratly Islands by issuing aggressive statements and making provocative moves against China. The aim is to justify "requests for assistance" from the US invoking the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and thus pave the way for the US' forward deployment of military personnel and war materiel in the region.

The US has been "modernizing" the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) under the MDT framework by selling and leasing out military equipment to the Philippines. Arming the AFP forms part of US efforts to strengthen its military presence in the South China Sea. In fact, the AFP serves as a pawn in the US' chess game in its pursuit of its military strategy. Still invoking the MDT, the US has been directly deploying its military forces in the region through so-called "joint exercises," the latest of which was a joint naval exercise by US and Philippine forces in June along the Palawan coastline facing the South China Sea.

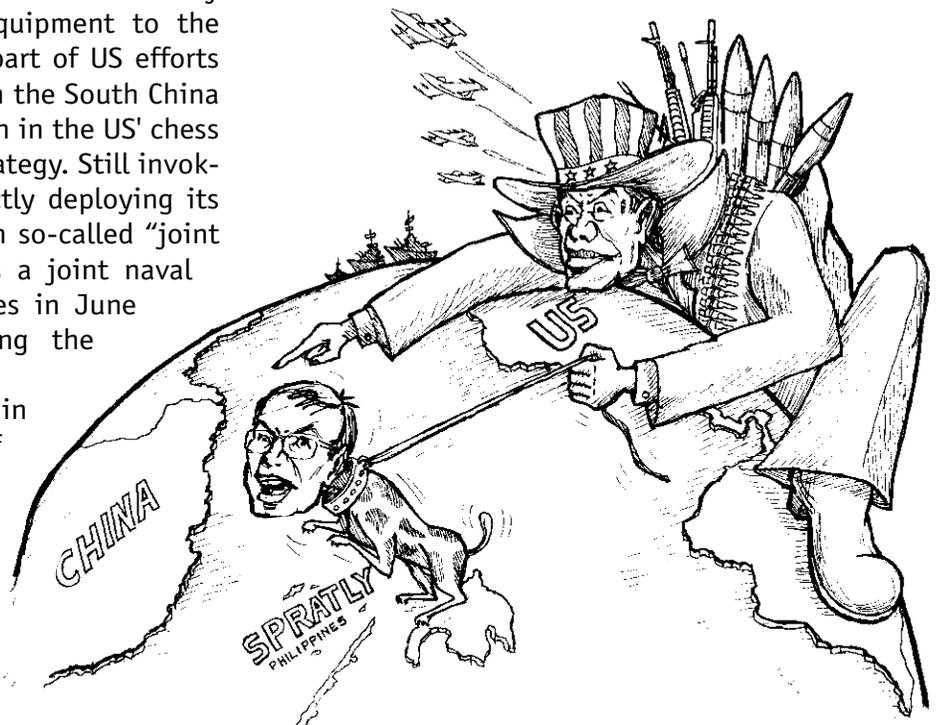
Such US imperialist moves are in accordance with its objective of "projecting its power" in the South China Sea. Its ultimate aim is to ensure its control over this crucial international trade route, the same way it controls other sea routes in other parts of the globe by maintaining its military presence in

strategic regions. In the US government's imperialist rationale, it has arrogated unto itself the sole right and power to control the international seas.

The US has therefore long been concerned about China's rise as an economic and military power. US imperialism views the Chinese government's consistent assertions of economic, military and foreign policy independence as a threat to its power.

In the past four decades, US imperialism connived with revisionists within China to undermine the socialist system and veer the country towards the capitalist road. But it is capitalist restoration in China that has spurred its ambitions to expand its power beyond its borders. US imperialism considers China a strategic threat to its status as the world's sole superpower.

The US wants its military tentacles to entangle the entire South China Sea to counter Chinese efforts to develop and deploy huge numbers of advanced military equipment such as ballistic and cruise missiles



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and warplanes and submarines fully armed with modern weapons. It fears China's developing capability for long-range air defense and electronic warfare and its ability to attack space-based computer systems and programs. It wants to neutralize China's naval base on Hainan Island which is believed to host submarines capable of launching strategic and tactical attacks.

In the face of US imperialism's military and diplomatic saber-rattling and China's emerging power, the Filipino people are advancing an independent and peace-loving foreign policy. They desire a peaceful resolution to the multi-country claims to the Spratly Islands free from US interference. They demand a stop to US intervention in the South China Sea and the withdrawal of all US forces in the area, including those based at the AFP Western Command headquarters in Puerto Princesa City and the AFP Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City.

The Filipino people condemn the Aquino regime for its subservience to its imperialist master and the latter's policy of worldwide hegemony. Aquino has been playing to the hilt the role assigned to him by the US when it summoned him aboard the USS Carl Vinson in May. He claims to favor a diplomatic resolution to the Spratly Islands issue, but continues to attack China and pave the way for the US to deploy its military machinery in the region under the cloak of "assisting in the defense of the Philippines."

The Filipino people are one with those who condemn China for its arrogance and refusal to recognize the multi-country claims to the Spratly Islands and engage in multilateral negotiations to resolve the issue in a peaceful manner.

The Filipino people call on the peoples of other countries with claims over the Spratly Islands to unite and build an alliance of Southeast Asian peoples that will resist their respective governments' obsequiousness to foreign powers, whether it be in the form of kowtowing to US intervention or bowing to China's exclusive claims over the region. They must use their solidarity to advance the equal rights of countries and peoples involved in the conflict.

