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Editorial

Corruption in the midst of crisis

The Arroyo regime's insatiable corruption, rotteness and maneuvering burst out in the open once more with the recent revelations of big-time corruption, both recent and from way back. The issues take exceptional prominence now due to the various schemes concocted by the regime to block the investigation of former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante. Bolante, Arroyo's chief operator in 2004 in stealing P2.8 billion from the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani fund was recently deported back to the country after the US denied his plea for asylum.

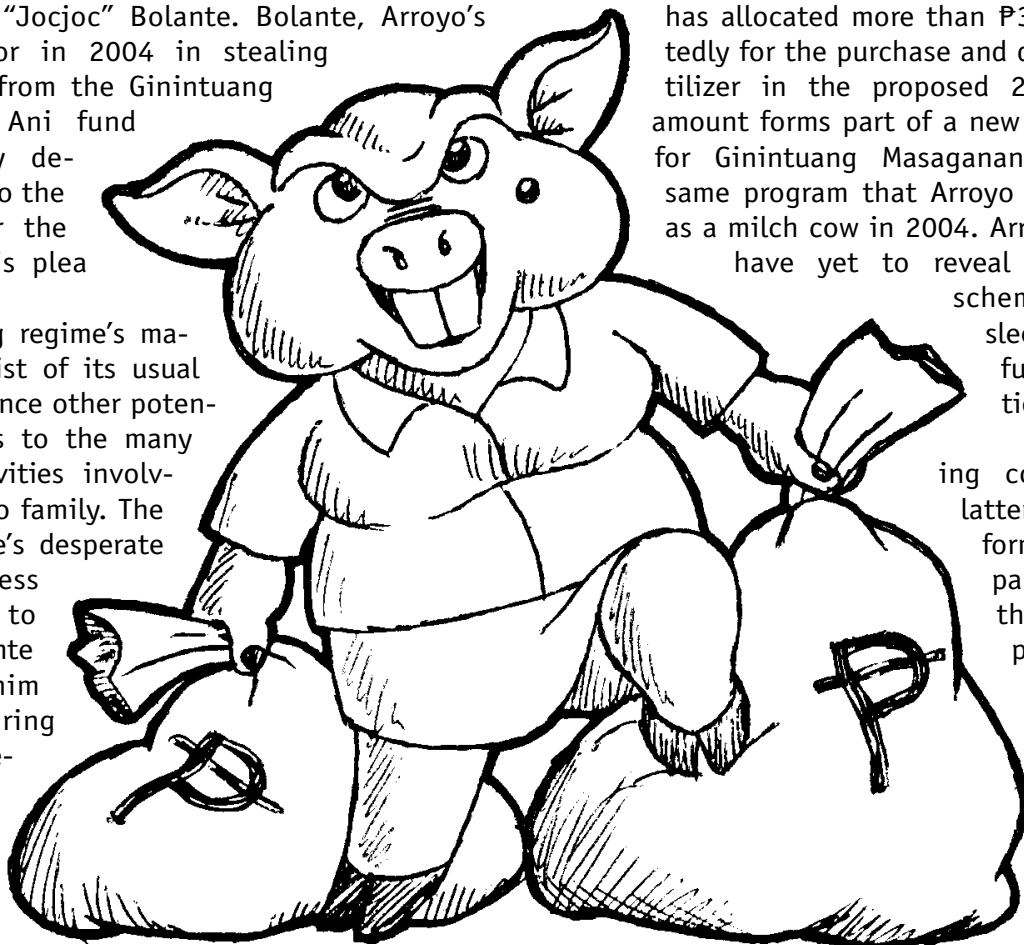
The ruling regime's maneuvers consist of its usual tactics to silence other potential witnesses to the many criminal activities involving the Arroyo family. The Arroyo regime's desperate and shameless attempts to muzzle Bolante and keep him from appearing before the Senate only betray its morbid fear of having all its crimes

and corruption cases exposed before the public. Knowledge of the regime's transgressions will surely fuel the people's anger.

The Arroyo regime is hell-bent on concealing the anomalies behind the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani funds especially since it intends to employ the same scheme for the coming 2010 elections. Arroyo has allocated more than P3.3 billion purportedly for the purchase and distribution of fertilizer in the proposed 2009 budget. The amount forms part of a new P7 billion budget for Ginintuang Masaganang Ani—the very same program that Arroyo and Bolante used as a milch cow in 2004. Arroyo and her cabal

have yet to reveal the many other schemes up their sleeves designed to further raid the nation's coffers.

Arroyo's worsening corruption in the latter years of her rule forms part of her preparations to ensure that she stays in power beyond 2010. She is tightening her grip on power for fear of being put on trial for all her crimes against the people.



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Arroyo has been amassing tens of billions in anticipation of the political battles she will be facing as a result of her unyielding desire to remain in power beyond her term. She will use these funds to buy off politicians whose votes she needs to push for changes in the constitution that will allow her to run again as president, if not as prime minister. Otherwise, she will use the humongous funds to secure the loyalty of the winning candidates should elections push through in 2010. Arroyo will also use the funds to ensure the loyalty of military officers and the police should she eventually declare military rule if her cha-cha schemes fail.

Due to the worsening socio-economic crisis, every centavo stolen by Arroyo from the nation's coffers adds to the impoverished masses' gnawing hunger. Arroyo's shameless plunder of billions of pesos condemns the people to immeasurable suffering and oppression and fuels their rage. Arroyo's pockets continue to be lined with gold as millions of people go hungry, and are landless, jobless and homeless. So many of the sick

could not afford to buy medicines, millions of students are forced to study in dilapidated classrooms without any facilities and millions of children and youth who could not even attend school due to extreme poverty have no future to look forward to.

History will judge the US-Arroyo regime as one of the most corrupt governments to use its power to amass gigantic funds and repress its people.

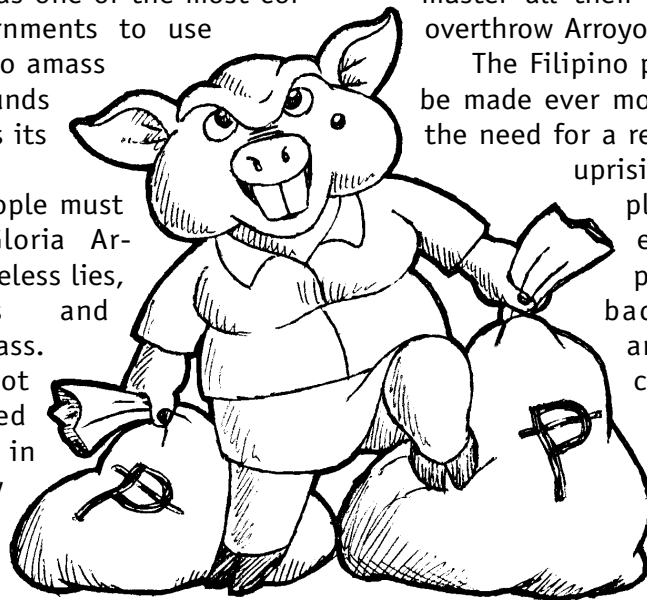
The people must not let Gloria Arroyo's ceaseless lies, deceptions and thievery pass. She must not be allowed to linger in power any longer. Every second Arroyo spends in power, every prevarication and machination employed by her is for the purpose of committing further plunder and tightening the shackles that keep the people in


bondage.

