

Why is it difficult to ascertain when Oplan Bantay Laya ends and Oplan Bayanihan begins? Is it because one is no different from the other except for different names and the latter's use of deceptive words like "respectful of human rights," "development-oriented activities" and "peace"? The first quarter 2011 data gathered by Karapatan present a profile of human rights violations indistinguishable from that committed by the U.S.-Arroyo regime. President Noynoy Aquino follows closely the U.S. Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Guide whereby all forms of protest are to be barred in the guise of "winning peace."

The U.S.-Aquino regime's supposed new Internal Peace and Security Plan, Oplan Bayanihan (OPB), officially started on January 1, 2011 soon after the failed Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) which officially ended on December 31, 2010. Oplan Bayanihan will last until 2016.

Consistent with the regime's attempt at projecting Aquino as the forerunner of change and that units of the AFP as newly converted human rights defenders, the Noynoy Oplan uses the Filipino term for mutual aid, *bayanihan*, as its name.

Karapatan will come out with a primer on Oplan Bayanihan to expose the OPB's features which drag the civilian population into counter-insurgency

operations and activities through "civil-military operations," building "peace and security" and "people-centered" approaches. OPB as a camouflage for state terrorism will eventually be fully exposed.

From January 1 to March 31, 2011 there are 14 victims of extrajudicial killings (EJKs), 70 who were threatened, harassed and intimidated and 1,427 internally displaced persons due to forced evacuation of rural communities. It is alarming that for the first three months (January to March) of 2011 there are already 14 EJK cases compared to the 18 victims in the first six months (January to June) of 2010 under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

TABLE 1: Victims of extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearance under Noynoy Aquino's government (per region)

Region	Extrajudicial Killing			Enforced Disappearance		
	Jul - Dec 2010 (updated)	Jan-Mar 2011	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)	Jul - Dec 2010	Jan-Mar 2011	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)
Cordillera Administrative Region	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cagayan Valley	0	2	2	0	0	0
Ilocos	2	0	2	0	0	0
Central Luzon	1	0	1	0	0	0
Southern Tagalog	9	1	10	2	0	2
Bicol	8	7	15	0	0	0
NCR	0	1	1	0	0	0
Eastern Visayas	6	0	6	0	0	0
Central Visayas	1	0	1	0	0	0
Western Visayas	1	0	1	0	0	0
Northern Mindanao	0	1	1	0	0	0
Caraga	0	0	0	2	0	2
Socsksargen	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Mindanao	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Mindanao	3	2	5	0	1	1
ARMM	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	31	14	45	4	1	5
Organized	20	7	27	0	1	1
Women	3	0	3	0	0	0

Based on reports gathered by Karapatan

Lives lost under Oplan Bayanihan

A local businessman, **Pedrito Bico**, 60, and his son, **Christian**, 28, together with their employees, **Crispiano Gamier**, 35, and **Arman Queto**, 34, were massacred in Bico's house in Libmanan, Camarines Sur on February 4. Four other employees of the Bico family were wounded. According to the survivors and witnesses, around seven to ten masked men with high-powered firearms entered the residence and fired at the victims. The paramilitary group Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) was behind the massacre. It will be remembered that in 2009, a certain 2Lt. Obandam of the 31st Infantry Battalion harassed Catherine and Ryan Bico, Pedrito's daughter and other son. The soldiers manhandled and detained the two, and accused them of being members of the New People's Army (NPA). Catherine filed formal charges against the military but the case did not prosper.

In Malilipot, Albay, farmer and Bayan Muna member **Rodel Estrellado**, 34 was abducted on February 25 by four armed men who posed as members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. Estrellado was walking home from the local market when he was accosted and forced into a gray car. Earlier the same day, Maj. Harold Cabunoc, spokesperson of the 9th Infantry Division of the AFP, issued a statement that an alleged member of the NPA named Elmer Estrellado was killed in an armed encounter in Buluang, Bato, Camarines Sur. That same afternoon, the military reported to the Bato police that they conducted a strike operation which resulted in the death of one Estrellado.

