

**ANG****Bayan**

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## Editorial

# The US is arming the Arroyo regime to the hilt

**U**S imperialism is further inciting the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's militarism. With a total military aid package of \$357 million pledged by the US government, it would like the reactionary regime to further intensify its all-out war in Mindanao, Mindoro and other parts of the country.

Gloria Arroyo received a reward for her unconditional puppetry to US imperialism during her visit this May to her master US President George W. Bush. Bush declared his total elation over Arroyo's full support for his "global anti-terrorist war" and the US invasion and forcible takeover of Iraq. Bush also applauded Arroyo's declaration of advancing the all-out war in the Philippines against the revolutionary movements led by the CPP and the MILF.

As a reward for his loyal puppet, Bush named the Philippines as one of the supposedly major US allies outside of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Asia-Pacific, in the same category as Japan and Australia. Bush also augmented the Arroyo government's instruments of repression, granting it the



largest amount of alms ever received by any puppet president since the US military bases were kicked out in 1992.

The Bush government will be subsidizing the Arroyo regime by up to \$47 million for launching Balikatan 03-1 in Sulu in June or July. Two million dollars (\$2 million) will be allotted for the "rehabilitation of Sulu" or the psywar component after US and AFP troops wreak havoc throughout the province.

In addition to the arsenal of repression that Bush has gifted the regime with, he will be providing an additional 15,000 M16 rifles, aside from the 15,000 sent last April; \$30 million for training and arming

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light reaction companies, light reaction battalions and Philippine Navy SEALs; 33 combat helicopters; money for their repair and that of airplanes, trucks and warships previously pledged by the US; and \$10 million for training and equipment for the "war against terrorism"—the surveillance and suppression of those waging resistance against the state.

This aid serves no other purpose but to increase the Arroyo regime's capability to launch fierce military operations characterized by unrestrained bombing, artillery attacks and assaults on the people, especially in the countryside. It also means the intensification of the "salvaging" or summary execution of mass leaders and activists, and the surveillance and suppression of militant organizations.

On the eve of her visit to the US, Arroyo announced the order to bomb and bombard with artillery fire, places suspected of being bases of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Mindanao. For ten days, large-

scale military operations pounded four provinces in Mindanao, resulting in the forcible evacuation of more than 400,000 civilians. Over 60 of the evacuees died in cramped and unsanitary evacuation centers, most of them children.

The puppet Arroyo gladly carries out all of her master's biddings because she has also received the much coveted mandate to stay in power. In her latest move to appease her master, Arroyo forged an agreement with the US government on May 13 not to subject any American to prosecution by the International Criminal Court.

Retaining Arroyo in power is favorable to the US because it could continue intensifying US armed intervention in the Philippines.

Any day now, Arroyo may declare that "she has changed her mind," and that "she can no longer turn her back on the challenge of the times," or "on the call of duty," and she will run again for president in 2004. The US is nonetheless grooming Defense Sec. Angelo Reyes as a reserve in case there is no chance for Arroyo to win the election.

Arroyo and Bush are dead wrong in assuming they can suppress the struggle of the people and the revolutionary movement through more weapons and ammunition. The New

People's Army is not afraid of the fact that the AFP has received many more arms from the US. Many of these weapons will surely fall into the hands of Red fighters through the tactical offensives that will be launched against the fascist troops.

They are also mistaken in assuming that they will be able to banish the grave political and socio-economic crisis from the people's minds through crumbs of "development aid." In fact, the US and the regime's terrorist campaign further inflames the civil war in the Philippines and the patriotic spirit of the broad masses of the people.

Gloria Arroyo will gain nothing from her shameless subservience to her imperialist master but the repudiation of the people and her unmistakable place as one of the worst puppets of US imperialism in the history of the puppet republic. **AB**



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# US pushes for bigger permanent military presence

The US is currently putting emphasis on expanding the presence of its troops in Southeast Asia and some other regions and strengthening its capability for rapid mobility and deployment from its present military bases, said Deputy Defense Sec. Paul Wolfowitz after the Asian Security Conference held in Singapore on May 31.

According to Wolfowitz, the US is now closely assessing and reorganizing the present disposition of its military forces, especially in Southeast Asia.

The US considers its military presence in the region wanting. The American troops in Mindanao now comprise the only overt US military presence in Southeast Asia. Its other forces are based in Northeast Asia (Japan and South Korea) and are all focused on North Korea. Ever since its two military bases were kicked out of the Philippines, the US has had to make do with maintaining warships in the Asia-Pacific seas as a security guarantee and a means of rapidly deploying its troops in the region.

