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Editorial

The thirst for justice of victims of the Marcos dictatorship remains unquenched

The compensation given to 7,526 victims of the Marcos fascist dictatorship comes too little, too late.

On March 1, they began receiving \$7.5 million, equivalent to a little more than ₱40,000 for each person. Although they accepted the small amount as damages, there is little cause for celebration.

Their thirst for true justice has not been quenched.

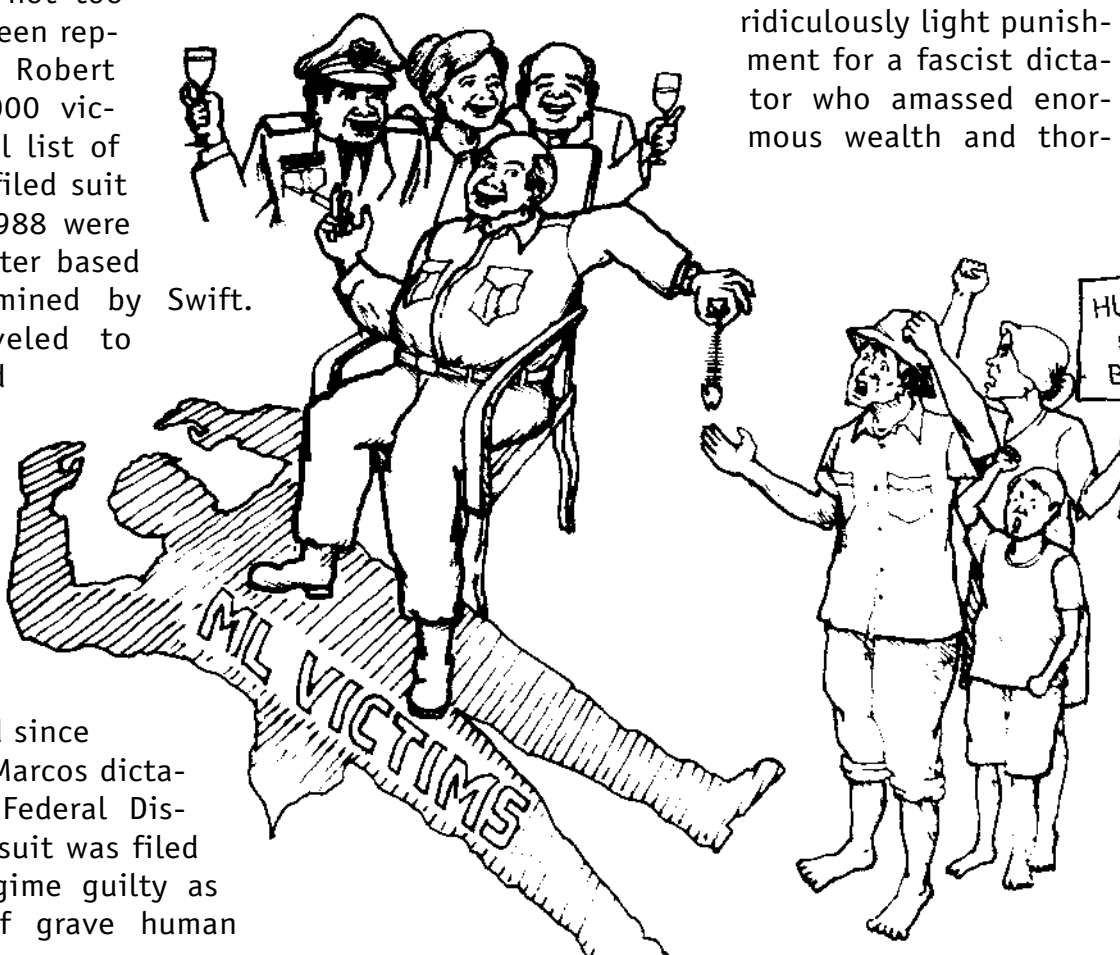
For one, they are not too happy about having been represented by lawyer Robert Swift. More than 2,000 victims from the original list of 9,539 plaintiffs who filed suit with a US court in 1988 were removed from the roster based on requisities determined by Swift. Many of them traveled to Manila, only to find out that their names were absent from the list.

Most of the victims of the fascist dictatorship are aging. Many have died. Twenty-five years have passed since the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship. The Hawaii Federal District Court where the suit was filed found the Marcos regime guilty as far back as 1992 of grave human

rights violations. A great injustice has been committed through the much delayed implementation of the court-mandated compensation to the victims.

In contrast, the Marcoses and their cronies have been politically resurrected and are now enjoying a new heyday in power.

The total amount of \$7.5 million that was divided among thousands of Marcos victims is a pittance compared to the atrocities they suffered. More than this, it is ridiculously light punishment for a fascist dictator who amassed enormous wealth and thor-



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roughly abused his power. It does not even represent 1% of the \$1.97 billion settlement granted by the US court. For the Marcoses and their minions, these are but crumbs from the banquet table thrown at the victims to silence their unceasing cries for justice.

The victims of the Marcos fascist dictatorship have not relented in their quest for justice. Most of them are workers, peasants, students, women, church people and other ordinary folk who stood up against the fascist regime and struggled for social justice and national liberation. They are the main victims of extrajudicial killings, involuntary disappearance, torture, illegal arrest and detention and other heinous human rights abuses.

