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Editorial

# Launch tactical offensives nationwide

**T**he New People's Army (NPA) is ready and ever-determined to launch tactical offensives nationwide as the most fitting response to the intensifying crisis besetting the oppressive Arroyo

regime's fascist rule. It

is the NPA's response to the Filipino people's urgent demand and supports their actions in the streets calling

for Gloria Arroyo's ouster.

The NPA's tactical offensives aim to deliver powerful blows on the enemy to demonstrate the Filipino people's intense loathing for the antipeople, pro-imperialist and repressive regime.

The Arroyo regime is severely isolated from the people. It can never enjoy the people's support in the face of the grave suffering and oppression brought to bear on them, and the insatiable greed and corruption of the Arroyo family and its cohorts. It manages to remain

in power only because of the limited support of the US government,

high-ranking military and police officials, a handful of die-hard militarists, clerico-fascists and mercenary cabinet members. It can still secure the support of the majority of congressmen and local government officials but only in exchange for huge bribes and rewards in the form of projects, lucrative government positions for relatives and other favors.

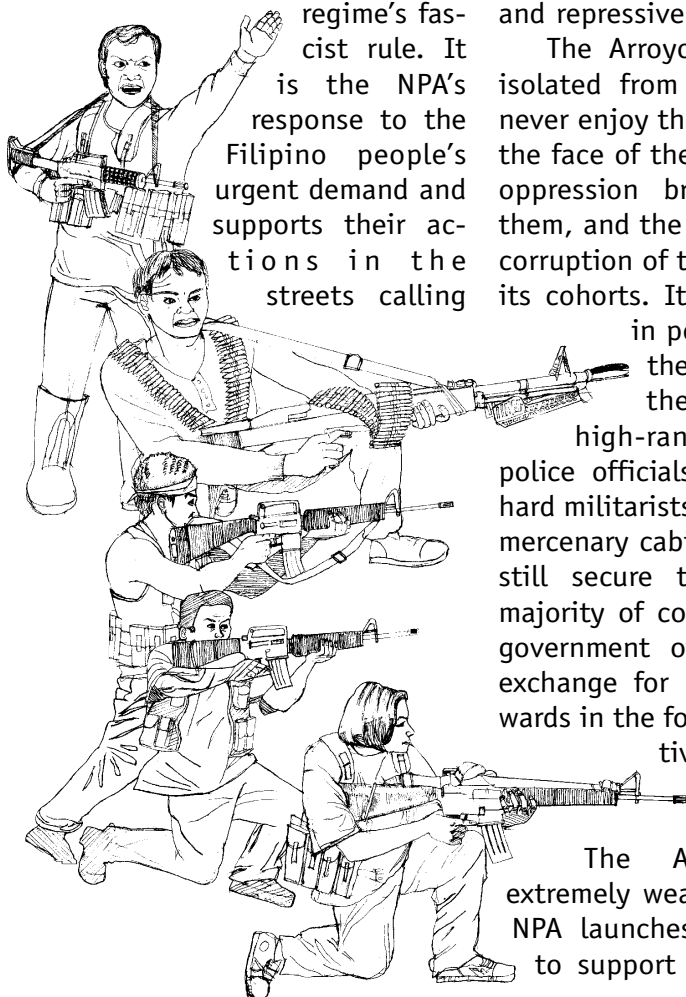
The Arroyo regime is extremely weak and unstable. The NPA launches tactical offensives to support the people's overall

effort to overthrow the tottering regime and deal blows on the AFP and PNP's armed units which lie at the very foundation of the Arroyo regime's rule or that of any reactionary regime.

The revolutionary armed forces are aware that they must accumulate enough armed strength to be able to one day overthrow the entire reactionary ruling state and system. Nonetheless, they know full well that the Arroyo regime can be overthrown as the current caretaker of the reactionary system. The Filipino people will be able to realize this objective, mainly by launching massive street mobilizations of hundreds of thousands up to millions of people.

By launching tactical offensives, the NPA's objective is to weaken the regime's capacity to use its fascist mercenary soldiers and police to suppress the people's mass actions in the streets.

It also aims to punish the Arroyo regime for its unabated, unrestrained and widespread human rights violations, especially in the countryside. During Arroyo's term, hundreds of leaders and activists of progressive and patriotic mass organizations, even ordi-



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nary civilians suspected of supporting the revolutionary movement, have been tortured and killed. Then and especially now, NPA units target the most rabid AFP and PNP units with bloody records of human rights violations.

Successful tactical offensives also serve to inspire the Filipino people to advance their struggles for a living wage, to reduce prices of oil and other goods and services, for increased budget allocations for social services, and for an end to US intervention as well as other urgent changes.

At this particular stage, the further intensification of NPA tactical offensives is geared towards accumulating victories to advance more rapidly to the next sub-stage of the strategic defensive of protracted people's war.

In the final analysis, the basic problems that have caused the people's extreme poverty can only be resolved through the victory of the people's democratic revolution.

Every tactical offensive, every advance of the armed struggle contributes to the victory of the revolutionary movement, which will bring about a bright future for the Filipino people.

