



ANG

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Editorial

Repudiate the US-Aquino regime

Benigno Aquino III's much-vaunted agenda of change has lost its appeal among the people. After 100 days in power, his government is fast becoming exposed as a puppet regime that is no different from previous reactionary regimes. In the face of a series of issues that exploded during Aquino's first 100 days in Malacañang, his regime's pro-imperialist, elitist, shallow, inutile, militarist and rotten to the core character is becoming evident to the people.

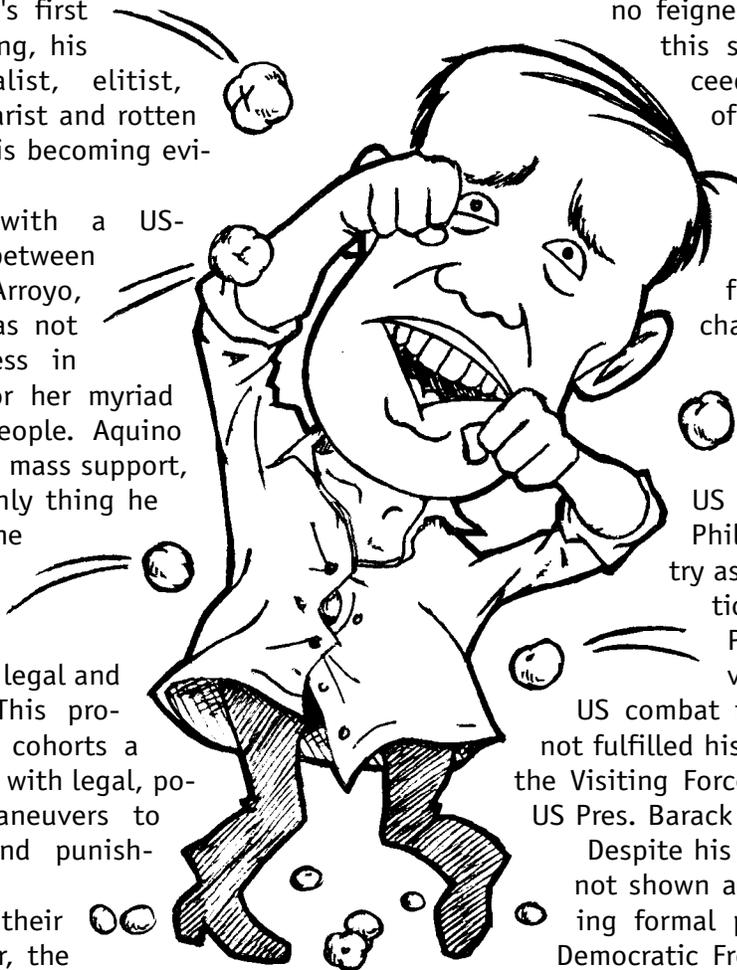
In accordance with a US-brokered agreement between Aquino and Gloria Arroyo, the current regime has not shown any seriousness in prosecuting Arroyo for her myriad crimes against the people. Aquino promised this to court mass support, but up to now, the only thing he has done is to form the Truth Commission as an investigative body. The commission now faces several legal and other impediments. This provides Arroyo and her cohorts a wide berth to come up with legal, political and other maneuvers to evade prosecution and punishment.

One month after their clan's ascent to power, the

Cojuangco-Aquino family intimidated, deceived and bribed the peasants and farm workers of Hacienda Luisita to make it appear that their long-drawn Stock Distribution Option (SDO) gimmick enjoyed widespread support, thus enabling them to continue avoiding the distribution of the hacienda land. Aquino feigned a hands-off policy regarding this scheme. But he has only succeeded in demonstrating his lack of intention to advance genuine land reform whether in Hacienda Luisita or other estates in the country.

He has paved the way for further US intervention in exchange for political, military, economic and financial support from the US. He is in favor of all-out counterrevolutionary US military intervention in the Philippines and utilizing the country as a base for US military domination in Southeast Asia and the Pacific region. Aquino also favors the permanent presence of US combat troops in the country. He has not fulfilled his pledge to take up the issue of the Visiting Forces Agreement in meeting with US Pres. Barack Obama.

Despite his statements on "peace," he has not shown any serious interest in conducting formal peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).



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Instead, he has demanded a "ceasefire" as a precondition for any talks, in violation of The Hague Joint Declaration and other agreements. His security and military officials are currently preoccupied with their "local peace talks" scheme which involves nothing more than the reactionary government talking to its own shadow.

Aquino's hands are stained in blood with his orders to extend the previous regime's OBL terrorist campaign even as he readies his own version of this counterinsurgency (COIN) operational plan. The US-Aquino regime turns a deaf ear to the people's widespread grievances against rampant injustice and violations of human rights. At least 16 activists have been killed by armed agents of the state since Aquino came to power. The Morong 43 are still in detention despite the flimsy case that has been filed against them and in the face of widespread calls in the country and worldwide for their immediate release. At least 388 other political prisoners continue to languish in jails and military camps nationwide.

The US-Aquino regime's nation-

al budget for 2011 is counterrevolutionary, neoliberal, mendicant and antipeople. It allocates the biggest portion to debt service and practically doubles the budget of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to give further stress to COIN. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) received the heaviest increase in accordance with the US' design to keep impoverished countries and peoples dependent on doleouts, and likewise enable the DSWD to play a major role in COIN. On the other hand, government subsidies for farmers and rice consumers as well as other support for agriculture, public colleges and universities, government hospitals and health programs for the poor, housing programs and legal support for migrant workers and other important economic and social needs have all been slashed.

