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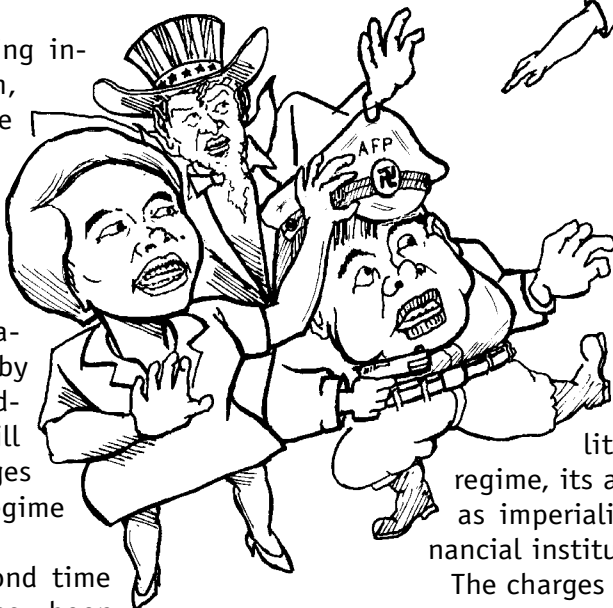
Editorial

Arroyo regime to undergo international trial

Encouraged by growing international concern, the Filipino people formally filed charges against the US-Arroyo regime last October 30 before the Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT), an established international court recognized by the UN and other worldwide institutions. It will start hearing the charges against the US-Arroyo regime in March 2007.

This will be the second time the Arroyo regime has been charged in court. In November 2004, the regime was charged before the Citizens Congress for Truth and Accountability (CCTA)—a group of legal experts and personalities known for their integrity. The CCTA in March found Gloria Arroyo guilty of violations of human rights, electoral fraud and plunder and declared that she should step down from power.

The case against the US-Arroyo regime is the second filed at the PPT against a ruling puppet and reactionary regime in the Philippines. In 1980, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) representing the Filipino people, and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) representing the Moro people jointly filed charges of violations of human



rights and serious economic and political crimes against the Marcos regime, its accomplice the US government as well as imperialist corporations and international financial institutions.

The charges now filed with the PPT by relatives of victims of fascism and by democratic organizations, human rights and peace advocates, lawyers and church institutions against the Arroyo regime and its imperialist master are almost of the same nature and substance. The charges fall under three categories:

1) Violations of human rights, especially civil and political rights. In particular, this refers to summary executions, abductions, massacres, torture and other brutal and systematic abuses of, and attacks against, the basic democratic rights of the people.

2) Violations of human rights, especially the economic, political and cultural rights of the Filipino people through the imposition of free market globalization; violations of their economic sovereignty and national patrimony; various forms of plunder and at-

This issue's highlights...

The Permanent People's Tribunal

PAGE 2

Workers' struggle in Dolefil and FBAC

PAGES 5 and 6

Thieves devour Food for School funds

PAGE 9

tacks against their economic rights; and environmental destruction.

3) Violations of the people's rights to self-determination and freedom through the imposition of the US war on "terror;" misrepresenting the people's struggle for national freedom and self-determination as terrorism; and the baseless inclusion of individuals, organizations and other entities in terrorist listings.

In formally receiving the complaint, the PPT recognizes the need to put an end to the US-Arroyo regime's severe violations of the Filipino people's rights and interests. The PPT considers current conditions in the Philippines as comparable to conditions obtaining when the country was put under martial law in 1972. Conditions are likewise comparable to those in other countries also investigated and tried by the PPT that had experienced intense corruption, repression and military rule.

The Philippines is but the third country that has been twice charged before the PPT. The two other countries are Afghanistan and the former Yugoslavia where

The Permanent People's Tribunal

The Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) is a formal international court formed in 1979 to investigate, try and judge violations of human rights and fundamental rights of peoples. The PPT continues the work started by the Bertrand Russell Tribunal I or the International War Crimes Tribunal (IWCT) I and IWCT II that tried similar cases. The IWCT I (1966-67) tried the US for war crimes during its war of aggression in Vietnam and the IWCT II (1974-76) tried the repressive US-backed regimes in Latin America.

The PPT is independent from any state power. It stands against the hegemony of one state over many other countries and uncompromisingly upholds the principle of international relations based on peace and equality among nations and peoples. It relies greatly upon the authority of free international public opinion.

It also prioritizes the investigation of violations of the interests of various peoples of the world, especially those who are most oppressed and denied their rights. Its investigations, trials and judgments are founded upon real and factual data gathered from the people's actual conditions, experiences and histories, aside from international laws and conventions. Members of the jury are thoroughly selected based on their high moral, intellectual and professional capabilities.

Continued on "PPT" on page 3

ruling regimes gained notoriety for their brutal and widespread violations of human rights.

The Party, the revolutionary forces and the Filipino nation

await with interest the PPT verdict on the cases against the Arroyo regime. They believe that the US-Arroyo regime will be found guilty as the Marcos dictatorship was in 1980.

