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Editorial

Let the fire of nationalism burn

US imperialist intervention in the Philippines under Benigno Aquino III's regime is brazen, widespread and intense. What could not be done with completion under previous regimes can now be implemented with full force, because the Aquino regime plays to the hilt its role as a stooge of its imperialist master.

Under the Aquino regime, the presence of US military troops and equipment will be heightened and the facilities left behind by the US in their abandoned military bases in Clark and Subic will be put to use once more. US military and police intelligence units are overtly stepping up their operations in the country under the guise of "coordination." The Aquino regime is also paving the way for charter change to thoroughly open the economy to foreign plunder. Through programs like K+12, imperialist intervention will likewise be finding its way to the very core of education and consciousness.

Aquino's puppetry to US imperialist

dictates and military dominance underscore the absence of genuine national freedom and sovereignty.

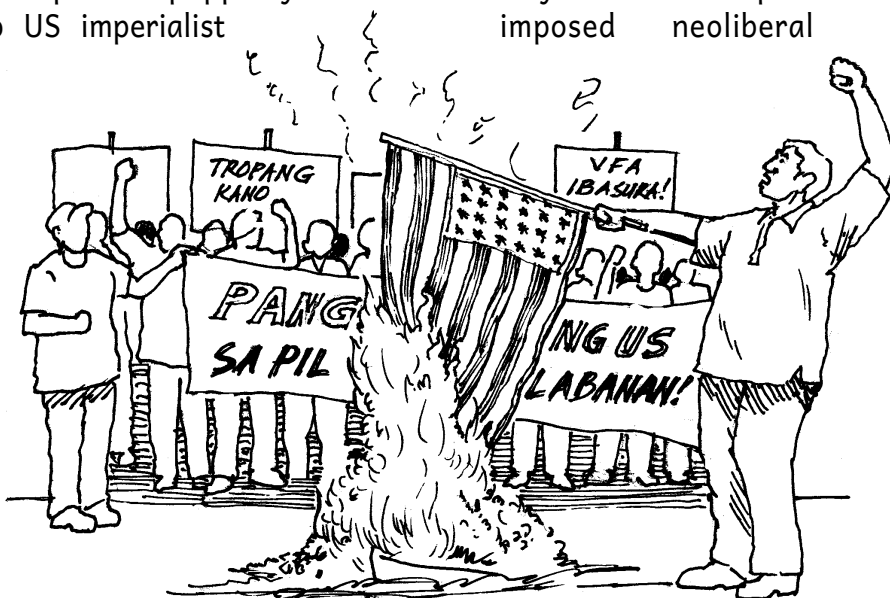
The prolonged economic depression of the US compels it to more vigorously assert its own interests and expand its markets. US efforts to intensify the exploitation of labor and tighten control of trade routes in order to ride over its economic depression are resulting in worsening socio-economic conditions in semicolonial and semifeudal countries like the Philippines.

Aquino's claims of "freedom from poverty" as the supposed fruit of his so-called "righteous path" are full of hot air. After two years under Aquino's US-imposed neoliberal

policies, the Filipino people are suffering more than ever from unemployment, hunger and massive poverty.

In the face of the US-Aquino regime's extreme contempt for Philippine sovereignty, there is urgent need for the Filipino people to reaffirm and reassert their nationalist aspirations and struggle for national liberation and self-determination.

There must be renewed vigor in upholding nationalism or anti-imperialism. The people must oppose the imperialist-sponsored notion that under a "globalized world," nationalism and the need to build a dynamic, self-reliant and industrialized economy are antiquated ideas. Apologists of imperialism turn a blind eye to the fact that the imperialist countries and other secondary capitalist countries



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are among the most zealous ultra-nationalists in terms of economic protectionism.

The Filipino people are at a crucial juncture where upholding nationalism especially in the field of economic policy and foreign relations is of utmost importance. US imperialism and their puppets seek to extinguish the fire of Filipino nationalism or depreciate its meaning to a narrow concept of pride in the nation's heritage or individual accomplishments by Filipinos. The history of US imperialism's oppression and plunder of the Philippines must never be banished from the consciousness of future generations of Filipinos.

The Filipino people, especially the Filipino youth must look back to our history of revolutionary resistance and struggle for national liberation. They must give serious time and effort to nationalist studies in order to gain the knowledge that has been stricken off the World Bank-designed curriculum of Philippine education.

They must look back to the

works of Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio of the late 19th century, the nationalist ideals of the heroes of the working class movement in the early 20th century, the nationalist assertions of Claro Mayo Recto, Lorenzo Tañada and Renato Constantino from the 1950s as well as the more recent expressions of Filipino nationalism set forth by Jose Ma. Sison and the national-democratic movement from the late 1960s to the present.

They must study, promote and seek inspiration from the heroic revolutionary resistance of the Filipino people in launching people's wars against Spanish and American colonialism, as well as in the struggle to achieve national and social liberation in the past four decades.


The nationalist studies movement must take root among young Filipinos and impact on the Filipino national consciousness. In so doing, the Filipino people can further raise the struggle for national liberation to unprecedented heights.

Nationalism or anti-imperial-

ism should be brought to the core of the people's mass struggles. In fighting oil price hikes, we must expose foreign monopoly control of the oil industry. In struggling for wage increases, we must expose the policy of cheap labor as a way of attracting foreign investments. In demanding greater social subsidies, we must expose deregulation, privatization and denationalization as policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. In fighting the demolition of urban poor communities, we must expose the fact that they pave the way for the foreign interests behind the Private-Public Partnership program of the US-Aquino regime. And in demanding the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Visiting Forces Agreement, we must expose US military interventionism and the master-client relations between the US imperialists and their puppet state.

The war of national and social liberation that has long been waged by the revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is a continuation of the Filipino people's unfinished revolution. The people have achieved great victories in the past and are poised to achieve bigger victories in the next few years.

The nationalist movement is one aspect of the national-democratic movement, with the revolutionary forces as among the most determined advocates of the people's nationalist aspirations. As the national-democratic revolution advances, so does the cause of nationalism. A broad nationalist movement rouses the people in their millions to the need for a national-democratic revolution. The mutual causes of Filipino nationalism and the national-democratic revolution advance hand in hand. **AB**

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Aquino reaffirms neocolonial relationship

Benigno Aquino III reaffirmed the neocolonial relationship between the Philippines and the US during his fourth meeting with US Pres. Barack Obama and his first official visit to Washington D.C. on June 8-9, calling the ties between the former colony and its imperialist subjugator "special."