The Aquino regime is giving a

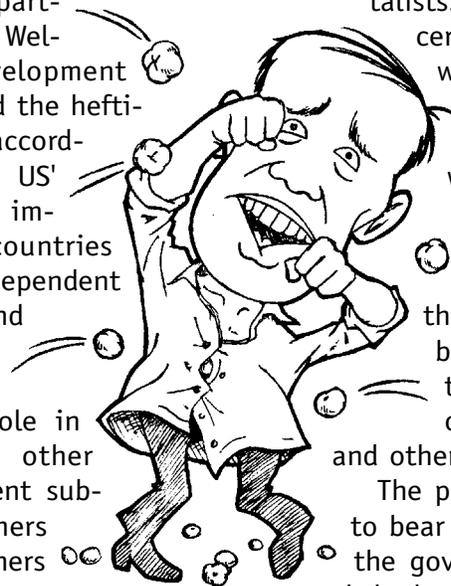
massive push to the further denationalization, privatization, liberalization and deregulation of the Philippine economy. It is frenziedly selling strategic industries, public utilities and other businesses and resources to big foreign capitalists. Aquino's main concern during his US visit was to sell to big capitalists hundreds of billions of pesos worth of privatization, investment and commercial projects in the country that have been made more attractive through various tax exemptions and other privileges.

The people are being made to bear the brunt not only of the government's bankruptcy and the losses incurred by its degraded services, but also of the high cost of privatization.

Water companies servicing Metro Manila are set to hike their fees this October and fares at the Metro Rail Transit and Light Rail Transit will also be raised in November, all in a bid to make them more lucrative and attractive to prospective investors.

Contrary to one of Aquino's campaign promises, his regime is on the lookout for opportunities to impose new taxes on the people. It had planned on collecting the 12% VAT on toll fees on expressways, but was stymied by intense opposition to the move and cases filed by the people in court.

The country and the entire world were witness to Aquino and his administration's grave incompetence during the hostage-taking crisis in Manila on August 23. From start to finish, the incident was a demonstration of failure and disorganization that culminated in the death of eight foreign tourists as



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well as the hostage-taker. It thoroughly exposed the rottenness and incompetence of the ruling system and the Aquino administration. An investigative committee has recommended filing the appropriate charges against at least ten police and government officials, but has nonetheless failed to zero in on Aquino's accountability.

Aquino has appointed corrupt officials to his cabinet and other high-ranking positions. These are mostly payback for political debts, especially for the huge amounts invested in his electoral campaign. He has turned a blind eye to the glaring cases these officials are embroiled in, among them the illegal numbers game *jueteng*. He has defended the guilty and maligned those who have exposed them. These controversies have exposed the factional conflicts within his government and underscored the fractiousness and dirty political maneuvers, the infirmities of the executive and Aquino's failure to govern.

Aquino's demonstrated pro-imperialist, pro-landlord and anti-people stance in these issues portends even greater suffering for the masses of the Filipino people in the remaining years of the US-Aquino regime. Now that the emptiness of Aquino's promises and the shallowness of his political gimmickry are being exposed one after the other, the people have no recourse but to wage revolutionary and militant struggle to defend and advance their interests.

The people will surely rise to resist and repudiate the rottenness of the US-Aquino regime and the entire ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system that has been oppressing and condemning the country and the Filipino people to suffering.

Editorial

Grand imperialist deception

The United Nations set in the year 2000 the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDG)—eight targets purporting to resolve poverty and concomitant global problems by 2015. Ten years after, it is clear that the MDG has no other objective but to serve as window dressing for neoliberalism and cover up the brutal onslaught of imperialist globalization and aggression.

US imperialism put up the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) as its own instrument in pushing for the MDG. The MCA is being utilized to fund so-called poverty alleviation programs as well as projects to uplift the low quality of life of people living in impoverished countries. Such assistance is granted on condition that the donees implement the imperialist policies of privatization, liberalization and deregulation and do not default on their debts. It is these same policies that the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (IMF-WB) have

been pushing for decades.

The MDG is now one of the instruments being used by imperialist countries to keep poor countries backward, unindustrialized, mendicant and subjugated.

Through this, the imperialists deflect the people's attention from the root causes of their poverty and shift it to shallow indicators of poverty and socio-economic problems. Meantime, imperialists are able to continue with their plunder as they divert the people with such lofty targets.

Even as they give doleouts, monopoly capitalists further tighten their hold on worldwide food production and supply systems. As it is in the Philippines, many countries are now dependent on food imports while the old feudal and semifeudal land monopoly exists and foreign imperialists along

with their local co-conspirators in agribusiness,



mining and logging lord it over.

Doleouts are provided for primary education but governments slash budgets for public education as part of the austerity measures dictated by the IMF-WB. Worldwide, almost half of the youth of high school age are unable to go to school. Simultaneously, the privatization and commercialization of education is being pushed. Schools are made to serve as molders of personnel whose skills are appropriate to the needs of multinational corporations.

Free health programs for mothers and infants are offered, but public hospitals and health services in general are allowed to go to pot. In the name of guaranteeing "intellectual property rights," imperialist companies are able to maintain atrociously high prices of medicines, thus depriving millions of people of access to affordable medicines. Almost nine million children younger than five years of age die annually, mainly because of malnutrition, the spread of preventable diseases and lack of clean water and sanitation.

Declarations have been made on the need to protect the environment, but the MDG is utterly useless in the face of the destruction wrought by monopoly capitalists whose only interest is to plunder and extract super-profits. Monopoly capitalist companies in the fields of energy, manufacturing, transportation, industrial agriculture, mining and construction, among others spew destructive chemicals without letup, causing dangerous

Eight points of deception

The imperialists through the United Nations set in 2000 the following targets for countries to achieve by 2015. It is absurd that the problems they purportedly want to resolve are the very problems that are being exacerbated by imperialist neoliberal policies worldwide.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality rate
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

changes in global climates and wreaking havoc on the lives of many peoples.