They must push for multilateral negotiations that are free from US meddling and demand the participation of people's representatives. Such negotiations must result in agreements that support the political and economic interests of the region's peoples and their aspirations for peace. AB

US strategic interests are behind the hoopla over the Spratly Islands issue

Even before Aquino and his security and diplomatic officials began hyping the Spratly Islands issue, the US had long been planning to incite tensions in the area in order to create conditions that would justify its entry into the fray.

The US asserted in the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review issued in February 2010 that it must deter and defeat "aggression" posed by countries that are potential US enemies. The face of US imperialism was starkly evident when it declared in the QDR 2010 that "without dominant US capabilities to project power, the integrity of US alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing US security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict."

Thus the US' zeal in resisting China's emergence as a power. The US fears what it calls "strategic anti-access" that aims to deprive it of the ability to "project its power" in key regions in various parts of the globe.

In an article published in the *Washington Times* on August 13, 2010, Adm. James A. Lyons, one of the US' leading military representatives to the United Nations and former commander of the US Pacific Fleet expressed US suspicions over China's expanding relations with Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia and countries belonging to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). He also expressed grave concern over the 65 agreements forged between China and the Philippines under the Arroyo regime, saying these were part of "efforts to reduce US power and influence."

Lyons said it is clear that China wants to become the dominant power in the Western Pacific and force a break between the US and its allies. To counter China, the US has expanded relations with Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. He added that the US is now in strategic competition with China over forming strategic military



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angbayan@yahoo.com

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relations with Indonesia.

The US is seriously concerned with China's establishment of "fortresses" in the South China Sea. Aside from its naval base on Hainan Island, Lyons cited China's construction of a military base on Mischief Reef in the Spratly Islands which he termed as a threat to the Philippines, Japan and South Korea, all of them US "allies."

Almost a year has passed since Lyons declared that aside from strengthening its relations with ASEAN, the US must use the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty to strengthen its position on the issue of the South China Sea. Lyons asserted that in addition to selling surplus military equipment to the Philippines, the US should likewise consider leasing out a squadron of F-16 airplanes along with T-28 jet trainers, helicopters, a C-12 twin-engine aircraft that could be used for counterinsurgency and ocean patrols and two FFG-7 warships.

Lyons also pushed for commercial agreements that would enable the US military to utilize the facilities and logistics in Subic Bay. In this regard, US Sens. Daniel Inouye and Thad Cochran came to the Philippines in April to inspect the facilities available at Subic that could be of use to the US military.

Meantime, US warships have already docked several times in Philippine ports since Aquino came to power. The USS Washington docked in September 2010 and March 2011 in Manila. In May, the docking of the USS Carl Vinson in the same port was described by the AFP as "sending a message to China." Joint exercises have also been conducted in Palawan and in the seas near the Spratly Islands as part of the annual Balikatan exercises. AB

Prepare for the SONA: Expose the real state of the nation!

The reactionary congress' resumption in a few weeks will be an occasion for Benigno Aquino III to deliver his "state of the nation address" (SONA). We can expect Aquino's SONA to be full of empty boasts and to propagate nothing but lies and illusions.

Long before Aquino's SONA, the Filipino people must actively expose the real state of the nation. All the revolutionary forces, activists and masses must be mobilized to launch a massive propaganda campaign to bring to the fore the real state of the nation. We must make use of all opportunities—gatherings in farms and streets, classrooms and offices, radio programs and the like—to vent our anger and our readiness to resist the antipeople, pro-imperialist and fascist policies of the US-Aquino regime.

Let us expose the US-Aquino regime's connivance with the international oil cartel and its feigned helplessness in the face of relentless hikes in the prices of petroleum products that bleed the people dry and enable the foreign oil companies to amass superprofits. We must assail the US-Aquino regime's refusal to raise workers' wages in the face of skyrocketing prices of goods and services.

We must slam its refusal to implement genuine land reform in Hacienda Luisita and other vast estates nationwide. We must expose the reign of oppression, exploitation and repression in the countryside.

Let us assail Aquino's continued failure to prosecute and punish Gloria Arroyo and her cohorts for their crimes of corruption and plunder and for killings and other hu-

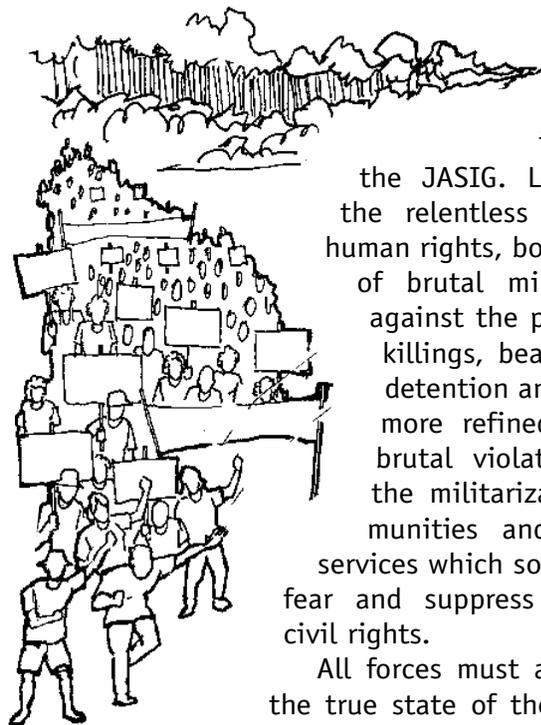
man rights violations.

