

The workers' movement must zero in on the ruling regime's responsibility for imposing antiworker and antipeople policies that have added to the people's burdens.

The toiling masses and other oppressed and exploited sectors must be made aware that they cannot rely on the US-Aquino regime for anything. The regime has, in fact, been zealously enforcing laws and policies that are disastrous to their interests.

The working class and other oppressed and exploited people must unite to form broad alliances that will advance their common interests and push for their collective demands. They must vent the people's pent up anger and create a powerful protest movement that will fight for the welfare of the toiling masses and hold the Aquino regime accountable along with all other entities that have caused the people's suffering.

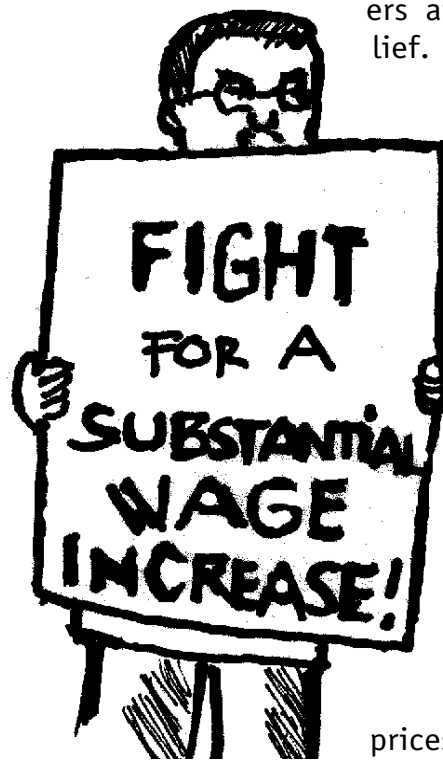
It is the duty of the working class and its proletarian party to lead the struggle against all of the Aquino regime's antiworker and antipeople policies.

This truth must be seared into the consciousness of the mass of workers: that the struggle for higher wages and other labor issues form part of the intense struggle between the capitalist and working classes, and the people and the ruling classes as a whole. They illustrate in the concrete the meaning of exploitation and oppression. They starkly point to the toiling masses and other oppressed sectors and strata the correct path to genuine change. This is the path of militant struggle and revolutionary resistance. **AB**

The just demand for a P125 increase in the minimum daily wage

The democratic mass movement in the country has for years been fighting for a legislated P125 hike in the workers' daily wage and a P6,000 raise in the monthly salaries of government employees.

The struggle for a higher minimum wage aims to provide the suffering workers at least temporary relief.



It is a struggle for a decent and living wage for the benefit of workers' families. It is thus a struggle to reclaim the right to live as human beings—a right the working class has fought for in a century of struggle.

The P125 raise actually represents a partial wage adjustment in the face of rapidly rising prices. It is, in fact, not enough to help workers' wages cope with the runaway inflation these past years.

The big capitalists and the ruling regime are hell-bent on blocking this just demand and have been using it as the boogeyman behind bigger production costs and higher inflation. In fact, they simply do not want any reduction in their profits.

A study by IBON Foundation shows that in 2008, all enterprises employing at least 20 workers raked in P895.2 billion in profits. A P125 increase in the minimum daily wage would translate to P135 billion in additional operating costs, leaving them with P759 billion in profits.

This is a 15% reduction. Among Metro Manila firms, the reduction would be 17.3%. As for the top 1,000 corporations, which enjoyed a 500% increase in income from 2001 to 2009, the reduction would merely be a drop in the bucket. **AB**



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Union refers workers' issues to NDFP

The workers' union at Dole Philippines Inc. (Dolefil) has raised issues currently facing the country's proletariat before the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) negotiating panel. Amado Kadena-NAFLU-KMU has requested the inclusion of the grave exploitation and deception being perpetrated by Dolefil's management and its seizure of vast tracts of land in General Santos City in the agenda of talks between the NDFP and the Government of the Philippines (GPH).

The union said it was fitting to include workers' issues in negotiations on socio-economic reforms. They would also like to include the widespread contractualization, violations of workers' rights, wage freezes and other workers' issues in the agenda.

The union is also demanding that Dolefil be divested of its control over more than 30,000 hectares of land now planted to pineapple and banana. According to Amado Kadena, this is but a modern way of concentrating land in the hands of a few to the detriment of peasants and small landowners.