This trial will expose to international public opinion the true condition of the country. The first trial conducted by the PPT and its subsequent guilty verdict contributed to Marcos' downfall in 1986. The current trial and the expected PPT condemnation of the US-Arroyo regime will spur broader condemnation for the latter and cause its further isolation. It will also contribute significantly to the eventual downfall of the current ruling clique, boost the demand to punish fascist criminals, and spur the advancement of the Filipino people's struggle for genuine national freedom, democracy, justice, peace and progress.

AB



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Contents

Editorial	
Arroyo regime to undergo international trial	1
The Permanent People's Tribunal	2
Fascist state on a rampage	
Unremitting violations of human rights	3
Children, women and environmentalists are victims of violence	4
Squabbling in the Arroyo cabinet	5
The workers' struggle in Dolefil	5
Strikes in Compostela Valley	6
Military abuses in the FBAC	7
Police disperse Cavite picketlines	7
Thieves devour Food for School funds	8
Hunger in the Philippines worsens	8
The return of Arturo Yap	9
Philippines: Japan's dumping grounds	9
Toxic wastes, etc.	10
News	10

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The PPT was established through the initiative of the Lelio Basso International Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (FILB), an international institution formed in 1976 by progressive intellectuals, writers and law experts. The FILB was established under the leadership of Lelio Basso, a known Italian anti-fascist activist, lawyer, journalist and statesman. Basso was one of the judges of the IWCT I in 1967. Basso also pushed for the formation of the IWCT II in 1973.

Since its founding, the PPT has held 34 sessions regarding various countries and organizations. Among those it has tried are the repressive and abusive regimes in the Philippines (1980), Western Sahara (1979), Argentina (1980), Eritrea (1980), Afghanistan (1981 and 1982), East Timor (1981), El Salvador (1981), Nicaragua (1984) and the former Yugoslavia (1995). It also passed a verdict on the criminal responsibilities of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (1994) and the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine (1986).

All documents received and reviewed by the PPT and the basis and explanations of its rulings are sent to the United Nations (UN) and other leading international institutions and organizations and many of these are discussed at the UN Human Rights Commission.

The second PPT session on the Philippines that will be heard in The Netherlands will be presided over by Gianni Tognoni, a doctor who also serves as secretary-general of the PPT. He also presided over the trial of the Marcos dictatorship in 1980.

The current case was filed at the PPT last October 30 by organizations that include Hustisya, an organization of the families and victims of human rights violations under the Arroyo regime; Desaparecidos, an organization of relatives of involuntary disappearance; Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainee Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya (SELDA); KARAPATAN; Public Interest Law Center; Peace for Life; Philippine Peace Center; United Church of Christ in the Philippines; Ecumenical Bishops Forum; Ibon Foundation; and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN). The PPT is scheduled to hear the case in March 2007. **AB**



Unremitting violations of human rights

Killings, abductions and other violations of the people's human rights continue without letup. Following are the latest reports collated by *Ang Bayan*:

November 5. Two masked men killed Rodrigo Catayong, 55, chairman of Katungod-Eastern Samar and an official of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers. Catayong, a professor and member of the Board of Regents of the Eastern Samar State University was shot while entering a church in Borongan, capital town of Eastern Samar. He suffered eight gunshot wounds. The assassins escaped aboard two motorcycles.

November 3 up to the present. Hundreds of families from Barangay Lumusong, Tulunan, North Cotabato were forced to evacuate after elements of the 38th IB lobbed mortar shells into their community. The AFP bombed the community in retaliation for an NPA raid on a military detachment in Tulunan last November 2 and a subsequent firefight between the NPA and the AFP in Barangay Lumusong.

November 2. Emerlito Dizon, secretary-general of the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL), an allied organization of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, now lies in critical condition in a hospital after being shot by three men in his house in Sitio Apalan, Barangay Bulawen, Palauig, Zambales. His son who witnessed the shooting said that soldiers or men connected to the military were involved in the attempted killing.

November 1. Elements of the PNP Regional Police Intelligence and Regional Mobile Group forcibly entered without a warrant the convent of the Contemplatives of the Good Shepherd in Barangay Ampayon, Butuan City allegedly to arrest NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos. The police searched the entire convent but failed to find Ka Oris. Afterwards, the police went to the convent of the Missionary Sisters of Mary and San Lorenzo Pastoral Center in Butuan but were not allowed to enter.



The Religious of the Good Shepherd (RGS) filed charges at the Commission on Human Rights against the PNP last November 5. The RGS refused to accept the PNP statement that the raid was a simple mistake. According to the RGS, the raid was premeditated and systematic and constituted terrorism and harassment by the instrumentalities of government.

October 21. Police in Lucena City arrested and detained for 24 hours 44 peasants and activists demanding a new system of income distribution in a hacienda. Among those arrested were Pedro "Tata Pido" Gonzalez, Pamalakaya national vice chairman; Guillermo Bautista, chairman of the Katipunan ng Samahang Magsasaka-Timog Katagalugan; and Domingo Escamillas, who chairs the Pinag-isang Lakas ng Magbubukid sa Quezon. The peasants were demanding a change in the

income distribution scheme at the 13,000-hectare Reyes family hacienda from 75-25 in favor of the landlord to 75-25 in favor of the sharecroppers. According to witnesses, about 100 peasants and their supporters marched from Saint Ferdinand Cathedral to hold a "people's camp" outside the mansion of the late Don Domingo Reyes in Barangay Cotta, Lucena City when they were forcibly dispersed and arrested by the police.