Let us denounce the US-Aquino regime's plans to raise MRT fares and expressway toll fees as well as its scheme to privatize the MRT and leave all infrastructure building projects in the hands of foreign investors in the name of "public-private partnership" which only adds to the people's burdens.

Let us expose and assail Aquino's connivance with US imperialism in allowing the entry of thousands of American troops into the Philippines through a series of "visits" by US warships in September 2010, March and May 2011. Let us assail the stoking of military and diplomatic tensions over the Spratly Islands in accordance with US dictates in order to justify US interference and deployment of military equipment and a stronger military presence in the Asia-Pacific as part of the US' strategy to deter China's growing influence and power.

Let us expose and assail attempts to stop the advance of peace negotiations between the NDFP and the GPH through the arrest and continued detention of N D F P consultants in violation of the JASIG. Let us expose the relentless violations of human rights, both in the form of brutal military attacks against the people such as killings, beatings, arrests, detention and the like and more refined but equally brutal violations such as the militarization of communities and government services which sow a climate of fear and suppress the people's civil rights.

All forces must act to present the true state of the various sec-



tors, communities, schools, offices and the like. We must avail of all methods of mass propaganda such as posting streamers in public, painting slogans on walls, displaying posters and statements and distributing leaflets. Launch mass meetings in schools, communities, factories and offices that will serve as fora for the masses to air their grievances, unite in their analyses against the US-Aquino regime and be encouraged to tread the path of mass struggle.

Let us encourage the mass media to help in exposing the real state of the nation. Let our statements be carried by the print, broadcast and television media.

The Supreme Court decision on Hacienda Luisita is unacceptable

Farmers and farm workers bitterly assailed the Supreme Court decision ordering another referendum on Hacienda Luisita. In a decision issued July 5, the court ordered a new round of voting by hacienda workers to determine whether they prefer being given land to till or shares of stock in Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI).

"If we choose land, we will have to pay for it and our amortizations will end up with the Cojuangco family. This is a win-win solution for the Cojuangcos and it leaves us at the losing end," said Rodel Mesa, spokesperson of the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Hacienda Luisita (AMBALA) on the

Supreme Court-mandated referendum.

Members of AMBALA have decided to boycott the referendum. The court's decision derives from a sham referendum in 1989 that had the assent of the then-prevailing yellow union. Through this referendum, the Cojuangco family was able to make the farmers choose the stock option plan instead of land through a combination of bribery and intimidation.

Thus, the planned referendum will be no different from the Cojuangco family's 1989 maneuver and another anomaly-ridden referendum in August 2010 that again secured the farmers' and farm

Call, text, tweet and use facebook to propagate the message of resistance.

Let us rouse the students into transforming their schools into centers for exposing the real state of the nation. Let us call on them to study the state of society by paving the way for campus tours of spokespersons of unions, peasant associations, urban poor groups and other organizations of the toiling masses. Let us stir their interest to join exposure tours in communities or factories near their campuses in order for them to grasp the "real state of the Filipino people." **AB**

workers' assent through deceit. It is all part of the Cojuangco-Aquino clan's grand plan to prevent the distribution of the hacienda lands to the farmers.

The Supreme Court decision only favors the landlord regime of Benigno Aquino III, railed Rep. Rafael Mariano of Partido Anakpawis. This decision clearly shows that the Supreme Court is an instrument of deception, oppression and exploitation. He warned that the decision will not resolve the more than 50-year agrarian problem in Hacienda Luisita but will instead add fuel to the fires of agrarian struggle in the estate.

A strike at Hacienda Luisita in November 2006 led to a bloody massacre when police, military and armed goons opened fire on protesting farmers. **AB**

"Saudization" and the contractual migrant Filipino

Mass layoffs of contractual Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia: this is what the "Saudization" policy means. The policy, which began implementation on July 2 involves the prioritization by the Saudi government of its own workers, to the detriment of contractual migrant workers in the Middle Eastern kingdom. It brings to the fore the bankruptcy of the labor export policy which systematically pushes many Filipinos to work abroad.

Up to 350,000 Filipino "domestic helpers" currently working in Saudi Arabia will be affected by "Saudization." Recruitment agencies estimate that up to 300,000 domestics will not be able to work next year.

Filipino domestic workers in Saudi Arabia have been suffering from a wage freeze in addition to oppressive working conditions. Many of them are made to work for long hours, given little food and treated like slaves. Some become their employers' sex slaves. Not a few come home with mental illnesses or end up dead.

The Saudi government has ignored calls to protect

the welfare and interests of Filipinos in the kingdom. It has refused to implement a \$400 minimum wage for Filipino domestics and ensure their rights. In spite of this, some 30,000 to 40,000 Filipinos keep on returning to Saudi Arabia annually to work.

The Aquino regime has not lifted a finger to prepare for the influx of jobless migrant workers. Instead, it has stepped up efforts to look for positions in other countries in hopes of retaining millions of dollars of remittances by migrant workers.

"Saudization" is but one of the policies that will lead to the mass layoffs of contractual Filipino workers. These policies are an offshoot of the economic crisis and political turmoil currently engulfing the entire Middle East. As the crisis in their respective economies deepens and as workers in the Middle East actively fight for their right to employment and just wages, more and more countries will be closing their doors to migrant Filipinos.

In the face of all this, the reactionary government must do away with the labor export policy and focus on the mass creation of jobs locally. **AB**

4Ps and Oplan Bayanihan

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a pacification program of the US-Aquino regime. It is the operationalized version of the World Bank's so-called "conditional cash transfer program" that is being implemented in various part of the world.