# Arroyo finds no peace

**G**loria Arroyo was ecstatic shortly after her allies in Congress junked the impeachment complaint. Because it would be a year before a new impeachment complaint could be filed against her, she thought she would be able to use the reprieve to push repressive measures to once and for all crush her opponents and suppress threats and movements against her regime.

In fact, when she delivered a speech before the United Nations Security Council on September 12, she proudly reaffirmed her puppet regime's commitment to the Bush government "anti-terrorist campaign", her preparations for the use of mailed-fist and dictatorial powers against a people's uprising and other threats to her regime, and her drive to have the Anti-Terrorism Bill passed.



It was, if anything, a fleeting respite. Electoral fraud, plunder, violations of human rights and other high crimes persistently raised by the people remain major issues despite the junking of the impeachment.

Protest actions confronted Arroyo even during her UN meeting and in the other activities she attended in New York. On September 15, over a hundred

activists in the US protested against Arroyo in front of the Philippine Consulate. Despite harassment by the New York Police Department and US Secret Service elements, the protesters were able to disrupt the snobbish art exhibit that Arroyo visited with their loud chanting calling for the ouster of the fake president. Some of those attending the art exhibit also joined the protest action.

Earlier, PISTON launched a nationwide transport stoppage on September 12 to press for Arroyo's ouster and oppose incessant oil price hikes.

The Gloria Step Down



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Movement (GSM) and other anti-Arroyo coalitions are now studying the possibility of holding a public trial of Arroyo to present all the important pieces of evidence that were not made public because of the junking of the impeachment.

The Bukluran para sa Katotohanan and the Solidarity Movement, both broad anti-Arroyo coalitions, are also set to launch huge rallies on September 21, the 33rd anniversary of the declaration of martial law, to expose and strongly oppose the increasingly evident fascist road being taken by the regime and to assert its ouster anew.

There is a gathering storm of protests that would culminate in a people power uprising to oust Arroyo from power.

In an interview on September 17, Renato de Villa, former AFP chief and defense secretary and one of the convenors of the Solidarity Movement, said that the military and police, especially the younger officers, will surely support an anti-Arroyo people's uprising. The majority of AFP and PNP officials are enraged over Arroyo's barefaced maneuvers to kill the impeachment.

The Young Officers' Union-new generation (YOUNG) has also declared that it would take action "to end the dirty political system" and establish a "principled and pro-poor system" composed of "genuinely patriotic" people after the killing of the impeachment by Arroyo and her allies in Congress.

Meanwhile, US espionage activities and intervention in developments within the country have been revealed in the face of

Arroyo's further isolation from the people, the establishment of an even broader anti-Arroyo united front and the launching of even bigger mass actions against the regime.

On September 12, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) arrested Michael Ray Aquino, a PNP official under Estrada and an operative of oppositionist Panfilo Lacson, and Leandro Aragoncillo, his secret connection to the FBI. The US charged Aquino and Aragoncillo with illegally securing and sending secret FBI documents. The alleged documents and information that they had sent all resulted from the FBI's surveillance operations on the movements of the various political forces in the Philippines, both in and out of power. It is believed that Aquino's links in the Philippines include Panfilo Lacson, Joseph Estrada, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., and Roilo Golez.

The US government monitoring of the country's internal affairs became a central issue with the exposé of the FBI's intelligence work on the Philippines. The documents that Aquino and Aragoncillo passed on contained information derogatory to the Arroyo regime as well as possible scenarios and implications on the US' immediate and long-term interests. Also among the topics discussed was the possibility that disgruntled AFP and PNP elements would launch coups d'état against Arroyo.

This has led some quarters to

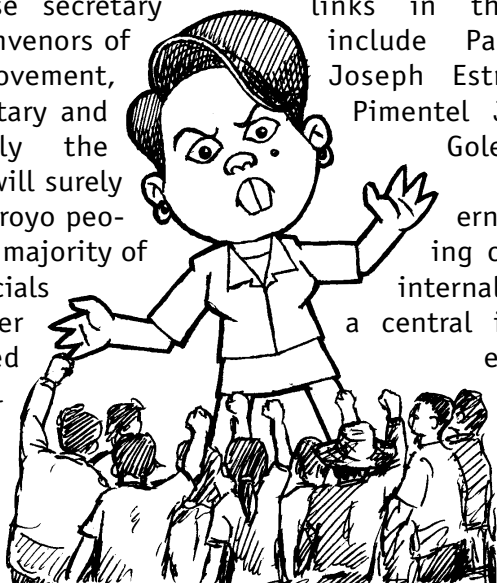
believe that the only reason why the US is venting its ire on Aquino is because he passed on these findings to the opposition. Said Satur Ocampo of Bayan Muna, in all likelihood, the US was also sharing its intelligence data with its puppet in Malacañang so that she could perpetuate herself in power. This way, the US could also prevent the ruling system from staggering too much and it could protect US imperialist interests.