The union also condemned the Dolefil management's repression and brazen fraud during the union certification elections in February. After employing widespread vote-buying and terrorism against union members, the company claimed that the pro-management union won the election. AB



24 soldiers killed, 3 wounded in Abra and Agusan del Sur

The AFP would have wanted to boast of its achievements under Oplan Bayanihan before Benigno Aquino III and their US imperialist master, but ended up suffering several casualties in its military operations in Abra and Agusan del Sur towards the end of March and the first week of April. The casualties resulted from counter-offensives by the New People's Army (NPA) against the Philippine Army in the Ilocos-Cordillera Region (ICR) and Northeastern Mindanao Region (NEMR).

In NEMR. Up to 17 soldiers under the 29th IB were killed in sniping and ambush operations by the NPA under NEMR's Front 19 in Barangay San Isidro, Marihatag, Agusan del Sur on March 30 and 31, according to National Democra-

Workers picket against union busting in Davao City

Three hundred workers belonging to the Kahugpungan sa mga Trabahante sa Superstar (KTS) along with their families picketed the Superstar Coconut Products Inc. plant in Barangay Maa, Davao City on April 1 to condemn management's attempts to bust their union.

In particular, the workers are opposing the company's attempts to bribe their workers into agreeing to an early retirement scheme. The company offered as bribe ₱3,500 per month in separation pay (or an average of ₱29,000 per year) to entice the workers into retiring early. The company also spread rumors that it would be closing down its factory on April 9 to stop the laborers from reporting for work. When

the day came, the company called in workers from its other factory in Butuan to continue its operations.

Most of the workers targeted by the company for early retirement are union members. The management has been angry at the union for having scored a string of victories since it was formed. The union has been able to assert the workers' rights despite their status as contractuales.

Since the union was organized in November 2010, it has actively struggled for the workers' rights and welfare. It was able to win a wage increase despite the company's claims that it was not the workers' direct employer but the agency that hired them. The workers were able to prove that the agency was a company dummy, thus compelling management to negotiate with them directly. In March 2011, the Department of Labor and Employment formally recognized the union and ordered the company to give the workers their rightful benefits.

In retaliation, the company resorted to the forcible retirement of the union members and stepped up repression not only within the factory but in the workers' communities as well. AB



tic Front-NEMR spokesperson Ka Maria Malaya. Most of the casualties were incurred in a misencounter between two enemy columns who were both rattled in the face of NPA attacks.

Three military columns began their attack as the 29th IB scoured the upland areas of Barangay San Isidro on March 30. Among them were new graduates of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA). By 6:30 p.m., NPA snipers scattered the ranks of the first column of Philippine Army troops, killing

four soldiers on the spot.

At around 7:30 a.m. the following day, the NPA ambushed the second column using a command-detonated explosive. The third column, which was then positioned on higher ground, tried to come to their rescue. It had no choice but to pass through the second column's position.

At around 7:45 a.m., the NPA guerrillas suddenly heard the two enemy columns firing at each other. The misencounter lasted until 12:00 noon. At around 11 a.m., two helicopters came and strafed the scene of the fighting. The soldiers also fired eight mortar rounds. The enemy incurred even more casualties due to this misencounter, said Ka Malaya, sustaining 13 more dead.

In ICR. Fascist troops suffered seven killed and three wounded in a series of tactical offensives launched by the NPA under the Agustin Begnalen Command (ABC) in Tubo, Abra from March 29 to April 2. The NPA was also able to damage

two AFP helicopters, said ABC-Abra spokesperson Ka Diego Wadagan.

At around 3:45 p.m. of March 29, the NPA closed in and shot at fascist troops of the 50th IB who were busy burning cogon and wood used by the NPA in huts found in an abandoned camp in Mt. Labayan, Sitio Beew, Barangay Alangtin in Tubo town. This prompted the military to pour more troops into Sitio Beew. The troops were harassed by the NPA at around 3:15 p.m. on March 31. The enemy sustained two killed and two wounded in these two fire-fights.

It was from an NPA ambush on a platoon of the 50th IB on April 1 that the enemy suffered a big number of casualties—five more dead and one wounded.

Two helicopters tried to retrieve their casualties at 9:20 a.m. of April 2 but failed to land in Mt. Labayan after being sprayed with gunfire. The helicopters were forced to leave after suffering some damage. **AB**



Report from Southern Tagalog

Basis for leaping to a new stage of people's war

The Party and the New People's Army (NPA) succeeded in preserving their critical strength in the countryside and cities of Southern Tagalog (ST) despite the unprecedented brutality of Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) I and II. These victories serve as the region's basis for contributing to the national effort to advance the people's war to a new and higher level within five years.