4Ps is one of the Aquino government's major programs. Aquino will be allotting P53.6 billion to the program in 2012, up from its P34.3 billion budget for 2011. Its avowed objective is to uplift three million families from poverty.

Through a package of doleouts and a few health and education programs, 4Ps aims to create the illusion that the government is delivering services to the people, thereby "regaining the people's trust." In fact, such showcase programs obscure the real roots of the people's poverty in order to assuage their anger and distance them from looking for revolutionary solutions to their oppression.

The Aquino government is implementing 4Ps in tandem with Oplan Bayanihan (OPB). Many of the 4Ps priority areas coincide with OPB priority areas.

In Negros, for instance, the local government recently unveiled the Negros First Development Agenda (NFDA), which is none other than the local version of 4Ps and other doleout programs of the Aquino regime. Its implementor is Gov. Alfredo Marañon, a despotic compradorlandlord and bureaucrat who was also the implementor of the bloody Oplan Bantay Laya under the Arroyo regime, and currently one of the main proponents of Oplan Bayanihan under the Aquino regime. Marañon has been using his office to mobilize the various agencies of government and use their funds for military and police operations against the revolutionary forces and the legal democratic movement. Marañon organized the Negros Island Peace and Order Council or NIPOC to serve as the center for

civil-military operations throughout the island. The council, whose members include high-ranking military and police officers is well-funded. It implements repressive and militarist programs in the name of "development" and "poverty-alleviation."

In Leyte, the scope of 4Ps was recently expanded from ten to 22 municipalities. 4Ps and other "development" and "poverty-alleviation" projects in Eastern Visayas are being implemented in tandem with the Samar Island Partnership for Peace and Development (SIPPAD) which is run by the 8th Infantry Division's top brass. Among SIPPAD's projects is the construction of what has been dubbed as the "road to war" which will connect the eastern and western halves of the island. The AFP has long considered Samar a priority area.

In Panay island, 4Ps is being used as an even more brazen instrument to suppress and pacify the people. PAMALAKAYA, a progressive fisherfolk organization reports that 4Ps beneficiaries are strictly prohibited from joining groups that criticize and resist the Aquino regime. In a glaring violation of their civil rights, residents have

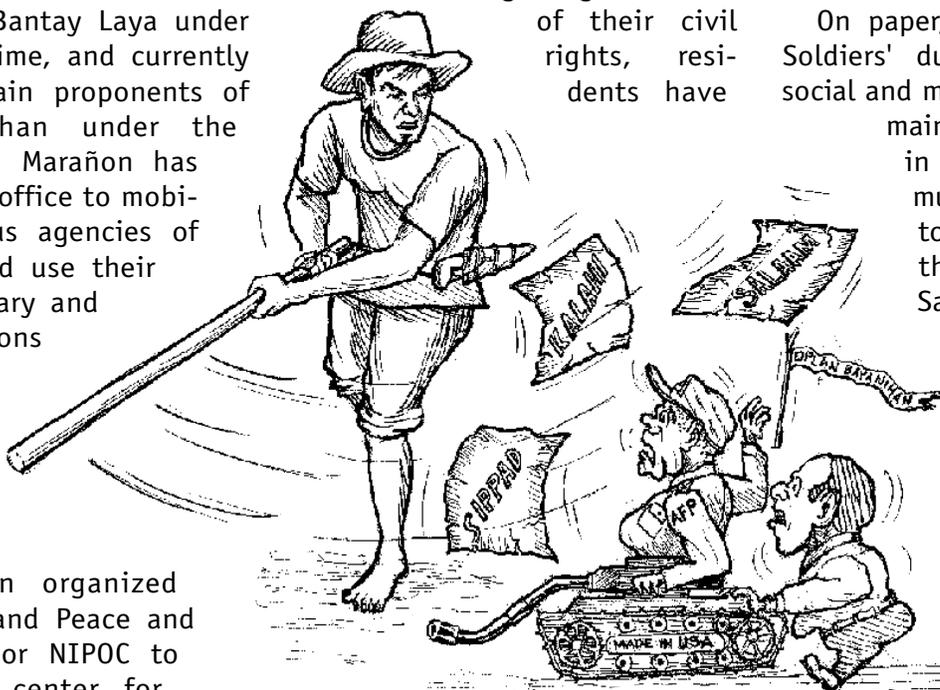
been warned that the small cash transfers they have been receiving will be withdrawn if they join BAYAN and other progressive organizations.

In Northeastern Mindanao, 4Ps is being implemented by soldiers. The AFP has been using the program as a pretext to call village meetings. One of 4Ps' provisions is that at least 85% of the target "beneficiaries" should be present in such meetings. Residents who want to enroll in the program are likewise subjected to background investigations, thus making 4Ps a way for soldiers to collect intelligence information.

In Palawan and other parts of Mindoro, the DSWD has been using 4Ps assemblies to counter the activities of progressive organizations. There have been instances when the DSWD purposely scheduled "community assemblies" and other "family sessions" to prevent residents from attending activities of progressive organizations.

The use of 4Ps and other sham social programs as instruments of pacification is not original to the Aquino regime. In 2003, the Arroyo regime formed Salaam (Special Advocacy on Literacy/Livelihood Advancement for Muslims) Soldiers in tandem with KALAHI-CIDSS. KALAHI-CIDSS is an organization affiliated with 4Ps. Many members of Salaam Soldiers are either soldiers or former members of the MILF or MNLF who have already become active in the AFP.