The Arroyo regime's treachery against the national interest was also exposed anew as its frantic efforts to secure US support for its charter change or cha-cha scheme were laid bare. Reports came out in the mass media in mid-September about National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales' secret agreement with Venable LLP, an American company contracted by Malacañang to help influence high-ranking US officials to fund cha-cha in exchange for constitutional provisions that would give foreign monopoly capitalists complete freedom to plunder the Philippines national patrimony.

In a statement, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said that Arroyo's treachery was added reason why she should be removed from power. She has shown that she does not represent the interests of the Filipino people, but those of her imperialist master, said Rosal.

Because of intense criticism reaped by the government, the Arroyo regime was forced to nullify its contract with Venable. Nine other similar contracts that the Arroyo regime signed with other big US agencies in its treasonous and barefaced efforts to court favors from the US Congress and other branches of the US government have likewise been exposed along with revelations on the Venable deal.

AB



## Martial law in schools

**T**he National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), Anakbayan, Youth Demanding Arroyo's Removal (Youth Dare) and other militant student organizations strongly denounced the Department of Education (DepEd) for issuing a memorandum directly banning elementary and high school students from joining rallies during school hours. The same memo likewise advises college students and teachers against demonstrating. The DepEd issued the memo to stem the growing participation of students and teachers in mass mobilizations against the Arroyo regime.

In a related development, students also condemned the brazen appointment of Gen. Ricardo de Leon as president of Mindanao State University (MSU). The MSU in Marawi City is one of the country's largest state universities. De Leon, a former PNP deputy director general was appointed "provisional" MSU president on September 13 following a recommendation from National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales who claimed that De Leon was needed to address security problems allegedly arising from terrorism and warlordism.

The regime is riding roughshod over democratic processes within the university just so it could appoint its favored general.

De Leon responded violently when teachers, students and the MSU community protested the shamelessly political basis for the appointment of the new university president. On September 13, de Leon ordered a barricade set up by students protesting his appointment dismantled. The entire MSU community's protests continue to date. **AB**

*The bid to kill the impeachment*

## Arroyo's frenzied bribing spree in congress

**W**hen the electoral fraud scandal broke out, Gloria Arroyo immediately mobilized her enormous ill-gotten wealth to make sure she controlled the majority in congress. Fearing that she would be ousted, Arroyo and her minions in government wheeled and dealt and gave out bribes galore.

In exchange for their support for maneuvers to kill the impeachment process in congress and maintain Arroyo in power were heaps of money, funds allegedly for projects, positions in government for relatives, and business favors.

**PAGCOR.** From the start of the "Hello, Garci?" tapes scandal, Malacañang had already dispatched Efraim Genuino, principal operator of Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and chairman of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR).

It was Genuino and Arroyo who called up congressmen to offer them money in exchange for voting against the impeachment. Genuino was immediately exposed for distributing P200,000 and promising an additional P300,000 as well as projects. Some congressmen reportedly received up to P1 million.

Former Education Secretary Florencio Abad, who was among those who resigned from the cabinet disclosed that Arroyo had rejected demands by some cabinet members that Genuino and other henchmen of the president's husband be removed from PAGCOR.

Arroyo replied that Genuino was valuable because he "takes care of the media and the bishops." Reports also revealed that Arroyo approved the release of P12 million from PAGCOR to distribute to her supporters in media.

**Road Users' Tax.** Aside from PAGCOR, Arroyo also regards the Road Users' Tax, which is intended for road repairs, as a private fund. Instead of having the Department of Budget and Management take charge of it, the RUT was entrusted to a brother of Ronaldo Puno, Arroyo's chief "dirty tricks operator" and president of her political party KAMPI.

Arroyo spent P2.5 million from the RUT for her electoral campaign in 2004. She poured the money into the hypocritical "Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin" program which she used as free promotion of her candidacy. She paid up to several thousand street sweepers to wear T-shirts calling on people to vote for her.

The RUT budget was raised to P5.1 billion this year, with half of it passed on to Ronaldo Puno to bribe Arroyo's minions in congress and elsewhere. Among those who received the largest sums from the fund were Remedios Petilla of Leyte (P90 million), Anthony Miranda of Isabela (P65 million) and Reynaldo Aquino of Pampanga (P50 million). It was only the bribery's exposé that prevented the fund's total depletion.

**Presidential Social Fund.** Arroyo used the funds from the

Presidential Social Fund (PSF) to bribe Rep. Antonio Magsaysay Diaz of the second district of Zambales and Rep. Isidoro Real Jr. of Zamboanga del Sur. Arroyo doled out nearly P20 million in the name of Representative Diaz's scholarship program.

To disguise the bribery, the president passed the money at the end of August to the Department of Education (DepEd). There were three checks worth P5 million each. From the Presidential Management Staff (PMS), each check was coursed through the DepEd and made out to the A.M. Diaz Scholarship Program, a private institution of the Magsaysay family. The anomaly all the more came to the fore when the PMS retrieved the checks after their existence was exposed in media.