Estrellado's family searched for Rodel in army camps and on February 27, based on the AFP's news report, went to the funeral parlor where "Elmer Estrellado" was reportedly brought. To the family's

dismay, "Elmer" turned out to be Rodel whom they have been searching for. The local police's investigation report revealed that the military had a hand in Estrellado's abduction and disappearance.

Peasant leader, **Rudy Dejos**, 50, was killed, along with his son, **Rudyric**, 26. Rudy is a tribal chieftain of the B'laan tribe and Vice-Chairperson of Zone-1 Farmers Association (Zofa) which is affiliated with Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP). Father and son were found dead on February 27 inside their house in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur. Mercy Dejos, Rudy's wife, arrived home and found her husband and son dead with signs of torture on their bodies. Since June last year, the Dejoses have been subjected to threats and harassment by members of the 39th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army. The soldiers have been discouraging the farmers in the village from forming Zofa, and got angry when the farmers affiliated their local organization with KMP. The residents are being required to report to the Barangay Defense System organized by the military.

According to the report of a fact-finding mission organized by Karapatan and people's organizations in the region, the 39th IBPA, led by Lt. Col. Oliver Artuz, and the Philippine National Police (PNP), misinformed the public that the Dejoses were killed by members of the NPA because of a personal grudge. The police has not conducted an investigation.

Another peasant leader, **Bonifacio Labasan**, was shot dead on March 9. He was on his way to a relative's house in Bgy. San Mateo, Isabela Province. Labasan and his daughter, Lani Miguel, were riding in tandem on his motorcycle, when another motorcycle with two men aboard overtook them. The men tried to force Labasan to go with them, but the latter refused. One of the men shot Labasan on the torso with



JUSTICE! (from left to right) Rodel Estrellado, Rudy Dejos and his son Rudyric.

a gun covered with a handkerchief. Lani's appeal to spare her father was ignored. Labasan was once again shot, this time in the head, thus ensuring his death. Labasan was the chairperson of Danggayon Dagiti Mannalon iti Isabela (Dagami), a farmers' organization in Isabela. It is a local affiliate of KMP.

Intensified harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders

Members of the **Community Health Education, Services and Training in the Cordillera Region (Chestcore)** continue to be targets of military surveillance. Threats have been made against their lives. Like the Morong 43 health workers, the Chestcore volunteers have been vilified as members of the NPA, since 2007, because of the health services they render to far-flung communities in the Cordilleras.

Chestcore social worker and Health Programs Desk Coordinator **Milagros Ao-wat**, 57, received threatening text messages on her cellphone on January 26. One of the messages said, "*Tsak tsak tsak o bang bang bang... Hahaha! Ingat kads ... O ping ping ping ka Ja?*" (Tsak tsak tsak or bang bang bang... Hahaha! Take care...) and "*Gusto mo bang sa kutson o sa malamig na lupa. Sabagay kads andyan sina Charlie, Daniel, Liyap at marami pa. Tsek tsek tsek*" (Do you prefer a cushioned coffin or cold soil. Anyway, Charlie, Daniel, Liyap and many others are also there). According to the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, the names mentioned in the text message were those of victims of extrajudicial killings by state security forces. In addition, Milagros felt that her house and family were under surveillance.

Rodwena Quilop, 41, Administrative Officer of the Center for People's Resources and Services was arrested at the new Bacolod-Silay Airport, Negros Occidental, on March 1. She had just arrived from a training seminar on the use of Quick Books Accounting Software in Bohol. She was accosted by some 20 members of the Police Intelligence Unit and the AFP. She was falsely accused of being a member of an NPA unit which allegedly burned down a transloading station owned by the Victorias Milling Company in Toboso, Negros Occidental in 2008.

Her belongings, including a laptop computer, two USB flashdrives and cash, were taken from her. All were later returned except the cash. Rodwena is currently detained in the Bacolod City Provincial Jail.