The US plans to strengthen its presence in Southeast Asia by establishing a broad network of small tactical bases called "deployment bases" or "forward operating bases." It plans to set them up in the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. In particular, the US intends to base ground troops in the Philippines and naval troops in Vietnam. The US also has plans to reduce its 20,000-strong force in

its military base in Okinawa, Japan and transfer them to a forward operating base to be set up in the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the office of the Defense Minister of Australia has confirmed that the US has already forwarded its plan to expand and strengthen its military presence in their country. In particular, the US seeks to base warplanes and 5,000 Marines in Australia. At present, it already has a number of war planes and ground troops tucked into military bases in Australia.

This subject has previously been discussed extensively in "Rebuilding America's Defenses," a document that Richard Cheney (now US vice president), Donald Rumsfeld (now US defense secretary) and other key US officials ordered prepared in September 2000. It was recently published in the *Sunday Herald* in the US in the face of US plans to reposition its military troops.

Strengthening the present naval presence in the Asia-Pacific or relying on the present military troops stationed in the region is no longer sufficient, according to this document. To achieve US military

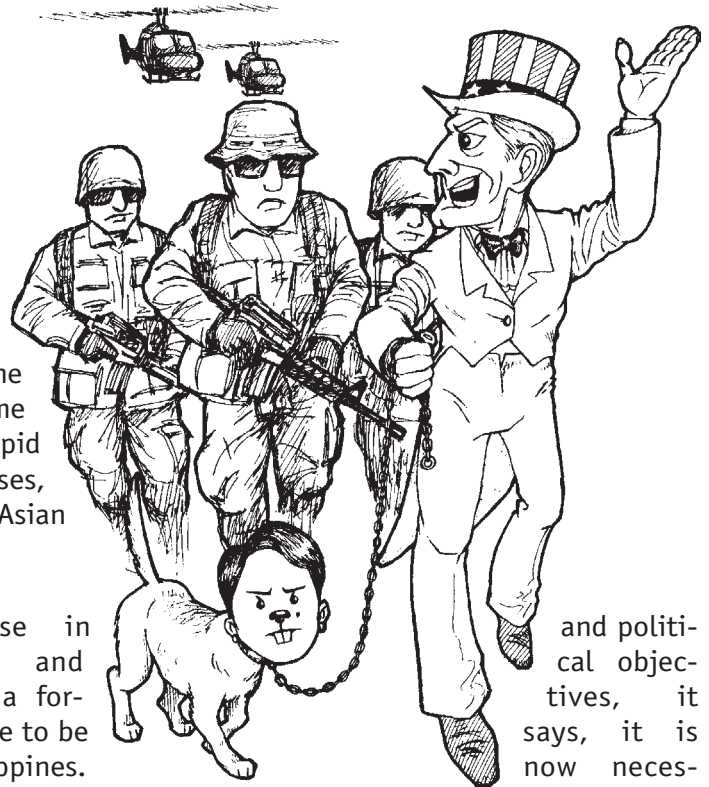
and political objectives, it says, it is now necessary to station

rapidly mobile ground and air forces, particularly in Southeast Asia.

These forces will serve to supplement or support troops permanently stationed in Japan and Korea. The document likewise stipulates that it is also necessary to maintain no less than a brigade- or regiment-size force stationed in these tactical bases at any time in order to "effectively carry out traditional ground operations while maintaining the rapidly mobile capacity of these forces."

Military equipment will also be positioned in the deployment bases or forward operating bases to be set up.

Setting up these tactical bases need not start from scratch. According to the document, the US may use the host country's military bases, which need only be "improved." The US will have the host country shoulder the actual "improvement" and other small expenses in setting up the base. To



further save on costs, the US will use the armed forces of the host country to maintain the bases. Any additional expense for this arrangement may be regarded as part of the "security assistance" to the host country. This way, the tactical bases could be immediately, easily and cheaply set up.

The document also stated that although these deployment bases will initially play a supportive role, they may be expanded and their roles made more encompassing, if necessary. Compared to permanent bases, these flexible types of bases are more acceptable especially to some of the US' so-called "skittish" allies.

In the Philippines, even if the US has not yet had the constitutional ban on foreign military bases and nuclear arms removed, these tactical bases can easily be set up through existing agreements like the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), Military Assistance Pact (MAP), Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). Nonetheless, the US is pushing for the revision of the Philippine constitution to ease any possibility of setting up permanent military bases in the country in the future. This also paves the way for broader, more intense and more direct US military intervention in the country. AB



## Despite the ceasefire AFP attacks against MILF continue

**T**he Arroyo regime brazenly and continuously disregards the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's (MILF) declaration of a 10-day ceasefire starting June 2 to pave the way for the resumption of peace talks between itself and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP).