Mountains, bodies of water and entire land masses have been completely destroyed by mining, logging and other plunderous operations that are accompanied by widespread abuse, brutality, evacuations, destruction of livelihoods and other violations of the rights of the local population.

The MDG does not have any genuine intention of solving poverty, hunger, widespread disease and corruption.

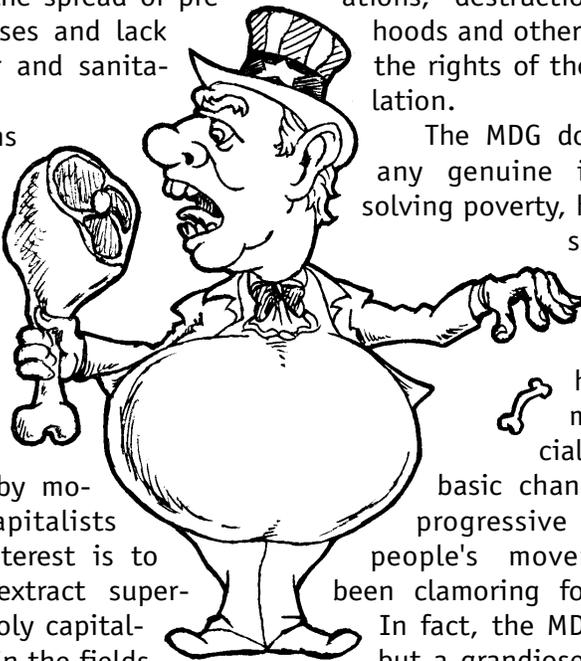
It pays no heed to demands for social justice and basic changes that the progressive forces and people's movements have been clamoring for worldwide.

In fact, the MDG is nothing but a grandiose scheme and propaganda offensive of monopoly capitalism to halt the advance of the progressive forces and people against imperialist neoliberal globalization.

It covers up imperialist wars of aggression and the squandering of huge resources, the continued existence of colonialism and neocolonialism and monopoly capitalist greed which have condemned most countries and the majority of the world's population to endless bondage and oppression.

It is currently the duty of the revolutionary and progressive forces the world over to expose the emptiness of this grandiose imperialist scheme that is the MDG. The impoverished peoples of the world who comprise the majority must be made aware of this scheme, and their attention and actions focused on the need for a decisive solution to injustice and oppression which are rooted in the rottenness of societies ruled by imperialism.

In every corner of the globe, wherever are found the poor, the deprived, the subjugated and oppressed, revolutionary struggle and widespread mass movements must be thoroughly advanced against imperialism and reaction. There must be massive, all-out and continuing education, organizing and mobilization of the majority for national and social liberation and all-rounded development. **AB**



Philippines for sale

Like a businessman desperate to make a sale, Aquino declared in his five-day visit to the US that the “Philippines is now open for business,” as if this is the first time it has been so.

Aquino offered programs and projects under his government's Private-Public Partnership (PPP) to foreign investors at bargain-basement prices. He lured them by providing tax incentives and various other privileges. The PPP, said Aquino, will serve as the main engine in propelling the economy and a key factor in the fight against poverty.

Up to \$17 billion worth of projects under the PPP were opened by this “regime of privatization” to foreigners. Among them are projects for road and airport construction, train systems, power generation, water distribution, irrigation and construction of schoolbuildings. Ten of these projects worth \$4.5 billion were auctioned off by Aquino in the US. Aquino is also putting up for sale export processing zones, business process outsourcing, tourism, mining, electronics, housing and agricultural projects.

Aquino also begged the Obama regime to pass the Save Our Industries Act and give preferential treatment to the Philippines especially in the importation of garments sewn in the Philippines out of US-made materials. Although garments remain the Philippines' second biggest export, it has suffered a 67% drop from its peak in 1960-70 and is now down to an income of less than a billion dollars annually.

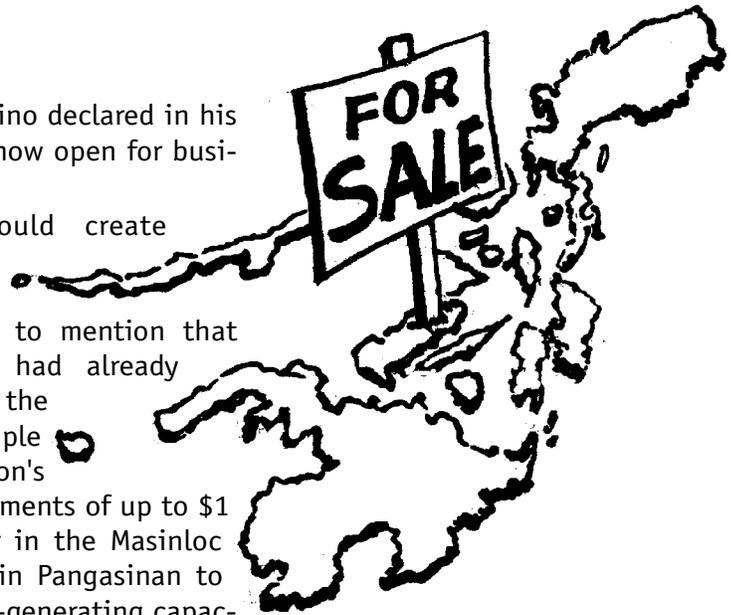
Although the achievements claimed by Aquino were no different from those of previous puppets of US imperialism, he boasted upon his arrival that a number of US corporations had pledged \$2.4 billion worth of additional invest-

ments that would create 43,000 new jobs in the next three years. He failed to mention that many of these had already been pledged in the past. One example is AES Corporation's additional investments of up to \$1 billion next year in the Masinloc coal-fired plant in Pangasinan to double its power-generating capacity. The pledge had actually already been announced as early as 2007.