The reactionary regimes have shown no compassion for the victims of the Marcos dictatorship in the past 25 years.

Instead of recognizing the victims' right to be justly compensated, these regimes staked their own claim on the Marcoses' ill-gotten riches in order to use them for their personal gain and to shore up their bankrupt rule. They blocked bills filed before Congress to implement the US court decision.

Not only did one reactionary regime after another block the grant of damages to the victims. None of them undertook any decisive moves to punish the dictator, his wife, children and cronies who colluded with them in plundering and suppressing the people.

For 25 years, justice was systematically undermined while the dictator's family was allowed to return to power. Their loyal henchmen who enforced martial rule now occupy seats of power in the reactionary state.

While expressing support for the grant of compensation to the victims of the Marcos dictatorship, the Aquino regime's lawyers have actually filed motions to block them from receiving any more damages. Like its predecessors, the Aquino government continues to object to efforts by the victims and their lawyers to acquire their rightful share of the late dictator's wealth.

The Aquino regime has likewise not done anything to punish the Marcoses and their



cronies for plunder and other grave violations of human rights. It is a huge irony that under the Aquino regime, there is now talk of reconciling with the Marcoses and allowing the late dictator's remains to be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.


The country's history these past two and a half decades shows that true justice can never be attained by the people under a reactionary state.

Not one of the post-Marcos regimes was able to punish the big plunderers and fascists who oppressed and exploited the people. Marcos, Ramos, Estrada, Arroyo and many others have never been punished.

Despite Benigno Aquino III's lofty words about fighting corruption, he has not lifted a finger to punish the thieves of Gloria Arroyo's past regime. Neither has he taken any steps to show that he is different from the past regimes in terms of stealing, brutality and abuse of power.

The people cannot expect the elements of the ruling class to punish their fellow oppressors, plunderers and exploiters.

The attainment of true justice lies in the people's hands and in their militant and revolutionary struggle. **AB**

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NDFP and GPH successfully resume formal peace negotiations

The formal peace talks were successfully resumed despite the sabotage efforts of ultra-fascist elements within the military and police. After seven days of talks, the two panels issued a joint communique.

They reaffirmed past agreements, including The Hague Joint Declaration and all bilateral agreements entered into by the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the NDFP until April 2004.

The two panels also agreed on the scope and timeframe of the talks. They agreed to finish and sign the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and

Economic Reforms (CASER) in September 2011; the Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms (CAPCR) in February 2012; and the Comprehensive Agreement on End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (CAEHED) in June 2012.

Regarding the CASER, there will be three bilateral meetings held between June and

August this year where both groups will go over the work they had already begun, and which was suspended in 2001.

Meanwhile, both panels will be forming their respective working groups for Political and Constitutional Reforms. These groups will start meeting in October 2011.

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) will also be revived, seven years after it was sidelined by the GPH. It will be drafting guidelines for JMC operations and will be meeting this March.

Based on the Joint Notes dated January 18, 2011, the GPH will continue to work on the expeditious release of all or most of the 14 NDFP-listed

History of injustice

In 1986, a civil case was filed against Marcos and his estate at the Hawaii Federal District Court by 9,539 victims of human rights violations. In 1992, the court found Marcos guilty of the crime of violating human rights and ordered his heirs to pay the victims \$1.97 billion in compensation.

In 1998, Switzerland's Supreme Court decided to return to the Philippines \$640 million worth of the Marcoses' ill-gotten wealth deposited in Swiss banks.

The fund, which was held in escrow in a local bank by the Philippine government, was supposed to be one of the sources of the compensation won by the victims.

Among the issues that had to be resolved, however, was an existing law calling for any ill-gotten wealth recovered from the Marcoses to be used to fund land reform.

In 2003, the Philippine Supreme Court ordered the transfer of this fund to the national treasury.

Since then, the victims

have expressed concern that the fund may no longer be available for compensation.

After more than 15 years, no enabling law has been passed granting compensation to the victims.

A bill to this effect had been marked among the priority bills of Congress, but was blocked by the Arroyo regime. Bayan Muna Reps. Neri Colmenares and Teddy Casiño refiled the bill in Congress in December 2010.

Dubious settlement. Meanwhile, a breakaway group from the original plaintiffs sought a settlement with the Marcoses through Atty. Robert Swift.

Swift was one of the lawyers who represented the

victims in the class suit filed in Hawaii. But most of the victims have long since dispensed with his services.

The amount distributed this March is part of a \$10-million settlement entered into by Swift with Jose Campos, a known Marcos crony based in the US.

Swift received \$2.5 million in legal fees while \$7.5 million was awarded to the victims.

Swift devised his own system of identifying the victims, which was different from that used by the US court.

The settlement is highly dubious.

The property held by Campos is estimated to cost up to \$78 million. But Swift agreed to a mere \$10-million settlement for the Marcos victims.

This left Campos in control of almost 90% of the ill-gotten wealth. **AB**

JASIG consultants and personalities before the second round of formal talks. The GPH had made the same pledge in 2004, but nothing came of it. This year, the NDFP added the names of Danilo Badayos, Leopoldo Caloza, Alan Jazmines and Ramos Patriarca to the list of those whose status will be verified in accordance with the JASIG Supplemental Agreement.