October 19. A 50-man force from the PNP, Philippine Army and CIDG entered and searched at 5:00 a.m. the community of C. Pascual, Bayugo, Meycauayan, Bulacan where Kadamay members Joselito Serrano, Mercedes Cayanan, Norlito Obenia, Joey Sebastian, Andres Calimlim, Fernando Serrano Jr. and Jeric Cabral are residing. Several of them were handcuffed and had guns trained at them. The raid was allegedly launched to arrest Joseli-

to Soriano for illegal possession of firearms. After the attack, the fascists threatened to return to the community after five days. The victims are active in the struggle against the anti-poor Philippine National Railways Modernization and Rehabilitation Project.

September 18. Thirty armed men seized Aeta tribesmen and cousins Nicolas Sanchez and Heherson Medina on the evening of September 17 while the victims were hunting in the mountains of Capas, Tarlac. They remain missing. Witnesses said that both victims were loaded onto a military truck and brought to Sitio Cabatuan, Barangay Bueno, Capas. The truck was later seen at the 71st IB compound in Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac City.

August 13 up to the present. Residents living near the railroad tracks in San Pablo City are in fear due to escalating militarization. The 22nd IB has been assigned to the area to force through the Philippine National Railway Modernization and Rehabilitation Project (PNR-MRP) Southrail Main Project. It has established detachments in Barangays Sta. Ana, San Joaquin, Soledad and Wawa while maintaining a continuing presence in Barangay San Gregorio and Barangay San Antonio 2. Martial law conditions have prevailed in these communities since the military arrived last August 13. A curfew is imposed at 7:00 o'clock in the evening. Leaders and members of the Samahan ng Magkakapit-bahay sa Tabing-Riles (SMTR) have been subjected to intense surveillance and harassment. Myrna Olarte, current chairperson of the STMR-San Pablo has received death threats. She cannot go home because soldiers have literally set up camp in her house. AB

Children, women and environmentalists are victims of violence

A study by GABRIELA shows that 58 children in various areas in the Philippines have become victims of political killings since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became president. The children were victims of massacres and indiscriminate firing by military troops operating in the countryside. Among the victims are four unborn children in their mothers' wombs. Seventy-eight women, mostly mothers, have been killed by military troops.

Meanwhile, 18 environmentalists have been killed by Gloria Arroyo's armed minions since 2001. Five of them were killed between August and September of this year. Joey Estriber, an activist fighting against illegal logging in Aurora, was abducted, while an attempt was made on the life of Fr. Allan Caparro, a staunch oppositionist to mining in Eastern Visayas.

Seven of those killed are from Southern Tagalog: Nicanor de los Santos, leader of the Dumagats opposing the Laiban Dam project in Rizal; Noli Capulong, spokesperson of the Southern Tagalog Environmental Action Movement; Manuela and Expedito Albarillo, Roger Fernando, Erwin Bacarra and Ramon Ternida, activists who opposed mining in Oriental Mindoro; and Napoleon Pornasodoro, a teacher who opposed the Mirant coal-fired power plant. AB

Squabbling in the Arroyo cabinet

The resignation of a key member of Gloria Arroyo's cabinet shows the growing fractiousness among the ranks of the ruling clique. Avelino Cruz, Department of National Defense secretary submitted his letter of resignation last November 5.

Cruz resigned because he openly disapproved of "Cha-cha." Cabinet squabbles, especially over the issue of Cha-cha, grew more intense after the Supreme Court scrapped last October 24 the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) pushing for charter change through a sham people's initiative. Arroyo blamed Cruz for the failure of Sigaw ng Bayan and ULAP to convince the Supreme Court to rule favorably on the issue of a people's initiative. Cruz intentionally defied Arroyo's order for him to convince Associate Justice Antonio Carpio to vote in favor of Cha-cha. Cruz and Carpio are both from the Villaraza-Angangco law office, a big law firm known to be close to the Arroyos but is now distancing itself from the ruling clique.

This is not the first time Cruz has defied Arroyo. Last January and again last February, Cruz opposed Arroyo's plan to declare martial law. Arroyo's interests were also threatened by Cruz's proposal to exclude the AFP from the electoral process to avoid such incidents as those exposed by the "Hello Garci" tapes.

Cruz's resignation is a sign that the Arroyo cabinet is now dominated by the most rabid militarists and con artists like Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, Sec. Raul Gonzalez of the Department of Justice, Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio and Presidential Chief of Staff Mike Defensor.

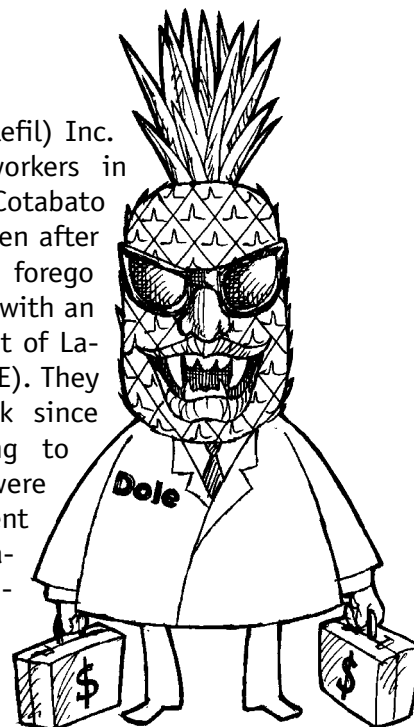
This shows that the Arroyo faction is crumbling and portends the resignation of more cabinet members who could no longer stand the outrightly fascist and shameless means employed to keep Gloria Arroyo in power.

