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Editorial

Make Aquino pay for his failure to hold Arroyo accountable for her crimes against the people

The Filipino people have lost all trust in the Aquino regime for its failure to hold Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo accountable for grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, plunder and other major crimes against the people.

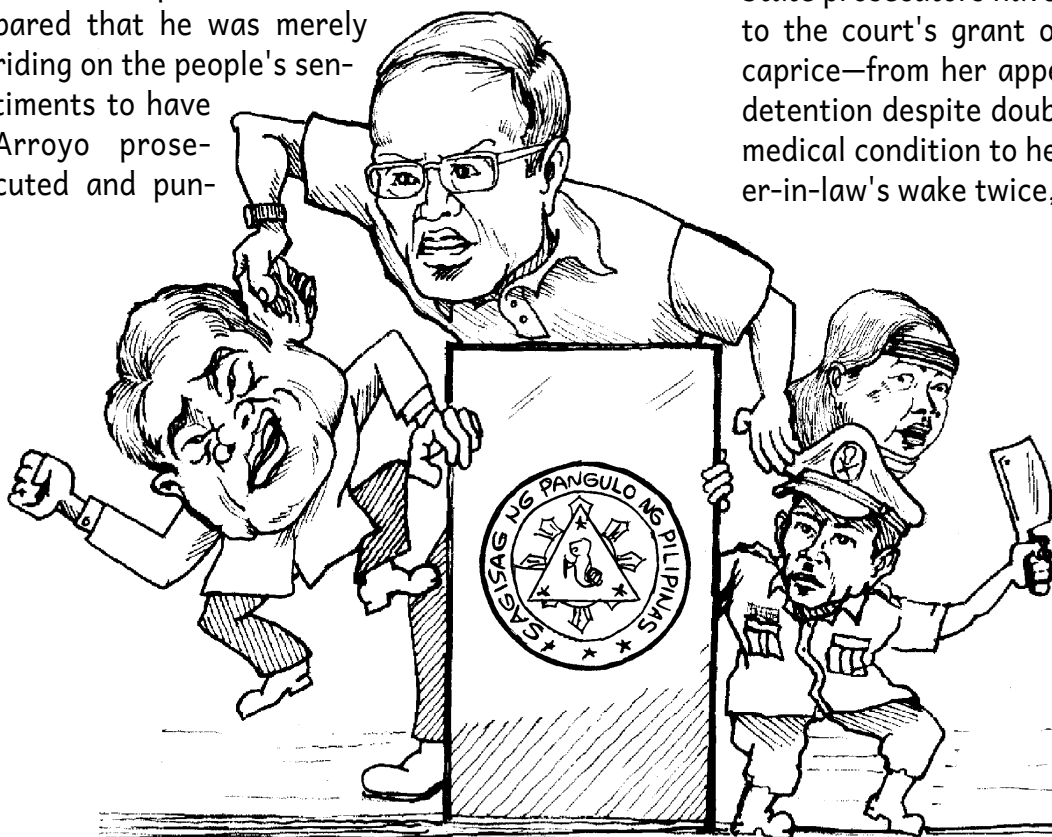
The latest disappointment came last week in the form of the prosecution's decision to terminate the presentation of evidence in the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona that would have proven him to be Arroyo's man in the Supreme Court. This move by Aquino's men within the prosecution panel is believed to have been made to cover up Corona's connection to the Arroyos.

By preventing the establishment of such a connection, Aquino has further bared that he was merely riding on the people's sentiments to have Arroyo prosecuted and pun-

ished in order to obtain their support for his moves to oust Corona from the Supreme Court. It has become even more apparent that Aquino's real objective was to control and bring the Supreme Court to its knees to compel it to reverse its decision to distribute the Cojuangco-Aquino-owned Hacienda Luisita and ensure the high court's support for his regime's actions.

It has now become clear to the people that Aquino's determination to have Corona ousted has nothing at all to do with the goal of holding Arroyo accountable for her crimes.

Corona's trial has turned out to be one long farce. Not a day passed without Aquino lambasting Corona. At the same time, however, his government has accorded Arroyo one favor after another. State prosecutors have never posed any objections to the court's grant of Arroyo's every whim and caprice—from her appeal to continue her hospital detention despite doubts about the severity of her medical condition to her request to visit her brother-in-law's wake twice,



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a privilege not usually granted to detainees facing criminal prosecution.

It has also become quite obvious to the people that the Aquino regime has no plans of taking any decisive steps to hold Arroyo accountable for more than 1,100 cases of extrajudicial killings and thousands of other grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed under the nine-year Oplan Bantay Laya war of suppression. Not one of the Arroyo regime's officials responsible for the brutal suppression of the people has been punished. Among them is Gen. Jovito Palparan who has yet to be arrested despite the criminal cases already filed against him. Worse, Aquino has continued and stepped up the war of suppression against the people under the so-called Oplan Bayanihan.

Neither has Aquino shown any resolve to hold Arroyo responsible for the high crime of plunder for cases of bribe-taking in the ZTE and IMPSA deals, and the PCSO, OWWA and fertilizer

fund scams, among others. After almost two years in power, his regime has charged Arroyo only with the relatively lesser crime of sabotaging the 2007 elections in a case that not a few lawyers say has been crafted in a way that would ensure its defeat in court.

At least seven plunder cases have been filed against Arroyo by various organizations and individuals. But even with Aquino's own choice of ombudsman in place, Arroyo has not been charged with plunder. She faces the lesser charge of graft even after having pocketed billions of pesos from the ZTE Broadband deal.


It has become plain to the people that Aquino's relentless tirades against Arroyo have all been a sham. This is not new to the country's history. Arroyo used the people's loathing for Estrada, the same way Corazon Aquino used Marcos, and Magsaysay, Quirino to blame their predecessor regimes for the people's poverty and suffering and cover up the rottenness and corruption under their own rule.

In the past 60 years of the puppet republic, however, not a single official responsible for large-scale plunder, suppressing freedom and trampling on human rights has been punished. Thus, under Aquino's government, plunderers as well as implementors of terror from martial law up to Arroyo's brutal rule stand side by side. Based solely on Aquino's own actions, it is highly unlikely that Gloria Arroyo will be the first to be punished despite her myriad crimes against the people.