The NDFP described the talks as a roller coaster ride all the way, where no one could be quite sure whether the talks would end up on a high or low point, or whether it might stall once more. Nonetheless, the NDFP recognized that "such is the nature of negotiations." It cited the two panels' points of agreement as "eloquent proof" of what they have achieved. It acknowledged that each party has bent over backwards from previous hard positions in order to find common ground.

One of the major stumbling blocks that has been removed is the GPH's branding of the CPP and NPA as well as NDFP Chief Political Consultant Jose

Maria Sison as "terrorists." However, the NDFP said that much more has to be done in ensuring that the GPH armed forces, especially the military and police, respect and abide by this position. The NDFP noted that the PNP suspension of operations order in relation to the reciprocal ceasefire declarations still referred to the CPP-NPA-NDF forces as "communist terrorists".

Despite the declaration of a reciprocal ceasefire, the NDFP also noted reports from its field units in various areas all over the country that the AFP has continued to conduct military operations under the guise of civil-military operations (CMOs) under Oplan Bayanihan.

In a separate statement, NDFP peace panel spokesperson Fidel Agcaoili challenged the Aquino regime to take a firm stand to resolve the roots of the armed conflict if it really wants to achieve a genuine political settlement with the revolutionary movement. Said Agcaoili, if the GPH and its panel want to expedite the

talks and realize a political settlement, they should seriously consider the proposed 10-Point Concise Agreement for an Immediate Just Peace that the NDFP submitted to the GPH in August 2005. If it really wants the talks to be concluded within the agreed timeframe, said Agcaoili, the GPH should have been more determined in setting the next series of talks.

The CPP welcomed the successful resumption of formal talks and noted the timeframe agreed upon by the two panels.

But the Party reminded the people that the political and economic problems that lie at the roots of the armed conflict are more than a century old. They include systematic exploitation and oppression caused by landlessness, poverty and massive unemployment.

Such deeply rooted problems cannot be resolved in a matter of 18 months. The regime's armed forces have likewise been relentlessly sabotaging and derailing the talks. AB

Daet 4 released

Four activists and mass leaders illegally arrested in a military raid in November 2010 were released on February 4.

Esmeraldo Baldon (Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas-Camarines Norte chair), Denver Bacolod (Karapatan-Camarines Norte staff member), Merlo Bernas (Kabataan Party member) and Elpidio de Luna (then a newly released political detainee) were arbitrarily arrested on November 10 in an office shared by Karapatan's provincial chapter with other progressive groups in Daet, Camarines Norte. They have since been dubbed the "Daet 4."

The soldiers and policemen

who arrested them failed to present a warrant of arrest. The raiding team also carted away office equipment, personal effects and money amounting to ₱5,500. These items have not been returned to date.

The Daet 4 were accused of being members of the New People's Army. Explosives were planted in the office and used as a pretext to file criminal charges against them. They were also charged with rebellion and inciting to sedition.

The rebellion and inciting to sedition charges were the first to go. When the court dismissed the charge of illegal possession of explosives, the police declined to file a motion for reconsideration. Said the Daet 4's lawyer, "They knew the charges would not stick because they were all fabricated."

The police instead pleaded with the Daet 4 not to file counter-charges against them, saying that the military merely pressured them into filing such cases against the victims.

The former detainees' lawyer is now preparing to file a case against the AFP. AB

NDFP assails AFP ceasefire violations

The Communist Party of the Philippines, New People's Army (NPA) and all revolutionary forces strictly abided by the reciprocal seven-day ceasefire declared by the NDFP and GPH in support of the peace talks. Nonetheless, Comrade Luis Jalandoni, who chairs the NDFP Negotiating Panel assailed continued violations by GPH security forces of the ceasefire in various parts of the country.

In Mindanao alone, the island's NDFP spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos reported 23 cases of ceasefire violations in the provinces of Bukidnon, Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Compostela Valley and Surigao del Norte. AFP-PNP-CAFGU forces bazonly violated their unilateral ceasefire in Southern Mindanao Region when they launched combat operations in the mountainous areas of Compostela Valley, Davao Oriental and Agusan del Sur against the NPA in a desperate attempt to rescue three prisoners of war.

On February 24, NDF-Bicol spokesperson Ka Greg Bañares reported 19 ceasefire violations by the AFP in the region. He said offensive operations and armed provocations by the AFP have been going on non-stop in Bicol's guerrilla zones.

He cited 14 combat operations and five cases of brutal operations by Reengineered Special Operations Teams (RSOT).

Thirteen barangays in the towns of Casiguran, Gubat and Sorsogon City are under attack by SOT operations conducted by forces of the 49th IB and 903rd Brigade while 23 villages in the towns of Aroroy, Masbate have been under SOT operations by the 9th IB and 903rd Brigade since February 2.

This shows that the Aquino government is unable to compel and discipline its troops in

the AFP to respect even their own unilateral ceasefire. There is thus no assurance that the Aquino government and the AFP will respect and implement agreements reached in the peace negotiations between the GPH and the NDFP, said Bañares.

On February 15, the start of the ceasefire, the 2nd ID and 901st Brigade also began SOT operations in the villages of Talin-talin, Apod and Rawis in Libon, Albay. SOT operations by the 2nd IB have also been going on for almost a month in Barangays Balabagon and Cavit in the town of Manito, Albay.