The people must use every means to block Arroyo's various schemes to prolong her stay in power. All democratic, patriotic and anti-Arroyo forces must strive to unite in the face of Malacañang's attempts to divide and crush them. They must forge their unity and muster all their strength to overthrow Arroyo.

The Filipino people must be made ever more aware of the need for a revolutionary uprising as they plunge deeper into poverty and backwardness amid the continuing intensification of the socio-economic crisis and the crimes perpetrated by the incumbent regime. As the regime's brutalities escalate, the people's determination to tread the path of armed revolution heightens.

The Filipino people's struggle grows stronger and more widespread with the tireless efforts of the broad revolutionary movement under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the perseverance of all anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist forces. The revolutionary, patriotic and democratic forces are relentless in advocating the interests of the people and advancing their struggles. The tactical offensives of the armed revolutionary forces will further intensify, along with the people's struggles and other forms of resistance to finally put an end to Arroyo's rule and compel her to face the people's judgment. **AB**



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Muzzling Bolante

The deportation by the US of former Undersecretary of Agriculture Jocelyn “Jocjoc” Bolante on October 28 has ruined the regime’s plans to either hide him within the country or slip him out, so he could avoid being investigated for the major corruption cases filed against him. The regime nonetheless persists in concocting various alibis and schemes to keep Bolante from talking.

Bolante is Arroyo’s chief operator in squandering Ginintuang Masaganang Ani funds worth P2.806 billion. The funds were diverted to Arroyo’s electoral campaign kitty in 2004. The most controversial among these is the anomaly-ridden P728 million fertilizer fund.

As early as 2005, the Senate has already had a standing arrest order for Bolante, after his persistent refusal to appear before Senate hearings on the case. The Arroyo regime slipped him out of the country in 2005 and Bolante later sought asylum in the US in 2006. Most senators fully believe that Bolante is guilty and that the only thing needed is his testimony in or-

der to arrive at a formal judgment and closure.

Malacañang failed to hold Bolante a la Jun Lozada because of the full media coverage and public attention attending his arrival. Nonetheless, as he was being brought to St. Luke’s Medical Center in Quezon City, the regime wasted no time in concocting excuses to delay his appearance before the Senate with the end goal of silencing him.

To prolong his hospital stay, Malacañang spread news about the possible ailments afflicting Bolante even if his medical bulletin constantly described his condition as stable and normal. Bolante was

brought immediately to the hospital after he complained of chest pains upon his arrival at the Manila International Airport. Unlike a regular patient, however, he was not brought directly to the emergency room, but to an expensive private room at St. Luke’s where a team of doctors awaited him. Soon after, Dr. Ramon Saavedra, Bolante’s doctor prohibited him from receiving visitors.

Bolante simultaneously urged the Supreme Court to approve his petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO) to prevent the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms from arresting him and bringing him to the Senate. On November 3, Bolante’s lawyer withdrew this petition because his client had actually already been arrested by the Senate.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice opened an investigation at the Office of the Ombudsman on the P432 million fertilizer fund scam filed by journalist Marlene Esperat against Bolante. This, after Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, a fervent ally of the Arroyos, sat on the case for three years.

The recent reopening of this case is now being used as a pretext to derail the Senate investigation. According to Sen. Edgardo Angara and Juan Miguel Zubiri, two of Arroyo’s most rabid lapdogs, the Senate and the Ombudsman will simply be trading diatribes should the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee pursue the investigation. Gloria Arroyo has accused the senators and congressmen of grandstanding in their persistence to open the probe on the fertilizer fund scam and other scandals involving Malacañang.

Recently, Bolante’s son Owen filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus before the Court of Appeals. The Bolantes and the Arroyo camp expect the court to rule in favor of the administration, as it did in its previous decisions. **AB**



NPA seizes 26 weapons, AFP-PNP suffers 43 casualties

Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) seized 24 high-powered rifles and two pistols in separate tactical offensives carried out from October 4 to November 5. Twenty-three elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP) and CAFGU were killed and 20 others were wounded in the clashes.

November 5. A CAFGU element was killed in a snipe operation by Red fighters just outside their detachment at Sitio Balagonon, Barangay Managa, Bansalan, Davao del Sur.

November 3. A soldier belonging to the 57th IB was wounded in an encounter between NPA Red fighters and the military in Sitio Talahek, Barangay Bacong, Tuluunan, North Cotabato.

November 1. Two CAFGU elements were wounded in an assault by the Red army in a military detachment in Barangay Mararag, Marihatag, Surigao del Sur.

October 29. Six M16 armalite rifles and a .38 caliber revolver were seized by NPA fighters from Jose C. Aquino Rubber Company, a rubber plantation in Barangay Sta. Teresita, Bayugan City, Agusan del Sur. Simultaneously, the Red guerrillas confiscated the M16 rifle of an AFP sergeant at a checkpoint set up by the NPA in Barangay San Jose, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur.

October 25. The NPA and people's militia seized 16 high-powered weapons in a raid on a CAFGU detachment under the 37th IB located inside the Dole-Stanfilco plantation in Barangay Luna Sur, Makilala, North Cotabato. A CAFGU element was killed and a sergeant

and three other CAFGU members were wounded.

Another group of Red fighters ambushed soldiers of the 57th IB in Barangay Luna Norte. The soldiers were about to reinforce the Luna Sur detachment.

According to Ka Dencio Madrigal, spokesperson of the Valentin Palamine Command of the NPA in Far South Mindanao, the raid was a punitive action against Stanfilco for grabbing lands from small farmers and abusing its workers.

Dole-Stanfilco at present has over over 30,000 hectares of banana and pineapple plantations in the region.

Prior to the punitive action, the NPA had warned Stanfilco against its landgrabbing activities and its persistent refusal to attend to the people's demands. Instead of listening to the people's grievances, Dole-Stanfilco stepped up its aggressive and fascist acts against the farmers and workers. It also expanded the military deployment in the area and intensified military operations in the plantation.