The reactionary ruling classes claim that it is good to forgive and let go of the past. This is an excuse to justify the ruling system's failure to give the justice demanded by the Filipino people. Despite their rivalries for the perks afforded by state power, all reactionaries are united behind the goal of suppressing, exploiting and oppressing the workers, the peasantry and the common people. All of them, without exception, are puppets that bow before the banner of US imperialism while picking up the crumbs that fall from the banquet tables of the plunderers of the country's wealth.

The Filipino people demand that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and all her criminal cohorts be proecuted and punished for their crimes of repression and plunder.

The people must persevere in the effort to hold Arroyo accountable along with her key officials like General Palparan, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Norberto Gonzales, Raul Gonzalez and the other masterminds and implementors of Oplan Bantay Laya and its campaign of extrajudicial killings. The big plunderers who stole from the nation's coffers and caused the people suffering must be held to account. The people must denounce, resist and demand ret-

 <p>Vol. XLIII No. 5 March 7, 2012</p> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English editions. It is available for downloading at the Philippine Revolution Web Central located at: www.philippinerevolution.net Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news. Readers are likewise enjoined to send in their comments and suggestions for the betterment of our publication. You can reach us by email at: angbayan@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Contents</p> <p>Editorial: Make Aquino pay his failure to hold Arroyo accountable 1</p> <p>Corona-Arroyo connection 3</p> <p>Violence in Hacienda Luisita 4</p> <p>Massive protests vs oil price hike 4</p> <p>Operation Pacific Angel in Bicol 5</p> <p>NPA-Rizal thwarts attack by 16th IB 5</p> <p>4Ps in Southern Mindanao 6</p> <p>Mindanao2020 6</p> <p>Foreign mining in Palawan 8</p> <p>Family massacred in Camarines Norte 10</p> <p>1002nd Bde protects Danding 11</p> <p>Education for profit 11</p> <p>Greece in the throes of debt 13</p>
<p>Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

tribution from the Aquino regime for accommodating Arroyo and paving the way for her exoneration from her numerous crimes against the people.

The people may seek recourse from reactionary institutions and legal processes within the framework of the reactionary system to advance the goal of holding Arroyo and all her criminal cohorts accountable. They may initiate the filing of charges against military officers, AFP personnel and other masterminds and perpetrators of fascist crimes in the reactionary courts. They may also file plunder cases and demand the abrogation of policies that are a burden to the people.

They must take advantage of conflicts and rivalries among the ruling classes to advance their

legal struggles. But they must disabuse themselves of the illusion that they can achieve significant gains in holding Arroyo responsible, especially in battles or processes that are under the control of the ruling Aquino clique.

It is therefore much more important to persevere and gain strength in the arenas of mass struggle and armed struggle where they can continue to build democratic people's power. Arroyo and all the other criminals who plundered and suppressed the people can only be decisively held accountable by putting an end to the current ruling system. Only the democratic system and government that the people are struggling to build can determinedly prosecute and punish the reactionaries. **AB**

Aquino covering up Corona-Arroyo connection

Aquino and his cohorts have been blocking efforts to present evidence at the Senate impeachment trial that would prove how Chief Justice Renato Corona has been serving his patron Gloria Arroyo.

On February 28, the 25th day of Corona's trial, the Filipino people were stunned when Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., head of the prosecution panel announced that they were terminating the presentation of evidence.

The move was surprising as the prosecution had presented evidence on only three of the eight articles of impeachment against Corona. Tupad said they no longer needed to present evidence on the five other articles, claiming that they had already presented enough evidence to convince the Senate to oust Corona from the Supreme Court.

Tupas' decision ran counter to an earlier agreement among the prosecutors that they would continue presenting evidence in court. This had in fact become doubly important since the trial was then hearing evidence on Article 7 which refers to Corona's pro-Arroyo deci-

sions and his close relationship with the Arroyos.

Tupas move was assailed by representatives of progressive parties who were among those backing Corona's prosecution. We are wondering who ordered Tupas to close the door on Sereno's testimony. This is alarming and seems to be part of a series of moves to cover up Corona's connection to Arroyo, said GABRIELA Rep. Emmi de Jesus, Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño and Alliance of Concerned Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio.

Tupas' termination of the presentation of evidence was done a day after Supreme Court Associate Justice Lourdes Sereno was invited to share what she knew about Corona's actions in favor of Gloria Arroyo. Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares had written Sereno inviting her to testify before the Senate on Corona's actuations.

Sereno would have been the best possible source of information on what Corona had done to ensure that Arroyo could leave the country to evade pending criminal cases against her. Sereno's dissenting opinion indicated that Corona distorted the Supreme Court decision to make it appear that the Arroyo camp had complied with the conditions set by the court for the Arroyo couple's travel abroad.

When the case was filed to oust Corona, he was clearly being held accountable for his partiality and obedience to Arroyo. It is this aspect of the case that is being weakened by no less than the chief prosecutor.

The progressive party representatives also explained that the case against Corona was being widely supported by the people because they know Corona to be an Arroyo lackey. If this fact could not be clearly established through the testimony of Sereno and others, the public will lose interest in pursuing this case. **AB**

Violence erupts anew in Hacienda Luisita

The Alyansa ng Manggagawang Bukid sa Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA) and the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL) strongly condemned renewed violence at the estate. They expressed concern that the 2004 massacre where combined forces of the military, police and the hacienda's armed guards opened fire on striking farm workers.

On February 20, military and police elements and security guards of Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) arbitrarily opened fire on some 300 protesting farm workers of the hacienda. The farm workers were stopping RCBC from fencing off a 184-hectare portion of the hacienda in Barangay Balite, Tarlac City that had been illegally sold by the Cojuangco-Aquino family to the bank. The next day, two truckloads of soldiers were sent to Barangay Balite to demolish a camp that had been set up by the farm workers who were collectively tilling the land at the disputed lot.

AFP forces have not pulled out of the hacienda since 2005. After the 2004 massacre, mili-

tary forces were deployed to the ten barangays within the estate to continuously harass and conduct surveillance on the residents.

On February 22, more than 200 members of AMBALA and their supporters marched to the Supreme Court to demand a final decision on the distribution of the 6,435-hectare hacienda. They called on the Supreme Court to deny the Cojuangco-Aquino family-owned HLI's motion for clarification and reconsideration to stop the distribution of land to 6,296 beneficiaries on record.

It has been more than two months since the Supreme Court decided to distribute the hacienda lands and order HLI to compensate the farmers in the

amount of ₱1.33 billion for its sale and conversion of 500 hectares currently being used for commercial purposes.