On paper, part of the Salaam Soldiers' duties are to deliver social and medical services and to maintain peace and order in their respective communities. But according to no less than the AFP, the operations of Salaam Soldiers are no different from that of the Special Operations Teams. A local DSWD administrator has particularly mentioned that among their "beneficiaries" are relatives of MILF and NPA. **AB**



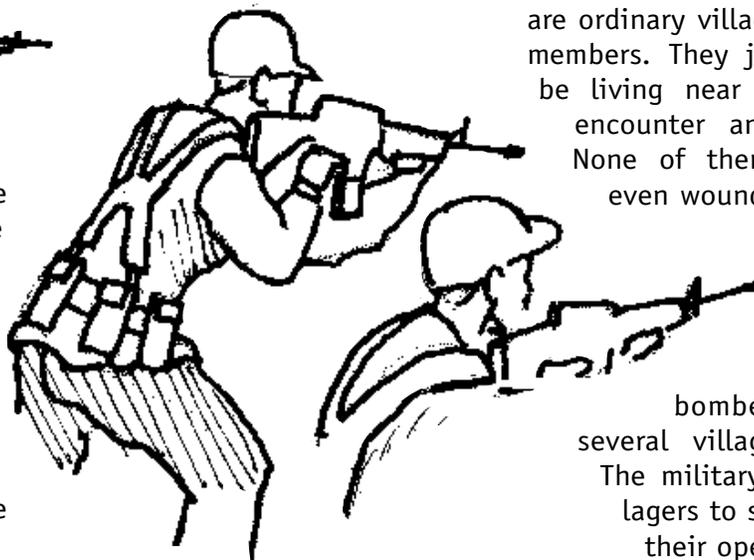


Encounters in North Cotabato

Contrary to reports by drumbeaters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the military suffered 16 casualties while not a single Red fighter of the New People's Army (NPA) was killed or wounded in a series of encounters in Barangays Malasila and Luayon in Makilala, North Cotabato on June 15, 16 and 17.

In a statement, Ka Macario Dilaab, spokesperson of the NPA Mt. Alip Operations Command in Far South Mindanao Region said that at least seven bodies were immediately loaded onto a helicopter after the encounters. The information came from eyewitness accounts of NPA snipers who were at a higher position. Reliable reports also said that the Philippine Army actually suffered 16 casualties, most of them regular soldiers of the 57th, 40th and 39th IB, due to a misencounter among the operating troops.

The fascist troops were so confused and



disorganized that they ended up shooting at each other as the NPA snipers observed them from afar.

After the military casualties were loaded onto a helicopter, 6th ID spokesperson Lt. Col. Gaudencio Asto announced that they had killed four NPA members. He identified three of them as Alexander Selano, Miguel Ocsio and a Commander Sammy. In fact, the men whose names he mentioned are ordinary villagers and not NPA members. They just happened to be living near the site of the encounter and misencounter. None of them was killed or even wounded.

To cover up the AFP's embarrassment, "Tora-Tora" planes bombed and strafed several villages of Makilala. The military also forced villagers to serve as guides in their operations. **AB**

Problems and anomalies of 4Ps in Palawan

4Ps is riddled with anomalies at every level, reported a Palawan local who has joined the program. In one of the island's towns, residents have also complained about the chaotic procedures involved in identifying the program's beneficiaries.

According to one of 4Ps' designated community leaders, it is not the poor who are on the list of beneficiaries but persons close to local officials. Some of them have regular jobs or are even employees of the municipal government. With the patronage system so rampant, only a handful of those who are truly poor are able to avail of the program's benefits.

The surveys do not cover people in the town's farflung areas, where most of the poorest residents live. When a beneficiary is unable to comply with the requirements, his benefits are transferred to someone from a ready list of "fillers." Many of these "fillers" are supplied by the local government and openly endorsed by politicians.

In one sitio, not all of the listed beneficiaries received doleouts. Some of them received the subsidies only once. Others did not receive the full amount, with some receiving only half of what they should have gotten. Many residents feel that it is not worth their while to join the program, especially since some of them have to spend for transport fare just to get to the municipal hall. **AB**

All talk, no action

After a year in power, the Aquino regime has done nothing to prosecute, try and punish Gloria Arroyo and her minions. Aquino has been all talk in condemning the corruption cases involving the previous regime.

The latest case involves Arroyo's anomalous use of PCSO funds, treating them as if they were private monies. After a series of investigations, not a single criminal case has been filed by the government against Arroyo.

As time passes, it becomes increasingly clear that Aquino is merely using the former president as a scapegoat in order to cover up his own regime's incompetence and bankruptcy. He calls for investigations but shows no interest in bringing to court the cases that have been unearthed. He steps up his tirades against Arroyo whenever people become more discontented with the way he runs his government.

Aquino's non-action has been reflected in the results of the latest Pulse Asia survey conducted May 21 to June 4, showing that 39% of Filipinos do not approve of Aquino's performance and 40% do not believe that he can reduce the poverty incidence and rampant government corruption. **AB**



Leader of armed cult killed at NPA checkpoint

Red fighters of the NPA Conrado Heredia Command (NPA-CHC) killed SPO3 Benjamin Langbid, an element of the CARAGA Regional Intelligence Division of the Philippine National Police who was also one of the notorious leaders of a private army called the Philippine Prayer for Peace of the Holy Spirit Incorporated (PPPHSI). The incident took place on June 23, at around 7 a.m. at an NPA checkpoint along the national highway in Purok 7, Barangay Pasian, Monkayo, Compostela Valley.