TABLE 2: Victims of extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearance under Noynoy Aquino's government (per sector)

Sector	EJK	ED
	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)
Peasant	25	3
Worker	4	1
Indigenous People	4	0
Government Employee	3	0
Teacher	1	0
Youth and student	2	1
Environmentalist	2	0
Entrepreneur	2	0
Urban poor	1	0
Minor	1	0
Total	45	5
Organized	27	1
Women	3	0

TABLE 3: Victims of extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearance under the Noynoy Aquino's government (per organization)

Organization	EJK	ED
	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)	Total (July 2010 - March 2011)
Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)	12	0
Bayan Muna	5	0
Anakpawis Partylist	1	0
Katibu Partylist	3	0
ACT Teachers Partylist	1	0
Kabataan Partylist	0	1
COURAGE	1	0
Others	4	0
Total	27	1
Women	3	0

Based on reports gathered by Karapatan

Families were not spared

On January 5, soldiers and members of the Civilian Armed Geographical Unit (CAFGU) barged into **Manuelito and Annabelle Loreno's** house in Bgy. Binulusan Grande, Calinog, Iloilo. The soldiers pointed their M-14 rifles at **Annabelle and her five daughters**, whose ages range from 3 to 14 years. They ordered the family not to move or they would be shot. The eldest daughter scampered away crying and hit her head against the wall.

Annabelle demanded that the soldiers point their guns away from her and the children. She asked what they were after. The soldiers, led by a certain Opeña, said that they were after NPAs.

The incident left traumatic marks on the Loreno children, specially the eldest daughter who later exhibited odd behaviour due to “anxiety reaction.” She was reported to have tied a younger sister’s hand and placed another younger sister inside a sack while laughing. She has sudden laughing bouts without provocation.

Members of the 34th and 63rd IBPA went from house to house in Carolina, Matuguinao, Western Samar. They forced residents of the village to attend a meeting. **Eddie Jalayjay** was one of those visited by the soldiers and was escorted by them to the town center. **Eddie’s four children**, with ages ranging from two to ten years old, were left in the house with some of the soldiers. The children were asked where the guns were hidden, to which they replied in the negative. The soldiers accused the children of lying.

Communities under attack

On January 25, residents of **Bgy. Corazon de Jesus, San Juan City** set up barricades against PNP-SWAT demolition teams composed of firetrucks, snipers and men armed with batons and arnis sticks. The residents wanted a dialog with Mayor Guia Gomez-Estrada and a halt to the demolition. Senator Jinggoy Estrada, former mayor of San Juan City, plans to build a business district in the area. There is no offer of relocation or a housing program for the affected 120 families.

The demolition team violently broke through the barricade using water cannons and tear gas. Hundreds were injured and 16 individuals were arrested including two minors, a paralegal staff and a media person.

Four farmers were forced to act as guides and were used as shield during a military operation on February 6 in Bgy. Marikit, Pantabagan, Nueva Ecija. They were **Joel Añonuevo**, 38; **Pedro Diaz, Jr.**, 25; **Freddie Geronimo**, 45; and **Antonio Rivera**, 35.

They were on their way to their farms when they were accosted by soldiers. Joel and Pedro were tortured and forced to admit that they were members of the NPA. They were coerced to guide the military in finding an NPA camp. Because of the torture and fear for their lives, the four farmers accompanied the soldiers.

There was an encounter with an NPA unit and a firefight ensued. Joel’s shoulder was used by a soldier as “tripod” for his rifle. The farmers were afterwards brought to the provincial police station, detained, and

TABLE 4: Violation of Civil and Political Rights (July 2010 to March 2011)

Violations	No. of victims
Extrajudicial Killing	45
Enforced Disappearance	5
Torture	26
Frustrated Extrajudicial Killing	9
Illegal Arrest and Detention	103
Illegal Search	37
Violation of Domicile	48
Divestment of Property	49
Forced Evacuation	2,251
Threat/Harassment/Intimidation	4,610
Forced/Fake Surrender	7
Use of Civilians in Police and/or Military Operations as Guides and/or Shield	13
Use of Schools, Medical, Religious and Other Public Places for Military Purpose	1,756

Based on reports gathered by Karapatan

were again subjected to tactical interrogation. They were later charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

On March 11, 2011, three teachers and 30 students of the **B’laan Literacy School and Learning Center (BLSLC)** were reportedly harassed by members of the CAFGU and the 73rd IBPA in a village in Malapatan, Sarangani Province.