The Cojuangco-Aquinos and their representative Benigno Aquino III claim that they are ready to comply with the Supreme Court's decision but have not stopped maneuvering to delay and eventually put a stop to the land distribution.

The Cojuangco-Aquino family is opposed to the Supreme Court resolution defining "just compensation" on the basis of the land's valuation in 1989. At ₱40,000 per hectare, the "just compensation" would come to ₱173 million for the distribution of 4,335 hectares.

But the Cojuangco-Aquino family wants to use 2006 as the base, when the land's value soared as a result of infrastructure built on the hacienda using government funds. The clam is thus demanding ₱9.8 billion and an additional ₱3.5 billion in interest. This means that the people would have to pay ₱580 million annually to pay off the ₱9.8 billion, in addition to 6% interest. **AB**

KMU to launch massive protests vs oil price hikes

The Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) will lead a massive protest action on March 15 against continued oil price hikes. According to KMU chair Elmer Labog, workers and other impoverished sectors cannot accept the weekly hikes in the prices of petroleum products and the latter's overpricing in the local market, the monopoly of big oil companies and the Aquino government's collusion with them.

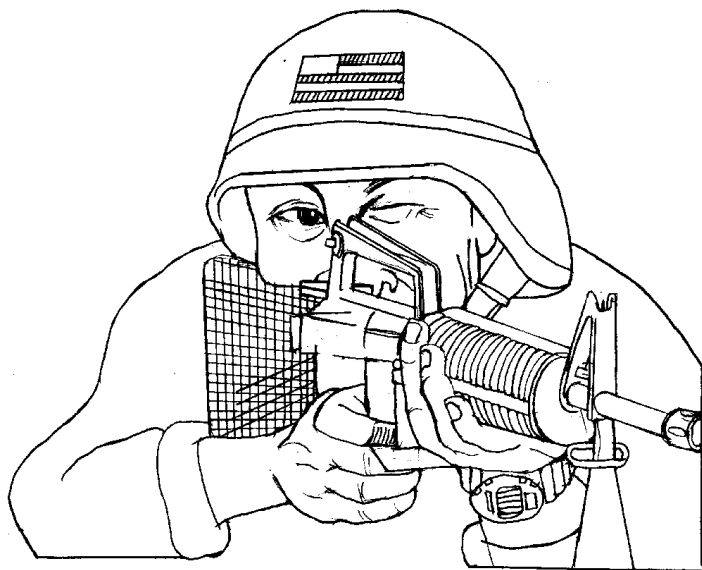
Labog called on workers and urban poor to join the nationwide protest and mass up at the nearest protest center. He said that the protesters must demand a major rollback in oil prices, the cancellation of the Value-Added Tax on oil and the abroga-

tion of the Oil Deregulation Law.

Labog added that their determination has mounted to launch a massive protest because they have been fed up by recent statements from the Aquino government claiming helplessness in the face of continuing oil price hikes. He said that workers and other impoverished sectors cannot accept the continued existence of oil deregulation because this causes them relentless suffering.

Oil companies last raised the prices of petroleum products on March 2 for the eighth time in as many weeks. This has resulted in gasoline prices of almost ₱50 per liter and more than ₱1,000 for an 11-kilogram cylinder of liquefied petroleum gas. **AB**

CPP assails Operation Pacific Angel



The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) strongly assailed the participation of American forces in Oplan Bayanihan in the Bicol region. The CPP likewise demanded the pullout of US forces in the region who are scheduled to launch Operation Pacific Angel 12-1 on March 5-10. The joint military exercise to be conducted by the 13th US Air Force is part of the US Pacific Command's civil-military operations.

In a separate statement, National Democratic Front-Bicol spokesperson Ka Greg Bañares said that the troops from the 13th US Air Force have been able to join Oplan Bayanihan operations by using “humanitarian and relief missions” as cover.

The US has been camouflaging its interventionist activities by invoking “peace and development.” The US wants to deceive the people through such catchphrases to make the presence of American soldiers in Bicol palatable to the public.

Bañares explained that the 13th US Air Force's real considerations are military and not humanitarian in nature. The CPP recalled that this particular US military unit was ordered in 2011 to send spy planes to North Korea to build a detailed map of its military capabilities.

Surveillance drones will be flown simultaneous with the 13th US Air Force's overt activities to conduct more intense espionage activities against the state's enemies and to obtain familiarity with the status of guerrilla warfare in Bicol.

It is right for patriotic Bicolanos to oppose the presence of foreign troops in the region, added Bañares. Huge protests were able to thwart plans to conduct the US-RP Military Exercises in Bicol in 2009.

Meanwhile, women and youth launched a protest action in front of the US embassy against the visit of US trade secretary Demetrius Marantis on February 28. Marantis arrived for extended talks on expanding the presence of US military forces in the country. **AB**

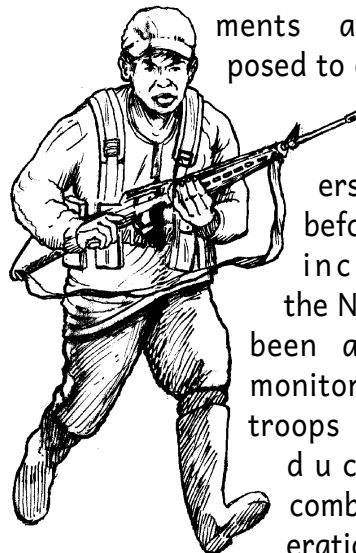
NPA-Rizal thwarts attack by 16th IB

Red fighters under the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command (New People's Army-Rizal) repulsed attacking forces of the 16th IB on February 9, killing a PFC Agcaoili. The NPA unit was able to retreat without suffering a single casualty.

The NPA unit was then temporarily encamped in Sitio Kinabuan, Barangay Sta. Ines, Tanay, Rizal when the troops attacked at a little past 1 p.m. But the planned attack by the fascist soldiers turned into an offensive against them when the Red fighters fought back. After the NPA was able to hit one of the soldiers, the 16th IB troopers quickly scampered away. The gunbattle lasted for a mere ten minutes but the soldiers were so terrified that they kept on firing their weapons indiscriminately until 4 p.m.

The thwarted 16th IB unit was led by a Lieutenant Bagbag.