Despite the ceasefire, the 42nd IB conducted combat operations in four barangays in Caramoan, Camarines Sur. The 2nd IB launched military operations in the villages of Quinartelan and Manawan in Camalig town in Albay and in the villages of Maogog, San



Roque and San Vicente in Jovellar, Albay from February 16 to 21.

In Sorsogon, 49th IB troops clandestinely entered a number of villages in Bulan and along the Barcelona-Gubat boundary before the ceasefire took effect on February 15. They hid for days behind thickets but failed to find any unit of the NPA and later decided to return to camp.

A unit under the 49th IB treacherously attacked an NPA unit in Barangay Magdago-song, Irosin, Sorsogon at dawn of February 16. Villagers immediately sent word to the Red fighters, enabling the NPA unit to retreat without firing a shot.

On February 21, at around 9 p.m., civilian-clad soldiers of the 49th IB attacked Barangay San Juan Daan in Bulan, Sorsogon. They were aboard a van and two motorcycles and illegally entered and ransacked five houses of civilians on the pretext of looking for an NPA member in the area.

On February 14, a day before the resumption of peace talks, 7th ID forces arrested Comrade Alan Jazmines, one of the NDFP's consultants in the peace talks protected by the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

In Samar, two Red fighters figured in an encounter with suspected elements of the 34th IB who had long taken up ambush positions in Barangay Cataydungan, San Jose de Buan from February 16-17. There were no casualties on the side of the NPA.

The following day, two columns of soldiers conducted operations in Barangay San Isidro and Cataydungan, while another column scoured the forests. Their operations persisted until the last week of February. AB

Peasant leader, Bayan Muna activist slain

The military mercilessly killed a Bayan Muna (BM) activist in Albay and a peasant leader in Davao del Sur. Soldiers also opened fire on a group of Aggay minorities in Cagayan and blamed it on the New People's Army (NPA).

March 1. Bacolod City police arrested Rogina Quilop, 42, at the Bacolod-Silay Airport at around 6:30 p.m., on trumped-up arson charges. She was accused of being an NPA member and of involvement in the burning of a transloading station in Toboso town in Negros Occidental. In fact, Quilop manages a local cooperative and is a staff member of Karapatan.

February 27. Elements of the 39th IB killed Rody Dejos and his son Rody Rick in Sitio Malusing, Barangay Zone 1, Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur. The elder Dejos is the vice chairman of the local Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) chapter and was active in the campaign against the Barangay Defense System and military harassment in their village. Thus, his name ended up first in the 39th IB's list of villagers ordered to report to the detachment to undergo interrogation.

He was coerced into signing a document stating that he was a member of the underground movement who surrendered. In November 2009, he was told by the 39th IB to dissolve the local KMP chapter. Last December, he was fired upon by 39th IB soldiers to intimidate him.

Despite all this,

the elder Dejos refused to stop his activities, and was murdered. His son Rody Rick was killed because he witnessed his father's execution.

February 27. Troops from the 39th IB forced brothers Johnson and Danilo Tio, both residents of Sitio Tambulang, Barangay Danwata, Malita, Davao del Sur to pose as NPA members who have surrendered because of the hunger and hardship they suffered in the mountains. The Tio brothers are ordinary villagers who have never been members of any NPA unit. They are still under military detention in New Argao, Malita, Davao del Sur.

February 25. Elements of the 9th ID summarily executed Bayan Muna activist Rodel Estrallado. Estrallado was abducted by military men in front of a basketball court in Barangay 3, Malilipot, Albay. Witnesses said the armed military men introduced themselves as agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency

(PDEA). Estrallado was forced into a waiting van with plate number MSL-902. PDEA officials denied having conducted such an operation.

Maj. Harold Cabunoc, spokesperson of the 9th ID was caught in his own lies as he tried to cover up the military's involvement in the killing. Cabunoc claimed that Estrallado was an NPA fighter killed in an encounter in Barangay Bulwag, Bato, Camarines Sur. But he could not explain how Estrallado was killed in an encounter that occurred in Camarines Sur more than two hours before he was abducted in Albay.

February 12. Elements of the 17th IB conducting operations terrorized Tokong Tayan, a farmer from Sitio Camandarian, Barangay Sta. Teresita, Cagayan and threatened to kill him and his child if he did not admit that the NPA had stayed in his area.

The soldiers also met a certain Balong along the way, placed bullets between his fingers and squeezed them.

The enemy destroyed farmer Bong Tacla's corn field. They cut the barbed wire fence surrounding the corn field, trampled on the plants and kicked down the stalks.

The soldiers also fed farmer Ely Talbo's chicken to their dog and refused to pay for it.

February 9. Soldiers from the 17th IB and RMG mercilessly waylaid a family of Aggay minorities who were hauling rattan poles, in Sitio Nagsicoan, Barangay Villa Cielo, Baguey, Cagayan at around 11 a.m. Thirty-two year old Julie Rosal was killed, while his brother Elvis



"Peasant...," continued on p. 7



6 killed, 7 wounded in NPA ambushes

At least six elements of the fascist enemy were killed and nine were wounded in three ambushes launched by the New People's Army (NPA) this February. Four high-powered firearms were seized. NPA guerrillas also successfully put a stop to destructive mining operations.