Instead, Arroyo has ordered the AFP to step up its attacks against the MILF. Arroyo has also been pressuring the MILF to sign a "final peace agreement" that calls for its surrender to the regime, to turn in its forces allegedly responsible for a series of terrorist bombings and to reveal its positions—all of which are impossible for the MILF to comply with.

Thus, the scuttling of the peace talks is almost a certainty. Arroyo spokesman Ignacio Bunye has said that any day now, it is possible that the GRP will formally include the MILF in its list of "terrorists," thereby closing the door on negotiations.

A day after the MILF announced its plans for a ceasefire from June 2 to 12, OV-10 Bronco and Tora-Tora planes of the AFP bombed a barrio in Butig, Lanao del Sur. High-ranking military officials claimed that the MILF suffered many casualties.

The Muslim Multisectoral Movement for Peace and Development strongly condemned the bombings. According to MILF Vice Chairman for Military

Affairs Al Haj Murad, the bombing victims were most certainly civilians since the MILF was not maintaining any camp in the area.

Murad said that the MILF Central Committee declared a ceasefire in response to calls for peace from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, the Bishops-Ulama Conference and others advocating peace in Mindanao. On the other hand, MILF Vice Chairman for Political Affairs Ghadzali Jaafar said that it would be a serious mistake for the Arroyo government to refuse to respond positively to the ceasefire.

Before the ceasefire took effect, the MILF continued its guerrilla attacks on the AFP to resist the regime's relentless military offensives. On May 31, seven elements of the CAFGU were killed in an ambush by MILF guerrillas in South Upi, Maguindanao. Earlier, on May 29, three soldiers and 12 CAFGU elements were killed in an MILF attack on two detachments of the 40th IB situated near each other, in Carmen, North Cotabato. The MILF seized two Garands and an M16.

Meanwhile, the MILF has been obliged to defend itself and wage resistance in the face of incessant attacks by government troops on MILF forces. AB

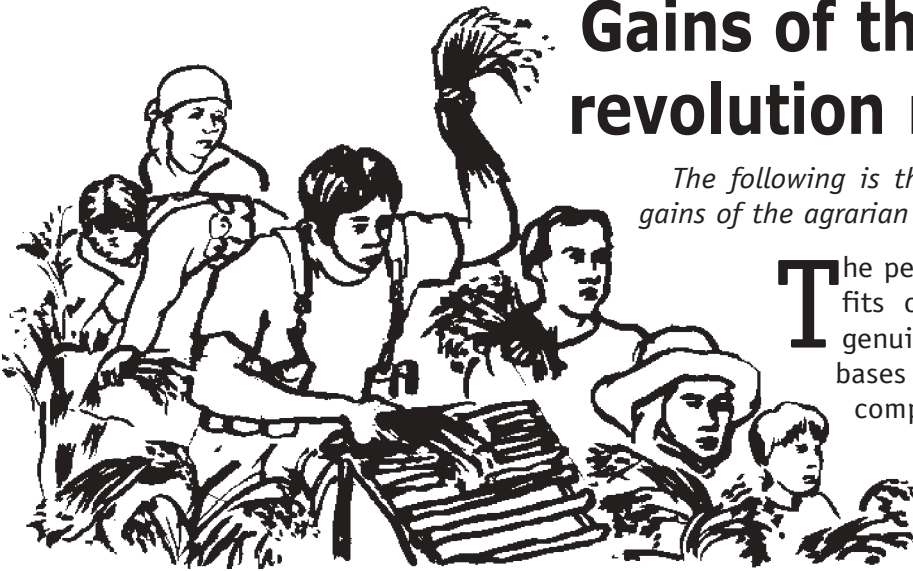




# Gains of the agrarian revolution reaped in Samar

*The following is the first of a series of articles about the gains of the agrarian revolution in Samar.*

**T**he peasant masses are now reaping the benefits of the step-by-step implementation of genuine land reform in guerrilla zones and bases in Samar. In a portion of a guerrilla base composed of vast expanses of rice fields and coconut lands, the peasants have been determinedly and sustainedly advancing the antifeudal struggle at the barrio and interbarrio level.



As a result of the benefits achieved by the peasants in launching revolutionary land reform, their conditions are now a far cry from what they were before the arrival of the first unit of the NPA in the latter part of 1977.

Before, despite the land's fertility, the peasant masses experienced extreme hardships because of feudal exploitation.