It had 19 elements as opposed to only 12 Red fighters. Even before the incident, the NPA had been able to monitor the troops conducting combat operations. **AB**



Burdensome and deceptive 4Ps in Southern Mindanao

The bogus and deceptive character of the US-Aquino regime's much-vaunted antipoverty scheme—the Programang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino—is plain to see in Southern Mindanao.

In Paquibato District, Davao City, the masses are railing against the inclusion of rich peasants and small businessmen in the 4Ps list of beneficiaries while the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) list excludes poor peasants. According to National Democratic Front-Southern Mindanao spokesperson Rubi del Mundo, only the DSWD identifies who the beneficiaries of the 4Ps program are.

The same situation exists in the towns of Laak, Monkayo and Montevista in Compostela Valley where barangay officials, their relatives and close friends who are usually rich peasants are on top of the list of beneficiaries.

Getting hold of their subsidies is tiring, chaotic and expensive for the beneficiaries who often come from farflung villages. They have to spend for motorcycle fare for such a small amount of financial assistance. Some even end up spending more for transportation compared to the subsidies they actually receive.

Ordinary beneficiaries from Paquibato District and other areas of Davao City have been arbitrarily taken off the list. Those living in villages along the provincial borders find it difficult to get their subsidies, especially when their names have not been excluded in the latest voters' lists for having failed to vote in the last elections.



In Kitaotao, Bukidnon, the military has been prohibiting women beneficiaries from joining democratic mass organizations. The 4Ps program has been purposely targeting Davao City and other areas where progressive parties and mass organizations are strong. The goal is not only to stop women's organizations from engaging in militant struggles but to derail the struggle of the urban poor for social services, decent wages and employment. **AB**

Mindanao 2020

Plan for imperialist plunder

Mindanao 2020 is a broad program of the US-Aquino regime that aims to pave the way for the plunder and exploitation of the wealth and people of Mindanao by foreign corporations. This was first bared to the public in November 2010 as a “development program” spanning the next two decades.

Behind the concept of Mindanao 2020 is Braintrust Incorporated, a World Bank-funded institution. Among its partners in implementing the program are USAID, AusAID, The Asia Foundation, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the World Bank and Japan Cooperation International Agency (JICA), all “development” agencies and institutions that serve as investment part-

ners of monopoly capitalist corporations. Aquino set up the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) to directly administer the program's implementation, along with cornering contracts and funds.

US imperialism has always been greatly interested in Mindanao, with its estimated \$840 billion to \$1 trillion worth of untapped mineral resources all

over the island. Researches estimate that 70% of the Philippines' mineral wealth is found in Mindanao. This includes rich gold, copper, nickel, manganese, chromite, silver, lead, zinc and iron ore deposits.

In a confidential cable from the US Embassy in the Philippines leaked last year by the *Wikileaks* website, the US directly ordered its agencies to cooperate with and fund exploration activities in identified resource-rich areas in the Philippines. In a cable in February 2006, the US even identified what these resources were and laid down instructions to ensure that it gains possession of them.

Facilitating the plunder of Mindanao's mineral resources is

one of the main objectives of Mindanao 2020. On January 12, the US completed its digital mapping of the entire island, a project funded by the JICA. The Aquino regime will be using these maps as bases for framing particular schemes for each region.

As of 2009, there were 89 mining permits granted by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to big foreign mining firms. The permits cover Mindanao's five regions. Forty-six of these permits are for the Caraga region, dubbed the "mining capital of the Philippines."

At the lead is Japan's \$3 billion-Sumitomo Nickel Ore Plant in Barangay Taganito, Claver, Surigao del Norte.

Infrastructure projects for foreign capitalists

In the first six years, the regime will focus on laying down the infrastructure and other projects that will directly serve the operations of monopoly companies. In accordance with the regime's Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016, the Aquino government came out with the Six-Year Strategic Development Priorities for Mindanao that prioritizes the development of infrastructure, energy and mining, agribusiness and tourism opportunities. This is simultaneous to efforts to ensure the security of foreign companies in the island.

Infrastructure development in the island is with-

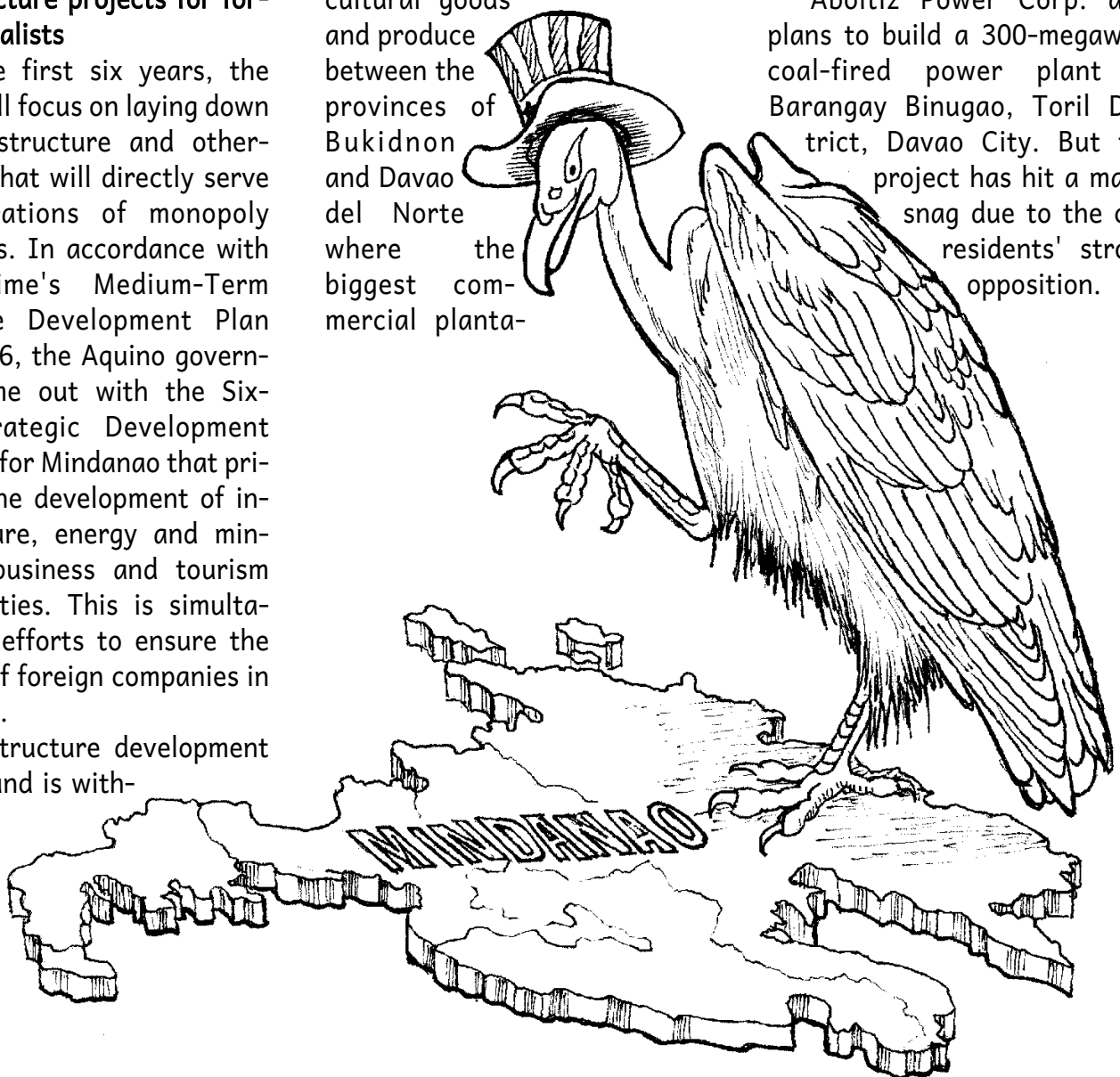
in the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) framework. Among the Aquino regime's PPP priority projects for 2012 are the completion of the ₱1.5-billion Laguindingan Airport in Cagayan de Oro. The Ayala Corp. has nailed the contract for running and managing the airport once it is completed. In this regard, there are plans to put up the Laguindingan Airport Development Project (LADP) between Cagayan de Oro City and Iligan City for the construction of the Mindanao Railway System and tourism facilities such as hotels and malls. Also targeted for completion is the rehabilitation of the Kapalong-Talaingod-Valencia Road that links Tagum City and Valencia City. It is an important alternative route that would facilitate the flow of agricultural goods and produce between the provinces of Bukidnon and Davao del Norte where the biggest commercial planta-