In 2005, ten cabinet members dubbed the "Hyatt 10" resigned because of massive electoral fraud committed by the Arroyo camp in the 2004 election and Arroyo's sham apology to the nation after being implicated in the "Hello Garci" scandal.

AB

The workers' struggle in Dolefil

Dole Philippines (Dolefil) Inc. is harassing its workers in Polomolok, South Cotabato and continues to do so even after the workers decided to forego their strike in compliance with an order from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). They have gone back to work since September 22. According to Dolefil workers, they were suspended by management until last October in blatant violation of the conditions of the DOLE order for Assumption of Jurisdiction.



The workers are organized under the Asosasyon sa mga Mamumuo sa Dole alang sa Kalingkawasan ug Demokrasya sa Nasud-National Federation of Labor Unions-Kilusang Mayo Uno (Amado Kadena-NAFLU-KMU).

Dolefil is a subsidiary of, and the largest pineapple producer for, the American-owned Dole Food Company. It operates a 14,000-hectare plantation in South Cotabato. It has its own port and factories for producing tin cans and cartons. It is the largest company in Region 12 and is a major source of income for the Dole Food Company.

Dolefil employs 5,000 workers. Most of them work on a contractual basis and receive less than the regional minimum wage of P160/day. Regular workers receive P200-400 daily. Only workers employed by Dolefil for the past 20 years receive P500/day.

Anti-worker

Last September 13, majority of the workers in the Polomolok Cannery, Dolefil's main plant, voted to launch a strike after talks that started last April between management and the union for a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) reached an impasse. Instead of fulfilling the workers' demands, Dolefil tried to cancel benefits and services won by the union in previous years such as paid short vacations, individual breaktime and even a rice subsidy.

Last September, management made a final offer of a 3% wage increase for the first year (P6-12/day for regular workers), 3.5% for the second year (P7-14/day) and 4% for the third year (P8-16/day); a P420 rice subsidy; salary for

a fulltime union officer, P30,000 lump sum; and P800,000 for the Education and Research Fund (ERF).

The union demanded a 21% (P42-84/day) wage increase; P500/month electricity and water subsidy; subsidy for 30 kilos of rice monthly; a P300,000 lump sum and P800,000 for the ERF. The last two items had been earlier proposed by DOLE's National Conciliation and Mediation Board.

The union's demands fall well below the nationwide call for a P125/day wage increase and makes but a tiny dent on the US\$5.87 billion (almost P300 billion) Dole earned last year. According to the workers, the amount is merely comparable to what the company earns from its sale of pineapple peelings.

As expected, 76% of the workers rejected the niggardly offer in a referendum last September 21.

Anti-union

About 712 workers were illegally suspended, 2,000 were threatened with disciplinary penalty, and 13 union officers received notices of termination for asserting their rights and welfare. Moreover, the company has intensified its spying, slander and armed threats against the union and its members.

Last August 29, the company sent 20 heavily armed military troops to the union office. The troops alighted from their truck and tore down the streamers in front of the union office while the rest pointed their guns at the people inside. They threatened to shoot unionists who would dare to stop them.

The company has also mobilized anti-communist groups ANAD and Alsa-Masa to slander the union and the KMU. Since the workers began their struggle, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of posters, placards and flyers slandering the KMU as a "terrorist organization" that deliberately sabotages company operations.

In a move that conveyed its desperation, the company paid cooperatives supplying contractual labor and a local government official to stage a rally against the KMU, Amado Kadena and the impending union strike. Many contractual laborers admitted to being forced to attend the rallies under threat of dismissal from work.

The company has also deliberately sabotaged its own operations and blamed the Amado Kadena and KMU.

Strikes in Compostela Valley

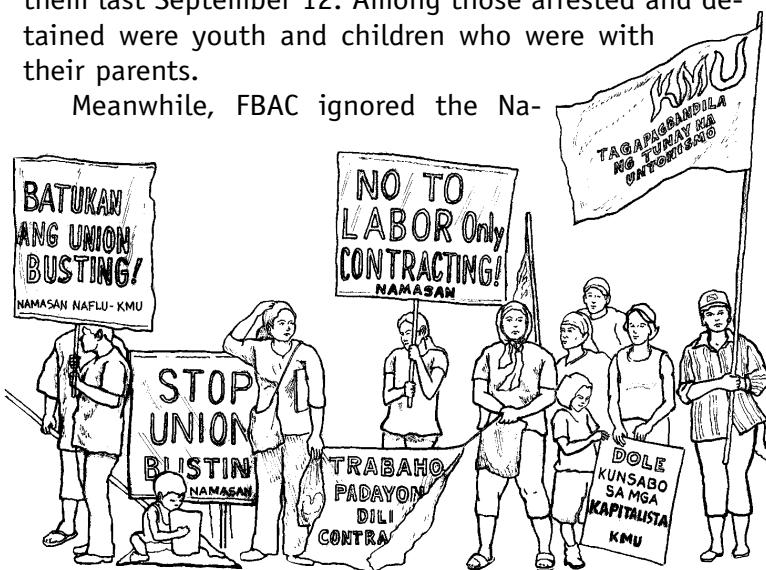
A struggle against tightwad capitalists and violations of union rights