Aquino's visit to the US was the culmination of months of meetings, negotiations and discussions between military officials and bureaucrats of the two countries on heightened US military presence in the Philippines. High-ranking US government officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, Gen. Martin Dempsey, chair of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and senior senators all came to the country

in quick succession. A number of negotiations were also conducted by Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo and Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin in Washington D.C. and Singapore with US military of-

ficials.

A day before Aquino's arrival in Washington D.C., the US Senate led by Sen. Richard Lugar passed a resolution calling for stepped up security and defense cooperation with the Philippines, including US support for the AFP modernization program.

The US was pleased by Aquino's claims of his regime's successes in the area of "good governance" because it justified the assistance being provided to the Philippines. It was also pleased when Aquino told on Chinese "coercion" regarding the Spratlys and Scarborough Shoal because this served as a pretext for the growing US military presence in the Philip-

pines. After the bilateral talks, Aquino met with the big capitalist bosses of S i t h e Global, Denham Capital, GN Power and United Underwriters Laboratories who all pledged to pour in \$1 billion to the country. Glendale, GazAsia, Royal Dutch Shell and Nestlé had earli-

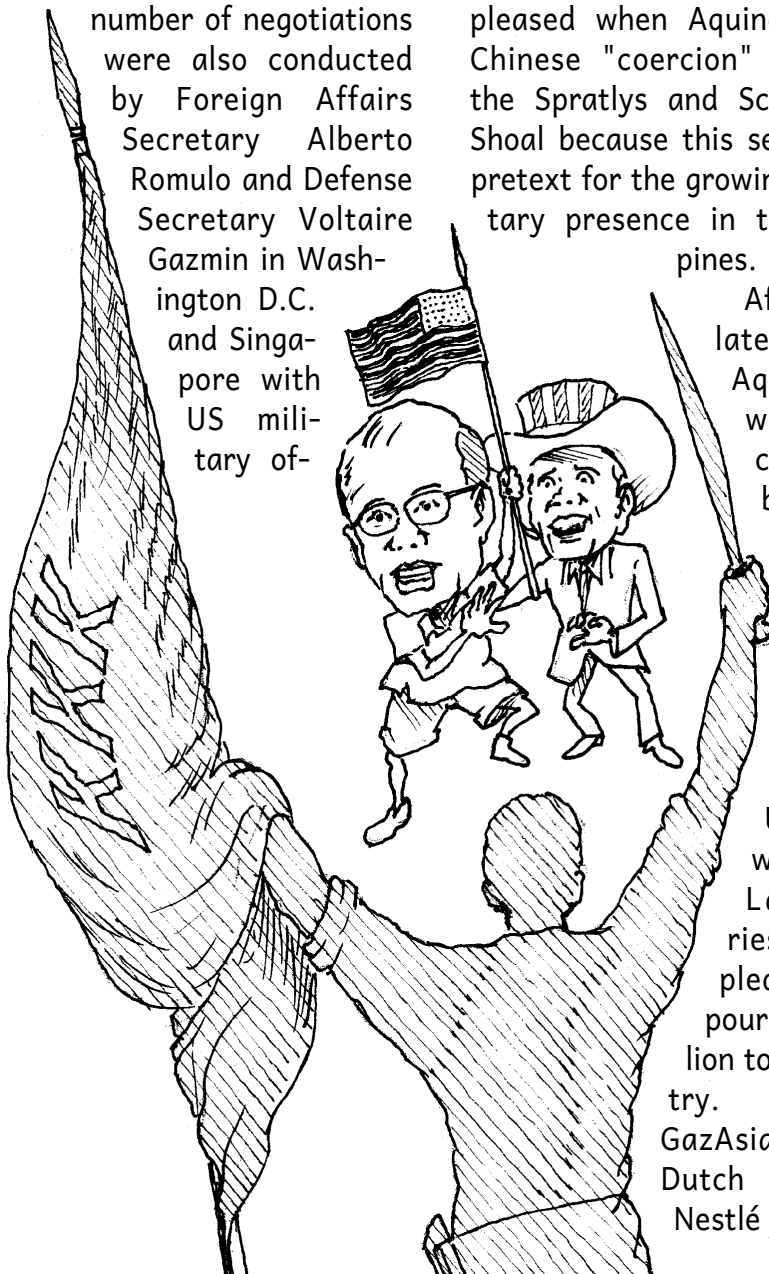
er likewise pledged another \$1 billion in investments during Aquino's trip to London.

Aquino was met with protest actions led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN-USA), National Alliance for Filipino Concerns and International League of People's Struggle in Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay in California and Washington D.C. on June 9. Members of BAYAN also marched from Mendiola, Manila to the US Embassy on Roxas Boulevard.

At a picket in front of the US Embassy, BAYAN strongly assailed the regime's outright puppetry, saying that Aquino hypocritically calls for the defense of the Philippines' territorial rights but completely opens the country to ever growing numbers of US troops. BAYAN added that all Obama gave Aquino were empty promises that were no different from the pledges made to the country's previous presidents just to secure US interests.

Meanwhile, some 2,000 rallyists marched towards Mendiola Bridge on June 12, "Independence Day," and held a short program outside Malacañang. Before concluding the two-hour rally, the protesters burned an effigy of Aquino fashioned after a gigantic golden "kuhol" (snail). The effigy symbolized Aquino's sycophant behavior towards his imperialist master.

There is no genuine freedom and democracy in the Philippines, said BAYAN secretary-general Renato Reyes, Jr. He added that intensifying US economic, political, cultural and military intervention in the Philippines is a big slap on the face of Philippine sovereignty. **AB**



Growing US espionage activities in the Philippines

The US government continues to step up its intelligence operations in the Philippines, with the US' latest plans to set up a radar system to spy on the oceans, especially the South China Sea. The radar system forms part of the National Coast Watch Center (NCWC), a joint project of the US and the Aquino regime. It was one of the items agreed upon during Aquino's meeting with key officials of the US State Department and the Department of Defense on June 9.