Accosted with Langbid at the checkpoint was his right hand man Romeo Casas, also a member of PPPHSI and a notorious element of the Barangay Intelligence Network. Instead of surrendering their firearms, Casas fired at the NPA checkpoint, prompting the guerrillas to return fire. Langbid and Casas were killed in the process.

The NPA seized a baby M16 and four pistols, said Ka Roel Agustin III, NPA-CHC spokesperson.

Langbid was also a close aide



of Josefina "Pina" Palma-Paulo, known as PPPHSI's "supreme leader" based in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur. Langbid led the 60-strong armed cult, half of whose members are regular soldiers of the 75th IB. The cult operates a 3,000-hectare coal mine in Barangays San Jose and Pamaypayan in Bislig City. The group is also involved in large-scale logging and extortion in Bislig City,

Lingig, Surigao del Sur and Trento, Agusan del Sur.

To protect these interests, the PPPHSI has been trying to evict more than 60 peasant families in San Jose and Pamaypayan. The armed cult has also been stealing the peasants' farm animals and beating up local residents to force them to leave their productive lands. Barangay officials who drafted a petition against the cult's landgrabbing and intimidation have been harassed and their lives threatened.

Benigno Aquino III is using armed fanatical sects like the PPPHSI to implement Oplan Bayanihan in the same way that his mother, former Pres. Corazon Aquino used them under the US-designed "low intensity conflict counterinsurgency," said the NPA-CHC.

Meanwhile, members of the NPA Wilfredo Zapanta Command seized an M16 in a raid on the police outpost at the Mati Bus Terminal in Mati, Davao Oriental on June 7. PO3 Alfredo Salva was killed when he fought it out with the guerrillas. A Red fighter also sacrificed his life in this operation. AB

NPA launches harassment operations in Negros

New People's Army (NPA) units under the Leonardo Panaligan Command (NPA-LPC) launched coordinated harassment operations against the 11th IB, the so-called "Killer Battalion."

NPA units harassed three detachments in Negros Oriental and another one in Negros Occidental at around 12 midnight of June 13. Other units simultaneously set up checkpoints along the national highway in Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental that day. Their objective was to block soldiers and criminal elements who owe blood debts to the people and those with standing warrants of arrest issued by the people's court.

Soldiers from nearby AFP and PNP camps did not even come out or send reinforcements, for fear of being involved in the fighting, said Ka JB Regalado, NPA-LPC spokesperson.

Before these military actions, members of the Pambansang Katipunan ng Magbubukid (PKM) launched a noise barrage and built bonfires on June 12 in several villages, towns and cities in Central Negros. Members of the Kabataang Makabayan (KM) joined the coordinated action by putting up posters and painting revolutionary slogans in the towns and cities.

By mobilizing hundreds of regular members of the people's army, the people's militia and self-defense units under the NPA-LPC, the Red fighters demonstrated their ability to conduct systematic and planned maneuvers supported by a several thousand strong mass base. The AFP and PNP were stunned by these coordinated actions and failed to mobilize despite the fantastic claims by Col. Jonas Sumagaysay, 3rd ID assistant commanding officer that the revolutionary movement in Negros island is on the verge of collapse. AB



61st IB: Fascist to the core

The Philippine Army 3rd Infantry Division was compelled to transfer its butcher unit, the 61st IB due to intense protests from Negrenses, especially farmers, farm workers, the religious and other democratic sectors. Because of its bloody record of violating human rights, the battalion supposedly underwent “retraining” and “reorientation” to teach it to value human rights.

After just a few months of being stationed in Panay, however, the 61st IB has bared its true character as an enemy of the people. A number of incidents in Central Panay illustrate that the 61st IB is fascist to the core.

For one, residents have long been complaining about the 61st IB's prolonged stay in the centers of intermediate and upland barangays of Tapaz, Capiz, where they have been using the people as human shields.

In May, drunken soldiers indiscriminately fired their guns in Barangay Roosevelt, Tapaz. They continue to sow terror and engage in psywar tactics against the people to destroy their unity and their

struggle for their rights.

The soldiers have been propagating decadent culture in the villages. In May, 61st IB troops brought prostitutes to Barangay Roosevelt and pimped them off to the locals. This was just a continuation of what their predecessors, the 47th IB, did. They also persist in showing pornographic movies to children despite the parents' demands for the soldiers to stop.

Crimes have proliferated in the villages. When the 61st IB replaced the 47th IB in 2011, the soldiers

based themselves in Barangay Roosevelt. Since then, carabao rustling has become rampant.

The 61st IB is also an instrument for seizing the ancestral lands of the Tumanduk. They are also being used as security forces in a dam project at the Jalaur River and in mining operations of Teresa Marble covering the upland barangays of Tapaz, Capiz and Calinog.

The fascist 61st IB is no different from the abusive 47th IB, said Ka Junie Guerrero, spokesperson of the NPA Jose Percival Estocada Jr. Command in Central Panay. It is no wonder that the people have been fighting it.

A number of angry civilians used a shotgun to shoot at 61st IB troops staying at the Barangay Roosevelt covered gym on June 12 at around 9 p.m., wounding a Corporal Pagurayon in the calf. The soldiers retaliated by opening fire for 20 minutes at the direction of the civilians' houses.



AFP, a bane on children

The AFP has been wantonly violating the rights of children nationwide. They cover up such crimes by maligning the New People's Army and the revolutionary movement.