Workers at the Fresh Banana Agricultural Corporation (FBAC) in Compostela Valley launched two consecutive strikes over the past three months. FBAC is owned by the partners AJMR Group of Companies owned by the Soriano family and Sumitomo Fruit Corp. (Sumifru), a giant Japanese company. The strikes comprise the workers' response to the company's niggardliness, illegal dismissals, union busting, threats and harassment at the FBAC.

The Nagkahiusang Mamumuo sa Osmeña-National Federation of Labor Unions-Kilusang Mayo Uno (NAMAOS-NAFLU-KMU), the workers' union in Plant-98 of FBAC, launched their strike after the collapse of negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement (CBA) last October 2. Before this, the Nagkahiusang Mamumuo sa San Jose (NAMASAN-NAFLU-KMU), the workers' union in Plant-95 of FBAC, launched a strike after the company illegally dismissed 196 workers.

In San Jose, the FBAC filed trumped-up damage claims against the NAMASAN. The complaint was dismissed by the court, but was deceptively refiled using the names of individual complainants. The court has issued a temporary restraining order against the striking workers. FBAC used the order as an excuse to violently dismantle the picketlines and arrest 80 striking workers manning them last September 12. Among those arrested and detained were youth and children who were with their parents.

Meanwhile, FBAC ignored the Na-



tional Labor Relations Commission order to compensate NAMASAN in the amount of ₱3.7 million for underpayment of wages, Cost of Living Allowances and service incentive leaves the workers did not receive.

Concurrent with the strike at the factory, the 196 illegally dismissed workers under NAMASAN held a vigil-rally in front of the offices of the AMR Group of Companies in Davao City. They demanded their rightful reinstatement as regular workers and refused the offer of contractual jobs in other companies.

The workers at FBAC are going through a long and complex struggle against the greed, deceptiveness and violence of multinational companies. Since sugar plantations in Compostela Valley were begun in 1992, capitalists have taken turns siphoning off huge profits and enslaving the workers. At the start, Stanfilco opened and managed plantations that supplied bananas to Dole Philippines (Dolefil). Towards the end of 2002, the plantations were sold by Stanfilco to FBAC, a subsidiary of the AMR Group of Companies. In 2004, the Sorianos established the AJMR Group of Companies to directly manage FBAC. At that time, Sumifru had ₱1.5 billion invested in AJMR.

For many years, the workers endured inhuman working conditions for measly wages. There are about 44,000 workers in more than 67,000 hectares of banana plantations. Most of them receive a mere ₱176/daily for 14 hours of work. This is far below the ₱621 needed to ensure a decent life for a family of six and is still below the ₱212 regional minimum wage for Southern Mindanao. The companies, on the other hand, earned approximately ₱44.25 billion last year. AB

Military abuses at the FBAC

The FBAC has been using the Armed Forces of the Philippines to exploit and deceive its workers. Two fact-finding missions were conducted in May and August to document military intervention in union activities and human rights violations against the workers' communities.

Reports stated that the 28th IB called a meeting in Packing Plants 90, 92 and 95 in August 2005 and warned workers against joining union activities. The military maliciously linked the union to the New People's Army and told the workers that the factory will

shut down if they persisted in demanding wage increases or affiliating with the Kilusang Mayo Uno.

In Osmeña (Packing Plant 98), military forces reportedly sat in the CBA negotiations and confiscated the workers' CBA copies. In San Jose (Packing Plant 95), military troops tore down union streamers stating the workers' calls and demands.

From 2004 to the present, fact-finding missions have documented eight cases of grave threats and 17 cases of harassment against the workers by the military. AB

Police disperse Cavite picketlines

Police violently dispersed the picketlines of two unions at the Cavite export-processing zone in September 25. More than 300 workers of the Chong Won Fashion Inc. and the Phils. Jeon Garments Inc., both Korean-owned, decided to launch a strike after management refused to negotiate. This, despite the Department of Labor and Employment's certification of the two unions as legitimate workers' bargaining agents.

Reports said that the workers had just set up their picketlines in front of the Chong Won gates when police and security guards attacked them, wounding at least ten strikers. At the same time, the police allowed scabs to enter the factory.

In the morning of September 27, policemen and security guards again attacked the picketlines, beat up 22 workers of

Chong Won and wounded 13 workers in Phils. Jeon. Two workers sustained head wounds. Many women workers were sexually molested by the attacking policemen and guards.

The next day, the police arbitrarily arrested and detained eight members of the Solidarity of Cavite Workers (SCW) while they were packing food for the strikers. The police seized the food supplies, cellphones, a camera, and other personal belongings and charged them with "trespassing" and "inciting to sedition." They were freed only on October 4.