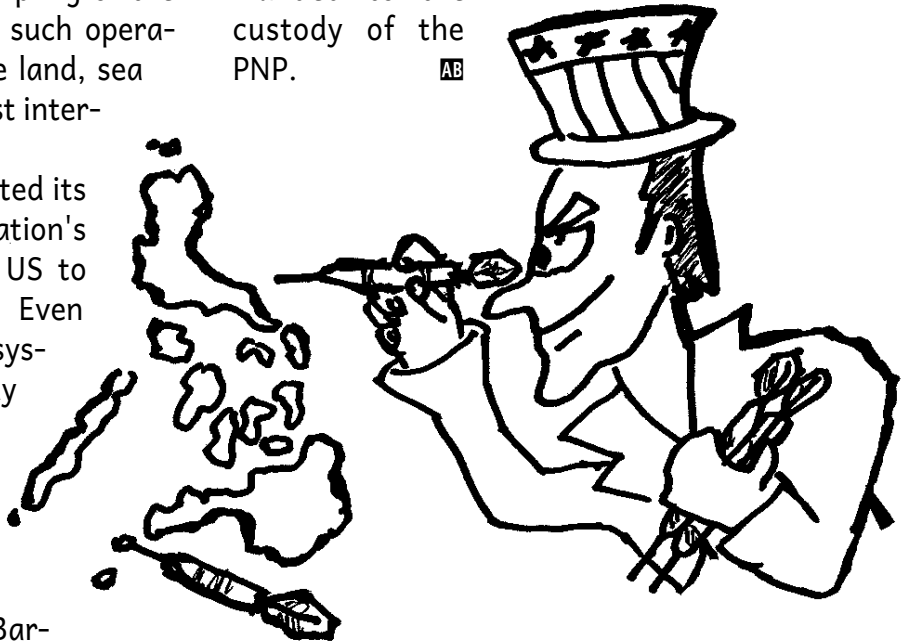
To allow the US military or any other foreign military entity to conduct intelligence operations in the Philippines is to allow the trampling of the nation's sovereignty. In undertaking such operations, the US is able to use Philippine land, sea and air space to advance its imperialist interest of dominating the Asia-Pacific.

The Aquino regime has demonstrated its utter lack of interest to defend the nation's integrity in paving the way for the US to conduct such espionage operations. Even before the plans to put up the radar system came to light, Aquino had already declared that he was supportive of US plans to fly surveillance drones and use Philippine air space for intelligence operations.

Meanwhile, Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Dir. Gen. Nicanor Barotome flew to New York, USA on June 15 to sign

an agreement between the PNP and the New York Police Department (NYPD) that would allow the NYPD to set up a "satellite office" within a PNP camp.

In a related development, political prisoners detained at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame disclosed that there are personnel of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) stationed at the camp. They also exposed the existence of at least three Indonesian nationals imprisoned at the camp who were renditioned from other countries by US operatives, given new identities and remanded to the custody of the PNP. AB



BAYAN assails new agreement between Philippines and Australia

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) slammed the Senate's ratification on June 6 of a new military agreement between the Philippines and Australia.

BAYAN said that the Senate should not have ratified the Philippines-Australia Status of Visiting Forces Agreement or SOVFA. Through its deputy secretary-general Eleanor de Guzman, BAYAN asserted that the Senate should have learned lessons from the country's bitter experience in having ratified the US-RP Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in 1998. Several sectors are opposed to the VFA because of the many abuses and other issues involv-

ing American troops in the country.

BAYAN added that the US has been using the VFA to evade accountabilities under the country's laws. It cited the case of Lance Corporal Daniel Smith's rape of Nicole in 2006 and the presence in the Philippines of more than 600 US soldiers since 2001.

The SOVFA is a bilateral agreement between the Philippines and Australia. It was signed in Canberra, Australia on May 31, 2007 under the Arroyo regime. Under the SOVFA, a series of joint military exercises will be conducted by the Philippines and Australia, similar to those currently being conducted by the US in the country. AB

Abrogate the bogus CARP!

Peasants attending a picket-rally organized by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) on June 10 cried for the abrogation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), the bogus land reform program of the reactionary government. More than 500 peasants from Southern Tagalog, Central Luzon and Northern Luzon protested in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) office in Quezon City on CARP's 24th anniversary.

The picket-rally was followed by an even bigger protest action by more than 2,000 peasants and their supporters led by the KMP on June 12, also the 114th anniversary of bogus independence.

The KMP said CARP failed to end the monopoly enjoyed by big landlords over vast tracts of land. After 24 years, landlessness and landgrabbing continue to worsen.

CARP or Republic Act 6657 was passed into law on June 10, 1988 under Corazon Aquino's regime and touted as the centerpiece program for social justice. It rode on the peasants' desire for justice, but only to pacify widespread peasant struggles in the countryside.

CARP is a bogus land reform and so-

cial justice program. It does not address the peasantry's cry for the free distribution of land that they had long paid for with decades of exploitation in the hands of the landlord class. The peasantry's bitter experiences demonstrate CARP's partiality for big landlords. The law has been used as a milch cow by landlords and bureaucrat capitalists alike by their overvaluation of land or simply by skimming government funds.