In a statement issued on March 29, ST's regional leadership reported that the NPA was able to maintain its more than ten guerrilla fronts in the face of the enemy's more than nine-year military campaign (2001-2010). As a result, the people's

army and the revolutionary people were able to overcome the most difficult conditions of battle and have been steeled in the process.

Particularly in the Calabarzon area (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon),

more than ten battalions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) have been deployed, aside from several CAFGU battalions and special armed paramilitaries within industrial enclaves. In the Mimaropa area (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), there are forces of the Philippine Marines aside from the Philippine Army, PNP Special Action Force (SAF) and CAFGU.

Despite the huge number of enemy troops in the region, the NPA was able to launch more than 60 tactical offensives and other military actions. In Calabarzon, the people's army was able to inflict casualties on fas-

cist troops repeatedly in a span of 18 months. A guerrilla front was able to launch 31 tactical offensives and other military actions, killing 17 enemy elements and wounding six others, including two agents of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP). The guerrilla units were also able to seize seven M16s, four shotguns and ten pistols.

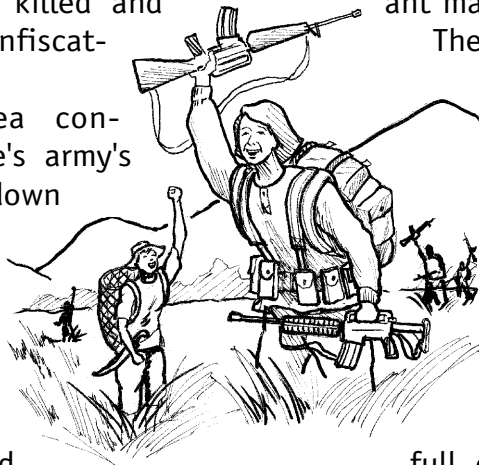
In another guerrilla front, 22 enemy elements were killed and 17 were wounded in 18 tactical offensives and other military actions. And in another guerrilla front, 14 tactical offensives were launched, including three separate ambushes on elements of the 3rd PNP Special Action Force. (In these three gunbattles in particular, eight elements from the 3rd SAF-PNP were killed and eight M16s and three pistols were confiscated).

Meanwhile, the Mimaropa area contributed significantly to the people's army's resurgence regionwide by pinning down and dispersing enemy forces thinly. In a year's time, the NPA in this area was able to launch 12 tactical offensives. An NPA platoon was able to annihilate a 22-man force of the 23rd Division Reconnaissance Company, seizing 17 high-powered firearms consisting of 11 M16s, three M14s, two M203 grenade launchers, a K3 SAW (Special Warfare Automatic Weapon) and an M60 light ma-

chine gun. Also seized were several rounds of ammunition and military equipment such as four Falcon Harris radios.

In other tactical offensives, the NPA was able to overrun a police substation without firing a single shot, seize an M16 and four pistols and ambush two truckloads of Philippine Marines, wounding six troopers.

Tens of thousands of peasants have also benefited from agrarian revolution and other antifeudal struggles. Depending on the strength accumulated by the revolutionary people, the NPA has been able to confiscate land from landlords and distribute them for free for the peasant masses to till.



The revolutionary movement in the cities has provided valuable political support to guerrilla fronts that are under attack by the enemy. It has helped to blunt repeated enemy attacks on guerrilla fronts and in the process produced many volunteer recruits for the NPA.

The Party leadership in ST has full confidence that the NPA and the revolutionary forces possess a firm foundation to continue gaining strength and firmly persevere in protracted people's war. **AB**

NPA reprimands NIA in Davao

The 1st Pulang Bagani Company under the New People's Army Merardo Arce Command in Southern Mindanao Region stopped and sent away eight personnel of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) on March 21 while the latter were conducting a meeting in Barangay Mapula, Paquibato District, Davao City.

In its capacity as the instrument of the people's revolutionary government, the NPA reprimanded the NIA for deceiving the people about its irrigation projects, said 1st Pulang Bagani Company commander Ka Parago. In fact, it is the destructive mining companies that are behind these projects.

The NPA also confiscated their vehicle, two cameras, maps, copies of NIA petition forms, membership agreements and identification cards. These items will remain in the custody

of the revolutionary masses until the NIA is able to present documents that can fully explain its projects' real objectives.

Many questions have arisen about the irrigation projects in the area because they fall within the 8,391.7642-hectare "mining claim and exploration" of Alberto Mining Corporation in Barangays Mapula, Lumiad and Salapawan.

Aside from the Mapula Communal Irrigation Project, the NIA has other projects in Sitio

KTC, Barangay Malabog and Sitio Labo, Barangay Tapak that lie within areas claimed by PENSON and Superfield Mining Corporation.