Aquino also witnessed the signing of the agreement to provide \$434 million in assistance from the Millennium Challenge Corporation in the US, which in turn came from the US government's Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

The MCA provides aid on condition that the recipient allows further US intervention in the country's economy, politics and military, including the implementation of COIN under US military guidance. Although MCC conditionalities do not explicitly mention their “counterinsurgency” character, MCA programs and projects purposely focus on areas where the people's armed revolutionary resistance is believed to be strong. In the Philippines, this is focused mainly in areas where the New People's Army is said to be strong.

Two-hundred fourteen million dollars (\$214 million), almost half of the fund, has been allotted for the construction and repair of a 200-kilometer road network for the whole of Samar island that will connect 15 municipalities. The project has been given priority because the AFP claims that Samar is one of the islands where the NPA



maintains an expansive and consolidated base, and which government forces find hard to traverse because of the lack of roads. Thus, “clearing” the area and constructing a road network becomes crucial in implementing the “counterinsurgency” program.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has already been implementing the Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) in tandem with the AFP in target barrios to “soften” the locals for coming military campaigns. The AFP makes no bones about the KALAHI-CIDSS projects being part of efforts to “neutralize” areas where the NPA and CPP are strong.

Way back during the Arroyo regime, the MCC, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and World Bank (WB) had already been supporting programs combining “poverty alleviation” and “counterinsurgency” in the countryside. One of the main programs funded was KALAHI-CIDSS. At the start of October, the WB approved a \$59.1 million loan to supplement funds for KALAHI-CIDSS.

Jueteng rooted in rotten society

The prevalence of jueteng nationwide is a recurring issue. It permeates all levels of society as it is abetted by corruption in the government and the police. The Senate and the House of Representatives have conducted numerous inquiries into the issue where courageous witnesses revealed the involvement of top police officers and officials in the national and local governments.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz recently disclosed that some personalities close to Benigno Aquino III receive monthly payolas of P5-8 million from jueteng operators. He revealed to the Senate that one of these officials is DILG Usec. Enrico Puno. He also revealed that Aquino cousin and top campaign contributor Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco asked him to "go easy" on his exposé.

The revelations of Archbishop Cruz and other whistleblowers have once again cast the spotlight on jueteng, demonstrating its widespread operation and how it benefits corrupt officials from the bottom to the top rungs of the bureaucracy at the expense of the people. Fearing its impact on his government, Aquino is trying in vain to downplay the issue. He refused to sack Puno despite clear evidence of his involvement and his offer to resign.

The prevalence and rampant operation of jueteng reflect the rottenness of the ruling social system. While it is illegal, the operation of jueteng is untouchable because of the deep involvement and bribery of government and police officials at different levels.

No good comes out of jueteng and other forms of gambling. It is like opium to the poor. Jueteng operators exploit the people's poverty and willingness to cash in on even the most fleeting relief.

Its operation is systematically laid out and reaches the most remote villages. Dozens of bet collectors openly ply their trade in ev-

ery village. They are hundreds of thousands of unemployed finding "employment" in jueteng.

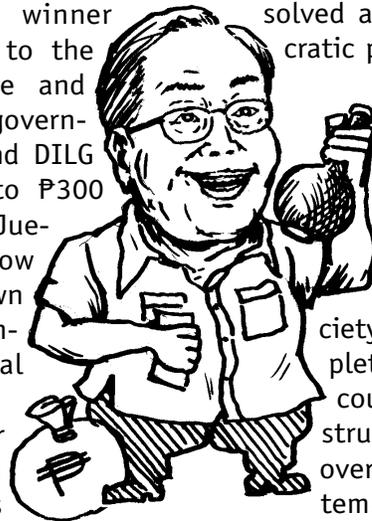
Jueteng operations earn up to P38 billion annually. A system is in place for the sharing of jueteng money among bet collectors (*kubrador*), local "group leaders" (*kabo*) and lottery winner drawers (*bolero*) up to the operators, the police and national and local government leaders. PNP and DILG officials receive up to P300 million every year. Jueteng operators are now using the Small Town Lottery (STL) to camouflage their illegal gambling operations.

The great number of people involved in jueteng operations

and its wide extent give jueteng operators a significant role in elections and governance. No government official lasts in office without getting involved in jueteng.

The revolutionary movement fights jueteng through painstaking organizing, educating and conducting propaganda work among the people, raising their cultural level and carrying out agrarian revolution and other means of improving the people's livelihood. The problem is increasingly being solved as revolutionary democratic power replaces the old rotten rule and as the people's politics and livelihood develop in revolutionary areas.

However, as jueteng is systemic and deeply rooted in society, it can only be completely eradicated in the course of revolutionary struggle and the decisive overhaul of the rotten system.



Water rates to be hiked anew

Metro Manila residents will again have to bear the brunt of water rate increases this October. Starting October 9, a regular consumer of the Manila Water Company will have to pay an additional P0.10 per cubic meter while a Maynilad Water consumer will also have to pay for an additional P0.09 per cubic meter beginning October 10.

The water service companies justified the increases, saying that the peso's value had inflated vis a vis the US dollar. They passed on to their consumers the resulting higher interest on their external debt.