On the day Congress was to vote in plenary on the Congressional Justice Committee report, Malacañang contacted the DepEd by phone regarding the P5 million check for Rep. Isidoro Real Jr. of Zamboanga del Sur.

A Malacañang employee disclosed that there were many other similar checks coursed through various government agencies to conceal the fund transfers. The PSF, otherwise called the presidential pork barrel, is worth over a billion pesos.

**North Railway Relocation Project.** Rep. Pedro Pancho of Bulacan openly admitted that he received P321 million worth of "discounts" from Malacañang in exchange for withdrawing his endorsement of the impeachment case. The amount, he said, was meant to subsidize discounts for the relocation costs of over 9,000 families to be evicted as a result of

the Philippine National Railways Modernization and Rehabilitation Program. Pancho was sure to gain hugely from this because he was also given the power to determine who would be granted the discounts and to whom relocation lots could be sold or given. Arroyo appointed Vice President Noli de Castro, as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council to "assist" Pancho avail of the "discounts." Pancho was absent on August 31, the day Congress voted.

**Relatives appointed to government positions.** Arroyo also appointed many close relatives of Congressional representatives she was wooing to get their votes against the impeachment.

Arroyo had Francisco Licuanan III resign as chairman of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) so she could appoint Alfredo Antonio in that position at the Magsaysay family's request.

Arroyo withdrew Antonio's appointment only because of Sen. Richard Gordon's vigorous objection. Gordon has long sought to maintain control over SBMA. To

strike a balance between the two warring parties, Arroyo simply appointed

someone else as SBMA chair.

To secure the vote of ALIF party-list representative Akmad Tomawis, Arroyo appointed his brother Sultan Yahya "Jerry" Tomawis as Executive Director of the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA).

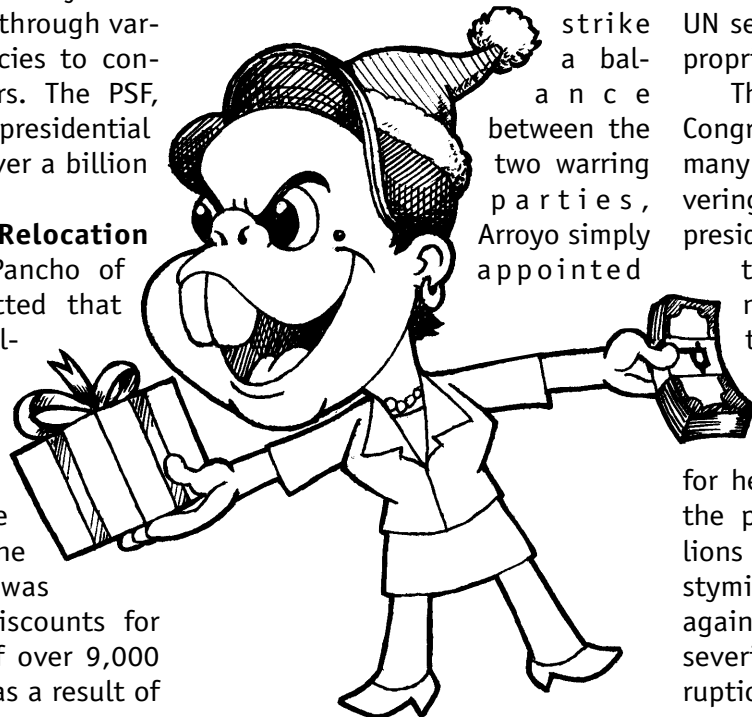
And to get Lanao del Sur Rep. Faisah Dumarpa's vote, Arroyo appointed her brother Monib Maniri as OMA-Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment director.

To secure Sen. Miriam Santiago's continued allegiance, Arroyo appointed her sister Nenalyn as additional member of the Commission on Higher Education.

**Travel.** Arroyo spent nearly P25 million from the state treasury when she brought 50 anti-impeachment congressmen and governors with her to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting in New York. The congressmen checked in at the Hilton Hotel where rooms went for \$500 (P28,000) a day.

The congressmen came for the trip for no other reason than to enjoy themselves and applaud Arroyo when she spoke before the UNSC. They were censured by the UN sergeant-at-arms for their inappropriate applause and cheering.

The bribery cases exposed in Congress are mere glimpses into the many instances of bribery, maneuvering and horse trading that the president has been doing in her bid to cling to power. It is truly nauseating that in the face of the people's ever worsening poverty and their growing demand to get at the truth and mete justice on Arroyo for her many grave criminal cases, the president has squandered billions from the country's treasury to stymie the impeachment process against her. This all shows the severity of the Arroyo regime's corruption.





## Tactical offensives in Quezon

The New People's Army Apolonio Mendoza Command (NPA-Quezon) successfully dealt blows on the 76th IB Reengineered Special Operations Team (RSOT) which was conducting operations in Barangay San Pedro, Lopez, Quezon on September 11. A seven-man NPA unit attacked the RSOT detachment where 24 soldiers were stationed.

Several soldiers were hit while the others scampered away in the first volley. Three soldiers were killed on the spot.