Paquibato's communities will not be able to benefit from these projects because they are within areas classified as having "minimal Potential Irrigable Areas." These are areas with mountainous or hilly terrain and with heavy limestone deposits.

Ka Parago also belied the NIA's claims that the projects can be availed of for free because beneficiaries are required to sign membership agreements and petition letters where "NIA terms and conditions" stipulate that irrigation services must be paid for during the entire duration of the contract. **AB**

A Red salute for Ka Toklai

The following is based on a tribute prepared by the CPP Regional Committee in Far South Mindanao

Billy Berana (also known as Ka Toklai, Ka Berka, Ka Ebyong, Ka Goyot and Ka Zero, among others) is a true people's warrior. He lived and died wholeheartedly serving the people. He devoted the bigger part of his life to the Lumad and peasant masses. He was 44 years old when he died, having dedicated almost 30 years in service as an exemplary revolutionary.

Ka Toklai died in a gunbattle with a platoon of the 73rd IB that had conducted a surprise patrol in a hinterland village of Malapatan, Sarangani in the afternoon of January 26. With other Red fighters who were in ambush position, he fought bravely using his M16 rifle, felling seven soldiers, two of whom were confirmed dead at a hospital.

Ka Toklai was an excellent organizer. Under his leadership, comrades were able to establish sizeable mass bases in Compostela Valley, Cotabato, Bukidnon, Davao and Sarangani. He

was dubbed the "recovery king" in North Cotabato this past



decade for entering uncharted territory using unorthodox methods. Due to his natural skills and creativity, he was able to pass himself off as Lumad, farmer, student, pastor, "last-two" usher, polio victim and many others. He was also fluent in several languages and could mimic the accent of the masses in the locality.

Ka Toklai once disguised himself as a teenage girl looking for her relatives, and was thus able to build contacts and organize peasant groups that eventually served as the initial mass base.

He could blend exceedingly well with his surroundings. He was even able to hide his real name until the very end, with the enemy completely unaware of his identity until his death.

He was deeply loved by the people. Wherever he went, Ka Toklai was accepted as a son, a brother, a friend. His advice was sought for a myriad problems—land disputes, working

NDFP lambasts Padilla

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) berated Atty. Alexander Padilla, who chairs the negotiating panel of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) for his "provocative" commentaries that have no place in the peace negotiations. Padilla recently claimed that the revolutionary movement could no longer recruit educated youth because the latter were more obsessed with the internet.

NDF Human Rights Committee chair Fidel V. Agcaoili said Padilla was merely demonstrating how far removed he was from reality. He said there were several websites, blogs and Facebook accounts being used by mass organizations and personalities to propagate the message of the national-democratic movement to the Filipino people. Agcaoili cited the Philippine Revolution Web Central, the Paaralang Jose Ma. Sison, Facebook accounts of Marco Valbuena and readers of *Ang Bayan*, as well as revolutionary and progressive videos uploaded on YouTube, among others.

The effective use of these venues by the Philippine revolutionary movement is a way of

propagating the message of the national-democratic revolution even before they can be reported in local and international newspapers.

Padilla's "provocative" comments come at the heels of his earlier statement questioning the NDF's sincerity in achieving a political settlement in the face of the raging civil war in the country. His insistence on a three-year timetable for concluding the peace talks is detrimental to the current negotiations because it plays into the hands of militarist saboteurs who are only interested to see the talks' failure and in unleashing all-out war under Oplan Bayanihan.

Padilla must realize that the success or failure of the peace talks rests squarely on the shoulders of the Aquino regime and not on the NDFP, said the Communist Party of the Philippines. Instead of coming out with such damaging statements, he should instead concentrate on looking for solutions to the issues of land reform and national sovereignty, widespread unemployment, poverty and hunger which lie at the roots of the civil war. **AB**

conditions, interpretations of the law, medical problems and even marital issues. Little children flocked to him for friendship, caring and laughter. On many occasions, he looked for homes to take in orphaned children so they would not go hungry and die. Himself coming from a poor peasant family, he would often admonish comrades that "while poverty is a reality we have to live with, we must always take care of the children, especially peasant children."

While he was attentive to and gentle with children, Ka Toklai was a fierce Red fighter who join and led many tactical offensives. His long experience as a guerrilla and his sharp analytical skills and no-nonsense hard work proved to be important factors in the success of several tactical offensives such as the series of raids in Magpet, North Cotabato and in Dangcagan and Quezon, Bukidnoon from 2005 to 2007 as well as the disarming operations in Malita, Davao del Sur.