February 26. Three M16 rifles and an M14 were seized in an ambush by Red fighters of the NPA Sergio Lobina Command on police security escorts of Arteche mayor Rolando Evardone. The ambush was launched in Barangay Catum-san, Arteche, Eastern Samar. In a statement, Ka Karlos Manuel, spokesperson of the NPA Efren Martires Command of the NPA in Eastern Visayas said P/Insp. Al Tandiado was killed and three of his men were wounded.

The ambush was a punitive measure against the Philippine National Police-Regional Mobile Group for its active involvement in combat operations against the NPA, added Ka Manuel. On the other hand, he said, the NPA was still investigating the wounding of Noe Aperario, a civilian who was allegedly hit in the cross-fire.

February 26. A unit of the Nona del Rosario Command of the New People's Army (NDRC-NPA) ambushed elements of the 86th IB at around 10:30 a.m. along the boundary of Barangay Cawayan, Asipulo and Barangay Ambasa, Lamut in Ifugao province. At least three soldiers were killed and four were seriously wounded while a number remain missing.

In a statement, NDRC-NPA spokesperson Ka Wigan Moncontad said the 86th IB has been marauding in the area for close to two months. The locals helped the NPA monitor the soldiers' movements.

February 1. Red fighters of the NPA Henry Abraham Command ambushed 17th IB Bravo Coy troops conducting operations in Sitio Bocali, Barangay Mision, Sta. Teresita, Cagayan at around 3 p.m. The troops were led by Lt. Randy Baga-

poro. Two soldiers were killed and two others were wounded. Meanwhile, all the guerrillas were able to retreat safely.

Hours before the ambush, the NPA halted quarrying operations along the Mision River in Barangay Rebeca, Gonzaga to put a stop to the destruction of the river which in turn has been ruining corn fields along the riversides and depleting irrigation water for rice fields in Barangays Rebeca and Isca.

Company and government employees immediately withdrew their dumptrucks and machinery.

The 17th IB quickly conducted pursuit operations to protect the interests of the environmentally destructive quarrying companies expelled by the NPA.

To cover up their embarrassment, the military claimed in the media that an encounter had taken place on February 1 that resulted in the death of a Red fighter and the seizure of an M14 rifle with magazines.

In fact, the body shown on TV Patrol-Cagayan was that of one of their dead soldiers and the M14 was the weapon he used in the firefight. **AB**

"Peasant..." from p. 6

Rosal, 28, and sister-in-law Mannang Rosal, 30, were wounded. The soldiers failed to provide medical attention to the victims and unceremoniously left the wounded at the Toran District Hospital in Aparri, Cagayan.

The military blamed the ambush on the NPA on the ridiculous reason that "the ambush took place in the forest." The military has not released Rosal's body and has been forcing other Aggay minorities to evacuate to the Villa Cielo barangay hall where they could be terrorized into believing that it was the NPA that waylaid them.

February 2. Bonnet-clad troops of the 17th

IB seized Bong Garaya of Barangay Rebeca, Sta. Teresita, Cagayan and submerged him in an irrigation canal in Barangay Cabambanan Norte of the same town.

That same day, the soldiers abducted 14-year old Lovejoy Alariao of Barangay Rebeca. She remains missing to date.

February 1. A group of minors was accosted by 17th IB elements in Sitio Bocali, Barangay Mision, Sta. Teresita, Cagayan and forced to serve as guides in their clearing and reconnaissance operations in hilly areas suspected as NPA lairs. The soldiers also began camping out at the Rebeca Elementary School and in houses in Sitio Bocali. **AB**



Tribute to Procopio "Ka Pyro" Tauro

Revolutionary leader, hero of the masses

At 5:20 a.m. on October 30, 2010, Ka Pyro was one of the Red commanders who led the tactical offensive undertaken by Red guerrillas of the Agustin Begnalen Command. During the first ten minutes of battle, Ka Pyro was hit while leading an assault as he stood up to fire a grenade launcher at elements of the Alpha Coy, 41st IB. At 9:10 a.m., the good comrade died, a revolutionary leader and hero of the masses. From the start, during the preparations and the actual implementation, Ka Pyro was resolute in guiding and leading the victorious tactical offensive along the Abra-Kalinga Road in Lenneng, Baay-Licuan, Abra.

Ka Pyro (Procopio Tauro) was born and raised in Benben, Lapaz, Abra. He was born to a tenant-farmer family, and endured the harsh life of the peasants and the terrorism of the warlords. He was able to go to school through scholarships and raise other needs by self-reliant efforts. Despite being unorganized activists then, his family earned the ire of the warlords because of their support for the revolutionary movement and their affiliation with the traditional oppositionist political party. Warlords murdered his brother, and he and his father were incarcerated for about a year for rebellion.