Harvests were always abundant even with the use of simple instruments of production. For example, it was possible to harvest 40-50 sacks of palay per hectare even without the use of irrigation or fertilizer. Most of the barrios could harvest 3,000 to 10,000 sacks of palay per harvest. However, only 30-40% of the harvest remained in the barrios. A large part was hauled to warehouses owned by landlords in the town center. Meanwhile, the peasant masses' share was slowly used up to pay for debts incurred due to huge production costs. The peasants also had to meet their daily basic needs from this remaining share.

Nine landlord families monopolized the principal instruments of

production such as land and carabaos. They owned 40-50% of the rice fields and coconut lands and 80% of the carabaos in the area.

The landlords set exorbitantly high levels for the rent of land and production equipment, paid low wages and required long hours of work, set very high lending rates, and raked in excessive profits from the sale of their goods.

**THREE STAGES.** The peasants underwent three stages of arduous, and at certain times, bloody struggle in order to change this order of things.

*First stage (1978-1985):* The agrarian revolution was advanced comprehensively. Four of the nine landlords who owned about 2,000 hectares of the land reacted severely. They joined military operations where enemy forces killed a number of peasant leaders and many farmers left their farms to live in the forest. Nevertheless, their struggle did not cease and even spread to other places.

*Second stage (1985-1992):* The anti-feudal struggle lost momen-

tum because the NPA focused mainly on premature "regularization" and insurrectionism.

*Third stage (1993-2002):* The anti-feudal struggle was once again stressed under the guidance of the Second Great Rectification Movement of the Party's Central Committee. Full-fledged mass organizations were established because of the reinvigoration and advance of the antifeudal struggle.

Some of the victories that the peasants have achieved are as follows:

## **LAND RENT HAS BEEN REDUCED.**

In the past, the usual sharing system was "50-50". Landlords merely shouldered half of the wages of farm workers, while the tenants shouldered all of the work, half of the wages and all expenses for food.

Land rent was first reduced by 30% secretly in 1978 and by 50% when open struggles were launched in 1985. At present, land rent has been further reduced to a mere 10% in rice lands.

In coconut lands, the previous *tersyo* sharing system (1/3 to the



tenants, 2/3 to the landlord) has been reversed. The previous sharing scheme was extremely exploitative because the tenants shouldered all of the work and expenses.

The mass organizations are also striving to systematize the management of at least 500 hectares of confiscated rice and coconut lands. Thus, a large part of the earnings from these lands now go to the peasant masses.

#### **WAGES HAVE BEEN RAISED.**

Wages for working the rice fields and coconut lands, for cutting timber and for carpentry work have been raised by 33% at the minimum, to as much as P100 from the previous rate of P50 per day that usually did not include free meals.

For instance, wages for every 100 square meters of palay planted have been raised to P50 from the previous P5. Carrying a sack of palay across a moderate distance is now paid P20 from the previous P2. The per kilo rate for carrying loads has been raised from P0.50 to P1.00. Wages for harvesting coconuts are now set at P30 for every 100 nuts from the previous P5. Wages for eight hours' toil of farm workers have been raised from P50 to P200 at present.

**COMBATTING USURY.** High lending rates and excessive profits on commercial goods are slowly being reduced. In the past, three months after a harvest, the peasant masses were forced to borrow from merchant-usurers because their share of the palay harvest was already depleted and they needed money to defray expenses for their daily needs. They also had to borrow money for their expenses for the next planting season.

A sack of palay borrowed before harvest then had to be repaid with two (100% interest) to three sacks of palay (200%). The rate has now been reduced to one and a half sacks (50% profit). The previous 5-6 system, where 20% monthly interest was imposed on cash loans, has been replaced with a system requiring only 10% monthly interest. In even worse cases where a debt of P50 was repaid with a sack of palay (P350, equivalent to 600% interest), only half a sack or P175 is now required as payment.

Many peasant lands ended up in the hands of landlord-usurers because of expropriation and extremely high lending rates through the *prenda* (mortgage) system that imposed a 50% interest. Now, the peasants are slowly retrieving their mortgaged lands.

The profits on commercial goods have been reduced from 50% down to only 10%. Before the existence of the revolutionary movement, goods were overpriced by 30-300%. On the other hand, prices of the masses' produce have been raised. From the previous price of P15 per kilo, meat is now priced at P70 per kilo.

**COOPERATIVES.** Credit and animal dispersal cooperatives as well as marketing and consumer cooperatives that have been set up by the masses are important in advancing and consolidating gains in the antifeudal struggle. The masses also maintain communal farms. This is how the masses see it:

"The cooperative develops economic activities for the welfare ... of the members of mass organizations and the peasant masses. It is a partner in eradicating feudal and semifeudal exploitation in the area

step-by-step. It serves as the seed of agricultural cooperativization and gradual changes in the old system of production."