On June 26, three children were illegally arrested and detained by the 401st Bde in San Agustin, Surigao del Sur. The military branded them as NPA “child soldiers” and ordered them to plant land mines along the road. This was after an NPA team ambushed a composite force of the 29th, 36th and 75th IB that day using a command-detonated explosive. Two soldiers were killed and several were wounded in the ambush. The troops had been launching a month-long operation with the sham Community Organizing for Peace and Development (COPD) under Oplan Bayanihan as cover. Throughout their stay, they had

been hit seven times by the NPA.

The truth is that the soldiers arbitrarily picked up the three children during a military operation in Hani-paan, San Agustin. They were then with their father and another relative. Due to the extent of the soldiers' casualties in the NPA's defense of the area, and also because of the local residents' firm and militant stance against the AFP's deception, the soldiers view all locals as NPA. They indiscriminately arrest, detain and even kill the civilians, regardless of



age. To evade responsibility for their crimes and abuses, they brand village children as NPA child soldiers, vent their ire on them and in the process slander the NPA.

It is against the NPA's rules to recruit minors. On the other hand, the NPA obtained proof of the AFP's use of minors in its counterrevolutionary war when a 16-year old CAFGU element was killed in a fire-fight in Lianga, Surigao del Sur on June 7.

Meanwhile, a 15-year old girl was raped by three elements of the Presidential Security Guard on June 21. Rose (not her real name) was pimped by Barangay Chairman Angelo Murillo to the PSG soldiers after she was caught violating curfew.

In a sworn statement, Rose said that a S/Sgt. Walter Candelaria and two of his companions raped her right inside the PSG barracks. Progressive organizations strongly condemned the crime and called on Aquino to investigate his men and punish those who are found guilty.

AB

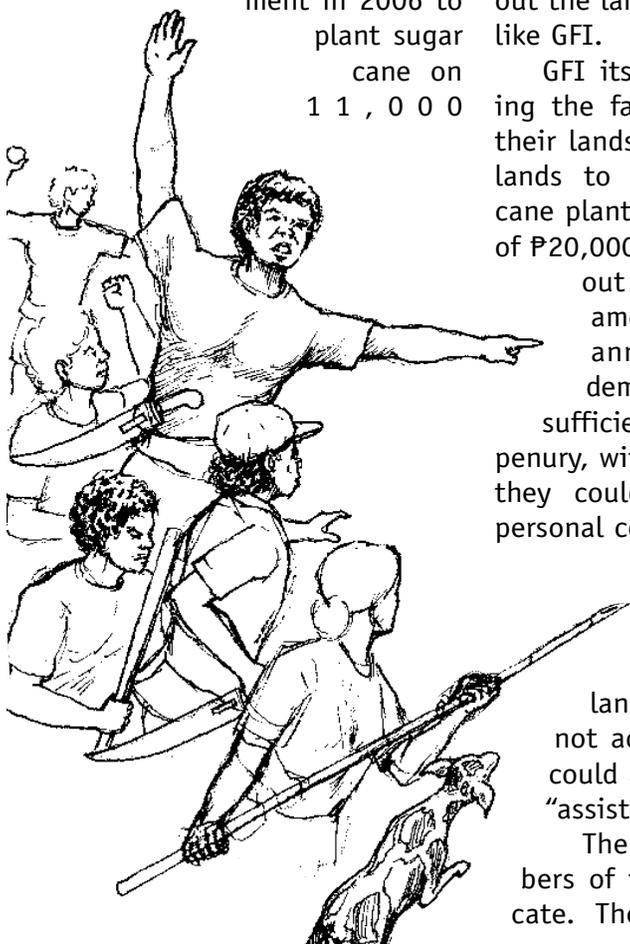
Landgrabbing in Isabela

Various government agencies are in cahoots to systematically seize the peasants' lands in several towns of Central Isabela. The syndicate is composed of officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), the Registry of Deeds and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP). A company engaged in bio-ethanol production is now using this cabal to seize more land than it could plant to sugar cane.

The first swindle foisted by government is to have the DENR declare the alleged presence of several idle and abandoned lands, particularly in San Mariano, Isabela, the center of the bio-ethanol project.

In reality, practically every inch of arable land in San Mariano is already productive and planted to rice, corn, pineapple and vegetables. The state's own statistics show that 33,262 hectares in this municipality was composed of agricultural land in 2003, with 14,927 hectares or almost 45% of it planted to corn. But the DENR has purposely classified the land erroneously to justify their takeover by Green Future Innovations, Inc. (GFI), the bio-ethanol company which is owned by a Japanese-Taiwanese-Filipino consortium. GFI signed a contract with the Isabela provincial government in 2006 to

plant sugar
cane on
11,000



hectares in 17 barangays in Central Isabela and set up a bio-ethanol plant in the area. The bio-ethanol product will be used to produce electricity.

Based on a production volume of 125,000 liters daily or 54 million liter annually, the GFI will be the biggest bio-ethanol producer nationwide. It will be fully operational in 2012. But this early, the residents of Central Isabela are already reeling from its destructive effects.

Isabela is the biggest corn producer and the second biggest rice producer in the country. This distinction is in danger of being lost with GFI's entry into the province.

The DENR also tells the farmers of San Mariano that the lands they have long been tilling lie within "protected areas." Unknown to them, the DENR has been leasing out the land to big agri-businesses like GFI.

GFI itself has been hoodwinking the farmers in order to seize their lands. Those who allow their lands to be converted to sugar cane plantations are promised rent of ₱20,000 per year. They later find out that GFI has reduced the amount to a mere ₱5,000 annually. This has condemned many formerly self-sufficient farmers to a life of penury, with not even a plot where they could plant vegetables for personal consumption.