tions on the island are found. There are also plans to build the Bus Rapid Transit System in Davao City.

In September 2011, the Hebei Road and Bridge Group Co. Limited and China Henan Shuli Yiju Co., both Chinese companies, struck a deal with the Department of Public Works and Highways for the maintenance and development of roads in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, in the energy sector, the State Grid of China Corp. will be investing ₱50 million in the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) in exchange for 40% equity. The Marubeni Corporation of Japan has also ventured with Aboitiz Corp. for energy projects in the Mindanao-Leyte Interconnection.

Aboitiz Power Corp. also plans to build a 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Barangay Binugao, Toril District, Davao City. But the project has hit a major snag due to the city residents' strong opposition. **AB**



Mindanao 2020: Anti-Moro

A major part of Mindanao 2020 is the suppression of armed revolutions in Mindanao. The MinDA and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) are focusing on pouring funds for assisting and rehabilitating those affected by the war between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the regime's armed minions. They pay particular attention to the Cotabato basin, where rich mineral deposits are found. The regime has already allotted P718 million for this area. The implementation of the bogus anti-poverty scheme Programang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino is prevalent in various communities.

To address the people's widespread opposition to mining and fake development projects in Mindanao, the MinDA set up the Min-

danao Peace and Development Security Committee (MPDSC) in December 2011 as a security mechanism for the entire island. It is composed of representatives from the MinDA and Mindanao Principals: governors and mayors under CONFED Mindanao and chairmen of the Regional Peace and Order Councils, the security sector (AFP and PNP), the private sector, civil society, NGOs and representatives of the Bishops-Ulama Conference.

In the final analysis, Mindanao 2020 aims to end the Moro people's armed resistance. In fact, the US directly intervenes in the peace negotiations between the Government of the Philippines and the MILF. It is also engaged in relentless public relations drives in Moro communities by pouring in funding for "development" projects. AB

Destruction by foreign mining companies in Palawan

The Aquino government's claims that it nurtures Palawan, its rich environment and endemic flora and fauna is a lie. In fact, practically the entire island has been laid bare to foreign mining companies.

Palawan is rich in mineral resources. It is estimated to have P300 billion worth of nickel deposits. Since the Mining Act of 1995 was signed into law, plunderous foreign companies have been scrambling to penetrate and take over the entire island of Palawan.

Currently, there is a mining application for every square meter of Palawan's land, river and sea. In the southern part of the island alone, 16 permits have been granted to various mining companies to operate off the western coast, in the so-called "Recto Bank," a small islet near Palawan. The area reportedly has three trillion cubic feet of natural gas, bigger than that

being mined from Malampaya, a source of oil and natural gas in northern Palawan. Even the famed Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park or the Palawan Underground River is being targeted by plunderers.

Among the foreign companies with mining operations in Palawan is the Vancouver, Canada-based MBMI Resources Incorporated.

MBMI mines nickel, a mineral with many industrial and consumer uses such as the manufacture of stainless steel and rechargeable batteries. In the Philippines, MBMI has nine nickel mines covering 22,000 hectares, including 3,277 hectares in the towns of Rizal,

Bataraza and Narra in Palawan.

These towns are found along Mt. Bulanjao in southern Palawan, a forested area where the headwaters of the six major rivers supplying water to the entire population originate. There are fears that mining operations will damage and poison these rivers, ancestral lands and productive agricultural lands.

Also conducting mining operations in Palawan is the London-based Toledo Mining Corporation which owns a nickel mine in the province. Another is Rio Tuba Mining Corporation, which plans to operate in Bulanjao Range. It is also run by MBMI Resources Incorporated.

In 2011, a number of nickel companies in Palawan earned a total of P3 billion. Among the companies with approved applications for nickel mining are

Narra Nickel Mining and Development, Inc. (NNMDI), Tesoro Mining and Development, Inc. (TMDI) and McArthur Mining, Inc. (MMI).

Another firm is MacroAsia, which is owned by billionaire Lucio Tan, one of the Philippines' biggest bourgeois compadors. It plans to begin mining operations in the 1,114-hectare ancestral lands of the Tagbanua in the Gantong and Mantalingahan Mountain Ranges.