Chong Won and Phils. Jeon manufacture clothes and undergarments for export. Among their clients are Wal-Mart of the US, Al Assel and Zico of Saudi Arabia, CNI of the US and Dream Station of Japan. AB

Thieves devour Food for School funds

The Arroyo regime's appetite for all manner of corruption is insatiable. In October, anomalies were uncovered in the regime's Food for School Program ostensibly intended for pupils in public elementary schools. This has been dubbed the "biggest scandal" so far because the deceptive program involves an ₱8 billion budget allotment till the end of 2007, an amount far bigger than the ₱4 billion involved in the Road User's Tax anomaly, the ₱3.27 billion in the PEA Amari project scandal, the ₱1.3 billion Mega Pacific contract or the ₱728 million Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program.

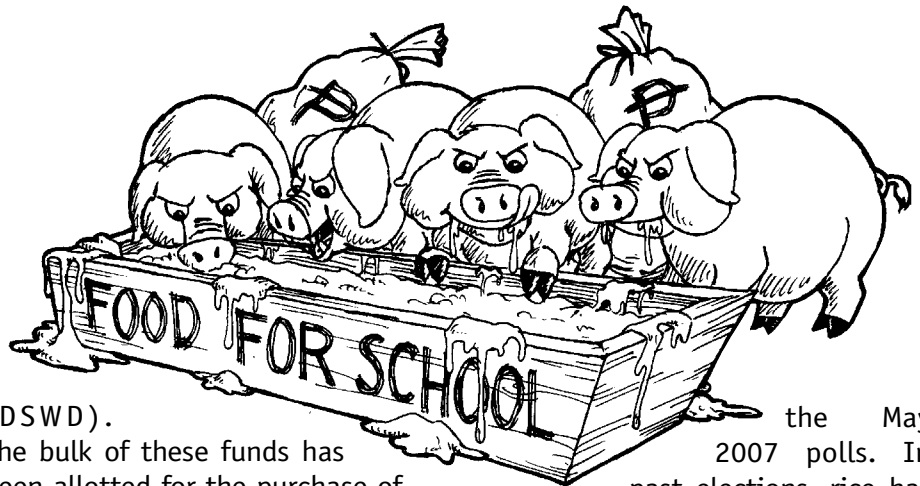
The anomalous program began in 2004 called for feeding millions of children in elementary schools aged five to eight, especially in areas where hunger and malnutrition are widespread.

Congress has approved an additional ₱2.625 billion budget for the Food for School program this year to be coursed through the Department of Education (DepEd) and another ₱270 million allocation to be coursed through the Department of Social Welfare and Development

(DSWD).

The bulk of these funds has been allotted for the purchase of imported rice to be distributed by the program. The National Food Authority (NFA) has already imported ₱1 billion worth of rice for this purpose. The 2007 budget allocates ₱4.0113 billion for the DepEd and ₱1.085 billion for the DSWD. Part of this budget will be used to import another ₱2 billion worth of rice.

Many critics have lambasted the hanky-panky regarding new plans to distribute rice to children to bring home to their families, whereas the original concept was to provide nutritious food for the children to eat in school. Many sectors view the program as a means to buy votes in



the May 2007 polls. In past elections, rice has been used for vote-buying.

Gloria Arroyo's recent reappointment of Arturo Yap as DA secretary is in league with plans to utilize his services as Malacañang operator in the coming elections. He will take on the role previously occupied by DA Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante who was the main culprit in the fertilizer fund anomaly.

As before, it is Gloria Arroyo's greedy politician allies and relatives who will benefit enormously from the funds intended for the importation and distribution of rice, and from the hoarding and resale of the newly imported rice at a higher price. It has been standard practice to substitute rotting rice stocks from the NFA for the higher-quality rice imports and to sell the latter for profit. The children, meanwhile, will be receiving the NFA rice. Rice importers in cahoots with this anomalous practice usually get big commissions and tax cuts.

Meanwhile, rice farmers will not benefit at all from this program. Instead, their production will suffer from unfair competition with the cheap imported rice.

Gloria Arroyo and her ilk are shamelessly exploiting the poverty and deprivation of innocent children in their insatiable greed for wealth and power.

Hunger in the Philippines worsens

Hunger has worsened in the Philippines in the past three months, a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey revealed. The survey showed that 16.9% of 17.4 million families, equivalent to 2.9 million families, suffer from hunger. The biggest number of hungry families is in Mindanao (21.3%), followed by 19.7% in the Visayas and 14.7% in Luzon. Hunger has worsened since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ascended to power in 2001.

The Communist Party of the Philippines said in a statement that worsening hunger is a result of the Arroyo regime's blind obedience to the dictates of imperialist globalization that has been destroying the country's productive forces, raising the unemployment and underemployment rate and denying basic needs and services to the toiling masses.

The CPP said that this adds fuel to the masses' fury and spurs the revolutionary movement's advance.

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The return of Arturo Yap

Arturo Yap was secretary of agriculture in 2004. He resigned in June 2005 when he and his family were charged with corruption. He laid low for a while, but in December 2005, a new role was tailor-made for him in Malacañang as "Presidential Assistant on Job Creation." By May, he was appointed head of the Presidential Management Staff.