As a result of these gains in agrarian revolution, favorable conditions have been laid down for the advance of armed struggle, Party building and united front work from the countryside to the town centers.

The broad and deep mass support for the armed struggle can be seen mainly in the recruitment of Red fighters for the NPA. In truth, many NPA recruits hail from barrios that have benefited concretely from revolutionary land reform. The masses actively support, and in some instances, directly participate in the tactical offensives of the NPA.

The support of the masses can also be seen in the way they provide for the daily needs of the people's army. They also attend to the needs of the families of Red fighters.

The masses likewise ensure the security of large gatherings of comrades such as study sessions, meetings and trainings of cadres and fighters held in the advanced barrios.

Because of their continuous struggle, many peasants and farm workers have been recruited into the Party and Party branches are rapidly set up in the localities. Local cadres have also been recruited and trained, and consequently, the section committee has been formed.

Peasants and farm workers are not only forces of the antifeudal struggle. They also join antifascist and anti-imperialist struggles such as campaigns against intensifying militarization and support open struggles in town centers and cities. AB

# Lies behind the war on Iraq

## Senselessness of claims that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction are further bared

To obtain international support for the war on Iraq, the US and the UK used the pretext that the Saddam Hussein government harbored weapons of mass destruction (WMD). However, two months after occupying Iraq, the invaders have not come up with a single trace of WMD.

Thus, the US and the UK are now scrambling to produce any piece of evidence that the former government of Iraq was engaged in the manufacture of WMD. To avoid embarrassment, US and UK officials have come up with all kinds of alibis.

Recently, intelligence agencies themselves revealed that the Blair regime forced them to add to their dossiers the lie that the Saddam regime had the capability to launch the WMD in its possession "within 45 minutes." Blair used this "information" to terrify the British people and to assert the "need" to take immediate military action against Iraq.

No less than US Defense Sec. Donald Rumsfeld had said that they did not really expect to find weapons of mass destruction, claiming that Saddam had already destroyed them long before the war began. Deputy Defense Sec. Paul Wolfowitz added that they only used the issue of weapons of mass destruction because it was the only way to unite all the factions and agencies of the US government. Wolfowitz headed the special committee formed by the Bush regime to come up with the best justification for attacking and occupying Iraq.

The presence of WMD in Iraq has now been further exposed for what it is: a total lie and a mere fabrication.

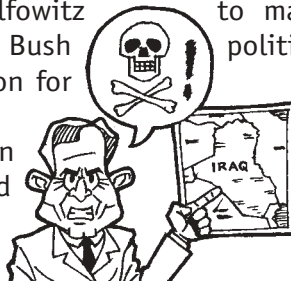
On May 30, the mass media in the

United Kingdom revealed that a few days before facing the United Nations Security Council, State Sec. Colin Powell met secretly with UK Foreign Minister Jack Straw.

During the meeting, both Straw and Powell expressed great reservation about the intelligence reports presented regarding the supposed presence of WMD in Iraq. They both agreed that the evidence gathered was insufficient and that the reports did not honestly present the actual and objective situation.

Despite the lack of sufficient information, Powell faced the UN Security Council and disclosed supposed evidence of the presence of WMD in Iraq. The information was said to have been gathered by their intelligence agencies. In truth, most of what Powell presented was based only on the dossier prepared and publicized by the Blair regime in January. A large part of it was not the result of a thorough gathering and analysis of intelligence data but merely plagiarized from the thesis of an American student.

With the lie about the WMD exposed, the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the Pentagon are pointing the finger at each other. The DIA accuses the Pentagon of having wasted the US' \$30 billion intelligence fund and manipulating intelligence data to make them conform to the Bush regime's political agenda against Iraq. The Pentagon deliberately ignored most of the data from the DIA and highlighted those that came from the Iraqi National Congress, a group which has long been funded by the US to topple Saddam Hussein's government.



AB

## Bush's new nuclear plan

The US poses as the world's defender against weapons of mass destruction even as it plans to create a new nuclear arsenal

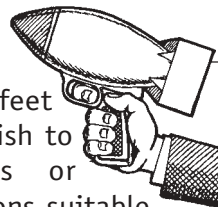
For the first time since the end of the Cold War, the Pentagon is pushing for the creation of new types of nuclear weapons.

The Pentagon has put two plans on the table. One, they plan to retrofit old warheads in order to enhance their capability to destroy

bunkers 1,000 feet deep. Two, they wish to design mini-nukes or small nuclear weapons suitable against stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons.

The Pentagon is proposing a \$46 million budget to bankroll these plans for 2004.