Despite suffering from chronic back pains, urinary tract infections, arthritis, sinusitis and occasional seizures, Ka Toklai was never bedridden. He was so energetic and his enthusiasm so infectious that he was able to convince his wife and three grown sons to join the movement and contribute to the revolution. He never stopped consolidating his family, deepening their grasp of the revolution and the importance of working in the people's service.

His sons endearingly called him "Kasamang Derpa" (Comrade Father) and lovingly told stories about him and his "escapades." They themselves are lighthearted revolutionaries one could be proud of, serving as brilliant examples to other revolutionary families in the region. "*Bilib man gyud mi sa iya, bisan sa iyang pagkaamahan,*" (We really admire him, even as a father), said one of his sons to a person attending their father's wake.

Despite all his achievements, Ka Toklai was a humble revolutionary who was open to criticisms and suggestions. He easily admitted his mistakes and shortcomings and tried hard to rectify them. He listened to everyone, young or old.

Under his leadership, tasks that seemed impossible became easier because of his lighthearted personality and sense of humor. He had no vices, luxuries or caprices. He was simply Ka Toklai, the hardworking and funny peasant revolutionary who laid down his life for the revolution. He will forever remain in the hearts of his comrades and the masses as a beloved hero and great leader. AB

2 activists slain, mass leader arrested

Two barangay officials in Compostela Valley and Batangas were killed by armed agents of the state while an Igorot leader was illegally arrested in Nueva Ecija. In Samar, four children became victims of military abuse and in Cagayan, two peasants were victimized by the AFP's brutality.

April 15. Soldiers conducting military operations hit 38-year old farmer Roel Santiago's chest with rifle butts. Santiago, a resident of Barangay Santor, Baggao, Cagayan was on his way home when he was accosted by soldiers in Sitio Culidag, Barangay Hacienda Intal and forced to serve as a guide. Soldiers also threatened 48-year old peasant Edgar Campo of Barangay Bacagan, Baggao that they would cut off his little finger if he refused to admit that he had been taking NPA guerrillas into his home.

The soldiers have been using the chapels and barangay halls of Bacagan, Hacienda Intal, Azingga Via, Santa Margarita, Tungal and Santor and many of the villagers' houses as military detachments since their operation began last April 11. The massive battalion-size operation was launched by the 5th ID as a test mission for its newly trained soldiers. The operation covers the towns of Baggao, Gattaran, Gonzaga, Sta. Teresita and Buguey.

April 12. An unknown assailant shot to death Ricky Manrique, 49, in his house in Barangay Kingking, Pantukan, Compostela Valley. Manrique, a village council member, was killed in front of his wife and child and sustained several gunshot wounds in the head and back. Manrique actively campaigned against the operations of big foreign mining companies in the province like the US-owned Russel Mining and Minerals. Manrique was also a member of the Anakpawis Party in Compostela Valley, a convenor of the Save Pantukan Alliance and the leader of the Boringot Small Scale Mining Cooperative and the Federation of Miners Aggrupation in Pantukan (FedMap).

April 11. Suspected military agents killed Kenneth Reyes, 28, a resident of Barangay Maguihan, Lemery, Batangas. Reyes was the barangay captain of his village and chair of BAYAN-Batangas. He was on his way home from a seminar when he was shot by two unidentified assailants. He sustained four gunshot wounds from a cal .45 pistol.

BAYAN-Southern Tagalog strongly condemned



Reyes' murder. They assailed PNP-Lemery chief S/Supt. Alberto Supapo for claiming that the victim was killed because of drug-related and personal issues. BAYAN-ST slammed Supapo's statement as malicious, with the intent of derailing the investigation on the real motives for the killing.

March 22. Igorot leader Erenesto Bubod, 44, was illegally arrested in Sitio Maluyon, Barangay Villarica, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija.

In a statement, Lita Umas Bubod, the victim's wife, said she and her husband were resting at their farm when five men who introduced themselves as personnel of the Energy Development Corporation (EDC) approached them and invited Bubod for questioning on the burning of their reforestation area on March 17.

It was later made known that Bubod was arrested not by EDC personnel but by soldiers of the 81st IB. Aside from arson,

Bubod was also charged with illegal possession of firearms because of a homemade shotgun they found leaning against a tree where the victim was resting.

The Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL) and the Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KKAMP) condemned Bubod's arrest. The AMGL disclosed that Bubod's area was heavily militarized due to the ongoing privatization of the hydro-electric power plant in Pantabangan by the First Gen Hydro-Power Corporation. The corporation is controlled by the Lopez Group of Companies which also owns EDC. Bubod is active as the leader of the Kalanguya-Igorot tribe in the area and is among those struggling to defend Igorot lands from the encroachment of foreign and local companies.