Yap was involved in rice smuggling when he was NFA head, and in anomalies in the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program. In 2004, journalist and former NFA employee Marlene Garcia-Esperat filed

corruption charges against Yap, "Joc-joc" Bolante and eight other NFA officials. These same personalities were the main suspects in Esperat's murder in March 2005. Yap, in particular, was implicated in Esperat's murder through the testimony of a DA employee in Central Mindanao. Only three lower-ranking DA employees were found guilty, however.

The reappointed Yap will take direct charge of the Food for School Program—proof that he enjoys Arroyo's lavish trust. AB

Philippines: Japan's dumping grounds

Japan has been granted the right to dump its toxic waste in the Philippines for ten years with the recent signing of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA). Article 29 of the agreement allows Japan to export with "preferential zero-percent tariff" 141 items that are all toxic wastes hazardous to health and the environment. This includes items that "no longer perform their original purpose...nor are capable of being restored or repaired and which are fit

only for disposal or for the recovery of parts or raw materials."

The great irony is that this is in exchange for the entry of up to 500 nurses and caregivers from the Philippines annually to care for the health of Japanese citizens.

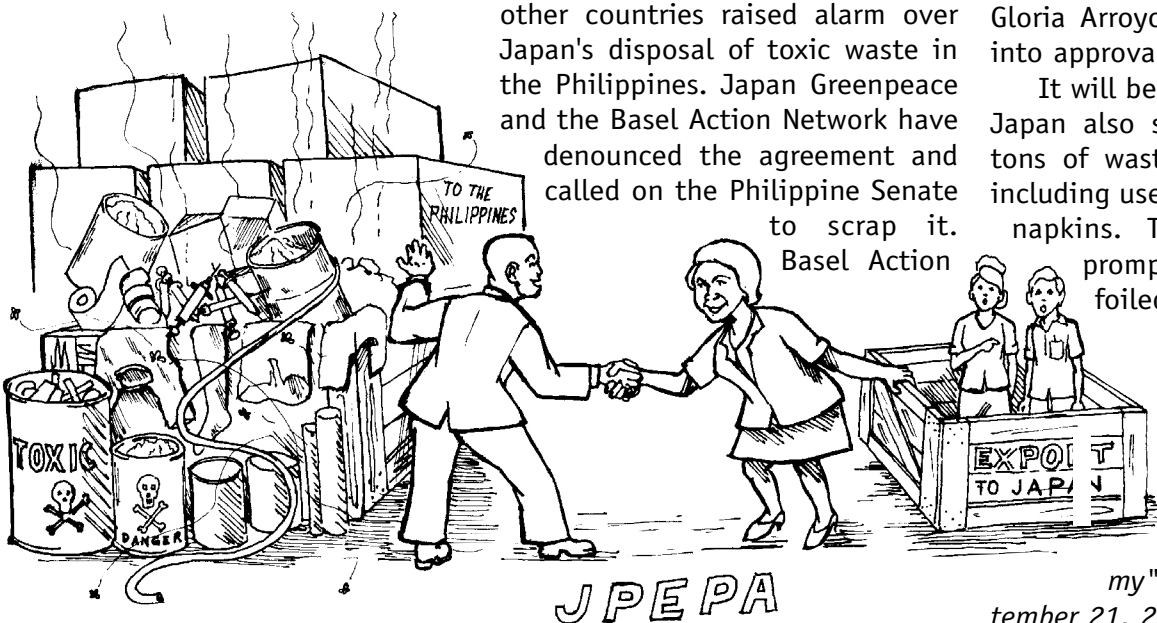
Various people's sectors, consumer interest groups, environmental and health activists, oppositionists and even senators are strongly denouncing the JPEPA for the harm it will wreak on the livelihood, health and environment in the Philippines.

Environmental activists even in other countries raised alarm over Japan's disposal of toxic waste in the Philippines. Japan Greenpeace and the Basel Action Network have denounced the agreement and called on the Philippine Senate to scrap it. Basel Action

Network is an international organization monitoring the compliance of countries with the Basel Convention that bans the export of toxic waste. Both Japan and the Philippines have expressed agreement with the treaty but have yet to formally sign it.

In the face of widespread opposition to JPEPA, Malacañang was forced to submit the agreement to the Senate for ratification. Before the full contents of JPEPA were bared to the public, the Arroyo regime had plans of making it a mere executive agreement so that Gloria Arroyo could simply sign it into approval.

It will be recalled that in 1995, Japan also sought to smuggle in tons of waste to the Philippines, including used diapers and sanitary napkins. The Filipino people's prompt and intense reaction foiled the attempt. AB



(See also "Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement: Another blow to the local economy" in Ang Bayan's September 21, 2006 issue.)

Toxic waste, etc.

Among others, the following waste will be allowed entry into the country under JPEPA:

- ▶ Ash and residues containing arsenic, mercury, thallium or their mixtures, of a kind used for the extraction of arsenic or those metals or for the manufacture of their chemical compounds. (Arsenic is a common ingredient in rat poison. Thallium is commonly used in insecticides. Prolonged exposure to mercury results in brain damage, convulsions, infertility or premature birth of abnormal babies and their eventual death).