Ka Pyro was resolute in revolutionary struggle and grasped basic revolutionary principles because of his life experiences and his sharp understanding of revolutionary theory. During his entire service in the NPA, the basic masses of the peas-

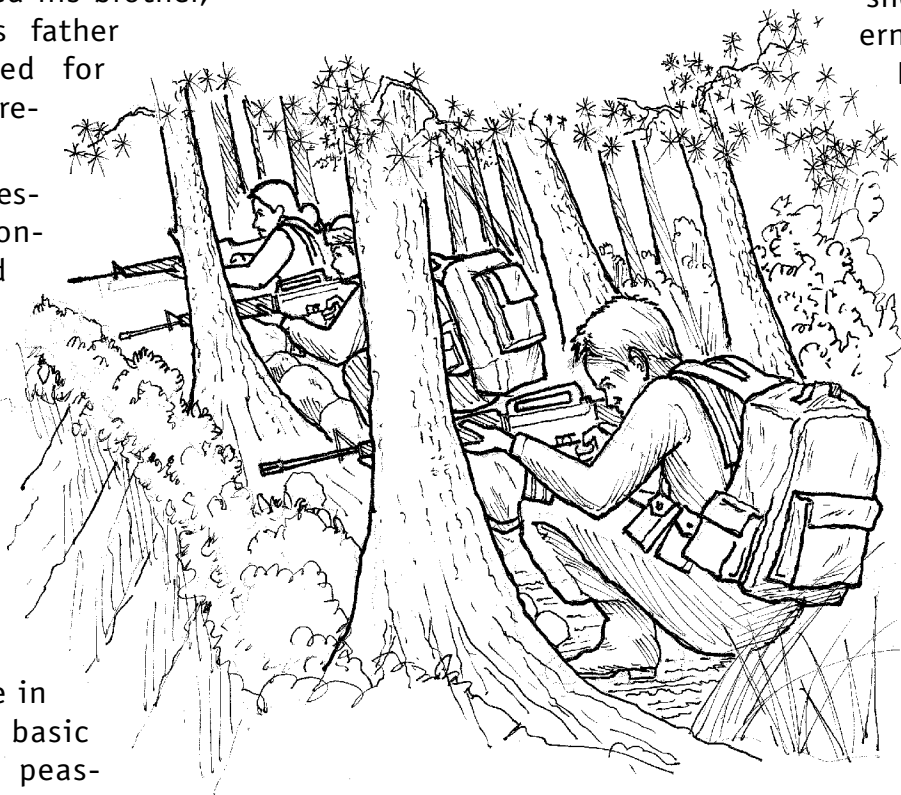
antry warmly received him mainly because of his persistence in waging agrarian revolution. He was a good organizer. He was also resolute in the fight against warlordism. He had weaknesses in the application of some revolutionary policies, dual tactics and in building the united front, but all these were secondary to his overall accomplishment of his tasks.

Ka Pyro was a trailblazer and led difficult tasks of the Party and the NPA that other comrades refused to take on.

He was one of the pioneers in the recovery of various areas in Abra and in nearby municipalities, such as in the BuDa-BoSa (Bucloc, Daguioman, Boliney, Sallapdan) area; the tri-boundary of LaDaLaga (Lapaz, Danglas, Lagayan) in Abra, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur; and in the Abra-Mt. Province-Ilocos Sur tri-boundary and persistently worked in these places. In the face of incessant enemy attacks and harsh guerrilla life, he remained unfazed and led comrades to strengthen their revolutionary resolve and persistence.

Ka Pyro was a good educator and propagandist among the basic masses. He had a deep grasp of the problems of the people, was good at detailing various issues, events and incidents. These served as concrete examples of revolutionary theory and an effective tool in explaining to the people the policies and programs of the revolutionary movement.

Himself a victim of bourgeois-decadent life while in college and during his short stint as a government employee, Ka Pyro lived the life of a lumpen-intellectual. He was into all sorts of vices and bourgeois-feudal relationships. His concrete experiences with bureaucrat capitalism while in the reactionary government forced him to persevere in the fight against warlordism, graft and corruption. As a legal ac-



tivist in the town center of Bangued, he had a deep and wide grasp of the provincial situation and the tasks required. He became sick because of his vices and resolved to do away with these and led a healthy life in the NPA since then. He had a child whom he loved so much—the result of an affair he had prior to joining the NPA. He patiently waited for the opportunity to finally meet his daughter and later catch up on parenting and limited family life.

Despite sanctions such as disciplinary actions due to his past mistakes, Ka Pyro was a role model in rectification and revolutionary perseverance. Even during times of crises and misdeeds, he was a perennial revolutionary optimist, ceaselessly believed in rectification, and constantly looked forward to a bright revolutionary future. Even in courtship and love, he was persistent and an incorrigible optimist.

Ka Pyro firmly grasped, prioritized and believed in the justness of armed revolutionary struggle. In order to fight military conservatism, he joined military operations and actively participated in the Provincial Operational Command. The tactical offensive on October 30, 2010 was Ka Pyro's last project. He was directly involved in the preparations, troubleshooting snags in intelligence work, battle planning, rehearsals and the actual implementation. He sacrificed his own life to advance armed revolutionary struggle, frustrate Oplan Bantay Laya 2 and advance the revolution to the strategic stalemate until final victory.

The life of a revolutionary should be measured through actual contributions in waging revolution.

Ka Pyro's revolutionary role was undoubtedly important and of strategic value not only in Abra, but in the entire Ilocos-Cordillera region.

The life of a revolutionary was cut short, but his dreams and aspirations will continue through the people and revolutionaries that he helped arouse, organize and mobilize. Ka Pyro died not only as a revolutionary, but as a proletarian leader. **AB**

Medical training held in Eastern Visayas

The medical unit of the Efren Martires Command (EMC) of the New People's Army in Eastern Visayas successfully trained from January to February to raise the capability of its medical machinery to manage the health care and medical needs of the combat units of the people's army in the region.