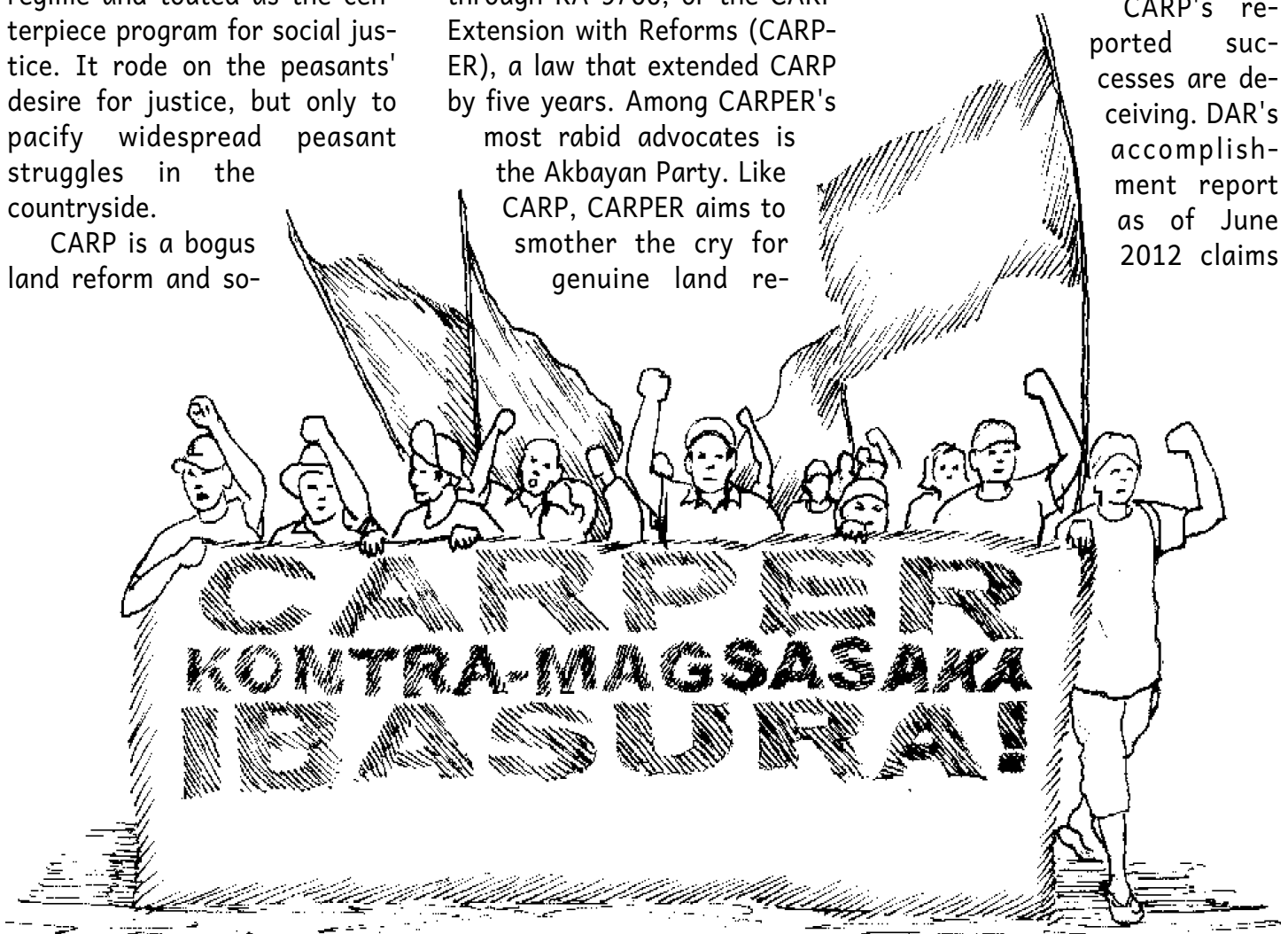
The deception of the peasantry has been intensified through RA 9700, or the CARP Extension with Reforms (CARPER), a law that extended CARP by five years. Among CARPER's most rabid advocates is the Akbayan Party. Like CARP, CARPER aims to smother the cry for genuine land re-

form. It is being implemented in areas alongside the Oplan Bayanihan suppression campaign and the Programang Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino (4Ps). Its target is to weaken the peasantry's revolutionary struggle in the countryside.

Up to P150 billion has been allocated for CARPER. It is set to end in 2014, but plans are afoot to extend its application to 2016. Only the big landlords and foreign agribusinesses in the country are bound to benefit from this fund and ultimately, from the bogus CARPER program.

CARP and CARPER are the longest-running and most expensive agrarian reform programs in the world. The long duration simply stems from the fact that CARP/CARPER have utterly failed to resolve the problems of landlessness and intense poverty in the countryside.

CARP's reported successes are deceiving. DAR's accomplishment report as of June 2012 claims



that the agency has distributed 219,069 hectares during the Aquino regime's two years in office, with 961,974 hectares remaining for land acquisition and distribution (LAD). But no less than DAR Secretary Virgilio de los Reyes admits that it would be difficult to complete land distribution by 2014, as Aquino had promised.



He added that it was relatively easy to distribute the first batch of landholdings because most cases involved public lands, with a few landlords voluntarily offering to sell their land. Distributing the bulk of the remaining lands will be a complicated endeavor because 93.6% of them are private lands.

On the other hand, a KMP study shows that an individual land survey has yet to be done, and that DAR has included among its accomplishments lands still locked in dispute.

The KMP cited more than 30 well-known agrarian cases, among them those of Hacienda Luisita; Hacienda Looc in Batangas; Saulog Estates and Golden Country Farms in Mindoro; the Moldex case in Cavite; the Araneta lands in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan; Fort Magsaysay and the Mambaya case in Nueva Ecija; and the Central Mindanao University lands in Bukidnon.

The revocation of Certificates of Land Transfer (CLT) of previously distributed lands is rampant. A case in point is Barangay Masikap in Montalban, Rizal where the peasants were able to complete the amortizations on the land as far back as the Marcos regime, but whose titles were cancelled nonetheless. On the other hand, the Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) of farmers in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan were revoked after the land was subjected to land-use conversion. The CLOA of farmers at the Central Mindanao University were likewise cancelled because the land in question was supposedly outside the purview of CARPER.

After two and a half decades, CARP has not even touched the vast landholdings of foreign agribusinesses. Pineapple and banana plantations of foreign companies like Del Monte and Dole cover at least 200,000 hectares. This is aside from lands covered by "contract-growing" and "joint ventures."

There is also widespread landgrabbing nationwide as a direct result of the regime's bias for the mining industry. Mining has dislocated people from their homes and livelihoods. In Batangas, Mindoro Resources Limited, a Canadian-owned mining company, has been eyeing up to 28,000 hectares of land for seizure. Up to

99,000 hectares of land have already been covered by Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements, which allow mining exploration activities in these areas.

According to the Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magbubukid sa Timog Katagalugan (KASAMA-TK), more than 200,000 hectares of the region's total land area have not yet been distributed, including those of Hacienda Looc and Hacienda Yulo in Calamba, Laguna.

In Negros island, the SDO and corporative joint venture schemes under CARP have resulted in the reconcentration of land in the hands of landlords. A study conducted by the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) shows that 41% of agrarian reform beneficiaries among sugar workers have lost their land due to the SDO and other schemes that serve as substitutes for land distribution. The NFSW also disclosed that Benigno Aquino III's uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco has been able to acquire more than 5,000 hectares of land through CARP.

The Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL) also cited the dislocation of thousands of peasants from the Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation in Laur, Nueva Ecija and due to various government projects in Tarlac and Nueva Ecija such as the Central Luzon Expressway, Aurora Pacific Economic Zone & Freeport (Apeco), Metro-Luzon Urban Beltway (MLUB) and the North Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle.

The peasant masses can never repose their hopes in bourgeois land reform under a semicolonial and semifeudal system ruled by the big landlords and comprador bourgeoisie. Genuine agrarian reform can only be achieved as armed struggle and the peasants' revolutionary organization continually gain strength and with the sustained advance of agrarian revolution. **AB**

"Oplan April Spring"

On June 15, security guards of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) pelted Hacienda Luisita farm workers with stones. The farm workers protested as the RCBC guards fenced off a 184-hectare lot illegally ceded by HLI to the bank in 2004 to pay off its debts. Four women—Flor Sibayan, Analyn Martinez, Rowena Flores and 16-year old Wendy Flores—were wounded and brought to the nearest hospital for treatment.

RCBC's insistence on fencing off the 184-hectare lot is part of the violent campaign currently being waged by the Aquino-Cojuangco family against the hacienda's farm workers. The campaign, dubbed "Oplan April Spring" was exposed recently to the public after the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) was able to acquire a copy of the plan.

More than ₱1.545 million has been allocated to "Oplan April Spring" for "propaganda, counter-propaganda, organizing and mobilization, and special operations (psyops)." More than half of the total amount (₱770,000) has been allotted for "law enforcement support" (₱650,000) and food and beverages for the Philippine National Police (₱120,000). Part of the special operations involve launching activities that would weaken the influence of "interventionist" groups such as the KMP.

"Oplan April Spring" was hatched by Atty. Romeo Candazo, former Marikina congressman and currently a negotiator for RCBC. The disputed 184 hectares is a portion of a 500-hectare lot that Candazo wants fenced off allegedly as payment for a debt incurred by the Cojuangco-Aquino family. It is part of the 4,600-hectare Hacienda Luisita estate that the farm workers want to be subjected to land reform.

KMP deputy secretary-gen-

eral Willy Marbella said that the hacienda farm workers must be alerted to "Oplan April Spring" since RCBC and the Cojuangcos are deadset on doing everything they can and are launching renewed maneuvers to deprive the peasants of their right to the land. "Oplan April Spring" has already begun in Hacienda Luisita, with Candazo serving as RCBC's henchman and the Cojuangcos' psywar agent. Money, deception and terror tactics are being used within the estate to destroy the farm workers' unity.

The Cojuangco-Aquino family is definitely monitoring all developments at HLI. The use of security forces and other state instrumentalities in "Oplan April Spring" is clear proof that the scheme enjoys Benigno Aquino III's blessings, added Marbella.

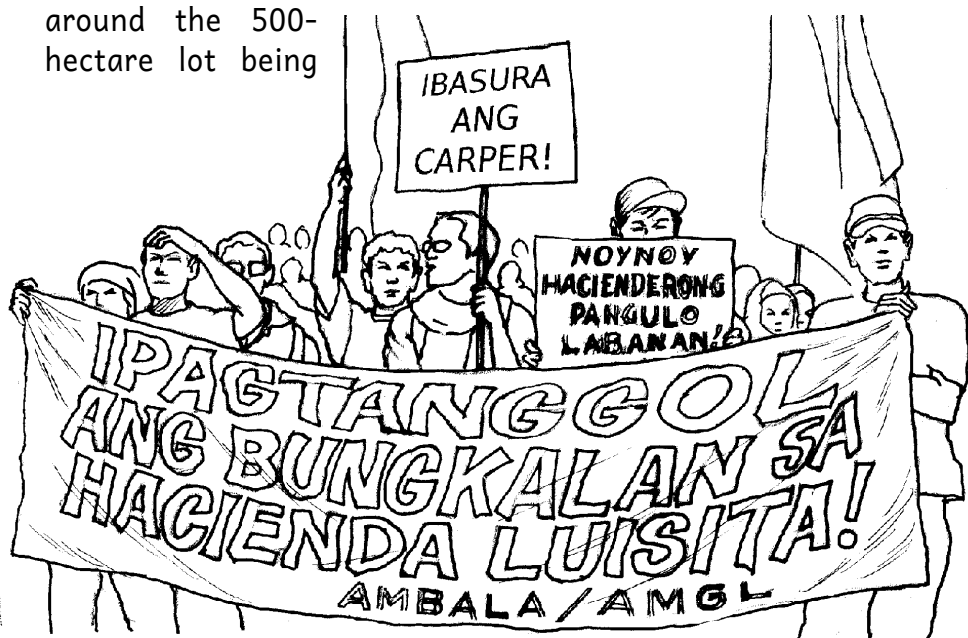
The Cojuangco-Aquino family is aware of the significance of the particular struggle revolving around the 500-hectare lot being

claimed by RCBC. "Oplan April Spring's" objective is to maintain the powerful family's monopoly over the entire HLI estate. The plots that the farm workers have been collectively tilling to support themselves economically and which symbolize their sacrifices and continuing struggle lie within this disputed 500-hectare property.

United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) chair Lito Bais urged his fellow farm workers at the hacienda to oppose "Oplan April Spring" and defend the victories they have already achieved in their life-and-death struggle. ULWU, at the same time, has declared Candazo persona-non-grata.

Obviously, this is just one of the many maneuvers that the Cojuangco-Aquino family and its cohorts like RCBC have launched. They are bound to have many other tricks up their sleeve and make use of the reactionary state's resources and power to prevent the peasants from obtaining the land.

More than ever, the hacienda farm workers must raise the level of their unity and militancy. They must consolidate themselves all-sidedly to retain their initial gains at HLI and achieve even more victories in the future. AB



Stop destructive mining in Leyte

Farmers and fisherfolk from the villages of Villa Imelda and Liwayway in MacArthur, Leyte have been barricading Lake Bito since May to defend it from the destructive effects of magnetite mining. Lake Bito in Villa Imelda lies in the middle of a seven-hectare rice field where more than three mining companies have been granted permits by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) through the deceptive Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MP-SA).