In other cases, farmers' applications to have their land titled are purposely not acted upon so that fixers could approach them and offer "assistance."

The fixers are actually members of the landgrabbing syndicate. They offer to survey the

land and process the papers for free. The farmers then find out too late that their land has been registered in someone else's name. The syndicate then announces that the fake owner has agreed to voluntarily sell his land.

Once the land is sold, the bogus owner who is usually connected to the DAR and the Regional Land Bank receives ₱70,000 per hectare or ₱546,000 per 7.6-hectare parcel of land. Farmers who complain are paid ₱2,000 to ₱5,000 to keep silent.

The Land Bank may also suddenly declare a piece of land to be under a CLOA and tell the farmers that they will have to pay amortization of ₱35,000 per hectare or ₱273,000 per parcel of land, excluding interest, for the next 30 years. Since most farmers are unable to keep up with their payments, their lands are foreclosed and sold.

In both cases, the GFI ends up with most of the parcels of land for sale.

Hundreds of farmers, including national minorities have been victimized by this syndicate.

To suppress those who oppose such abuse, the areas covered by the bio-ethanol project are continually being militarized, with more soldiers coming in and more military camps built. Those who resist are threatened and beaten up, with some being accused of membership in the New People's Army. Their names are also dropped from the list of beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). They are refused certificates of indigency to prevent them from availing of free social services.

"The peasants have been losing their land, livelihoods and even their lives because of this project," said Diony Yadao, a farmer and leader of the Danggayan Dagiti Mannalon ti Isabela (DAGAMI) which is affiliated with the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. "We cannot eat sugar cane, and we cannot sell it either. Agricultural lands that used to be planted to rice, corn and vegetables have become sugar cane plantations, and the farmers do not benefit from them at all. From being farmers, we have become tenants and vulnerable to abuse." AB

LFS slams AFP

THE League of Filipino Students (LFS) slammed the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) for stating that the LFS is one of the organizations that should be avoided by students because it recruits members who will eventually become rebels.

LFS chair Terry Ridon said the statement by AFP Civil Relations Service chief Brig. Gen. Ernesto del Rosario is irresponsible and dangerous. Ridon said they will hold Del Rosario personally accountable if someone among the ranks of the youth and students is killed due to his statement.

The LFS also plans to file administrative and libel cases against the military officer.

Based on experiences under Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL), mass leaders and activists are either killed or abducted whenever the military issues such statements.

The LFS said it does not believe that the Aquino government's much-vaunted Oplan Bayanihan is different from the bloody OBL. In fact, said Ridon, attacks by warmongers like General Del Rosario against the youth and students continue under the Aquino regime.

ILPS hails Greek uprising

THE International League of Peoples Struggle (ILPS) hailed the Union of Working People, one of its member organizations, for leading a mass action joined by more than 500,000 people at Syntagam Square in Athens on June 5. The Greek people demanded the ouster of their government for implementing anti-worker and antipeople policies.

The ILPS expressed solidarity with the Greek people and called on its 300 member organizations the world over to demonstrate their solidarity and support for the Greeks in their struggle against their government's austerity measures and for genuine democracy and social liberation.

Aside from the people that gathered at Syntagam Square, thousands of others massed up in public parks in 30 other cities to show their anger over the austerity measures.

Greece is only one of the capitalist countries in Europe that has been hit hard by the financial and economic crisis that has been pummeling the international capitalist system since 2008. The main reason behind the crisis is the insistence of bourgeois governments to implement neoliberal policies.

Aside from Greece, other countries that have been severely hit by the crisis are Portugal, Italy, Ireland and Spain.

Cops disperse US Embassy protest

SEVERAL rallyists were injured when policemen violently dispersed a protest action against Fil-American Friendship Day launched by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) in front of the US Embassy along Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City on July 4.

More than 200 rallyists marched towards the US Embassy to assail the unequal relations between the US and Philippine governments. They also demanded the junking of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) which they said was being used as a pretext for the continued presence of more than 700 American troops in the country.

The violent dispersal of the demonstration shows that Benigno Aquino III is no different from his predecessor Gloria Arroyo, said BAYAN secretary-general Renato Reyes. His security forces do not have any qualms dispersing democratic assemblies just to be able to show his regime's puppetry to US imperialism.

Bishops, governors tied to PCSO anomaly

THE names of Catholic bishops who received luxury vehicles from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) during the Arroyo regime were divulged in a hearing by the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee on June 29.

PCSO director Atty. Aleta Tolentino disclosed that Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos received two Sports Utility Vehicles (SUV) while Rev. Orlando Quevedo of Cotabato, Msgr. Augusto Laban of Sorsogon and Fr. Roger Lood of Iligan City received one SUV each. Also on the list of recipients are the Zamboanga Archdiocesan Social Action Apostolate, the Diocese of Bangued (Abra), the Prelature of Isabela (Basilan), the Apostolic Vicarate of Bontoc and Caritas of Nueva Segovia which covers Ilocos Sur.

The law only allows the PCSO to distribute ambulances and not luxury vehicles.

When it comes to ambulances, Arroyo allies received the biggest number. Seven governors topped the list: Loreto Campos of Misamis Occidental and Sally Lee of Sorsogon (20), Joey Salceda of Albay (14), Bellaflor Angara-Castillo of Aurora (13), Enrico Aumentado of Bohol (12) and Oscar Moreno of Misamis Oriental (11).