Opposition to the new fee hikes is mounting as these companies are known to have previously defrauded their consumers by prematurely increasing charges to raise capital for still unimplemented projects. The projects include the rehabilitation and improvement of Wawa Dam, Angat Dam and Laiban Dam; the Laguna Lake Treated Bulk Water Project; and the Earthquake Contingency Project.

Boon to foreigners, bane to the people

The Quezon City-Central Business District or QC-CBD is an infrastructure program being pushed by imperialist international banks to transform a strategic location in Quezon City into a commercial center for foreign and local capitalists. It is now aggressively being pushed by the Aquino regime at the expense of urban poor residents in the area who stand to lose their livelihoods.

A World Bank plan. The World Bank (WB) laid out the plan for the establishment of the QC-CBD as early as 2005. The WB also enlisted the Asian Development Bank and contracted Japan's ALMEC Corp. to complete and detail the plan. The projected cost of the project then was \$3 billion. In exchange for WB funding, the bank shall have a direct hand in the project by giving policy advice, technical assistance and investment support.

Gloria Arroyo issued Executive Order 620 in 2007 designating 250.6 hectares of land covering the

East and North Triangles and the Veterans Memorial Medical Center for the QC-CBD. It also included the Quezon Memorial Circle and parts of Quezon Avenue and the University of the Philippines campus already being leased to foreign companies.

Buildings for businesses, banks, residences, private offices and institutions, call centers and tourism are planned to be built at the QC-CBD.

The QC-CBD will serve as a world trade and business hub like the Ayala Commercial Center and other commercial centers in the

country. It is projected to become a center of gravity in Metro Manila and attract broad markets owing to its strategic location.

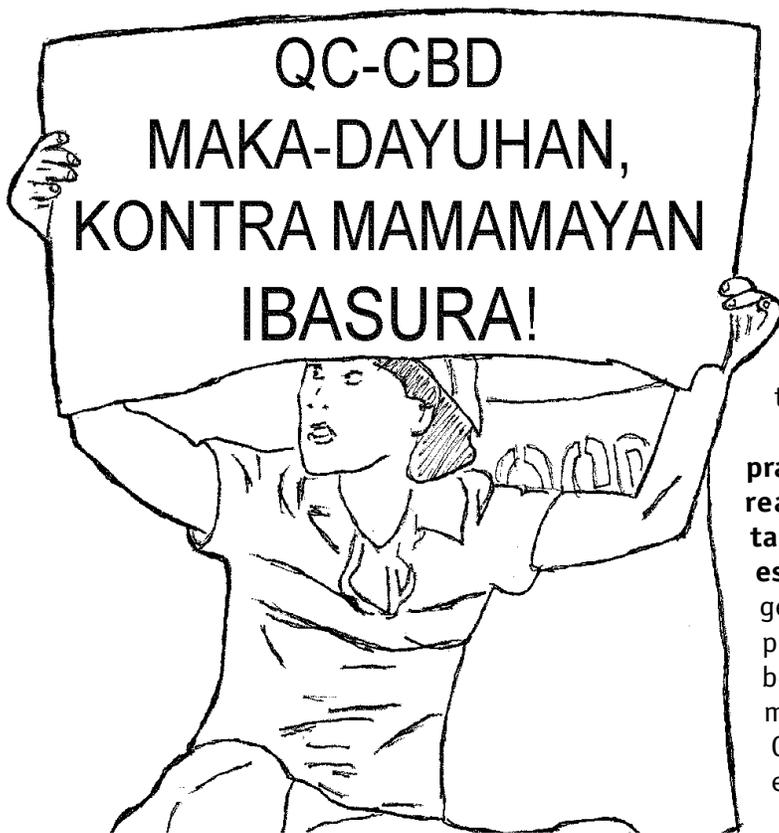
Big-comprador and bureaucrat-capitalist interests. Big bourgeois compradors will benefit the most from the QC-CBD project. They include the

Ayalas (Ayala Holdings Inc.) who have bought a 29.1-hectare section of the North Triangle for P22.1 billion. The Gokongwei family (Robinsons Land Corporation) has acquired 15 hectares, while Lucio Tan is said to have invested P15 billion for the QC-CBD. Henry Sy for his part has been expanding his SM City in the North Avenue area even before the entry of the Ayalas and other big capitalists.

Construction firm New San Jose Builders Inc. (NSJB) reaped its share early, bagging a contract from the NHA to occupy the North Triangle area for P50 million. It has built a transport terminal and a batching plant without paying the NHA.

NSJB is owned by Jerry Acuzar, brother-in-law of Executive Secretary Paquito "Jojo" Ochoa, who was then Quezon City administrator. Then city mayor Feliciano Belmonte was a partner of NSJB in the garbage collection business and also profited from the Quezon City hall sidewalk project. It is also NSJB that purchased the land in Montalban, Rizal where it built houses for the relocation of the North Triangle residents.

Eviction of poor residents. The project is going to affect 24,500 families in the area. Houses have already been demolished and commercial establishments like the Trinoma Mall at North Avenue have been built here. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has carried out operations to clear the sidewalks in the North and East Triangles. Meanwhile, the UP-Ayala Technohub was built in Commonwealth Avenue on part of the UP Diliman campus despite opposition from



students and teachers.

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY), Confederation of Unity for the Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (COURAGE) and small businessmen are firmly against the project. KADAMAY says the QC-CBD will only serve the interests of big capitalists and will be a bane to the poor who will be driven out of their homes and lose their livelihoods.

KADAMAY opposes the planned relocation of the residents to Montalban, Rizal as it will take them away from their jobs and schools. Moreover, the relocation site lacks water and electricity and the houses that have been built there are substandard. The families to be relocated are only given token assistance comprised of P1000 cash, five kilos of rice and a few canned goods and packs of instant noodles. They will have to pay P300 to P1000 pesos a month for their relocation housing.