The farmers and fisherfolk in the area have been losing their livelihood since the entry of Nicua Mining Corporation, which extracts and exports magnetite to China. Magnetite mining has since destroyed the surrounding rice fields and the fishing grounds of Lake Bito. There have already been three fish kills this year due to pollution caused by oil and other toxic chemicals disposed of by the mining company. Residents fear that unless the massive excavations being conducted around it are stopped, Lake Bito will continue to grow shallower and eventually dry out.

The Samahan han Gudti nga Parag-uma ha Sinirangan Bisayas (SAGUPA-SB) strongly opposes magnetite mining in Leyte. In the Magnetite Mining Committee Hearing conducted on May 23, SAGUPA-SB disclosed that 22 tons of fish in Lake Bito worth ₱1.87 million died due to two fish kills from March 12 to April 15. It also said that on May 12, not only the tilapia died but also clams, shrimp and ducks living in the lake.

Claims by Nicua Mining Company, MGB, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), the local government units and other state agencies that the mining company has

been taking care of the environment are pure hogwash.

As of February, mining claims in the Eastern Visayas region already covered 507,747 hectares or 24% of its entire land area. Magnetite mining is being conducted in 149,535 hectares or 7% of the total land area. The progressive fisherfolk group PAMALAKAYA has pointed its finger at Nicua Mining Corporation as the culprit behind the successive fish kills. The company has pending mining applications in 5,390 hectares in the towns of Tanauan, Tolosa, Julita and Dulag, all in Leyte province.

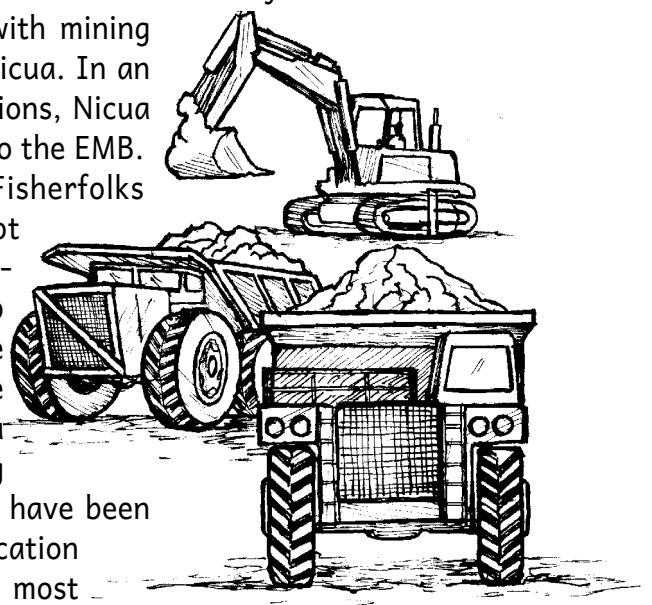
The farmers and fisherfolk's strong campaign to expose and oppose the deleterious effects of magnetite mining on their livelihood has forced the EMB to investigate. Both the EMB and Nicua Mining Corporation could not deny that Lake Bito was indeed contaminated with mining waste coming from Nicua. In an attempt to ease tensions, Nicua paid a ₱50,000 fine to the EMB.

The Lake Bito Fisherfolks Association was not pleased with this token move. The group said that only the EMB received the amount, with not a single centavo going to the fisherfolk who have been demanding indemnification and who have been most

affected by the mining operations. The fisherfolk demanded a complete stop to destructive, antipeople and pro-capitalist mining.

Other companies with pending applications to mine magnetite are Kando Mining Corporation, 3,945 hectares; Rushfield Mining Company, 5,309 hectares; Minoro Mining and Exploration Corporation, 6,375 hectares; City Group Philippines Corporation, 1,694 hectares; Bridestone Mining and Development Corporation, 7,252 hectares; Lazarus Mining Corporation, 6,205 hectares; and Grand Total Exploration and Mining Corporation, 17,438 hectares in ten coastal towns of Leyte.

The residents of Eastern Visayas and the entire country derive no benefits from mining's current orientation as a capitalist profit-driven industry. Mining is being conducted at a tremendous cost to the environment, agriculture and the people's livelihoods. SAGUPA-SB called for a total ban on magnetite mining and a stop to the processing of mining applications not only in Eastern Visayas but nationwide. **AB**



NDFP, GPH hold peace talks

The peace panels of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Government of the Philippines (GPH) met in Oslo, Norway on June 14-15 after the negotiations were stalled for 15 months. The long impasse resulted in an earlier statement by the NDFP on May 20 that the GPH has virtually scuttled the talks. The two panels last met formally in February 2011.

In a joint communiqué issued on June 16, the NDFP and GPH agreed to continue talks on the following:

- Respect for, and compliance with, all bilateral agreements without qualification. Elaboration or amendment to the agreements must be by mutual agreement of both parties.

- Respect for and compliance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

- Release of all 356 political prisoners including 14 NDFP consultants and other JASIG-protected staff.

- Independent investigation of the extrajudicial killing of NDFP political consultant Sotero Llamas and the enforced disappearances of Leo Velasco, Prudencio Calubid, Rogelio Calubad and other NDFP consultants, family and staff.

■ Recognition of GRP/GPH responsibility for instigating raids on the NDFP office in The Netherlands and attacks on Jose Ma. Sison and other NDFP personnel in 2007.

- Reconstruction of the Document of Identification (DI) list and use of encrypted photos as legitimate photos.

- Rectification of declarations by Secretary Teresita Quintos-Deles of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) that the US and other foreign governments had the right to include in their lists of "terrorists" the CPP, NPA and Prof. Jose Ma. Sison in February 2004 and earlier acquiescence

and declaration by former GPH President Gloria Arroyo in August 2002 that said listing did not constitute intervention in the country's internal affairs.

- Indemnification of all victims of human rights violations under the Marcos dictatorship as provided for by the provisions of the CARHRIHL.

The key to the continuation of the peace talks is for the GPH to comply with the issues presented by the NDFP. On the other hand, the NDFP responded positively to the GPH's proposal for a ceasefire, saying that the two panels could discuss this in the future in relation to a proposal by the NDFP for a Concise Agreement for an Immediate and Just Peace. For now, the NDFP is ready to hold discussions with the GPH on the implementation of the 1998 GRP-NDFP Joint Agreement in Support of Socioeconomic Projects. Officials of the Royal Norwegian Government served as third-party facilitator while former Sen. Wigberto Tañada sat in as an observer. AB

Ka Bart still being tortured in prison

Political detainee Tirso "Ka Bart" Alcantara continues to be mistreated and tortured by the military in his prison cell in Fort Bonifacio, headquarters of the Philippine Army. In particular, his captors have been serving him fatty and salty food, which is detrimental to his health. The food is likewise ill-cooked and prepared in unsanitary ways. There have been incidents when match sticks, shards of broken glass and crawling ants have been mixed into his food.