- ▶ Ash and residues from the incineration of municipal waste

- ▶ Pharmaceutical waste

- ▶ Residual products of the chemical or allied industries; municipal waste; sewage sludge;

- ▶ Clinical waste—adhesive dressings and other articles having adhesive layer; wadding gauze bandages, used surgical gloves

- ▶ Wastes of metal pickling liquors, hydraulic fluids, brake fluids and anti-freeze fluids

- ▶ Worn clothing and other worn articles

- ▶ Used or new rags, scrap twine, cordage, rope and cables and worn-out articles of twine, cordage, rope or cables, of textile materials (importation prohibited under RA 4653).

AB

Mindanao raids yield 37 firearms

THE New People's Army seized 37 firearms in two raids without firing a single shot in North Cotabato, Compostela Valley and in Sarangani in the last week of November.

NPA Red fighters launched a surprise attack at 8:30 a.m. of November 2 on the 72nd IB detachment in Barangay Bituan, Tuluhan, North Cotabato. They seized 18 Garands, three M14s, an M16, several rounds of ammunition, military uniforms and important documents. The guerrillas masqueraded as policemen to facilitate the raid.

Meanwhile, in Sarangani, the people's guerrillas seized three Garands, three carbines, two .45s, two .38s, a 9 mm and a .357 Magnum when they disarmed CAFGU elements in Barangay Paet, Alabel on November 5.

In Compostela Valley, the NPA seized two M16s and a 9 mm pistol when they raided a Philippine National Police (PNP) detachment in Sitio Mambusaw, Barangay Ngan in Compostela town at about 11:15 a.m. on November 6.

NDFP publishes *Liberation International* anew

LIBERATION International (LI) was revived on October 30, 2006. LI is published by the International Information Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. It aims to continuously provide news on the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation against imperialist and feudal rule. It will also publish the NDFP and its allied organizations' analysis of burning international issues. With *LI* back in circulation, revolutionary propaganda has been boosted against imperialist propaganda that relentlessly attacks the movement for the national and social liberation of oppressed countries like the Philippines.

CPP belittles AFP recruitment drive

THE Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) belittled the AFP's planned "massive recruitment" allegedly aimed at crushing the armed revolutionary movement in two years.

"Throwing in more arms and more men will not make the rotten and fascist AFP a better fighting force against the NPA," CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said. "Ultimately, the balance between revolution and counterrevolution is determined not by the quantity of troops and arms, but rather by the breadth, depth and enthusiasm of the people's support," he said.

The CPP reacted thus to AFP chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon's announcement on October 20 that the AFP will recruit 3,000 new regulars and 7,920 militiamen to form 90 CAFGU companies. This is in accordance with the plan to crush the NPA by 2010. There are now 52,748 CAFGU forces nationwide.

CAFGU recruitment will be concentrated in alleged NPA strongholds such as Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Samar, Caraga and Davao.

Free Ricardo Palmera!

THE International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) demanded the release of Ricardo Palmera from US detention.

Ricardo Palmera is a leader of FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) who was illegally arrested by combined forces of the CIA, Interpol and the Colombian and Ecuadorian military on January 2, 2004 in Quito, Ecuador while he was arranging a meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for an exchange of prisoners of war with the Uribe government in Colombia. Palmera was FARC's representative in the peace negotiations with the reactionary

Colombian government.

He was imprisoned in Colombia up to December 31, 2004. In January 2005, Uribe endorsed him to the US to face trumped-up charges of terrorism, kidnapping, drug trafficking and rebellion filed against him by the US government.

The ILPS said that Palmera's detention and trial in the US violates not only Colombia's sovereignty but also threatens all other countries in the world fighting for independence, democracy and a just society. It is a stark example of US intervention in Colombia's internal affairs.

Saddam Hussein's death sentence a US dictate

UNDER US dictate, the death sentence was meted out on November 5 to former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and two of his men for alleged crimes against humanity. A puppet Iraqi court handed down the verdict two days before midterm elections for the US Senate, Congress and other local officials. The Bush regime had hoped that the news of Hussein's death sentence would boost his Republican party's chances of grabbing the majority of seats in the Senate, Congress and local government positions in the face of widespread condemnation of his regime's war in Iraq and the resulting voters' re-

pu diation of Bush's party.

Hussein's sentencing was intentionally fasttracked to time favorably with the Republican party's electoral tactics. The verdict was scheduled for November 7 but the court arbitrarily closed the presentation of evidence and testimony by the defense. In fact, the story of Hussein's trial is a story of gross violations of due process and the basic rights of the accused. Earlier, Hussein was previously imprisoned for a year without trial and counsel. Since the trial began, three of his lawyers have been murdered.

The court that tried Hussein had no independence and credibil-

ity. It was set up under American occupation and followed US dictates. The first chief judge handling the case resigned when he could no longer bear the intense political pressure. Another was fired by the puppet Iraqi government when he asserted that there was no evidence of Hussein linking with the al-Qaeda and harboring weapons of mass destruction.

Contrary to the expectations of the Bush regime and the puppet Iraqi government, Hussein's sentencing will exacerbate the conflict in Iraq and further strengthen the Iraqi people's anti-US sentiments and struggle.