KADAMAY added that the 3,000 families which the NHA claimed to have voluntarily relocated have returned to the North Triangle because of lack of jobs at the relocation site. KADAMAY asserts that if the residents are to be relocated, the site should not be outside Quezon City so as not to take the poor residents from their jobs, schools and livelihood.

Transfer of government offices. To clear the way for the building of infrastructure for foreign

Mass action averts North Triangle demolition

Collective action by the residents of Sitio San Roque, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa in North Triangle, Quezon City successfully prevented the attempt of National Housing Authority (NHA) personnel to demolish their homes for the implementation of the QC-CBD project.

The residents began setting up barricades as early as September 22. They lighted candles outside their houses, with some of them holding a vigil to prevent the police and NHA demolition teams from entering the area. Others fortified their homes. Mass meetings and discussions were held to explain the importance of defending the livelihood of the poor and resist the demolition.

The residents massed up the following day to stop the demolition, getting out of their homes and barricading the streets. The mass action swelled up to Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA), where the people linked arms and put up obstacles to block the police.

Violence erupted when the demolition teams forced their way in and destroyed some houses. Some policemen threatened residents with their guns. Those manning the barricades were hosed down with water. Seven residents were injured and two were arrested. The people resorted to throwing stones at the NHA personnel to stop the destruction of their houses.

At around 3:00 in the afternoon, the Regional Trial Court Branch 226 issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) against the demolition. Even Benigno Aquino III who was then in the US was compelled to order the NHA to temporarily stop the demolition. The poor residents have vowed to remain on guard and block any attempt to demolish their homes. AB

businesses, even government offices will be transferred to the so-called National Government Center in Batasan Hills. The offices include the National Housing Authority, Sugar Regulatory Administration, Bureau of Internal Revenue and at least ten other agencies. The project will also possibly affect the campus of the Philippine Science High School. The buildings and land to be vacated by these offices will be leased or sold to private investors.

In line with the "medical tourism" program, plans are underway for the privatiza-

tion of such hospitals in the area as the National Kidney Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Heart Center, Veterans Memorial Hospital and the Philippine Children's Medical Center. The cost of services in these hospitals has begun to shoot up beyond the means of the poor.

The organization of government employees also opposes the QC-CBD project because it serves the interests of foreign investors instead of public service. They are also concerned that the transfer of government offices will be used as a pretext for the mass dismissal of government employees. AB

Areas and number of families affected

San Roque (16,000)
Brgy. Central (5,000)
Pinyahan (2,000)
Palanas (1,000)
San Isidro (500)

Aquino orders further cuts in meager education budget

The Aquino regime has slashed the meager education budget, contrary to its claims of prioritizing education.

The regime allocated only P23.4 billion for the 112 state universities and colleges for 2011. This is 1.7% lower than the P23.8 billion allotment in 2010.

Pres. Benigno Aquino III outrightly declared that he is gradually cutting down subsidies for education in order to push state universities and colleges to generate their own funds. The regime is gearing for the further commercialization and privatization of public schools.

Topping the list of schools affected by the budget cuts are the University of the Philippines (20.11% or P1.39 billion), Philippine Normal University (23.59% or P91.35 million), Aurora State College of Technology (22.21%), Cerrillos State College (21.95%), University of Southeastern Philippines (20.03%) and Bicol University (18.82% or P88 million). No funds were allotted for the purchase of new equipment as well as the repair, construction and improvement of facilities.

According to the Kabataan Party, funds raised by state universities and colleges shot up from P1.16 billion in 2000 to P7.78 billion this year and this has covered an increasing part of their expenses. Data also show that in the last decade, students shouldered only 6.6% of the budgets of state universities and colleges. They now provide 22.1% of their schools' budgets by paying higher tuition and other fees. The National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) said the government's share in the total funds of state

universities and colleges has dropped from 87.74% in 2000 to 67.35% this year.

Student walkout. The NUSP led a walkout on the National Day of Action of Youth and Students on September 24 to protest the education budget cuts.

Some 1,500 students walked out of their classes in Metro Manila. Youth and students also held simultaneous mass actions in Ilocos, Central Luzon, Los Baños, Bicol, Tacloban, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu and Davao. The Los Angeles, California chapter of Anakbayan expressed



support for the mass actions in the Philippines.

Walkouts were held at UP Diliman, UP Manila, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and PNU with the support of students from several private schools as well as such groups as the League of Filipino Students, Student Christian Movement and Anakbayan.

They gathered at the University of Santo Tomas before marching towards Mendiola. The students set on fire an effigy of Aquino in Quiapo. Police barricaded the area with barbed wire to prevent the students from proceeding to Malacañang.

Protest at the Batasan. On October 5, several students led by the NUSP held a protest action inside the halls of Congress, expressing their anger for the cuts in the meager education budget. Guards immediately restrained the students and forced them out of the building. They were met outside by students who were also holding a protest action at the gate. **AB**

FBI cracks down on antiwar activists

A series of raids by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on houses of activists opposed to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and supporting the struggle of the Palestinian and Colombian peoples have drawn strong condemnation. The attacks were conducted on September 24 in the states of Illinois and Minnesota in the US.