In the last decade, the US congress had banned the creation of mini-nukes for fear that there



will be less reluctant to use them. But just last month, Bush was able to convince the US Senate to do away with the ban. The issue is now being deliberated in the House of Representatives.

The Bush administration asserts that the US' present nuclear arsenal was designed to destroy cities and does not have the capability to penetrate deep into the ground where countries like

Iran and North Korea supposedly manufacture and harbor their weapons of mass destruction. The US also claims that its present arsenal no longer serves as an effective deterrent. According to the US, its enemies reckon that it would not use its nuclear weapons weapons, fearing intense interna-

tional opposition to the widespread damage that these weapons would bring about.

The Bush regime's real objective is to ease restrictions on the use of nuclear weapons, the better to terrorize and subdue the US' perceived enemies. It is easier to decide on using smaller and

more precise nuclear weapons because the resultant damage will be much smaller compared to that caused by the old type of nuclear arms. The US wants to create a state of affairs where it can use nuclear arms freely and any time it wants to, as though they were ordinary weapons. AB

## Imperialism's propaganda giants

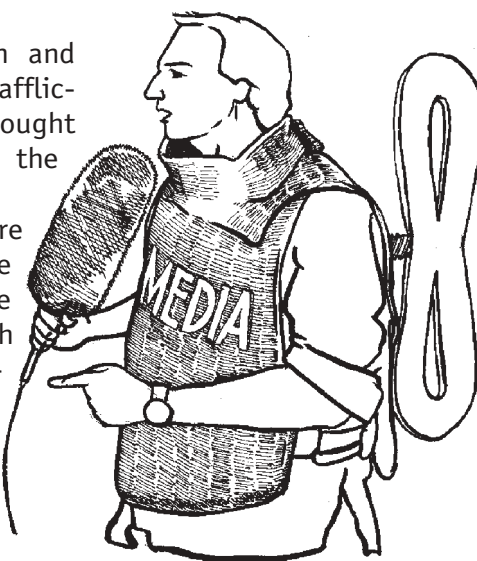
**A** number of US mass media conglomerates shamelessly serve as spokespersons of the militarist Bush government.

The role that the media plays in propagating the imperialist and reactionary outlook and viewpoint is immense. This was made clear in the media network conglomerates' coverage of the US' "war against terrorism" in general and the US aggression on Iraq in March in particular.

In both instances, the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency were able to make good use of these large media networks—from television and radio up to newspapers and the internet—as accomplices in spreading

various kinds of disinformation and speculation and sanitizing the affliction that imperialist war has wrought on the lives and livelihood of the Iraqi people.

The reporters that were "embedded," or who joined, the US military units served as the units' mouthpieces. Through them, the gigantic media outlets' 24-hour daily coverage mirrored the CIA and the Pentagon's calculated propaganda. Fox News, CNN and MSNBC applauded every little move made by the American soldiers in Iraq and limited the reporting of opinions and events that were con-



trary to the official version of the CIA and the Pentagon. They served as conduits for the worst forms of propaganda spewed by the CIA and the Pentagon that included movie-like scripts and shows. (*See related article*)

On the other hand, the media networks also used their "close" relationship with the American troops to continuously release sensationalized and never before seen footages of selected events and statements of military officials in the hope of outdoing their respective rivals and attracting more viewers and readers from among the unsuspecting public. AB

### British soldiers tortured Iraqis

Hundreds of British troops, including officials and commanders involved in the invasion of Iraq are now under investigation after revelations that they oppressed and tortured captured Iraqi civilians and soldiers.

This May, pictures seized from a soldier showed a group of British troops committing acts of cruelty and oppression against prisoners of war. In one picture, a bound and gagged Iraqi is shown being suspended from a forklift driven by a British soldier. The picture also showed a British soldier who was laughing hard. Other pictures showed a number of naked Iraqis being forced to commit sexual acts with British soldiers or with each other while other soldiers watched. There was also a picture of two naked and extremely frightened Iraqis with their heads bowed.

Before this, there had already been exposés regarding the cruelty against Iraqi civilians of Col. Tim Collins, commander of a battalion stationed in Basra. Collins' own men as well as American troops stationed in Basra at that time witnessed how Collins beat up an Iraqi leader, indiscriminately shot at and terrorized other civilians, and shot at the wheels of civilian vehicles. AB



# Just like the movie Rambo

**A**side from the grand lie about weapons of mass destruction, exposés abound about CIA and Pentagon schemes to concoct stories and shows that hype up the supposed correctness of the war of aggression, the heroism of American soldiers and the cruelty of the Iraqi forces.

Prominent among these lies are the following:

**The toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue.** On April 9, three weeks after the US began the invasion of Iraq, American troops entered the city of Baghdad.