March 4. Four children aged four to 12 years were victimized by 30 soldiers conducting mili-

tary operations in the hinterlands of Barangay Carolina, Matuguinao, Samar.

The soldiers barged into the children's house, asking them where they kept their firearm. The children had been left alone because their parents had been forced by the soldiers to attend a meeting at the town center.

The children answered that they didn't own a gun. But the soldiers refused to believe them and accused them of lying. They relented and left only when the eldest child told them to go ahead and search the house if they didn't believe them.

Before this, the soldiers fired their guns for five minutes to terrorize the villagers and burned down a hut outside the barrio center. Upon entering the barangay, they forcibly rounded up the villagers in the town square to attend an anti-NPA rally. The soldiers threw stones at the houses of residents who refused to go in order to compel them to attend the meeting. **AE**

Anti-Balikatan 2011 caravan

Patriotic mass organizations launched a series of protest actions against the US-RP Balikatan Exercises 2011 held in Central Luzon. The latest was a caravan led by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas last April 15 that kicked off from Quezon City towards Central Luzon.

The caravan was blocked by policemen and armed guards at the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSPEZ) in Angeles City. But the rallyists asserted their right to peaceful assembly and dismantled the barricades put up by the CSPEZ security force.

After a short program that included the burning of a replica of the US flag, the caravan headed for Camp Servillano Aquino in Barangay San Miguel, Tarlac City. They were welcomed by peasants from Tarlac and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) and Nueva Ecija under BAYAN-CL.

The rallyists assailed Balikatan as an act of treason against national sovereignty and a reversal of the people's victory in 1991 when they were able to expel the US military bases. They also expressed disappointment with Benigno Aquino III for his decision to push through with Balikatan.

The peasants said that Balikatan was useless to the farmers of Central Luzon. The presence of American and Filipino soldiers is even being used to intimidate peasants who have been asserting their rights, in-

cluding those who have been struggling against the Cojuangco-Aquino-owned Hacienda Luisita.

The Balikatan Exercises 2011 held April 5-15 was the biggest joint military exercise since the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) was implemented in the 1990s. Joined by 10,000 soldiers (5,000 from the US and another 5,000 from the AFP), the military exercise included deceptive civil-military operations such as medical, dental and veterinary services and civic action.

Nonetheless, no matter how much the US and the Aquino regime deodorize it, there is no denying the fact that the military exercise is a massive counterinsurgency operation conducted by American troops within Philippine territory. **AE**

Obama's "humanitarian" intervention

On March 28, nine days after joint forces from the United Kingdom, France and the US bombed Libya, US Pres. Barack Obama detailed his "humanitarian" foreign policy. It was forthwith called the "Obama doctrine" and touted as "more just" compared to the "Bush doctrine" of unilateral militarist intervention.

Obama justified the use of force against Libya, an independent country, invoking the need to "defend civilians." The US cannot turn a deaf ear, he said, in the face of the imminent massacre of civilians. Neither should the US hesitate to use force against an enemy of humanity, he added, if this was what the situation warranted.

Within this framework, Obama ordered the bombing of Libya in March using US warships and planes. The objective was to provide support to armed groups fighting Moammar Gaddafi's government. Contrary to declarations of "defending civilians," the bombings conducted by the US and its NATO allies resulted in the widespread loss of civilian lives and infrastructure.

Obama strained to portray his aggression towards Libya as "humanitarian military intervention by a broad democratic coalition" to differentiate it from the previous Bush regime's "war against terror." But apart from the differ-

ence in name, there is no distinction between the two. Both the "humanitarian military intervention" and the "war against terror" were launched to defend US interests in the region—namely, the vast oil resources. They both resorted to the same "shock and awe" tactics of former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. They both inflicted civilian casualties and damaged civilian infrastructure in a desperate attempt to crush the defenses of regimes in power.

At first, Obama said that his "doctrine" did not include the overthrow of the existing regime in Libya. But after weeks of bombing raids that had no clear objectives, direction and results, the US let the cat out of the bag, saying that it was impossible to have "genuine reforms" in Libya as long as Gaddafi remains as president. The US and its allies had earlier violated Libya's sovereignty when they recognized anti-Gaddafi forces as "legitimate representatives" of the Libyan

people despite their small number and the fact that they were based only in three to four cities.