The NPA conducted the harassment operation as punishment for the AFP unit's bloody record in the area. One case involved the murder of Emmanuel Eseo, a worker and village resident whom the military shot and killed several hours before they themselves were attacked on the morning of September 11.

The NPA had earlier killed six military and police elements in an ambush on combined forces of the 76th IB and 416th PNP Provincial Mobile Group on August 23 in Barangay Villa Nacaob, Lopez, Quezon.

The guerrilla unit which happened to be stationed in the area had been closely monitoring the soldiers who had been conducting operations for five days along the Lopez-Macalelon border. The Red fighters waited for the opportunity to annihilate an enemy unit that would detach and venture close to their position.

Twenty-four enemy troops did come close. They were part of a three section-strong military force (the equivalent of an undersized company) combing the area. The Red fighters immediately fired at

them. Caught by surprise, outmaneuvered and trapped in unfavorable terrain, the enemy troops scampered in different directions.

The fighting lasted for almost two hours. Intensely fearing for their lives, enemy forces in the two other sections conducting operations nearby were unable to lend support. Six soldiers were killed, many wounded and the rest simply ran away. The barrio folk witnessed how three enemy troops abandoned their weapons, took off their uniforms and ran for almost an hour towards the road.

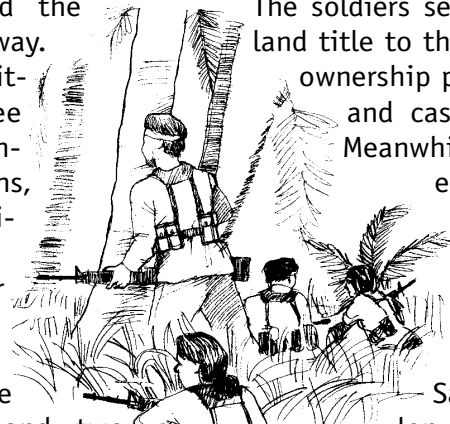
The fighting was all over by the time two MG520 and two

Huey helicopters arrived as reinforcement. The Red fighters retreated safely, with two guerrillas sustaining minor injuries.

The people in the area were delighted. Prior to this, soldiers of the 76th IB had ransacked the home of Arnel and Evelyn Palmero, residents of Barangay Vista Hermosa, Macalelon on August 5.

The soldiers seized the couple's land title to their coconut farm, ownership papers for a horse and cash worth ₱7,000.

Meanwhile, on August 18, elements of the 76th IB ransacked the home of Danilo Rodriguez's family in Barangay San Jose, Macalelon. AB



## Militarization in Northern Samar

Over 50 families from Sitio Canonghan, Osmeña, Palapag in Northern Samar have been forced to evacuate after desperate military troops vented their ire on them after suffering defeat in an encounter with an NPA unit on August 25. More than 30 families from nearby Sitio Cag-anibong were likewise forced to leave their homes after being severely terrorized by soldiers who ransacked their houses and burned some of their belongings. The troops also stole their livestock and merchandise from their cooperative.

A soldier was earlier killed and several other troops wounded when an NPA unit ambushed elements of the 63rd IB in the same sitio on August 20. The ambush took place as the soldiers were walking towards the barrio center. Contrary to the military's report, the Red fighters sustained no casualties.

As a result, troops of the 63rd IB under 2Lt. Gilbert Denzo rounded up 13 men and beat them up. A minor was also forced to accompany the military in its operations. Troops ransacked the homes of two village council members whom they accused of being NPA supporters. Terror-stricken by the enemy, a woman also miscarried while another fainted. AB



## Harassment operations in Bicol

**N**ine soldiers were killed and two were wounded in successive harassment operations by the New People's Army (NPA) against enemy troops conducting operations in Albay and Camarines Sur in August.

On August 18, an NPA team ambushed 42nd IB troops conducting operations in Barangay Salvacion, Pasacao, Camarines Sur. A corporal was killed in the battle.

Two days earlier, two soldiers of the 31st IB were killed in a harassment operation conducted by an NPA team in Barangay Mangkawayan, Lupi, Camarines Sur. The Red guerrillas did not sustain a single casualty.

Meanwhile, in the second week of August, an NPA team harassed the headquarters of the 7th Scout Ranger Coy (SRC) in Barangay Anislag, Daraga, Albay, wounding three soldiers.

Also in Albay, two soldiers under the 901st Brigade Headquarters based in Camp Villa Hermosa, Daraga were killed in a harassment operation conducted by the NPA on August 3.

Before this, Sgt. Liberato Bustillo of the LSN 9th ID of the Philippine Army and Pfc. Jun Casimiro, intelligence agents assigned with the mayor of Pio Duran, Albay, were punished.

Meanwhile, four elements of the 7th SRC were killed in an attempt to encircle an NPA squad in the second week of August in Barangay Catomag, Guinobatan, Albay. A Red fighter sacrificed his life in the battle.