On that very day, the imperialist media broadcast what seemed to be a very happy celebration by the Iraqi people of Saddam Hussein's ouster and what also seemed to be the spontaneous toppling of his giant statue in a park in the middle of Baghdad.

These scenes were repeatedly and continuously shown on television screens all over the world as supposed proof of the broad and widespread uprising of the Iraqi people against Saddam Hussein's regime. President Bush of the US and Prime Minister Blair of the UK bragged about this, claiming it was proof of the Iraqi people's warm acceptance of the American troops' entry into Iraq and their occupation of Baghdad. From a "few dozen citizens" in the beginning, "a few thousand" and later, "several thousand Iraqis" were reported to have participated in these amazing events.

Not once did the giant media networks show the park's entirety nor even just the entirety of the people assembled there.

It has now come to light that these events were CIA and Pentagon shows that were made for television.

A Reuters photographer has posted on the internet a photo taken from atop a high building showing the entirety of the park, and clearly demonstrating that there were at best a little less than 100 people in the park and hardly any people in the streets of Baghdad. American troops and tanks encircled the park and closed off its entrance and exit. The only ones in the park were the American troops guarding it, the

vehicle used to bring down the statue, a group of Iraqi men, and a few journalists who were part of the US forces' entourage. The vehicle was secretly used to pull and bring down the statue with a cable because it could not be pulled by a handful of people or demolished with just a few sledgehammers. Other journalists, such as those of *Time Magazine*, also witnessed and reported that the Iraqi men who were with the American soldiers were not residents of Baghdad but members of the Free Iraqi Forces (FIF), a group based abroad, flown in by the Pentagon and brought into Iraq for the sham celebration. The FIF, which is on the CIA's payroll, is headed by the leading US puppet, Ahmed Chalabi.

**The fantastic "rescue" of Pvt. Jessica Lynch.** Even earlier, the CIA and Pentagon released through the captive media the made-up story of how the US Special Forces supposedly rescued an American soldier captured by Iraqi forces.

On April 3, the US crowed about the allegedly successful and heroic rescue by US Special Forces of Pvt. Jessica Lynch, 19, from the hands of Iraqi soldiers.

From the beginning, the CIA/Pentagon-controlled media wove the movie-like story about Lynch's alleged escape. The media kept on parroting the CIA/Pentagon script that Lynch continued to resist as far as her strength could hold. Quoting "unnamed military officials," the media reported that Lynch suffered many bullet wounds and was even stabbed by Iraqi soldiers. They even added that the cruel Iraqis showed no concern for Lynch's condition. Allegedly,

the Americans learned about Lynch's condition only because an Iraqi lawyer was kind enough to walk several hundred miles towards an

American checkpoint to tell them that Lynch and other soldiers were being held by the Iraqis.

Thus were plans for a military operation by US Special Forces laid down and the hospital stormed in the middle of the night to rescue Lynch.

In May, however, other journalists revealed the vacuousness of this tale.

In an investigation



*"Rambo", page 10*

## Raid on detachment: NPA seizes 13 firearms

GUERRILLAS of the Julito Tiro Command of the NPA-Northern Mindanao confiscated six M16s, seven Garands and ammunition of various caliber when they attacked the 9th IB detachment in Sitio Lantaca, Barangay Kibanban, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental around 9:00 a.m. June 3.



One soldier was killed and a CAFGU element wounded in the 30-minute firefight. At around the same time, another NPA unit harassed another detachment of the 9th IB in the barangay center.

NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos warmly congratulated the NPA on its successful tactical offensive. He also congratulated the masses who supported the operation. Some of them voluntarily joined the operation and helped cart off the confiscated arms and attend to the wounded.

The Red fighters had long retreated when reinforcements arrived from the 2nd and 5th Special Forces Battalion and the 2nd Reconnaissance Coy supported by two MG-520 helicopters.

## Soldier involved in Ka Eden, Ka Eddie slay arrested

THE National Bureau of Investigation arrested on June 3, M/Sgt. Donald Caigas, one of the perpetrators of the murder of Ka Eden Marcellana and Ka Eddie Gumanoy. Ka Eden, secretary general of Karapatan-TK and Ka Eddie, chair of KASAMA-TK, were abducted and summarily executed by men under 204th Bde commander Col. Jovito Palparan, in Naujan, Mindoro Oriental last April.

## NPA condemns murder of Bayan Muna official in Isabela

THE Fortunato Camus Command (FCC) of the New People's Army-Cagayan Valley strongly condemned the murder of Joaquin "Jake" Soriano, Bayan Muna chair of Jones, Isabela. Soriano was murdered on May 15 by AFP soldiers in his own home in San Vicente, Jones upon orders of Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy Jr. In a statement, FCC spokesperson Victor Servidores also denounced the AFP's malicious accusation that Soriano was killed by the NPA.