A 17-year old teacher-apprentice narrated that as their group trekked to a silt basin for tree-planting, soldiers waylaid them and began asking questions about the school and what the children’s activities were. The teachers answered some of the soldiers’ questions politely and asked them to proceed to their staff house and talk with the school officials instead. Some of the children who got to the silt basin reported that soldiers were nearby and even threw small stones in their direction.

Also in March, a BLSLC student reported to his teacher that he was forced by soldiers to hold a gun and wear an ammunitions vest as his photograph was taken by them.

The BLSLC, founded by the B’laan tribe through the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services, Inc. (CLANS), has been subjected to threats and false accusations by elements of the CAFGU and 73rd IBPA since November 2010. Soldiers, led by a certain Sgt. Jake Geron, spread the word that the alternative learning school is a training center for the NPA.

The military’s constant visit to the school, interrogation of teachers and school personnel,

and harassment of students and parents, have terrorized the villagers, specially the children. The school was forced to suspend classes and postpone graduation ceremonies for the school year 2010-2011.

As of this writing, CLANS reported that the military has begun hamletting the community, monitoring and limiting the movement of villagers in and out of the village.

Residents of **Kadiwa, Bgy. San Roque, Navotas City**, an urban poor community, whose homes are for demolition by the local authorities, have petitioned the local court for a temporary restraining order. On March 16, the eve of the court hearing, **Antonio Homo**, Spokesperson and Campaigns Officer of Nagkakaisang Samahan ng Kadiwa (Nasaka or United Association in Kadiwa) was shot and killed.

Antonio arrived at around 8:40 p.m. at one of the houses being used as a venue for Nasaka's meetings. While talking with another community organizer, he was shot from behind by an unidentified assailant. The witness to the incident saw the gunman point the gun at Antonio through a window behind them. The residents believe that the gunman is a member of an armed syndicate in the community hired by local authorities to threaten and harass Nasaka leaders.

Residents of **Bgy. Mahaba, Marihatag, Surigao del Sur**, were again forced to evacuate their homes due to the military's combat operations against the NPA. Elements of the 29th and 23rd IBPA launched air and land reconnaissance missions against the NPA. They bombed and shelled the areas around the village from March 30 to the present. Infantry troops patrolled the communities trying to sow terror among the more than a hundred families. Farmers' movements were curtailed.

The military also barred on March 31 the members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from entering the area to look into the situation of the community. It will be recalled that the community was subjected to forced evacuation in 2006 and 2009 due to intense military operations.

Operations of the Alpha Company of the 79th Infantry Battalion on March 16 in **Bgy. Nagbinlod, Sta. Catalina, Negros Occidental** forced more than fifteen families to flee their homes and escape the



Antonio "Nono" Homo (Photo courtesy of Tudla Productions and Bulatlat)

shooting and bombing by soldiers. Many villagers were also threatened and physically assaulted.

Farmer **Marvin Villegas**, 19, was shot at by the soldiers while he was tending the family's carabao in the field. He sustained gunshot wounds in his right chest and left leg. He was not given medical aid. Marvin was able to limp back home. His father carried him to the village and sought the help of the **Karapatan**

- **Central Visayas Human Rights Monitoring Team** who were then staying at the village and documenting reported abuses by the military.

Unable to find a vehicle to transport Marvin, the Karapatan team together with eleven other farmers carried the wounded to the hospital, despite the lateness of the hour.

At around 10:30 pm, while the group was trekking, soldiers who emerged from the bushes alongside the road accosted them. Despite identifying themselves as civilians who were transporting the wounded, the team and the volunteers were held at gunpoint for hours at the side of the road, and were not allowed to pass.