Aside from raising their capability to provide medical care, the squad of medics who came from various guerrilla platoons and the paramedics from the mass organizations will also be serving as medic-instructors with the ability to train the next group of medics and paramedics.

This was the fourth medical training conducted by the EMC in Samar and Leyte. Since the trainings started, hundreds of peasants have been provided medical assistance by NPA medics.

The instructors explained that medical work is a regular task and is not conducted only when there is a patient needing assistance.

The orientation of platoon medics (P5) was also enhanced, based on the Regulations for Guerrilla Platoons, with the task described as a broad field of work.

Meanwhile, P5 elements from two platoons took the Intermediate Medical Course. They trained more intensively on anatomy and physiology, on the treatment of different kinds of common illnesses, on nursing skills, the use of anesthesia, minor surgery and dentistry.

They studied trauma management, how to take case histories and diagnose ailments.

The course on trauma management focused on gunshot wounds in order to raise the platoon medics' capabilities in the face of efforts to advance people's war to a new and higher level.

The P5 elements also held their practicum. After the course, the medic-students immediately launched a clinic in two villages along with their instructors.

More than a hundred peasants were provided services such as checkups, acupressure treatment, tooth extraction, circumcision and cyst removal.

The masses were instructed on sanitation, nutrition, symptoms of common diseases and reflexology.

Herbal medicines and products were also distributed. **AB**

Aquino regime inutile in the face of spiralling oil prices

The Aquino regime is deliberately doing nothing in the face of a series of hikes in the prices of gasoline, diesel and other petroleum products in recent weeks. Despite the tremendous burdens posed by oil price hikes, Malacañang has not lifted a finger to protect the people's interests as foreign oil companies continued to rake in superprofits.

"The oil price hikes are necessary" was all Malacañang had to say after foreign oil companies incessantly raised the prices of their products in recent weeks. In a span of four days, the prices of gasoline and other petroleum products were raised by up to ₱2.

The greedy foreign companies used as pretext the political turmoil in Libya to implement oil price hikes. In fact, less than 1% of worldwide oil production has been affected by the production slowdown in

Libya.

The price per barrel of oil has shot up to \$110-120 per barrel in the international market. This is now being invoked by foreign oil companies to justify the series of oil price hikes in the local market. Since January, petroleum products have risen by up to ₱5 per liter in the Philippines. In fact, big foreign oil companies which own the local companies control the major part of the world's oil supply. Every oil price hike in the local market

thus earns them double profits.

Progressive organizations and various sectors have assailed the lack of controls over oil prices in the local market. They have called for the junking of the Oil Deregulation Law which has given the oil companies free rein to set the prices of their products and amass superprofits.

But instead of heeding the people's calls, Malacañang has quickly set aside such demands, saying that the government lacks funds to implement regulation. In Malacañang's view, deregulation entails state guarantees for the foreign oil companies' profits instead of state controls over their profits in order to protect the people's interests.

The Aquino regime's deliberate inaction in the face of continued oil price hikes will cause more hardships to the people. **AB**

Abandoning the OFWs in the Middle East and North Africa

Migrante International strongly assailed the Aquino regime for its continuing neglect of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). The government failed to fulfill its obligation to protect OFWs especially in the middle of the severe tensions now engulfing the Middle East and North Africa.

Migrante particularly cited the situation of OFWs in Libya.

Migrante chair Gary Mar-

tinez said only 6% of the more than 26,000 OFWs in Libya

have been evacuated by

the government to the Philippines. Martinez also said that the government should not be setting deadlines

for the evacuation since the lives of Filipino workers are in danger in that country.

The ₱10,000 assistance being given to every repatriated OFW is likewise an insult, because the DFA has allotted up to \$150,000 for the evacuation aside from the ₱200 million provided by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA). Neither has the government offered them any decent jobs. Malacañang is quick to send OFWs abroad to sell their labor power, but has been extremely slow in addressing their grievances, said Martinez. Meanwhile, a report from Migrante-Middle East said that an OFW was killed in Libya after unidentified armed men raided the company he was working for. It was not clear whether he was shot



dead or fell from a rig. Other OFWs have reportedly been forced to evacuate to other countries by crossing the desert. Some are short on food while others have fallen ill because of the intense heat and exhaustion.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) meanwhile said that the Aquino regime must have a longterm livelihood and employment plan in place for OFWs. The OFWs will simply return overseas to seek their fortune if the government fails to provide them decent jobs, said KMU. Migrante and other groups protested at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila on February 28 to demand concrete action from the regime on the evacuated OFWs. Even some OFWs who were stranded in other countries expressed their dismay by bringing placards saying "Mga salot sa OFW: P-Noy, DFA, OWWA, DOLE, Philippine Embassy at POEA." (Bane of OFWs: P-Noy, DFA, OWWA, DOLE, Philippine Embassy at POEA)

OFWs have also been suffering in Libya's

neighboring countries. In Egypt, the Aquino regime failed to evacuate all OFWs during the height of protests to oust Hosni Mubarak. Only 46% of 6,500 OFWs were able to return despite the P25 million allotted by the DFA for the repatriation of Filipino workers in that country.

In Bahrain, Migrante-Middle East called on Aquino to draft a contingency plan for the safety of OFWs there. Up to 30,000 OFWs are now in Bahrain.