### *"Rambo", from page 9*

conducted and aired by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), it was revealed that Pvt. Lynch sustained no bullet or stab wounds. Instead, she suffered fractures in her arm and thigh and twisted her heel when the truck she was riding turned turtle. It met an accident and was separated from a convoy of supply trucks when a sandstorm intensified.

According to the BBC's investigation, two days before the "rescue," the Iraqi soldiers had already abandoned the hospital and left Lynch in the care of Iraqi doctors. The Iraqi doctors took

good care of Lynch and also immediately notified the American soldiers about Lynch's medical condition—a fact attested to by the American doctors who examined her. According to the doctors and staff at the hospital, they had tried to bring Lynch to the nearest American checkpoint, but their ambulance was fired upon, forcing them to return to the hospital.

The doctors and staff were startled no end when American soldiers suddenly barged into the hospital, fighting a non-existent enemy.

The Rambo or Arnold Schwarzenegger movie-like show

put up by the CIA and Pentagon about how American soldiers "daringly and bravely" rescued Lynch amid "heavy fire and intense fighting" was a big absurdity. The American soldiers looked like lunatics, shouting and firing blank bullets and detonating small bombs. A rescue helicopter suddenly circled round and whisked Lynch away. While the fake rescue was being executed, other soldiers were taking video footages using night vision cameras, broadcasting the event live to the Central Command in Qatar. The footages were immediately edited, distributed and feasted upon by the media and shown on television screens worldwide. AB

## Anti-tuition fee hike struggle begins

THE campaign against the new round of tuition fee increases has already begun with the League of Filipino Students (LFS) and Anakbayan taking the lead. It will culminate in large mass actions with the opening of classes on June 16.



The LFS said that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has allowed 317 private universities and colleges to impose an additional P22-62 per unit this school year. Each subject usually has three units and each college student enrolled in five to eight subjects.

The tuition fee hikes have led many students from private schools to transfer to public schools. The CHED, however, said that government universities are also poised to raise tuition fees.

## 39% of youth unable to go to school in 2002— *Anakbayan*

THIRTY-NINE percent (39%) or 3.5 million children and youth who should be in school (ages 5-24) were unable to enroll in 2002, according to a study made by the group Anakbayan. Most of them were from the countryside.

The study likewise revealed that 36% of the 30.2 million youth (ages 13-35) were unable to attend school or find work last year. Only 21% were enrolled in high school, college or vocational courses. Of those employed, 22% worked in farms and 21% in the cities, mostly in contractual jobs.

## Meralco's excessive charges assailed

MERALCO had not even returned the P30 billion in excess charges in full to its 3.4 million registered consumers when the Energy Regulatory Board (ERB) allowed the company to charge an additional P0.08/kwh, bared the People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (POWER).

POWER also assailed Meralco's method of gradually reimbursing its excess charges. According to POWER, Meralco must repay its debt to all consumers in full, immediately and unconditionally. The company must also pay up to P2 billion in interest accumulated in the eight years it collected these excess charges.

## Farms under CARP to be used as collateral

SIX bills seeking to use as collateral for credit lands distributed under reactionary land reform have been filed in congress and the senate. They are among the regime's priority bills, identified during Arroyo's State of the Nation Address in July 2002. If passed into law, this will provide landlords added means to reconcentrate lands distributed under CARL and Presidential Decree No. 27. In the bills filed before congress, a creditor may temporarily till the farms used as collateral for as long as the peasants have not paid off their debts.



## Protests greet G8 meet

UP TO 120,000 persons protested against the G8 which met in Evian, France on June 1-3. The demonstrators assailed globalization and the US occupation of Iraq.

Thousands of people began to protest in the city of Lausanne in Switzerland as early as May 29. They lit 50 bonfires around Lake Geneva along the France-Switzerland border, calling them "fires of protest". Marches from the towns of Annemasse, France and Geneva, Switzerland converged on the Swiss side of the border, entering France on June 1.

The protests continued up to the last days of the meeting of the eight richest countries of the world: the US, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and Russia.

## US puts the squeeze on Iran

AFTER attacking Iraq, the militarist Bush government is now preparing for "regime change" in Iran. US propagandists are now laying down the basis for demonizing the country and its leaders. The US alleges that Iran manufactures and harbors nuclear weapons and has provided refuge to some al Qaeda members who fled Afghanistan—a claim that even the Central Intelligence Agency refutes.