Marvin was accused of being an NPA combatant while the others were accused of aiding a rebel. The following morning, soldiers brought Marvin to the provincial hospital while the team and the farmers were brought to the Municipal police station and were guarded by the soldiers, led by a certain Corporal Yosores. Nine of the local farmers were later released, while the human rights team was released on March 19.

Those arrested and detained were forced to sign an "agreement" stating that they were not detained.

Quoting from Karapatan's 2010 Year-End Report on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines,

"Aquino's '*daang matuwid*' (righteous path) has been reduced to a populist line to divert the people's attention from the inability of his government to achieve any noteworthy gain that can foreshadow any significant change in any aspect of our society especially human rights. Very early, it has become a U.S. inspired path that is increasingly being marked by the blood of the victims of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, torture, forced displacement and other violations of human rights."

In Honor of Leonard Weinglass

by **Melissa Roxas**

I would like to express my deepest condolences to the family and closest friends of Leonard Weinglass, human rights lawyer and fighter for justice. I share with you a deep sense of loss over his passing away.

Len was an important part of my legal team, as co-counsel and adviser. I met with him several times in his office in New York to discuss my case. I am deeply thankful for all the times he met with me and listened to my questions and concerns. He was always very kind and attentive. Len spoke out publicly on my behalf. This meant a lot to me because as a survivor of abduction and torture -- it gave me a lot of hope and encouragement at a very difficult time -- he made me feel that my voice was important and that it would have a chance to be heard. He was committed to pursuing my case, along with the cases of other victims of human rights violations in the Philippines. He helped with preparations for the prosecution of former Philippine President Gloria M. Arroyo, et al, for gross human rights violations in the Philippines.

Leonard Weinglass has been a long-time fighter for justice, as a civil rights lawyer in the United States and as an international human rights lawyer. He is well-known for his support of international justice struggles and a long-time ally and friend of the Filipino people. He will always be remembered and honored for his commitment to justice and his service to the people.

Thank you, Len, for your commitment to justice and freedom for all oppressed peoples and for all victims of human rights violations! May your memory be an inspiration to many more people for generations to come.

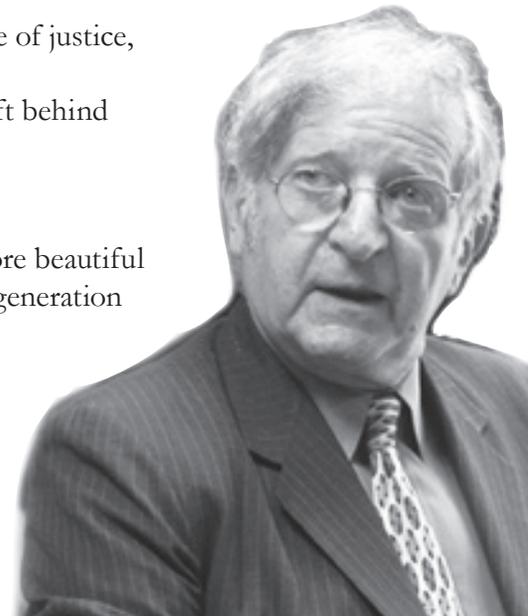
a little poem for a big legacy for Leonard Weinglass

when we die,
left behind
are parts
of ourselves
whose weight in memory
is equal to the sum
of those lives
we've touched

if,
for every kindness
you've shown,
a tree,
for every person you've
helped,
a sweet violet,
for every defense of justice,
an orchid,
the forest you left behind
lives
full of blossoms

it ever grows more beautiful
with every new generation
you inspire

Mabuhay ang
diwa ni
Leonard
Weinglass!



Leonard Weinglass (August 27, 1933 – March 23, 2011) was a leading figure in the U.S. civil rights movement and international struggles for justice. He was the Co-Chair of the international committee of the National Lawyers Guild for many years. He was very active in supporting the Filipino people's struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. He attended and assisted the Permanent People's Tribunal that tried Marcos et al in Antwerp in 1980.

The author, Melissa Roxas, a Filipino-American artist, was abducted and tortured by the military in 2009. She was conducting research for possible medical missions in Tarlac