Totally enraged, the fascist enemy arrested, beat up and detained four peasants. AB

## Military misencounters in Bicol

**R**adio, television and newspapers carried reports about an alleged New People's Army (NPA) attack on a Globe cell site in Sorsogon City on August 25. The police claimed that NPA fighters fired shots at the cell site because Globe had refused to pay revolutionary taxes.

According to the same report, Philippine Army troops immediately responded, but a soldier unfortunately lost his life while in pursuit of retreating Red fighters.

The truth is that a fistfight among Philippine Army troops eventually led to a shooting match that caused the soldier's death. To cover up the bloody incident, the military concocted a story about an NPA attack on the Globe cell site. AB

## GRP distorts results of Oslo talks



**I**nformal talks between the NDFP and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) were held in Oslo from August 28-30 upon the invitation of the Norwegian government. Representatives from the Norwegian government also attended the talks as third-party facilitators.

The NDFP agreed to hold informal talks to clarify certain issues arising from the third round of talks held in Norway last year. The NDFP also wanted to officially submit drafts of its proposals and correspondence to GRP representatives in the interest of pushing the peace process forward.

The NDFP likewise agreed to Norway's proposal to discuss what measures were needed to resume formal peace talks and on what basis this could be done. The Arroyo regime responded by sending Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Rene Sarmiento and his staff to Oslo.

The NDFP had earlier criticized the GRP's continued refusal to comply with its obligations in previous agreements, including those made in Oslo in February and April 2004. It also said that if the GRP persistently refuses to honor such agreements, it was prepared to wait for the new regime that would succeed the present Arroyo regime, given the fact that the latter was not going to last very long anyway. The NDFP

likewise condemned the GRP's suspension of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and its threats to arrest members and consultants to the peace negotiations in retaliation for the NDFP's alleged abandonment of the peace process. Since the NDFP merely postponed the formal meetings, it clarified that the GRP's suspension of the JASIG was not only invalid but was also in clear violation of the agreement. The NDFP is prepared to continue negotiating with the government, regardless of which president holds office, as long as the GRP complies with its obligations. The NDFP said that the informal talks were never suspended.

Before the talks were held, the NDFP's national council drafted a proposal that would hasten the peace process, cause the immediate cessation of the civil war and allow peace to reign in the country. The proposal entitled "Concise Agreement for an Immediate and Just Peace (CAIJP)" was presented to the GRP to be acted upon either by the Arroyo regime or its successor.

The CAIJP is the NDFP's answer to the "Final Peace Agreement" or FPA, a longtime proposal by the GRP that would supposedly accelerate the process of achieving peace in the country. The CPP-NPA-NDFP refuses to accept the FPA because all it contains are demands for the surrender of the revolutionary forces even as it disregards the people's demands for meaningful reforms. The FPA insists on the implementation of a meaningless ceasefire in exchange for empty promises.

Unlike the FPA, the CAIJP calls for the establishment of a coalition government where the revolutionary forces maintain their independence and political power and

remain intact and armed. It also calls for the immediate implementation of meaningful reforms to resolve the people's basic problems and the eradication of the government's pro-imperialist, antinational and antipeople policies and orientation. Only upon completion of these provisions can a genuine and just ceasefire be carried out.

Under the CAIJP, reciprocal working committees will simultaneously discuss their respective agenda in order to promptly come up with agreements on each point.

The NDFP vowed that the civil war would end on the day the principals of the GRP and the NDFP sign the CAIJP.

BOTH parties conceded during the talks that the peace process consists of formal and informal talks and consultations. It does not cease even when formal negotiations are suspended. Sarmiento thus admitted the invalidity of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's suspension of the JASIG. On September 2, Ermita grudgingly withdrew the notice of suspension that the GRP negotiating panel had submitted to the NDFP on August 3.

GRP representatives officially received correspondence from NDFP peace panel chair Luis Jalandoni addressed to President Arroyo as the GRP principal. The letter clarified certain issues muddled by erroneous and misplaced declarations of officials from the Arroyo cabinet. The NDFP berated cabinet officials like Ermita and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales who posed as GRP principals despite the fact that they were in no position to do so.

In the course of the talks, it became clear that GRP representatives did not have the authority to address issues raised by the NDFP and commit to the resumption of

**The NDFP is prepared to continue negotiating with the government, regardless of which president holds office, as long as the GRP complies with its obligations.**

formal talks without their principal's agreement. To date, the NDFP continues to await the Arroyo regime's reply to issues raised by the negotiating panel. The NDFP challenged the Arroyo regime to promptly agree to the proposed agenda so that the Norwegian mediators could declare the resumption of formal talks. Should Arroyo accede, the time, the date and the agenda for the formal talks' resumption would immediately be set.

The NDFP peace panel initially agreed to a limited and temporary ceasefire upon the resumption of formal talks as a gesture of goodwill. But since no agreement was reached on the formal talks' resumption, proposals for a ceasefire were rendered moot and academic.

The Norwegian representatives strongly admonished both parties against making premature and damaging statements to the media, especially on matters regarding the resumption of formal talks and ceasefire agreements.