October 25. A soldier of the 66th IB was wounded in an ambush conducted by NPA guerrillas on a military truck carrying soldiers in Barangay Olaycon, Monkayo, Compostela Valley. Prior to this incident, a soldier was killed in an attack by NPA guerrillas on a detachment of the Philippine Army Special Forces Battalion in Barangay Canidkid, Montevista, Compos-

43 military actions by the NPA in Samar

SIXTY-NINE military elements were killed in successive military actions carried out by the New People's Army (NPA) in Samar island from January to the first week of September. Twenty-five enemy soldiers were wounded in these encounters while five Red fighters sacrificed their lives. The NPA seized 15 high-powered weapons.

In a preliminary report issued by the NPA Regional Operations Command, the NPA launched 43 military actions in the provinces of Samar, Northern Samar and Eastern Samar from January to September 6. The military actions were composed of a raid, five ambushes, 29 sniping/harassment operations, seven special operations and one disarming operation. The NPA likewise was able to prevail over the military in six defensive actions and five encounters.

Of the 43 military actions, 24 took place in Samar, 15 in Northern Samar and four in Eastern Samar.

The continuing military actions are being waged by the NPA as part of the campaign to frustrate the onslaught of Oplan Bantay Laya 2 in the island.

AB



tela Valley.

October 24. Eight soldiers were killed, including a lieutenant, in an ambush staged by Red fighters of the NPA against troops of the 66th IB conducting patrols in Barangay Manurigao, New Bataan, Compostela Valley.

October 23. A CAFGU element was killed and four others were wounded in an assault by Red

fighters on a CAFGU detachment under the 72nd IB in Paquibato District, Davao City.

October 23. Eight soldiers were killed and three others were wounded when Red fighters of the Nerissa San Juan Command (NSJC) of NPA-Catanduanes peppered with bullets the nipa hut they were staying in. In a report by Ka Theresa Magtanggol, NSJC spokesper-

son, the comrades seized the opportunity to attack the exhausted troops of the Philippine Army and CAFGU who were resting inside a vacant nipa hut in Barangay Hilawan, San Andres, Catanduanes. The enemy soldiers had been scouring the contiguous barangays of Tibang, Barihay and Hilawan with the Red guerrillas closely monitoring their movements. Another military squad that was also resting in a nearby area scampered away from the scene of the attack for fear of getting caught in the crossfire.

October 19. Red fighters seized the .45 caliber pistol and M14 rifle of an abusive policeman at a public market in Escalante City, Negros Occidental.

October 13. A CAFGU element was wounded when NPA guerrillas assaulted the 72nd IB detachment in Sitio Bukobuko sa Anay, Barangay Kingking-Polacion, Pantukan, Compostela Valley.

October 13. Two soldiers were killed when Red fighters ambushed a military truck in Talaingod, Davao del Norte. Before this incident, a CAFGU element was killed when the NPA attacked the 72nd IB detachment in Barangay Palma Gil in the same town.

Another CAFGU element was wounded when Red guerrillas fired at a composite force of the 72nd IB and CAFGU in Sitio Likupon, Barangay Sanghay, Mati, Davao Oriental.

October 4. Three soldiers belonging to the 29th IB were wounded in an ambush by Red guerrillas on their convoy in Sitio Kapihan, Barangay Concepcion, Valencia City, Bukidnon.

There were no reported casualties on the side of the Red fighters.

NPA rescues 7 detained comrades in Quezon

RED guerrillas of the Apolonio Mendoza Command (NPA-Quezon) raided the Quezon Provincial Jail in Lucena City on October 25 and helped four detained comrades escape without firing a single shot. The raid was carried out in just ten minutes.

To facilitate their entry into the prison, the Red fighters wore Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) uniforms and claimed that they were there to pick up a prisoner. They timed their assault during the shifting of the guards. As the off-duty guards exited the building, the Red guerrillas positioned themselves outside.

They immediately pointed their guns at the guards and ordered them to lie on the floor face down. The Red fighters disarmed them of five revolvers and locked them in a cell together with the other guards. A private security guard from the adjacent building who tried to come to their rescue was quickly stopped by the Red fighters. They confiscated his shotgun and also put him in the prison cell with the others.

Aboard four vans, the Red guerrillas swiftly dispersed to different directions after the successful rescue operation. Two policemen were wounded when they tried to block one of the vans at a checkpoint in Barangay Iyam, Lucena City. The Red fighters threw a grenade at the policemen before completely withdrawing.

The daring NPA operation was conducted right at the heart of Lucena City where the Quezon Convention Center, Regional Trial Court, Philippine National Red Cross and the provincial capitol are situated. The Quezon Provincial Jail also lies near Camp Guillermo Nakar, the main headquarters of the Southern Luzon Command.

The guerrillas had closely monitored the enemy's movements for a month before carrying out the rescue. They were able to seize seven pistols and a shotgun in this special operation.

This incident is the second rescue operation of political detainees in Southern Tagalog. On January 14, 2006, Red fighters of the Edgardo Dagle Command also freed nine NPA guerrillas imprisoned at the Batangas Provincial Jail in Batangas City. AB



Disarming operation in Davao Oriental Provincial Jail

This article is based on a correspondence report submitted by the NPA 3rd Pulang Bagani Company in Southern Mindanao.

Red fighters launched a daring disarming operation at the Davao Oriental Provincial Jail in Mati City on May 19. The guerrillas, who belonged to the 3rd Pulang Bagani Company were joined by a squad each from Front 2 and Front 27.

In a matter of 15 minutes, the Red fighters were able to break into the provincial jail, situated a few kilometers away from the Mati city hall, and were able to seize two M16s, an M14, two Garands, three carbines, two shotguns, two 9 mm pistols, a .45 and a .357 caliber pistol and rounds of ammunition. The Red guerrillas also confiscated magazines, 12 handcuffs, a base radio and several handheld radios.

The provincial jail guards were clueless that the uniformed men who arrived on board two trucks and a van were NPA guerrillas. The NPA strike squad immediately brought the guards to the entrance gate leading to the jail warden's office while two other teams of guerrillas proceeded to the guard house tower, another tower near the armory and a place where the guards usually hang out. The other squad maintained position outside to monitor the movements of the guards.

"We are only after your weapons," announced the Red guerrillas after they had introduced themselves as NPA fighters and declared their intention to disarm them. The guards were taken aback. Shaking with fear, they could do nothing but hand over their shotguns while the jail warden helplessly looked on.