The US Department of Justice's Joint Terrorism Task Force conducted the raids the same day warrants were issued to search the activists' houses and compel them to face a grand jury. The targeted activists had released political statements defending the struggle of the Palestinian and Colombian peoples. The longtime organizers have also denounced the US' wars of aggression and its repression of other countries. They are leaders of organizations like the Twin Cities Anti-War Committee, Palestine Solidarity Group, Colombia Action Network and Freedom Road Socialist Organization. **AB**



NPA metes punishment on 1003rd Brigade

The New People's Army 1st Pulang Bagani Company (PBC) staged a harassment operation last October 5 against the patrol base of the 1003rd Brigade of the Philippine Army 10th Infantry Division in Paquibato Proper and Paradise Embac. Red guerillas also harassed the same troops in Barangay Fatima last September 1. These barangays are under Paquibato District of Davao City.

The military actions were launched to mete punishment on soldiers of the 1003rd Brigade who have been deployed in the area to ensure unimpeded exploration activities of big mining companies. Since last year, 11 applications have been filed at the Mines and Geosciences Bureau covering over

95,000 hectares. The affected areas include the mineral-rich uplands of Davao City, Davao del Norte and Bukidnon. More than half of the applications are for Paquibato District.

To silence opposition against largescale mining, the 1003rd Brigade has been launching intensified combat operations. There have been more than 1,000 victims of human rights violations in a month, including civilians Julius Tammodes and Reynaldo Labrador who were murdered by soldiers.

The 1st PBC launched ten tactical offensives against the 1003rd Bde from July to September in response to persistent requests from residents. **AB**

NPA belies alleged victories of the 8th ID

The Efren Martires Command (EMC) of the New People's Army (NPA) in Eastern Visayas has belied claims of victories by the Philippine Army 8th ID in the face of a string of losses suffered by the military in NPA tactical offensives.

Maj. Gen. Mario Chan, 8th ID chief, had boasted that the military had seized several abandoned NPA camps in Samar, resulting in what he said was the imminent defeat of the revolutionary forces. According to Comrade Karlos Manuel, EMC spokesperson, the military has nothing to brag about because the NPA, being a guerrilla army,

does not have permanent bases.

In fact, the military's braggadocio is only a coverup for its losses in the hands of the NPA and the relentless resistance waged by the revolutionary people, said Manuel. The EMC spokesperson said that it is mass support that is decisive in each victory, and not military strength alone.

According to initial reports obtained by the EMC from guerrilla fronts, the NPA in the region was able to launch 51 tactical offensives against 8th ID troops, police and other armed elements of the reactionary government from January to September, resulting in 74 dead and 25 wounded on the enemy side. The NPA, on the other hand, lost ten comrades and suffered six wounded. The NPA was also able to seize 18 firearms.

These tactical offensives were successful in spite of the reactionary government's much bigger military force.

Despite the 239 additional soldiers deployed by the 8th ID in the three Samar provinces, the BHB is certain of victory not only due to its armed strength and correct strategies and tactics, but because of the people's continuing support. The EMC said it was concerned not so much for itself but with the people because the addition of military troops will only result in more cases of human rights violations. **AB**

Opposition mounts to pension reforms in France

OPPOSITION to pension reforms pushed by French Pres. Nicolas Sarkozy has intensified. Last October 2, up to 2.9 million French people took to the streets to denounce the globalization policy which, among others, calls for raising the retirement age of workers from 60 to 62 years old.

Around 200 protest rallies were launched in France, according to the Confederation Francaise Democratique du Travail (CFDT or French Democratic Confederation of Labor), one of the biggest workers' federations in the country. This was despite heavy rainfall in the western part of the country and various repressive acts barring workers from taking part in the protest actions. **AB**

5 peasant leaders killed by the military

The killings and repression of leaders and activists of progressive organizations continue without letup under the US-Aquino regime. Five peasant leaders became the latest victims of extrajudicial killings from September up to the first week of October. Personalities critical of the Aquino government have also been targeted for harassment.

October 1. Military men killed peasant leader Rene "Toto" Quirante, 48, in Sitio Amomoyong, Barangay Trinidad, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental. Quirante is the vice chairperson of KAUGMAON, an affiliate of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP). He is the 14th victim of extrajudicial killing under the US-Aquino regime and the 41st victim of political killing in Negros island.

Quirante was attending a peasant consultation and slept over at the house of Romeo Gador at Sitio Amomoyong when some 30 soldiers of the 11th IB attacked them at around 2 a.m. The soldiers dragged them out of the house and tortured them.

Quirante was shot three times in the head while Gador was freed, according to Fred Caña, secretary general of Karapatan-Negros. Qui-

rante had received several death threats, prompting him to seek help from the mayor and town council of Guihulngan. In 2007, he was detained on a fabricated rebellion charge but was released one and a half months later due to lack of evidence.

September 24. Elements of the 39th IB arrested and tortured Eliseo "Ka Bimbo" Tada, an ailing Red fighter. He was arrested at Datu Danwata, Malita, Davao del Sur while being brought to a hospital. Subjected to torture, he was presented to the media as a surrenderee and forced to confess that he participated in an NPA tactical offensive in Akboal, Upper Suyan, Sarangani last September 21. But this is impossible as the place where he was arrested was too far away from the site of the NPA attack and he had long been suffer-

ing from a serious illness.

September 23. The military desecrated the bodies of five activists who met a tragic death when the vehicle they were riding collided with a ten-wheeler truck in Pigpatan, Alcala, Cagayan. The fatalities were Salvador Doniego, Benedicto de Leon, Ileen Robles and two others who remain unidentified. Two of their companions were seriously injured. All of them were members of Anakpawis in Cagayan Valley. Accused as NPA, their bodies were not attended to but were merely lined up at the back of the Alcala town hall. The military also refuses to allow relatives of the injured to visit them at the hospital.