Ka Bart is one of 14 consultants of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and more than 350 political prisoners currently incarcerated in various prisons nationwide. He was illegally arrested in Lucena City in January 2011 on the eve of consultations on the resump-

tion of formal peace negotiations.

Ka Bart believes that he is slowly being poisoned by the military. From January to June this year, he suffered from headaches and numbness in the entire body on several occasions after eating the food served to



him in prison.

Sometimes, he is forced to take headache pills and cold relief medications even if he suffers from neither condition. On March 10, he was checked by a doctor who refused to identify himself, and who hooked him up to an electro-cardiogram (ECG) machine. He was then made to take medications that caused nausea, headaches and tremors. When he reported his symptoms to the doctor the day after, the latter dismissed them with the ludicrous explanation that these were merely side-effects of the ECG examination.

Ka Bart's glasses were confiscated from him without explanation in November 2011. They were returned only last May, causing him to suffer from poor vision for six months.

His visitors are always given a hard time and told to secure permission first from the Office of the President and the AFP chief of staff.

The Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA) is demanding Ka Bart's immediate transfer to a civilian facility where he could have easier access to his lawyers and physicians. SELDA said Ka Bart's continued detention in Fort Bonifacio is a violation of his civil rights.

In a separate statement, the Communist Party of the Philippines said that the Aquino government should release Ka Bart in compliance with its obligations under JASIG and as part of confidence-building measures for the peace negotiations. AB

Military abducts, uses Quezon activist

In a desperate attempt to cover up its crimes against the people of South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula (SQ-BP), the Armed Forces of the Philippines abducted, tortured and is using a youth activist deeply involved in the struggle against militarization in the area.

Franklin Barrera, district coordinator of Kabataan Partylist and one of the convenors of Save Bondoc Peninsula Movement which has been demanding the pullout of military troops from SQ-BP was seized by armed men on June 7 while he was on his way home to his house on Yumul Street, Barangay Gomez, Lopez, Quezon. He lost consciousness after suffering a big blow to the back of his head. When he regained consciousness, he found himself inside a red van. He was immediately blindfolded by the armed men and brought to a house in Barangay San Isidro, Lopez, near the 85th IB headquarters.

His neck and feet were bound with a piece of rope. He was forced to eat three tablespoons of salt and drink plenty of water. When he began to throw up, he was shown pictures of certain people and told to identify them. When he could not, he was hit in the nape with the butt of a rifle. He was also hit in the legs and back.

He pretended to lose consciousness. When his captors left him temporarily, he untied himself and escaped. He rode a bus to Lucena City and got off at Atimonan town where he sought medical treatment at a hospital. This was where he was fetched by members of KARAPATAN-Southern Tagalog who documented the atrocities he suffered in the hands of the mili-



tary.

The AFP once more got hold of Barrera when he left the Kabataan Partylist-ST office in Lucena City on June 10.

With Barrera in their hands again, the AFP has reversed the entire story. Col. Eduardo Año, chief of the Philippine Army 201st Brigade presented Barrera to the media on June 13 and made him tell reporters that he was a Red fighter of the New People's Army (NPA) and that it was his fellow guerrillas who abducted and tortured him before turning him over to KARAPATAN. He was allegedly used as a "prop" to malign the military.

It was a desperate move by the AFP to discredit KARAPATAN and belie its reports of relentless military abuses in SQ-BP. The military's storyline is incredulous, however, because Barrera is a well-known activist. AB

RPA violence against children in Negros



Not a few children in various towns of Negros Occidental have suffered grave violence in the hands of the hired goods of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA). This was discovered by several organizations that joined a fact-finding mission on May 9-13.

According to Roan Tuayon of Children's Rehabilitation Center-Negros, the child victims of the RPA's violence show symptoms of psychological trauma. They could hardly speak about the violence they suffered. They feel mixed emotions of hopelessness and anger and harbor a strong desire for vengeance. They cry uncontrollably whenever they see a man with a gun.

The RPA is a paramilitary criminal group that has long been used by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in its suppression campaigns in the provinces of Negros and Panay.

During the fact-finding mission, 17-year old Jolovie narrated how elements of the RPA burned down their house on February 19. She recounted how she was resting in their house when the RPA barged in. The men doused the entire house with gasoline before putting it to the torch. They even threatened to rape and kill Jolovie.

It has been a year since Jolovie stopped going to school. Her father July was abducted by the RPA on July 29, 2011. She could still remember clearly how the RPA goons forced their door open to get into their house. They tied up her father and took him with them. The goons promised to bring July back the next day but never did. He remains missing to date.

Fourteen-year old Ronelyn, a resident of Sitio Calintaan, Barangay Lopez Jaena, Sagay City suffered the same atrocities when the RPA also burned down their house. She still suffers night-

mares about the incident.

Ten-year old Ariel and his nine-year old friend Gino from Hacienda Baldevia, a 24-hectare estate in Sagay City locked in a land dispute narrated the same experiences. Their houses were torn down and burned by the RPA on the landlord's orders. Gino's family currently lives in a vacant lot near the hacienda. Ariel's family, on the other hand, has moved in with relatives in Barangay Salvacion.

Ariel, Gino, Ronelyn and Jolovie are all victims of the fascist violence of the RPA, AFP and the landlords they serve. They are all suffering from serious psychological and physical trauma.

They have also been deprived of their economic rights. They all came from farm worker families who suffer intense exploitation, hunger and poverty.

The children have a simple wish: They want a stop to the violence being waged by the US-Aquino regime through the mercenary RPA and their families to have their own land to till and a place to rebuild their homes. AB

Military summarily executes peasant in Bicol

A peasant was mercilessly "salvaged" by the military in Bicol. Meanwhile, the office of a progressive women's party was burgled. In Southern Mindanao, two mass leaders were slapped with trumped-up cases.