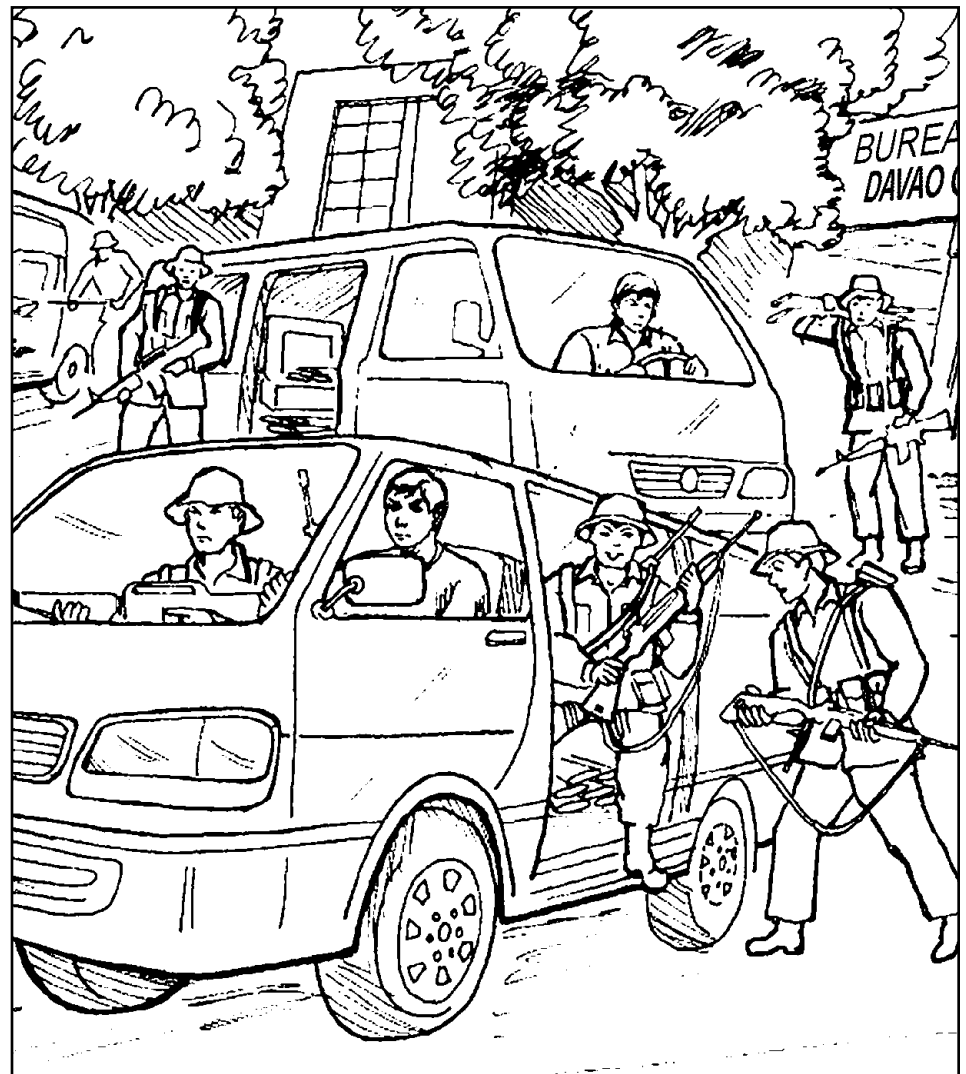
The prisoners expressed their

gratitude as the disarming operation was taking place. Corruption was rampant in the jail, they said, and it was a good thing the guerrillas came to teach the abusive guards a lesson. Some prisoners asked

that they be freed. But the Red fighters, adhering to the principles of revolutionary justice, did not grant their requests. Nevertheless, as the comrades were withdrawing, a prisoner shouted "Long live the NPA! Long live the revolution!"

The PNP got wind of the incident but all the policemen did was to block the road leading to their headquarters. The firemen stationed nearby jested that the police were only good at attacking roast pig, but would not respond when attacked.

The masses were elated upon seeing the comrades after the tactical offensive because no bullet was spent and no life sacrificed. **AB**



Escape from the enemy

Iresolved that day that I would never allow the enemy to capture me alive and I was willing to die just to escape from my captors!"

This was what Ka Don, a Red fighter from a province in Southern Tagalog said when he successfully escaped after 17 days of detention.

Ka Don was captured along with two Red fighters in September in the course of conducting intelligence work in preparation for a tactical offensive.

When they were taken and brought to the military camp, they were immediately subjected to psychological torture. The military threatened to hurt their families if they refused to collaborate with them. His fellow comrade eventually gave in to these threats and divulged information to the enemy. Ka Don, however, remained firm.

The enemy offered money to Ka Don in exchange for pointing out where his other comrades were, but he refused.

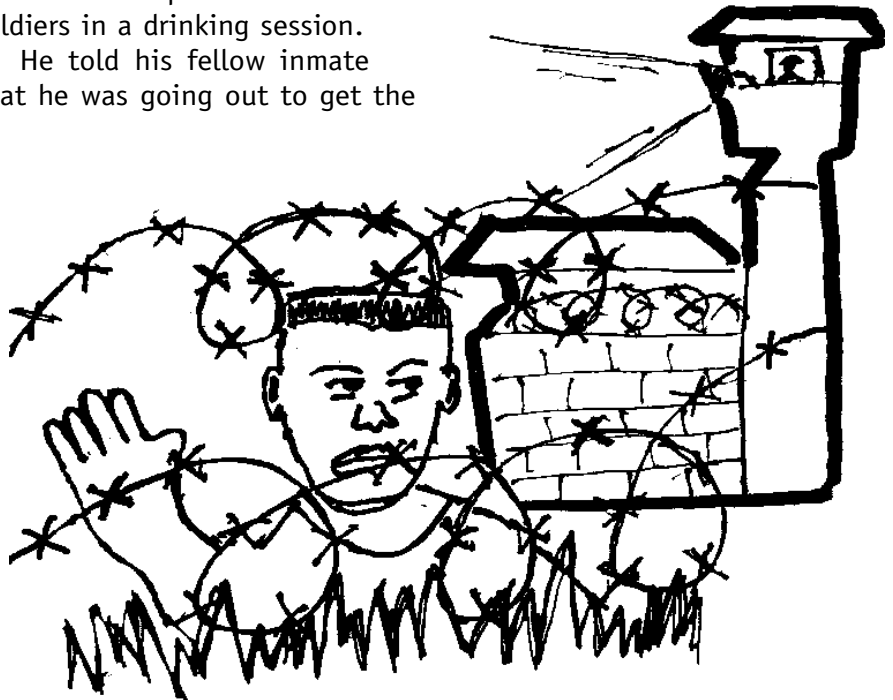
On the 15th day of his imprisonment, Ka Don attempted to escape from the military camp. He

first tried to pass through his cell gate and flee but a guard was watching that position all day. The day after, there were too many soldiers scattered all over the compound. On the third day, he saw a chance to escape when he saw the soldiers in a drinking session.