Palaweños rail against mining. Palaweños successfully launched an antimining demonstration in the island on January 24. More than a thousand people were able to join the rally held in Puerto Princesa City despite intense military repression. The rally was timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the murder of Dr. Gerry Ortega, a broadcaster and antimining activist who has yet to be given justice.

Led by the Mamamayan Kontra Mine (MKM) alliance, it was the biggest rally launched in the province since 2005-2006. The protesters, who came from different parts of the island rode on buses and boats. Volunteers contributed and cooked food like rice and fish.

Four layers of checkpoints set up by the military failed to daunt the rallyists. Their vehicles were stopped on the pretext that the authorities were looking for an escaped convict. The protesters were ordered to alight, and were frisked and terrorized by the military. The harassment caused some delegations to arrive late, reducing the time left for the program.

Nonetheless, the rally was a success, with the demonstrators collectively assailing the entry of mining companies in Palawan and demanding justice for Ortega. AB

Fisherfolk fight abusive Maritime Police

An abusive element of the Maritime Police was killed after he was shot by a civilian he was harrassing in Barangay Liminangcong, Taytay, Palawan on January 27.

SPO2 Jomar Manili and a certain Corpuz were together and both armed with M16 rifles and pistols when they accosted a group of fishermen coming from the pier. The Maritime Police tried to "arrest" the four fishermen. But one of them was able to shoot the policemen, killing Manili.

Corpuz was able to kill Nonoy Castillo, one of the four fishermen that the Maritime Police had tried to victimize.

The four civilians were able to seize an M16, a 9 mm pistol, ammunition, a telescope and other military equipment from the two abusive Maritime Police elements. They gave the weapons and other military equipment to the New People's Army.

The Maritime Police forces are based in Barangay Liminangcong and are deeply despised by the townsfolk because of their abusive behavior towards civilians. Castillo's wife plans to file murder charges against the abusive Maritime Police.

Progressive groups assail big mining firms

Hundreds of environmental activists marched towards Malacañang on March 3 to show the Aquino government their strong opposition to the policy of liberalization and foreign mining in the country. It was the opening salvo in a series of mass actions marking a stepped up nationwide campaign against destructive mining.

The protest action was timed to coincide with the 17th anniversary of the Mining Act of 1995 and the conclusion of the Third National People's Mining Conference held March 1-3. The conference, which was attended by delegates from all over the country was organized by Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE), Defend Patrimony! Alliance and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN). They demanded the abrogation of the Mining Act of 1995 and a stop to widespread mining in the country.

BAYAN secretary-general Renato Reyes Jr. belied claims by big businessmen that it is the mining industry that will bring development to the country as long as it is



done responsibly. In fact, said Reyes, mining has contributed a mere 1.5% to the economy in the past decade.

Kalikasan PNE coordinator Clemente Bautista said that plunderous mining corporations have controlled more than a million hectares of land in the Philippines in the 17 years that the Mining Act of 1995 has existed. Conflicts and violence have erupted in mining areas and there has been massive environmental destruction and poisoning of streams, rivers and seacoasts.

Large-scale mining operations have also led to human rights abuses. Since 2001, there have been 40 human rights violations against environmental activists, including 37 extrajudicial killings, two attempted murders and one case of involuntary disappearance. Militarization and terrorism by government armed forces exist side by side even as residents are blinded by various gimmicks cooked up by multinational corporations and their cohorts among local officials, added Kalikasan PNE.

Instead of the antipeople, anti-environment and pro-foreign capitalist Mining Act of 1995, the environmental activists called for support for the People's Mining Bill filed by Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño. The bill aims to make the country's mineral resources serve the goals of national industrialization, particularly manufacturing and agricultural modernization.

Family massacred in Camarines Norte

A peasant family was massacred in Camarines Norte while a farmer was abducted by the military in Laguna. Also among the striking cases gathered by *Ang Bayan* were incidents of harassment of political detainees and student journalists.

February 26. Three leaders of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP) were harassed by the military during the conduct of the CEGP Convention at the University of Eastern Philippines in Catarman, Northern Samar.

Military elements surveilled Pauline Gidget Estella, CEGP deputy secretary-general for the National Capital Region, Angelo Karl Deceo, CEGP-Samar chair and CEGP-Samat secretary-general Micah Susana Rebenecia. On the last day of the convention, an unidentified man approached them to ask where they were going and insisted on accompanying them. When they refused, he suddenly shouted at them.

While they were on the way to the

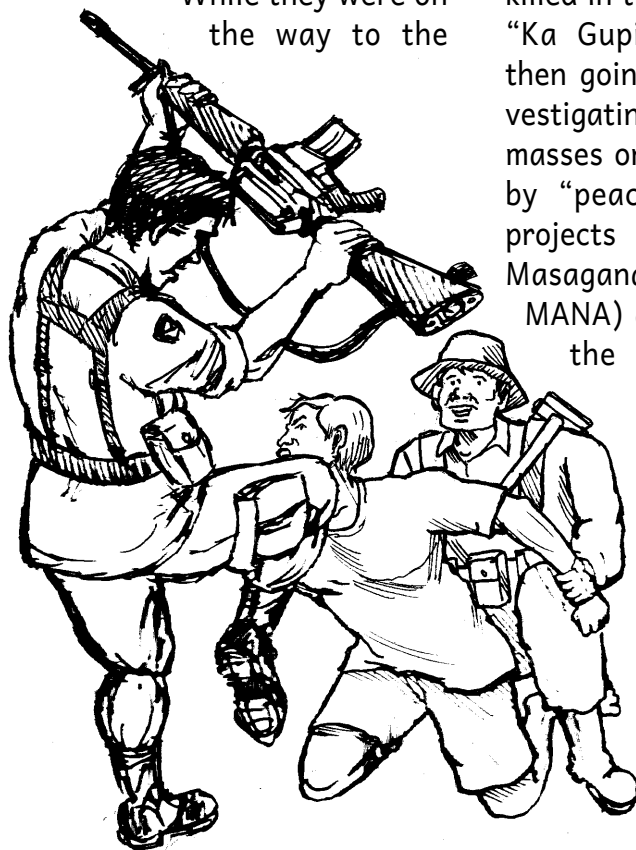
Rebenecia's house, they noticed a man aboard a tricycle following them who later offered them a ride. When they reached their lodgings, there were other men aboard scooters who were all watching them and talking to someone over the cellphone.

The CEGP also received information that Deceo and Rebenecia are on the AFP's "order of battle" in Samar and are targets of military attack.