June 17. Troops of the 8th Scout Ranger Company summarily executed Cezar Habla, 47, a peasant and resident of Barangay Palale, Bulan, Sorsogon.

At around 5:30 a.m., the military clashed with a unit of the New People's Army that was temporarily based in an area some 200 meters from the Habla family's kilns for making copra

and some 300 meters from their house. Couple Cezar and Doris Habla were then tending to their kilns.

After the 15-minute fire-fight, Habla and his youngest son Jovan, 10, hurriedly left for their house to make sure that their other family members were safe. The soldiers gunned down Habla while he was walk-

ing home.

His wife, who witnessed the crime, testified that the soldiers shot Cezar from behind in different parts of his body. His son who also witnessed his father's brutal murder has been severely traumatized by the incident.

Lt. Teody Toribio, 31st IB chief, arrogantly announced over a local radio station that Habla was an NPA member and that their strike operation was a success. In a further lie, Toribio claimed that they painstakingly made sure that the conduct of their strike operation in Barangay Palale complied with the rules of war.

June 13. Unidentified elements broke into the office of the Gabriela Women's Party (GWP) at Tandang Sora, Quezon City and made off with two desktop computers, monitors and a laptop computer. The break-in occurred at dawn when the GWP's in-house staff were all asleep. The GWP believes that the incident was no ordinary burglary because other valuable items like the TV, DVD player, photocopying machine and printers were not taken.

Since the GWP National Women's Council meeting and 5th National Convention had just taken place, the stolen computers contained consolidated reports from the party's regional chapters, plans for the coming election and the names of GWP leaders and members.

April 22. Two peasant leaders in the Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) were slapped with a trumped-up case of qualified theft. Armando Diones, a resident of Banaybanay, Davao Oriental and vice chairman of Katawhan sa Davao Oriental and Lito Lao, chairman of Alyansa sa mga Mag-uuma sa San Isidro were forced to flee their homes and go into hiding after a court issued warrants for their arrest.

Diones was stripped of his tenancy rights in December 2010 upon the death of the original landlord and evicted by the landlord's heir Vivien Jubac. His house was torn down, and he was not paid his share of P887,000 for farming a 10-hectare coconut plantation since 2003.

Even if the landlord owed him, it was Jubac who was charged with qualified theft for harvesting more than P30,000 worth of coconuts from the Jubac family's land. Not content, the Jubacs harvested the rice and corn that Diones and his family painstakingly planted. Soldiers from the 28th IB even helped the Jubacs haul away up to 40 sacks of harvested rice.

Aside from other members of the Diones family, Lao was among those charged because of the assistance he extended to Diones in a previous case filed by the Jubacs that was dismissed by the court. AB

NPA seizes 27 firearms in ComVal



The New People's Army (NPA) seized 27 firearms when three companies of Red fighters from the Merardo Arce Command (MAC) of the Southern Mindanao Region simultaneously raided two big mining companies and a gold milling plant in Compostela Valley on June 8. The arms haul consisted of two baby armalites, an M14, twenty-two pistols and two shotguns, aside from six VHF radios.

The Red fighters burned a bulldozer, a

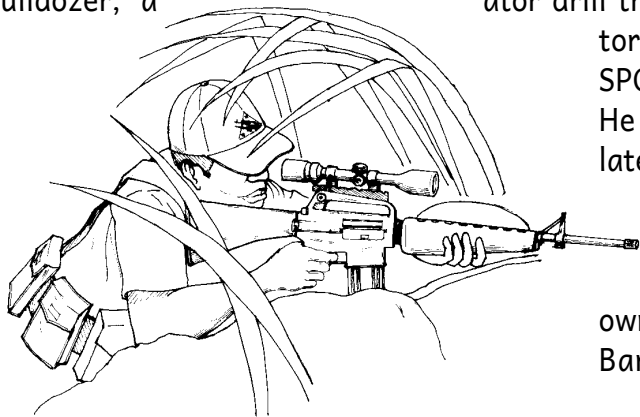
boom truck, a backhoe, a generator drill truck and ten generator sets and arrested SPO1 Charlito Alcuezar. He was freed four hours later.

An NPA platoon attacked the Canadian-owned Philco Mining in Barangay Camanla-

ngan, New Bataan and burned four big pieces of mining equipment and ten generator sets. The mining company operates on a 2,139-hectare concession, extracting copper and gold.

In Maragusan town, another NPA platoon raided a gold milling plant owned by the Uy family. The governor of Compostela Valley and the mayor of Tagum City, the capital of Davao del Norte both hail from this family. The Uys have business interests in Milagrosa-Oz Minerals which operates in Barangays Saranga and Pamintaran in Maragusan. The Red fighters seized ten pistols, a shotgun and six VHF radios in this raid.

In Barangay Mainit, Nabunturan, another platoon of people's guerrillas attacked another



er gold milling plant owned by the Uys, confiscating 16 firearms and arresting SPO1 Alcuezar.

The next day, five soldiers were killed when Red fighters used a command-detonated explosive on a six-by-six truck that was part of a three-vehicle convoy of reinforcements consisting of 71st IB troops in Barangay Nueva, Mawab. The 71st IB is notorious for being a protector of mining companies.

The destructive operations of large-scale mining have long been wreaking havoc in the mountains of Compostela Valley, causing massive landslides and other calamities that have led to the loss of many lives.

Alongside mining operations are grave violations of human rights due to the military operations conducted to protect the interests of large-scale mining.

This coordinated NPA offensive is part of a continuing campaign against destructive large-scale mining companies in the region. It was conducted to enforce the policies of the People's Democratic Government against big mining companies that have been massively destroying the environment and the lives and livelihoods of the peasantry and minority peoples, said MAC-NPA spokesperson Rigoberto F. Sanchez.

"Large mining firms in the region and their uniformed cod-

dlers in the 10th ID-Eastern Mindanao Command of the AFP can expect more escalated and coordinated raids and ambushes by the NPA to defend the interest of the people and the national patrimony," Sanchez added.

Meanwhile, two soldiers belonging to a Community Organizing for Peace and Development (COPD) team of the 2nd IB were killed in a tactical offensive launched by a team from the Santos Binamera Command (NPA-Albay) in Barangay Sinungtan, Guinobatan, Albay on June 13. It was a punitive action because of the military unit's longstanding serious violations of human rights. **AB**