He told his fellow inmate that he was going out to get the

clothes that he had hung out to dry. As soon as he had collected his clothes, however, he bundled them and scampered out of the prison.

He had to pass through 20 barbed wire fences surrounding the detachment and dodge spot lights inside the camp. He had lacerations and scratches from the barbed wire and from having had to walk through the camp perime-



NPA officers course in Eastern Visayas makes headway

A hundred officers and cadres of the Party and the New People's Army (NPA) in Eastern Visayas have completed the special officers course since the NPA Efren Martires Command launched its politico-military school in December 2007.

The special course constitutes studies on general principles of warfare, lessons from guerrilla warfare in China and Vietnam, specific characteristics of people's war in the Philippines and the lessons drawn from actual experiences in guerrilla warfare in the region. The course also delves on the conduct of war at tactical levels (such as a military action) and operational levels (such as a series of military actions implemented over a wider scope and a longer timeframe).

The theoretical studies include lectures combi-

ned with workshops and case study discussions. Military exercises and drills were also conducted with a view of standardizing their conduct by officers in their respective units and areas of responsibility. Officers of staff units were also given training whenever needed. For instance, they were given crash courses on intelligence and communications work. There were also particular training modules for political officers of squads and platoons.

The five batches of trainees that have graduated from the school underwent six- to ten-day trainings on the average. The graduates said that the training course contributed significantly in building their confidence and knowledge in leading and directing military actions and campaigns. **AB**

ter that spanned one hectare.

When he finally got out of the detachment, he limped his way through the highway and headed towards a barrio where he knew he could seek help. There was an instance when he came across enemy soldiers, so he walked as normally as he could by the roadside to avoid being recognized. His journey lasted for three gruelling hours before he was able to reach the village.

By the time he reached the barrio, it was dawn. He was very thirsty and shivering from the cold and the sheer exhaustion from his long walk. He knocked at a nipa hut. When the door opened, he introduced himself as an NPA fighter. He explained to the owner of the house that he had just escaped from a military camp and that he needed to get in contact with the comrades as soon as possible.

The man he talked to seemed to doubt him and hesitated to help him. But the comrades, who at that time were in the barrio asked the house owner to attend to Ka Don's immediate needs. He gave Ka Don food and allowed him to enter their house and rest.

Soon after, a team of Red fighters came and talked with Ka Don. The NPA unit's leading committee analyzed the interview results and was immediately convinced of the truthfulness of his account. That same evening, he was collected by the comrades and reintegrated with his unit.

Ka Don's staunch conviction while in the hands of the enemy and his planning out an escape are remarkable. His experience of being able to muster enough strength and resolve to overcome big challenges provides valuable lessons for fellow comrades who may find themselves in the same situation. AB

Persecution of legal activists escalates

Illegal arrests of personalities from the legal democratic movement and filing of trumped-up criminal cases against them topped cases of human rights violations gathered by *Ang Bayan*.

November 6. Men on board four motorcycles gunned down Bayan Muna municipal coordinator Danny Qualbar of Compostela town in Compostela Valley. Qualbar was headed home when he was ambushed in Osmeña town in the same province at around 5:30 p.m.

November 6. Two men wearing bonnets shot at Sensuous Union Labor Organization vice president Arnold Cerdo as he was talking with his brother-in-law in his residence in Riverside, Calamba City at around 9:30 p.m. Cerdo, also a staff of Cabuyao Workers Alliance was nearly hit in the face.

November 4. A court dismissed the petition for a writ of amparo filed by the family of Mary Grace Delicano, a Gabriela member who was illegally arrested in September in Bacolod City. The dismissal came despite irregularities in the conduct of her arrest by the PNP. The warrant of arrest used to capture Delicano was for a certain alias "Kim" who is accused of theft in relation to a raid conducted by the New People's Army (NPA) in Escalante, Negros Occidental in May 2005 where comrades confiscated nine firearms. Delicano's name does not appear anywhere in the warrant. The police only requested that the arrest order be amended to state that Delicano and "Kim" are one and the same person after Delicano had already been arres-

ted.

October 31. Lt. Col. Manuel Sequitin, 66th IB chief attempted to prevent the evacuation of some 300 families from Barangay Andap, New Bataan, Compostela Valley on October 31 in spite of threats to their lives wrought by military operations in their area. The civilians were headed towards the town center of New Bataan when military elements blocked them and ordered them to instead seek shelter at Sitio Mother of Perpetual Help, which is near the area where the military and the NPA were having a firefight. The civilians insisted on, and succeeded in, proceeding directly to the New Bataan Gym in the town center which was temporarily converted into an evacuation center. They stayed there until November 1. The clashes prompted the mayor of New Bataan to put Barangay Andap and the neighboring Barangay Manurigao under a state of calamity.

October 31. Media worker Loreto Rosario, a dxMS reporter became a victim of harassment after covering a fire that destroyed the AFP Field Supply Support Unit inside Camp Siongco in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan. In a statement, Rosario disclosed that Col. John Oswald Bucu, Camp Siongco commander, accosted and berated him, confiscated his press card and cellphones and accused him

of being an intruder.

October 30. Combined elements of the Caloocan Police and AFP Intelligence Service nabbed Norberto Murillo Sr., 52, in his house in Camarin, Caloocan City. Murillo, who is accused of being an official of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was illegally arrested on fabricated murder charges related to a purported purge in Hilongos, Leyte in 1985.

October 24. Trumped-up murder and robbery charges were used to arrest couple Margie Lupo Navia and Donato Palo in Barangay Bolo, Labrador, Pangasinan. Navia and Palo, accused of being CPP officers in Quezon were arrested by the police in Pangasinan while visiting relatives. They were brought to the 3rd Intelligence Service Unit headquarters of the Philip-

pine Army in Tarlac.

October 13. A civilian was seriously wounded by shrapnel from an M203 fired by government soldiers in Barangay Sanghay, Mati, Davao Oriental. Isidro Gerona, 60, was tending their store when NPA fighters and 72nd IB elements engaged in a gunfight nearby. The Gerona family fled but the father was left behind. His son went back for him after hearing a grenade explosion from an M203 fired in the direction of their house. He found his father covered in blood and their dog killed after being hit by shrapnel. Their dining table was also in shambles. Gerona's son said that the government soldiers continued firing even though the NPA guerrillas had long withdrawn from the area. AB

Target: Southern Tagalog activists

Mass leaders and activists of the open democratic movement in Southern Tagalog are now facing an intensified repression campaign. Forty leaders and members of progressive organizations in the region were slapped by the Arroyo regime with trumped-up criminal charges. Twenty-seven of them were accused of torching the Globe Telecommunications cell site in Lemery, Batangas in August.