Obama and his allies claim that they are against despotic leaders. France and the US cite their armed intervention in the ouster of Ivory Coast's despotic leader Laurent Gbagbo even if it is well known that the man they installed, Alassan Outtara has also been involved in the large-scale slaughter of the people of Ivory Coast.

The real objective of US armed intervention is the removal from power of leaders who refuse to submit themselves to US control.

Contrary to Obama's declarations, the US government supports dictators for its own interests. The US has, for instance, approved the Saudi Arabian king's use of force to suppress the growing protest movement in the country. It did not lift a finger when the US' puppet government in Kuwait violently suppressed protest actions.

In Bahrain, the US supported Saudi Arabia's move to send troops to violently suppress protests against its monarchic allies (who allow the presence of the US' biggest naval base in the region). In the same vein, the US has expressed little interest in the just protests taking place in Yemen, Oman and other parts of North Africa. AB

Plans to reconcile with Marcoses assailed

THE CPP called on the Filipino people to resist moves by the Aquino regime to reconcile with the family and cronies of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Part of the new reconciliation deal involves allowing the Marcos family to inter the former dictator's remains at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. The move was initiated by Salvador Escudero, a crony of the late dictator.

The move is a big insult to

victims of human rights violations under the US-Marcos dictatorship. Up to 70,000 people were illegally detained and millions of others, especially in the countryside suffered the brutality of Marcoses' lieutenants.

No regime has punished any member of the Marcos family or their cronies. Some of them are back in power and wield great influence in the reactionary government. Imelda Marcos and her

children are now officials in various branches of government. Juan Ponce Enrile, the main implementor of martial law is currently the Senate president. Panfilo Lacson and Gregorio Honasan are both senators. They are but a few of the former lieutenants who tortured anti-Marcos activists using the water cure, electrocution and other forms of cruelty and physical abuse.



Widespread protests around the globe

Since December 2010, gigantic protest actions have been spreading like wildfire in countries of the Middle East and North Africa. The protests are focused on overthrowing repressive and corrupt regimes. A striking feature of these mass actions are the people's militant demands for decent living conditions in the face of grave crisis, widespread poverty and unemployment due to the implementation of imperialist globalization policies. Most of the protests were initiated by youth and students, but eventually spread to include workers, professionals and other democratic sectors.

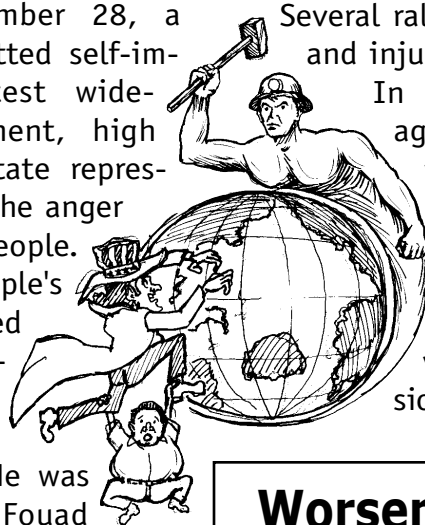
The protests began in Tunisia. On December 28, a young man committed self-immolation to protest widespread unemployment, high food prices and state repression. This kindled the anger of the Tunisian people. In January, a people's uprising culminated in massive demonstrations that ousted President El Abidine Ben Ali. He was succeeded by Fouad Mebazaa.

Next to erupt was Egypt. Despite brazen repression, huge demonstrations in Cairo's Tahrir Square went on for close to 20 days, forcing an end to Hosni Mubarak's 39-year rule. Protest actions once more erupted in April against the military council that took over to demand punishment for Mubarak and the implementation of democratic reforms.

In Bahrain, thousands of people have been protesting since February 14 to oust the monarchy and demand political and press freedom. The protests have grown despite the violent suppression. On March 15, martial law was declared. The day after, anti-monarchy demonstrations were brutally dispersed by the state, supported by troops from Saudi Arabia who came up-

on the Bahraini prince's request. Several rallyists were killed and injured as a result.

In Syria, protests against the Assad regime began on January 16. The people have continued their protests despite violent suppression by the regime.



By February, local government reforms began to be implemented, including the resignation of a number of officials. Certain economic concessions have also been granted to the people.

In Yemen, protests erupted in mid-January against widespread poverty and unemployment and for changes in a constitution that allows the existence of a monarchy.

In Oman, protesters called for higher wages, more jobs and lower prices. The sheikh revamped his cabinet three times in an effort to quell dissent and launched programs that would allegedly create 50,000 new jobs. The sheikh also raised the wages of all workers.