The moment the GRP representatives returned to the country, however, Sarmiento violated this recommendation by announcing that the two parties had "agreed" to resume formal talks in October and declare a ceasefire. The NDFP was compelled to issue its own statement to dispute Sarmiento's claims. The GRP now purports that it is the NDFP that has violated the agreements arrived upon on August 28-30. AB





## Proposed 10-point agreement

ESTABLISH a clean and honest coalition government for genuine national freedom and democracy against imperialist domination and control.

RESPECT the democratic rights of the toiling masses and provide for their sufficient representation in a coalition government.

CARRY OUT national industrialization and land reform and oppose imperialist plunder and corruption in the military and bureaucracy.

CANCEL foreign debt and reduce budget allocations for the military and other armed organizations of the GRP.

UPHOLD a patriotic, scientific and pro-people culture.

RESPECT the right to self-determination of the national minorities.

INVESTIGATE and prosecute government officials with cases of treason, corruption and human rights violations.

IMPLEMENT a genuinely independent foreign policy.

MAINTAIN trade and diplomatic relations with other ASEAN countries, China, South and North Korea, Japan and Russia.

IMPLEMENT a ceasefire between the armed forces of the GRP and the NDFP. **AB**

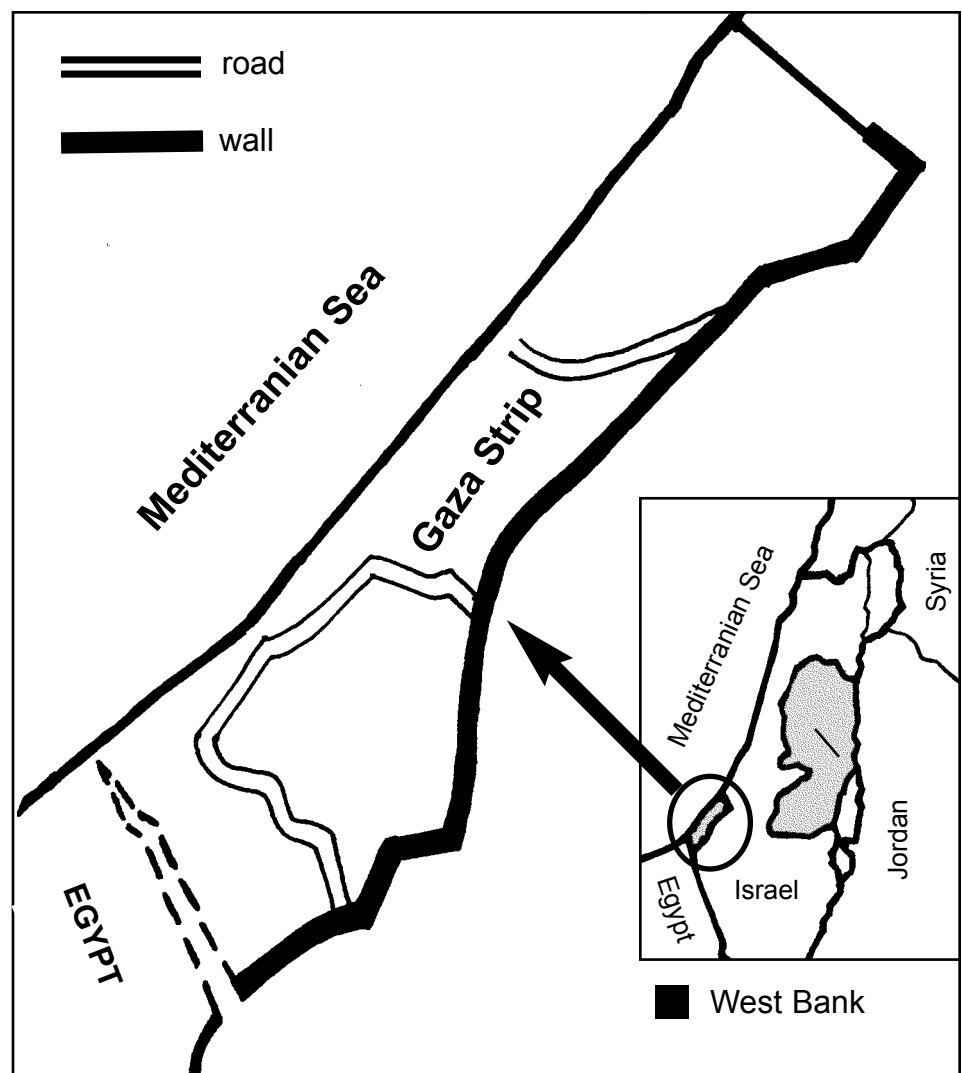
### Gaza Strip

## World's largest prison

Israel is arrogantly claiming that it has taken a positive step towards peace with Palestine by pulling out of the Gaza Strip on September 11. After 38 years of brutal and illegal occupation, it is only now that Israel is withdrawing Jewish houses, farms and communities from Gaza. Gaza Strip is but one of the Palestinian territories that Israel has occupied since 1967.

Since last year, Israeli leaders have openly declared that withdrawal from Gaza would signal their intention to terminate peace negotiations altogether with Palestine and thwart efforts to establish a Palestinian state.