Meanwhile, 17 of them also face murder charges for an ambush by the New People's Army on elements of the PNP Regional Mobile Group in Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro on March 3, 2006, where two policemen were killed and three others were wounded. A total of 72 persons are accused in the Mindoro Oriental case, 30 of them open mass leaders and activists.

Several of those named in the charge sheet have been picked up by the police and military.

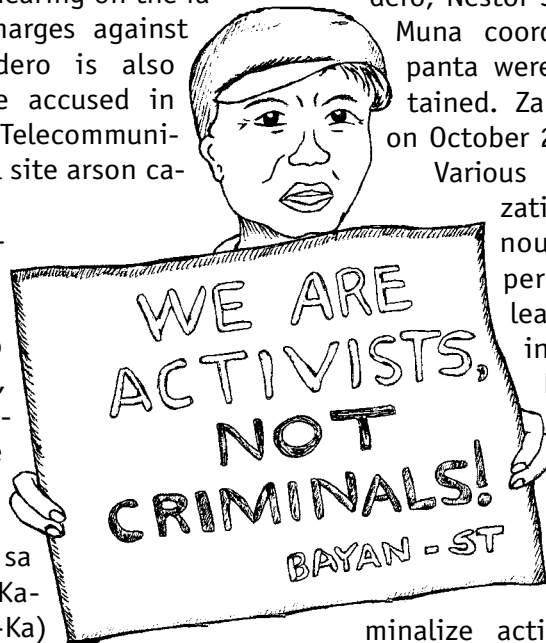
The most prominent victim is KMU lead counsel Atty. Remigio Saladero. He was illegally arrested by combined elements of the Antipolo Police and Military Intelligence Group 4A of ISAFP at his home in Antipolo City on October 23 and was brought to Calapan City, Mindoro Oriental the following mor-

ning for a hearing on the fabricated charges against him. Saladero is also one of the accused in the Globe Telecommunications cell site arson case.

Meanwhile, on November 3, Rogelio Galit, spokesperson of the Kalipunan ng mga Magsasaka sa Kabite (Kamagsasaka-Ka) was arrested in his house in Silang, Cavite, for the Oriental Mindoro case. Galit who suffers from diabetes, has been bedridden for a year and was sche-

duled for an operation when he was seized by 15 elements of the Cavite PNP and regional intelligence agents. He was also brought to the Calapan provincial jail the following morning, where three of his co-accused—Attorney Saladero, Nestor San Jose and Bayan Muna coordinator Crispin Zapanta were already being detained. Zapanta was arrested on October 27.

Various progressive organizations vehemently denounced the blatant persecution of mass leaders and activists in Southern Tagalog. Bayani Cambronero, Bayan Muna Southern Tagalog regional coordinator stated that the witchhunt is part of a scheme to criminalize activists. "The Arroyo government is conjuring trumped-up charges against us because of its failure to silence us through extrajudicial executions," he added. AB





Mounting number of Moro victims

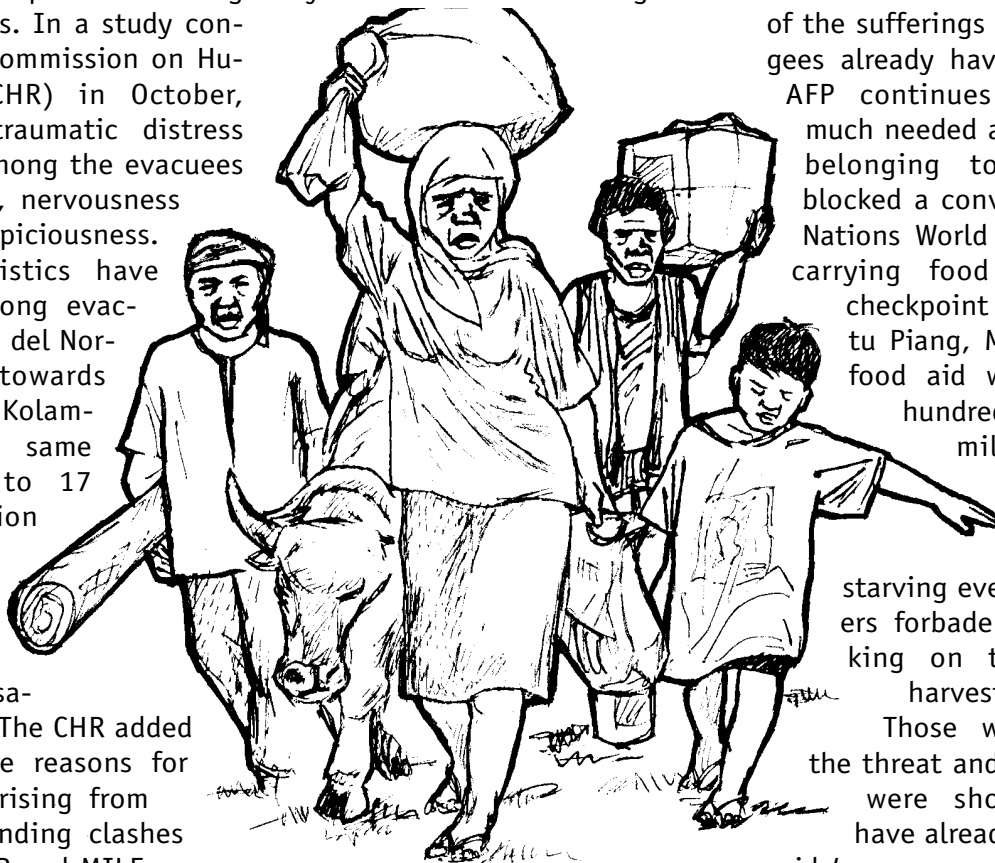
The number of Moro civilians victimized by ruthless military operations perpetrated by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continues to swell in various parts of Mindanao.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported on October 29 that in evacuation centers in Datu Piang, Maguindanao alone, the number of individuals who fled their homes have ballooned to 55,000 from 35,000 in August. Since August until the third week of October, almost 127,164 families or 611,753 individuals have been affected by clashes between the MILF and the AFP in the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao.

Widespread anxiety. Intense militarization has resulted in various psychological problems among internal refugees. In a study conducted by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in October, symptoms of traumatic distress are prevalent among the evacuees such as anxiety, nervousness and extreme suspiciousness. Such characteristics have been noted among evacuees from Lanao del Norte who fled towards Kauswagan and Kolambungan in the same province and to 17 other evacuation centers in Ozamiz City and Tudela in the neighboring province of Misamis Occidental. The CHR added that one of the reasons for this was fear arising from rumors of impending clashes between the AFP and MILF.