In Algeria, various protests began in December 2010 and continued until February 2011. Similar protests were also held in Djibouti, Jordan, Iran, Iraq and Morocco. **AB**

Worsening crisis in Portugal

Portugal was forced on April 6 to ask for a bailout from the European Union (EU) due to its worsening economic and political crisis. Portugal is the third European country (after Ireland and Greece) that has sought such recourse since 2008.

The \$116 billion bailout package from the EU Rescue Fund and the IMF obliges Portugal to reduce social spending (ostensibly to allow for economic growth) whatever the public's reaction.

Portugal is finding it extremely difficult to seek new credit due to its huge public debt and budgetary deficit. From 59.8% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2004, its public debt has grown to 83.2% of its GDP this year. Its \$500 billion external debt is equivalent to 223% of its GDP.

Unemployment is widespread at 11.1%. Almost half of the youth are jobless.

Reductions in social spending since 2009 have resulted in massive and continuing protest actions by workers and the people since the third quarter of 2010.

From January to April 2011, more than ten gigantic protest actions have been launched by the Portuguese. More than 500,000 rallied on March 12 in Lisbon, the country's capital. On March 23, Prime Minister Jose Socrates was forced to resign, giving way to a caretaker government. **AB**

SC decision favoring Cojuangco condemned

FARMERS' groups strongly condemned the recent Supreme Court decision upholding Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's claim over 20% of San Miguel Corporation (SMC) stocks bought through coco levy funds. The Supreme Court ridiculously said that the close relationship between Cojuangco and the former dictator Marcos has not been proven.

Marcos and Cojuangco initiated the imposition of a levy on coconut farmers ostensibly for their benefit. The funds collected were incorporated into the Coconut Industry Investment Fund which was used to set up the United Coconut Planters Bank. As a UCPB official, Cojuangco used the coco levy funds to purchase 47% of SMC shares, which were sequestered by the Aquino government in 1986.

The CPP lambasted the Supreme Court decision, saying that it was clearly payback by Benigno Aquino III for Cojuangco's support for his campaign in the presidential election. Cojuangco was one of Aquino's biggest campaign contributors.

Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano said the Supreme Court decision tramples on the rights of small coconut farmers who were forced by Marcos and Cojuangco to pay the coco levy. This fund has never been of any benefit to the coconut farmers.

In Lucena City, the Coconut Industry Reform Movement is preparing to file a motion for reconsideration against the court decision. Farmers' groups launched a protest action on April 14 in front of the Supreme Court.

"Drivers' Calvary" this Holy Week

A protest action by drivers starting April 20 this Holy Week has been dubbed "Drivers' Calvary." The protest action led by the Pinag-isang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (PISTON) was precipitated by the latest oil price hike last April 19.

The 13th oil price increase since January has resulted in diesel prices of ₱46.70-49.25 per liter (after a 25-centavo hike), gasoline prices of ₱54.30-61.51 per liter (after a 60-70 centavo increase) and kerosene prices of ₱56 per liter (after a 40-centavo hike). There will also be a ₱1 per kilo hike in the price per 11-kilogram cylinder of liquefied petroleum gas.

A noise barrage had been launched earlier, on April 13, by various organizations along Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City; Marikina Bridge; San Juan City; Sucat Road in Parañaque; San Roque National High School and Dypac Compound in Tondo, Manila. PISTON is demanding the immediate repeal of Republic Act 8479 or the Oil Deregulation Law.

GABRIELA-National Capital Region also launched a protest action in Trabajo Market, Manila to demand higher wages and the removal of the e-vat on petroleum products.

Gutierrez's prosecutors named

THE House of Representatives has named the 11 congressmen who will serve as prosecutors in the impeachment case against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

The team of prosecutors will be led by Iloilo Rep. Neil Tupas who will preside over his fellow-congressmen-lawyers Rep. Erin Tañada (Quezon), Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas (Ilocos Sur), Rep. Feredico Quimbo (Cavite), Rep. Elpidio Bargaza (Oriental Mindoro), Rep. Reynaldo Umali (Oriental Mindoro), Rep. Arlene Bag-ao (Akbayan), Rep. Joseph Emilio Abaya (Cavite), Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo (Valenzuela City), Rep. Raul Daza (Northern Samar) and Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares. Colmenares will be handling the euro-generals case.

Meanwhile, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) called on Congress to choose competent private prosecutors in order to ensure Gutierrez's conviction. The National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL) has pledged to provide assistance.

BAYAN has called a meeting of various sectors to prepare for protest actions against Gutierrez and legal measures to remove her from her post.

Gutierrez's impeachment trial will be held as soon as the Senate and Lower House resume their sessions on May 9.