In fact, its withdrawal from Gaza is but the first step in its scheme to entrap Palestinians within cramped and separate enclaves. With US backing, Israel wants to consolidate existing territories and expand into more fertile lands and more strategic, industrial and commercial parts of Palestine, especially in the West Bank and historic Jerusalem.





Israel also wants to put Gaza under tighter watch and continue building illegal security barriers around occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Jerusalem which are far bigger and richer than the barren lands left for the Palestinians. Israel wants to make it appear that it is peacefully making reparations for perpetrating numerous crimes and oppressing Palestinians for over half a century.

The Israelis have withdrawn only from Gaza. Palestinians within the Gaza Strip have had a slight reprieve since they could now resume farming and build houses on the lands that have been returned to them. The brutal Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) are likewise no longer stationed in Gaza.

The entire place, however, has become a huge prison, a living hell for its 1.4 million Palestinian residents. Israel now controls all of Gaza's borders on land, sea and air more tenaciously than ever. It has fortified the 56-kilometer long and seven-meter high barrier along the Gaza-Israeli border.

Technologies far more advanced than what is being used in the West Bank security barrier are now being utilized to secure Gaza's borders. Heavily guarded towers with remote-controlled machine guns surround the area. The towers are equipped with electronic warning devices and surveillance cameras.

Israeli military troops continue to hold Gaza under siege. Using remote-controlled vehicles, they constantly conduct reconnaissance patrols within Gaza's air space and by land along the Gaza wall.

Israel continues to control the Mediterranean Sea along the Gaza Strip's western border, despite its

## **Crumbs for Palestine, prizes for Israel**

**I**t is an added insult to Palestine for the US to have granted Israel \$2.2 billion in aid to construct new settlements for those who had been evacuated from the Gaza Strip while allocating a measly \$200 million in assistance to the Palestine Authority to rebuild houses and infrastructure destroyed during Israel's bombing of Gaza.

Israel has not paid a single cent for its occupation and destruction of the Gaza Strip and the whole of Palestine.

In the past several decades, Israel has driven out thousands of Palestinians from their homes in the Gaza Strip. Israeli bulldozers have demolished up to 12,000 homes since 1967. Thousands of families have been desprived of their homes, lands and crops. Israeli forces have moreover killed over 2,800 people from September 2000

claims that it has relinquished jurisdiction over Gaza. It strictly forbids Palestinians from venturing beyond 18 kilometers out into the sea. It likewise controls the sea-ports from which Palestine products are traded. It refuses to reopen Gaza's international airport which has been destroyed by Israeli bombs.

Israel remains in control of all routes from Gaza, not only into Israel but also into Egypt which is southwest of Gaza. It is Israel and not Egypt that will maintain control of the barrier, guard towers and intersections along the Gaza-Egyptian border. The IDF will likewise maintain troops along this border.

With communication lines severed, residents of Gaza are unable to contact anyone living in other areas of Palestine or anywhere else in the world for that matter. No Palestinian may leave Gaza without going through the strict searches and heavily guarded crossings.

At present, only workers need-  
ed in certain construction projects

in Tel Aviv, Ashkelon and other parts of Israel are allowed to cross the border. By 2008, no Palestinian from Gaza will be allowed to enter Israel.

Palestinians have denounced Israel's deceitful withdrawal from Gaza. They see all too clearly Israel's actual intention of weakening and dividing armed resistance groups fighting for Palestinian self-determination, such as Hamas. They are aware that Israel's real objective is to grab more Palestinian lands, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

In response to Israel's militarist arrogance, Palestinians have persevered in carrying on their armed resistance to reclaim East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza forthwith and eventually drive out Israel from their lands.

Militant Palestinians advancing the armed resistance for national liberation have vowed never to abandon armed struggle even as the Palestine Authority likewise perseveres in its efforts to carry out legal struggle. **AB**

to March 2004, including 527 children and minors. Up to 308 have been summarily executed.

Up to 1.4 million Palestinians are cramped into 360 square kilometers of territory in the Gaza Strip, making this one of the world's most densely populated areas. It also has one of the world's highest concentrations of poor people. The majority of its population earn less than the minimum necessary for their families to live decently.

Palestinian economic and political life have deliberately

been stunted under Israeli military occupation. Israel controls the movements of Palestinians through numerous checkpoints manned by the Israeli Defense Forces. Palestinians have to pass through them just to be able to go to their farms. Since 2002, things have become even more difficult with the construction of the security barriers. The Israelis have shut off ports and taken control of land routes on the pretext that they serve as arms and supply routes for militant armed groups.

The United Nations World Food Program (UNWFP) has long been extending food aid to the impoverished people of the Gaza Strip. The food aid program is in danger of being cut off because of recent reports that the WFP's funds are set to run out by October. A UN pledge of \$10 million (of which only \$1 million will be sourced from the US) is likewise fraught with uncertainty. The WFP has said it would be needing \$80 million for two more years of food and medical aid to the Gaza Strip.

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