Residents who still live in their villages are likewise plagued by anxiety. MILF website Luwaran reports that many residents of Barangay Inas and Dungguan in Mlang, North Cotabato have begun packing up and preparing to flee since the military started conducting a census among Moro residents on October 18. With the soldiers giving no valid reason for the census, the Moro residents in the area fear that the military is "cooking up" something against them.

Such fears among the Moros in the area are not surprising. Two days before the soldiers began the



census in Mlang, three civilians were seized by elements of the 40th IB in Barangay Nalapaan in the bordering town of Pikit, North Cotabato. The victims were identified as Rahman Suleik, his son Taurin and Tongtongan Dilanggalen.

In the nearby province in Maguindanao, six people were arbitrarily arrested in Barangay Linantangan, Mamasapano on October 16 and beaten up by military agents. The victims were identified as Aladin Lamalan, Ding Datuan, Alimudin Ibrahim, Daud Ibrahim, Binyamin Abdulatip and a certain Kaumbo. They are still under military custody as of this writing.

The government soldiers also torched more than 100 civilian houses in Barangay Nimao and Andamit in Datu Piang, Maguindanao in mid-October, Luwaran added.

AFP starves evacuees. On top of the sufferings the internal refugees already have to endure, the AFP continues to deny them much needed assistance. Troops belonging to the 54th IB blocked a convoy of the United Nations World Food Programme carrying food supplies at a checkpoint in Dapiawan, Datu Piang, Maguindanao. The food aid was intended for hundreds of evacuee families in Libutan, Mamasapano, Maguindanao who had been starving ever since the soldiers forbade them from working on their fields and harvesting their crops. Those who dared brave the threat and tend their fields were shot. Two farmers have already been wounded, said *Luwaran*. AB

US imperialist policies will continue under Obama regime

The following is based on a statement by the Communist Party of the Philippines issued on November 7.

Barack Obama's victory in the US presidential elections reflects the American people's overwhelming rejection of the militarist and neoconservative Bush regime. Obama, who ran under the Democratic Party, presented himself purportedly as an antithesis of the Republican George W. Bush. He took advantage of the current intense and widespread disenchantment of the American people with the Bush regime, especially in the face of the US political and military disasters in Iraq and Afghanistan and the worst economic crisis in the US since the Great Depression.

Imperialism's continuing policies of global hegemonism, plunder and war, however, blur the line of demarcation between Obama and Bush and show that they simply represent two factions of the US monopoly bourgeoisie.

The current deepening recession and desperation in the US and the world capitalist system is pushing the US to intensify imperialist exploitation, plunder and oppression in its home country and its semicolonies, covet more areas for expansion and wage wars of counterrevolution and aggression.

The US will continue to expand its military-industrial complex, flex its military muscle and wage big and small wars in order to pursue its hegemonism, prevent rivals from carving up its vast empire, and seize new markets and territories for greater imperialist plunder and clout. Obama will only serve as US imperialism's new lead instrument for all this. With Obama's populist rhetoric, US hegemonism and aggressiveness only become more devious.

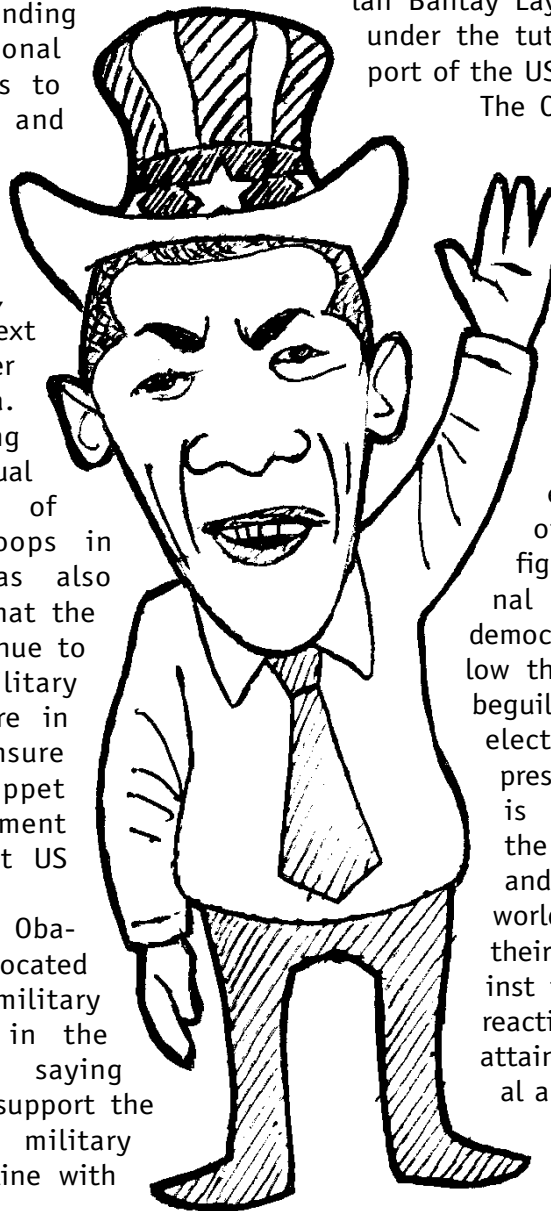
Obama has repeatedly expressed support for the Bush-initiated war of terror. He has specifically

advocated sending an additional 10,000 troops to Afghanistan and carrying out unilateral strikes at its borders with Pakistan, on the pretext of going after the al-Qaeda. While calling for the eventual withdrawal of American troops in Iraq, he has also made clear that the US will continue to exert its military presence there in order to ensure that the puppet Iraqi government will carry out US dictates.

Last June, Obama also advocated continuing military intervention in the Philippines, saying that he will support the Balikatan military exercises in line with

the "friendship" between the US and its neocolonial client state. He has completely disregarded the fact that Balikatan is used to camouflage the buildup of permanent US military presence and interventionism in the country. He has called for the further expansion of programs to supply weapons to the Philippine military, in utter disdain of the several hundreds of thousands victimized by the Arroyo regime's Op-lan Bantay Laya being waged under the tutelege and support of the US military.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) urges the Filipino people, as well as the American people, and the people in the semicolonies of the US and other countries fighting for national liberation and democracy not to allow themselves to be beguiled by the newly elected American president. The CPP is confident that the working class and people of the world will persist in their struggle against imperialism and reaction, and for the attainment of national and social liberation, democracy and progress. **AB**



Migrants hold successful parallel conference

Progressive organizations from various countries successfully conducted the first international conference on migrants and refugees issues. The International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR) was held as an alternative conference to the second Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) hosted in the Philippines from October 28 to 30.