February 25. Farmer Benjamin Mancera and two of his children were killed when elements of the 49th IB rained bullets on his hut in Sitio Pagurin, Barangay Malaya, Labo, Camarines Norte. Another child of Mancera was wounded. Also killed in the incident was Rafael "Ka Gupi" Llantino who was then going about his duties investigating complaints from the masses on the damage wrought by "peace and development" projects under the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANANA) and military abuses in the village.

Barangay Malaya council officials said Mancera was an ordinary farmer and not a member of the New People's Army as claimed by the military.

The Manceras and Ka Gupi were then resting after



having lunch when the military suddenly opened fire on the hut without considering who the occupants were.

February 23. Personnel of the PNP Custodial Center confiscated the typewriters of Alan Jazmines and other consultants of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) upon orders of their chief P/Supt. Cesar Magsino.

Magsino had earlier tried to censor documents Jazmines was sending to his lawyer through a close relative who was not allowed inside and made to wait outside. Jazmines insisted on his right to have his correspondence with his lawyer remain confidential. Magsino, however, refused to allow the documents out unless he could censor them.

Jazmines said that Magsino wanted to put a stop to the continued exposés of cases of unjust,

arbitrary and illegal arrest and detention of political prisoners at the custodial center.

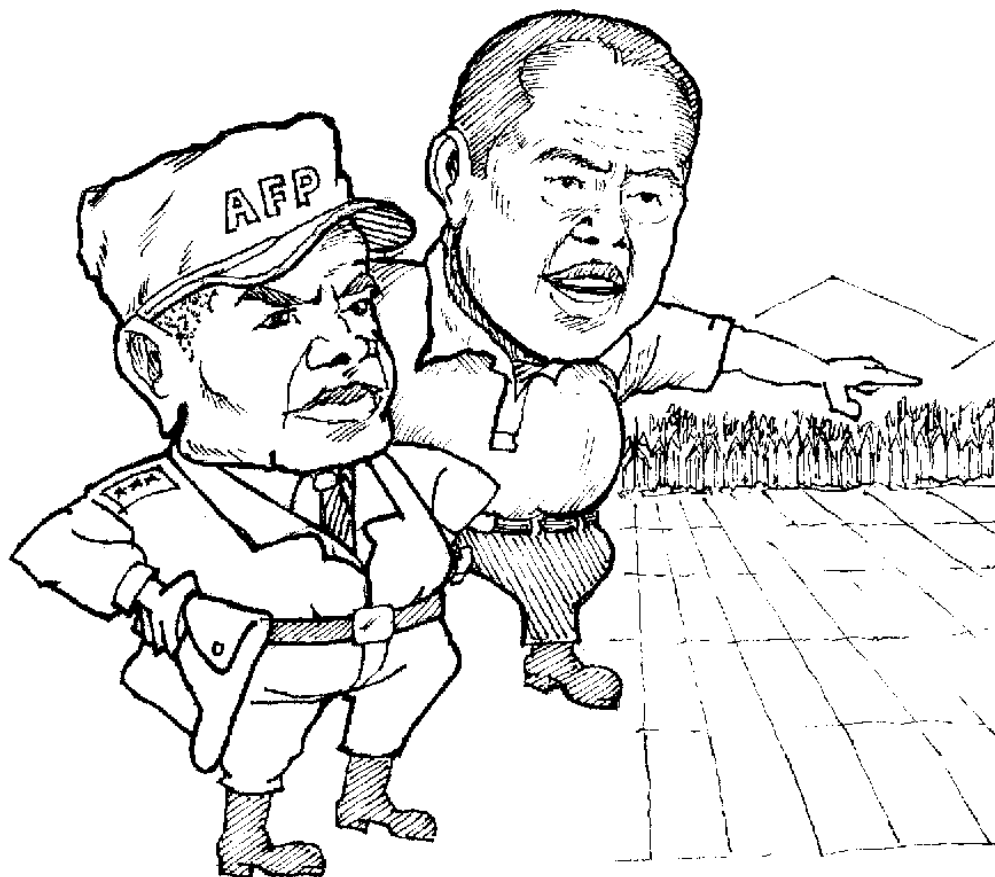
The typewriters were provided to the NDF peace consultants by the NDF panel for their use in their work in the peace talks.

On December 26, the political detainees at Camp Crame also complained about the confiscation by Magsino of KARAPATAN primers on Oplan Bayanihan.

February 14 and 17. Elements of the Special Warfare Group (SWAG) abducted Edwin Robles, a resident of Barangay Buo, Majayjay, Laguna. Earlier, soldiers from the 1st IB beat up Imo Mirania on February 14 at Barangay Bangkal in Majayjay, as well as Romeo Guyala and his son Romeo Jr., in Barangay Olla in the same town. These violations form part of a string of military abuses in Majayjay and the neighboring town of Magdalena. **AB**

1002nd Bde protects Danding Cojuangco in Malita, Davao del Sur

The 1002nd Brigade of the Philippine Army serves as the protector of big bourgeois comprador Eduardo “Danding” Cojuangco in Malita town, Davao del Sur. Colluding with Cojuangco in sowing terror and raking in huge amounts of money from various businesses in Malita is the town mayor Franklin Bautista.



Hundreds of hectares of banana plantations are owned by the Cojuangcos in Malita and the same goes for the Bautistas. They continue to expand their plantations by deceiving the peasants or violently seizing their land. Currently, their main instruments in seizing vast tracts of land are the 39th and 73rd IB of the 1002nd Brigade.

Violence marks the Cojuangcos and Bautistas' landgrabbing schemes. Seven persons were killed and hundreds were wounded in Tarlac when the Cojuangcos' armed minions opened fire on striking farm workers in 2004. More than 20 persons have been killed by the Bautistas in the past several years in the town of Malita.

Malita's upland areas and its neighboring towns are being targeted for mining operations. One of the companies with a pending mining application is Looc Mining which is also owned by the Cojuangcos.

Heavy military presence and the AFP's “peace and development initiatives” have turned Malita into a virtual military garrison. The AFP imposes mar-

tial law through killings, food blockades, checkpoints, limits on the working hours and food brought by farmers going to their fields, interrogations, repeated harassment and maulings of civilians.