September 21. The military harassed Kelly Delgado, 34, secretary general of Karapatan-Southern Mindanao. At around 10 a.m., the Philippine Army 1003rd Brigade led by Brig. Gen. Eduardo del Rosario and Datu Ruben Labawan held a press conference at Apongcola, Anda Street, Davao City. Labawan is a military agent and the brains behind the fake "pangayaw" (tribal war) in Paquibato, Davao City. The general accused Delgado of masterminding an alleged plan to liquidate Eastern Mindanao Spokesperson Lt. Col. Randolph Cabangbang, citing a witness' affidavit that Delgado had ordered three New People's Army members to implement the plan. He also claimed that Karapatan and Bayan Muna are front organizations of the NPA. Karapatan has obtained reports that Delgado has been targeted for assassination under the government's counterinsurgency program. He faces a string of trumped-up cases and is included in the 10th ID's order of battle (OB).

80 days, 8,000 victims

Up to 90 cases of human rights violations victimizing around 8,000 individuals in Mindanao were documented by the 80th day of Benigno Aquino III's administration, according to National Democratic Front-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge Madlos.

In Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) where over 12 battalions have been deployed, 42 cases of human rights violations were documented, victimizing 7,721 individuals.

In North Eastern Mindanao Region (NEMR), 41 cases of human rights violations were reported, with 286 families or 1,252 individuals as victims. Most striking among these was the evacuation of 300 families from several villages in Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte due to intensified military operations.

In Far South Mindanao Region, seven cases were reported, which included rape, theft and illegal arrest last July and August.



September 21. Criselda Cabangon-David, 27, acting editor of the weekly *Ang Diaryo Natin*, has been included by the AFP Southern Luzon Command in its OB. According to a military informant, David is listed as an NPA officer in Quezon province. David founded the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP)-Quezon chapter and serves as its secretary general. She was also a student leader and campus journalist at Enverga University in Lucena City. She is known for her fearless articles against abusive persons and supporting peasants fighting for their right to land.

September 13. Soldiers of the 36th IB abducted Renato Deliguier and Agustino Ladera, fisherfolk from Marihatag, Surigao del Sur. Their families received reports that they had been brought to the PNP station in Tandag, Surigao del Sur, but police officers denied having them in custody. The 36th IB has cooked up an opposite story, falsely claiming that NPA members abducted the two fisherfolk.

September 12. Elements of the 50th and 86th IB killed Elmer Valdez, 33, a farmer and resident of Conconig East, Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur. His decomposing body was found in a shallow grave three days after he

disappeared.

The military also harassed and tried to prevent his family, barangay officials, and representatives of non-governmental organizations from finding his body. Valdez went up to a nearby mountain around 10 a.m. to cut bamboo poles for the repair of their kitchen when he was accosted by the military who accused him of being a member of the New People's Army.

Meanwhile, two more farmers were harassed and accused as NPA members by military troops. "Niel" was cutting bamboo when he was nabbed by patrolling soldiers. He was threatened and accused of being NPA. "Ben", 60, who was grazing his cow also had the same experience. He strongly belied military accusations that he was NPA, but was nonetheless detained for four hours.

September 7. Elements of the 9th Infantry Division massacred four members of the Masbate People's Organization. Vicente Flores, 41; Richard Oliva, 44; Melecio Monacillo, 45; and Jonathan Monacillo, 21, were resting in the house of a friend in Mobo, Masbate when they were shot to death with automatic rifle fire. The military concocted a story that they were NPA guerrillas killed in a gunbattle. AB

10-day protest action for land reform

Farmers began a ten-day protest action on September 29 to press the Aquino administration to implement land reform. The last day of protest on October 8 will coincide with the 100th day of the Aquino administration.

"100 days of Noynoy Aquino Useless to Farmers!" said a placard while members of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and its allied organizations burned 100 pictures of Aquino in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in Quezon City last September 29. It symbolized the farmers' opposition to the policies of the current antipeasant and antipeople government, said Antonio Flores, KMP spokesperson.

Last October 6, farmers marched from DAR to Mendiola where they were forcibly dispersed by the police. At least seven rallyists suffered head injuries after being hit by baton-wielding police-

men. The farmers returned the following day to continue their protest.

Meanwhile, Lito Bais, acting president of United Luisita Workers' Union (ULWU) and Felix Nacpil, president of the Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Hacienda Luisita (AMBALA) called for vigilance over maneuvers of the Aquino government favoring the Cojuangco-Aquino family in the light of the suspension of the September 27 Mediation Panel hearing.

The three-member Mediation Panel was formed by the Supreme Court in the first week of September to conduct a series of hearings within 30 days purportedly to re-

solve the decades-long Hacienda Luisita rift. Before the deadlock, the HLI had announced on September 14 that it was open to distributing 4,100 hectares of the total 6,543 hectares of Hacienda Luisita.

The HLI management's alleged openness, however, was conditioned on land valuation estimates of at least ₱1,000,000 per hectare set by a real state assessor it had commissioned instead of the Landbank's valuation of ₱167,000 per hectare. It was proof that the Cojuangco family was not interested in distributing the land as it would be impossible for the farmers to afford such a huge amount.

A week before the deadline, the Mediation Panel stopped the hearing when AMBALA members and their lawyer Joebert Pahilda walked out, saying the HLI was merely ma-

nipulating the proceedings. AMBALA petitioned the Supreme Court to discontinue the hearing and immediately order the distribution of the hacienda lands in accordance with the decision of the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council.

The Supreme Court, however, dismissed AMBALA's motion and continued with the hearing. A few days after, Farmworkers Agrarian Reform Movement (FARM) members and their lawyer Christian Monsod also walked out. The court was then compelled to stop the hearings which had already become pointless. AB