Also successful was “Zero Remittance Day,” a protest campaign on October 29 carried out by the migrants group and spearheaded by the International Migrants Alliance. That day, migrants refrained from sending remittances to protest the GFMD’s framework and campaign.

The first forum, which was attended imperialist countries and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank was held in July 2007 to support the prevailing order and policy where rich countries take advantage of cheap labor from poor countries. These policies justify and encourage the intensified global export of workers from poor countries under the guise of “global migration.”

They propagate the slogans “migration for development” and “migration rights” in order to justify the exploitation by rich countries of cheap and docile labor from backward countries. Such a setup is heavily reliant on migrants’ remittances from host countries as an alternative way to achieve development and solve poverty. The policy also pushes for the allocation of these remittances to resolve government budgetary deficits and service the debts of poor countries.

As a testament to its rotten-

ness, the GFMD gathered countries who are the biggest violators of migrants’ rights and did not even bother to invite organizations that have long been struggling for migrants’ rights and welfare.

The GFMD’s inutility became all the more obvious with its choice of the Philippines and the Arroyo regime to host of the event. The regime is unsurpassed in its greed for migrants’ remittances at the expense of migrant

workers and their families. The regime fully embraces the GFMD framework because it affirms the state’s labor export policy and its reliance on remittances to keep the bankrupt economy afloat.

On the other hand, migrant groups gathered at the IAMR to strengthen the level of their solidarity and solidify their struggle for their rights and welfare. They shared experiences from their countries of origin and the countries they work in. They criticized the GFMD framework and called on the world’s governments to put an end to forced migration and ensure the availability of jobs in their own countries. They also demanded respect for migrants’ rights and guarantees for their welfare. **AB**

Philippines ranks 5th among hunger-stricken countries

THE Philippines is 5th among countries worldwide suffering from severe hunger, according to the World Food Survey in Gallup International-Voice of the People 2008. The list of the world’s hunger-stricken countries was released on November 4 after surveys of 58,000 people from 55 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe in June and September in commemoration of World Food Day.

Gallup reported that 40% of Filipinos say they frequently or occasionally went without food or did not have enough to eat in the past 12 months. Survey results also revealed that Metro Manila, the country’s capital had the highest incidence of hunger.

Among the countries Gallup surveyed as suffering from severe hunger were 1) Cameroon, 55%; 2) Pakistan, 53%; 3) Nigeria, 48%; 4) Peru, 42%; 5) Philippines, 40%; 6) Bolivia, 35%; 7) Guatemala, 35%; 8) Ghana, 32%; 9) Mexico, 23%; and 10) Russia, 23%.

Gallup’s survey results are even more alarming than those of the Social Weather Station which revealed that 16.8% of the Filipino people suffered hunger in the third quarter of 2008.

Militants condemn coverup of "Euro Generals" scandal

REP. Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño of Bayan Muna have denounced a decision by House Committee on Public Order and Safety chair Rep. Rodolfo Albano to suspend investigations on high-ranking officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) dubbed the "Euro Generals." The progressive solons disagreed with Albano's rationalization that the case was now being heard by the PNP, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Ocampo and Casiño are the authors of House Resolution No. 843 calling for a thorough investigation of eight PNP officers who attended the Interpol meeting in Russia in October. They were headed back to the country on October 9 when police authorities at St. Petersburg airport intercepted P/Dir. Elizeo de la Paz for carrying ₱6.9 million (105,000 euros), which exceeds the amount allowed by law. The general and his wife were detained for a week, while his companions P/Dirs. Silverio Alarcio, German Doria and Romeo Ricardo, Dep. Dirs. General Emmanuel Carta and Ismael Rafanan, Chief Supt. Jaime Caringal and Supt. Elmer Pelobello were released.

At the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee investigation on October 23, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno (concurrently Napolcom chief) and Police Director General Jesus Verzosa could not explain why such an exorbitant allowance was given to the high-ranking PNP officers who even brought along their wives. These funds are "loose change" compared to the millions in question in cases involving Arroyo and her cohorts. Nevertheless, those who pushing for a further investigation say that the "Euro gene-

erals" incident smacks of immorality in the face of the severe poverty afflicting the country.

Puno and Versoza have been hard put coming out with sensible answers whenever questions are raised against the issue. They have claimed that the money was a "cash advance," a "contingency fund" and

more recently, intended for the purchase of surveillance equipment. It turns out that aside from the ₱6.9 million handcarried by De la Paz, a former PNP comptroller, the police officers also had in their possession a so-called "contingency fund" in the amount of ₱2.192 million or ₱274,070 per person.

JDV endorses new impeachment complaint against Arroyo

FORMER House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. endorsed the impeachment bid against Gloria Arroyo on November 4. He signed the complaint at the Philippine consulate in San Francisco, California, along with Filipino-American members of Bayan-USA, Gabriela and National Alliance for Filipino Concerns. The document will be formally submitted to the Lower House at the opening of the session on November 10. De Venecia also announced that he is willing to testify on the case and reveal everything he personally knows about the corruption cases involving Arroyo.

The impeachment case, the fourth since 2004, was filed last October by De Venecia's son Joey, Atty. Harry Roque and Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico. The bid was first endorsed by Rep. Satur Ocampo and Teddy Casiño of Bayan Muna and Rep. Liza Maza of Gabriela Women's Party. The charges consist of grave abuse of power of the president; violations of the constitution; corruption involving cases such as the NBN-ZTE deal, Northrail Project and the ₱28 million "fertilizer scam;" and extrajudicial killings and human rights abuses.

Meanwhile, church leaders, including Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP); Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Lingayen-Dagupan (Pangasinan); Bishop Emeritus Jose Sorra of Legaspi (Albay); Bishop Joel Baylon of Masbate; and Bishop Socrates Villegas of Balanga (Bataan) have called for a new government to immediately replace the Arroyo government for its severe corruption.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and several patriotic and progressive organizations have backed Lagdameo's call. Also expressing support are Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi of Nueva Caceres (Camarines Sur); the Bishop-Businessmen's Conference headed by Archbishop Antonio Ledesma of Cagayan de Oro; the National Council of Churches in the Philippines; and Chief Justice Reynato Puno of the Supreme Court. Rep. Eddie Villanueva of Jesus Is Lord Movement conveyed his solidarity and called on all leaders of the CBCP and the Protestant and Evangelical churches, Muslim religious leaders and other religious groups to meet, forge a common stand and agree on the measures needed to support the call for a new government.