In 2011, four civilians were killed by the 39th and 73rd IB in Malita, with two of the victims slain in an exceptionally brutal way. They were hung on trees, hacked, stabbed and shot multiple times. These two battalions are notorious for human rights violations. Their crimes are brazen violations of the provisions of international humanitarian law and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

Alongside such violence is the deception foisted on the people through Oplan Bayanihan (OPB). Under OPB, the military conducts “peace building seminars and rallies,” the latest of which was held on February 25-27. About 200 people who had allegedly “strayed” and had now returned to the fold of the reactionary government were paraded before the public as surrenderees. In fact, they were civilians herded by the military from five interior villages of Malita.

Bautista and the 1002nd Bde also gave away P200,000 and a few goats to the “surrenderees” as a reward for returning to the government's fold.

The people of Malita are intensely repulsed by such highly insulting actions by the reactionary government and the 1002nd Brigade. Because of Oplan Bayanihan, poverty, violence and the lack of democracy have worsened in Malita town. This has encouraged its residents to join and support the people's war. AB

Education for profit

In the coming school year (2012-2013), more than 300 private schools will be raising their tuition fees despite strong opposition from students and their parents. The fees will be raised by an average of 10-15%. Last year (2011-2012), 324 colleges and universities raised their fees by an average of P37 per unit.

A study made by student groups has revealed that current tuition fee rates in the Philippines have doubled since 2001. In the National Capital Region (NCR), tuition fees have practically tripled, or risen by an average of 143%. Students pay up to P2,000-3,000 per unit or P36,000-54,000 for an 18-unit semester in the bigger universities.

This amount does not include miscellaneous fees—which were raised or even invented by school owners, expenses for uniforms and textbooks and other academic requirements. Many private universities follow the trimester system, which further raises expenses.

Yearly expenses come to P120,000 at the Far Eastern University (FEU) and the Philippine Women's University (PWU); up to P145,000 at the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU); P160,000 at Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT); and P198,000 at De La Salle University (DLSU).

Among the schools that will be hiking tuition fees in 2012 are FEU (5%), University of Sto. Tomas (UST, 19% for new

rollees), Centro Escolar University (CEU), University of the East (UE, 3-5%) and DLSU (3%)—all of them universities that are already charging high fees.

These schools rake in millions like other private universities in selling supposedly quality education. In 2010, FEU earned P585 million, UE P300 million and CEU P248 million. In 2003-2009, CEU, UE and the University of Perpetual Help earned a combined income of P3.45 billion—placing them in the Philippines' Top 1,000 Corporations.

In the face of the continuously skyrocketing cost of education, it is right for students to demand a moratorium on new tuition fee increases and a review of the previous years' hikes. They are well within their rights to assail capitalist school owners who rake in millions upon millions in selling a service that the Filipino youth should enjoy for free.

It is also correct to hold the Aquino regime accountable for abandoning the management of private schools to capitalist greed. In Febru-



ary, student opposition grew more widespread to onerous and unjust tuition fee hikes. The National Union of Students of the Philippines—the biggest alliance of student councils—launched the Tuition Monitor to closely follow hikes in school fees. The Kabataan Partylist is likewise fighting within Congress for the regulation of private education. Progressive student organizations have pledged to launch mass actions against tuition fee hikes. The students' struggles are expected to heighten as school opens in June.

Opposition must also be stepped up against the reactionary government's reduction of the budget for education. Decades of neglect of the public school system has led to its privatization.

Even public universities and colleges have not been exempt from this trend. Yearly budgetary reductions have resulted in soaring tuition and other fees in public universities and colleges. For instance, in 2007-2009, tuition and other fees rose relentlessly at the University of the Philippines (UP) because of budgetary cuts. The same has happened at the Eulogio “Amang” Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology (EARIST) and attempt-

ed at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP). To cope with the lack of funding, the government has been pressing public schools to enter into commercial contracts with big companies or sell land intended for academic expansion.

The youth and students reaped gains in launching mass actions last year against the Aquino regime's devious reductions in the education budget. In the course of these protests, the students were able to expose the real character of the new regime's “reforms” and the inutility of its poverty alleviation programs. Even as it gave doleouts to the “poorest of the poor” Filipino families, the regime slashed funds for the most basic services and gave freer rein to the private sector to profit from them.

As the struggle against tuition fee hikes and the commercialization of education advances as a whole, it must be put in the context of the struggle against an elitist, antipeople and foreign capitalist-oriented system. Alongside trampling on the youth's basic right to education, it prepares them for eventual exploitation by companies who are the ultimate beneficiaries of exorbitantly priced education. AB

Greece in the throes of debt

A hundred thousand Greeks clashed with police and marched towards the parliament building in Athens to oppose a new round of budget cuts on social services and impending mass layoffs.

In February, the “troika” (European Commission, International Monetary Funds and European Central Bank) imposed another deadline on the Greek government to slash its budget for social services and adopt more austerity measures. In exchange for this is a 130 billion euro bailout fund that the Greek government has been requesting from the European Council (EC).

The “troika” wants a reduction of up to 325 million euros from the budget. Among the items slated for reduction are funds intended for health services and benefits enjoyed by Greek workers that already suffered cuts last year. Pensions will also be slashed by 35%. Greece is a welfare state where the government pays for all of the people's health, education and pension needs. These measures will condemn millions of Greeks to severe poverty.

Aside from widespread and massive cuts in social services and benefits, the minimum wage will also suffer a 22% reduction, resulting in a fall of up to 44% in real wages. Once this is in force, workers will be receiving only about 600 euros from the pre-

vious 1,800 euros. There will also be a new set of restrictions on union negotiations even as the government is poised to terminate more than 150,000 of its employees. These conditions have been called one of the “most violent systematic attacks by capitalism” on organized labor in the country's history.

Like the first one, this second bailout is meant to ensure that the Greek government is able to pay off its debts to creditor banks and institutions at the EC without fail. In fact, one of the conditions imposed by the “troika” is for an EC official to enter the Greek bureaucracy to directly manage the fund. The official will ensure that Greece spends the bailout money to pay its debts and complies with the “troika's” other conditions.

The Greek economy entered into a recession in 2008. Production plummeted by 8% and unemployment soared from 7% to 21% in merely three years. To cover up the crisis, the Greek government resorted to massive borrowing. The country's indebtedness ballooned annually and by 2010, the country owed an amount equivalent to 121% of its Gross Domestic Product. In May 2010, the “troika” lent the Greek government 110 billion euros to keep the economy afloat and bail out bankrupt banks and institutions. AB