In other countries, various issues beset OFWs. In China, three Filipinos have been sentenced to death. There are Filipino victims of floods and other calamities in the Middle East and Australia. A Filipino mysteriously died in Saudi Arabia. Filipinos continue to enter Afghanistan, Jordan and Iraq despite an existing ban on working in these countries.

All this is proof of the regime's failure to ensure the security and rights of Filipinos working overseas. AB

US exploits turmoil in Libya

The US has been quick to exploit the current tensions in Libya to overthrow the country's leader Moammar Gadhaffi. Gadhaffi who has long ruled Libya is known for his anti-US declarations.

The US' current intervention in Libya is due to its interest in controlling the country's oil wealth. It has been blatantly intervening in Libya's internal affairs since US Pres. Barack Obama demanded Gadhaffi's resignation on February 28. A number of US warships from the Red Sea are now on their way to Libya to threaten Gadhaffi.

The Libyan uprising against Gadhaffi's rule began on February 15. It is part of the wave of protests in the Middle East and North Africa.

From the first protests in Tunisia, uprisings have erupted in Egypt, Bahrain, Algeria, Morocco, Iraq, Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, Syria and Jordan. The protests

have culminated in the overthrow of long-reigning dictators in Tunisia and Egypt.

Libya is a country in North Africa with a population of 6.5 million. It has rich oil reserves that are of higher quality compared to those of Saudi Arabia and other oil-producing countries. It produces 1.6 million barrels per day.

The US and its imperialist allies have long coveted Libya's oil wealth. They are determined to tighten

their grip over all major sources of oil and gas worldwide. Gaddafi's government and other regimes that have been asserting national independence and depriving the imperialists of the opportunity to monopolize oil resources have earned the ire of the US and its ilk.

The US is now flagrantly seeking to grab and tighten its control over the oil resources of Libya as in Iraq. It is taking the lead in applying sanctions and threatening to unleash the aggression and atrocities that it used to take over the oil resources of Iraq.

Among the sanctions now being imposed on Gadhaffi is a UN Security Council ban on officials of his regime to travel and transfer assets. Britain has likewise frozen \$32 billion worth of Libyan assets, most of which are deposited in London banks.

Meanwhile, Libyan rebels have continued their ad-



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Residents barricade land grabber in Cagayan

MORE than 500 people barricaded Mision River in Sta. Teresita, Cagayan in the first week of February to block a survey of the river being conducted by Taiwanese businessmen led by a certain Mr. Lu. The barricaders came from the villages of Isaca, Rebeca, Cabambanan Sur and Mision in the same town.

The residents are opposing Lu's claim that he owns 1,500 hectares of land between Barangays Rebeca and Isaca, including land on both sides of the Mision River. He has even imposed fees on people who have been extracting sand and stone from the river.

Elements of the 17th IB guarded the Taiwanese surveying the Mision River, with their operations spanning the February 15-21 ceasefire period. The operations were launched in Sitio Paribalat, Barangay Dungeg and Sitio Camandarinan, Barangay Aridaoen in Sta. Teresita town, and in Barangay Villa Cielo in the town of Buguey.

Anti-tuition fee hike protests launched

A NATIONAL day of action was launched by youth and students against hikes in tuition and other fees.

Thousands of students rallied in Mendiola, Manila on February 28 and called for a moratorium on tuition fee hikes. Progressive organizations led the mass action joined by students from various public and private colleges and universities.

They were simultaneous student protests in Ilocos Sur, Baguio, Pampanga, Laguna, Palawan, Iloilo, Tacloban, Cebu, Butuan, North Cotabato, Cotabato City, Davao and General Santos.

National Union of Students in the Philippines (NUSP) secretary-general Vanessa Faye Bolibol said schools are set to raise tuition fees by 10-15%. Bolibol cited Father Saturnino Urios University which raised its fees by 10%; Baguio Central University, 12%; and University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, 14%. Even State Universities and Colleges (SUC) plan to raise tuition fees, among them the Pangasinan State University which will be imposing a 16% hike (equivalent to P150 to P175 per unit) and the Don Honorio Ventura State University which will be implementing a 30% hike (equivalent to P130 to P170 per unit). Fees will also be hiked at the Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology (EARIST) and the University of the Philippines-Mindanao.

Meanwhile, students filed a complaint at the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on March 4 against schools that have been arbitrarily demanding higher tuition and other fees.

Kabataan Party Rep. Raymond Palatino has filed a bill regulating tuition and other fees. The bill also seeks to strengthen the power of students and parents in consultations and in giving consent to any hike in school fees.

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vance from the eastern part of the country towards Tripoli, where rallyists have attacked the police and the state radio broadcasting stations and burned government offices.

They have controlled towns and cities in the country's eastern part where 80% of Libya's oil supply and infrastructure are concentrated.

On March 1, rebels were

able to control the city of Zyawiya, one of Gadhaffi's known strongholds, aside from other nearby towns. They have reportedly set up temporary councils in the areas under their control.

As in other countries in the Middle East and North Africa, US imperialism and its other allies are now making arrangements to seat a puppet who will play the part of a democ-

rat and lead the drafting of a new constitution, conduct periodic elections and impose term limits on elected officials.

This uprising must be seized by the revolutionary forces to set up or strengthen revolutionary parties, mass organizations and alliances for the continued advance of the people's aspirations for national and social liberation. **AB**