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Oplan Bayanihan: The AFP's new campaign plan for counterrevolutionary war

The reactionary US-Aquino regime implemented Oplan Bayanihan, its new campaign plan for counterrevolutionary war, at the start of 2011. Its objective is to defend the semicolonial and semifeudal system, maintain the rule of US imperialism and its local puppets the big comprador bourgeoisie and big landlords. It also aims to crush or secure the surrender of the armed revolution and other forces waging resistance to their antinational, antimasses and anti-democratic rule.

There is no fundamental or qualitative difference between Oplan Bayanihan and Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) I and II and earlier campaign plans of the AFP. Even if it purports to represent a radical shift from the previous fascist and militarist Oplan, it is in essence an extension of OBL I and II. The old oplan has merely been given new garb and being peddled as a grandiose program for peace, development and human rights. The Oplan and even its pretensions are all derived from the 2009 Counterinsurgency Guide.

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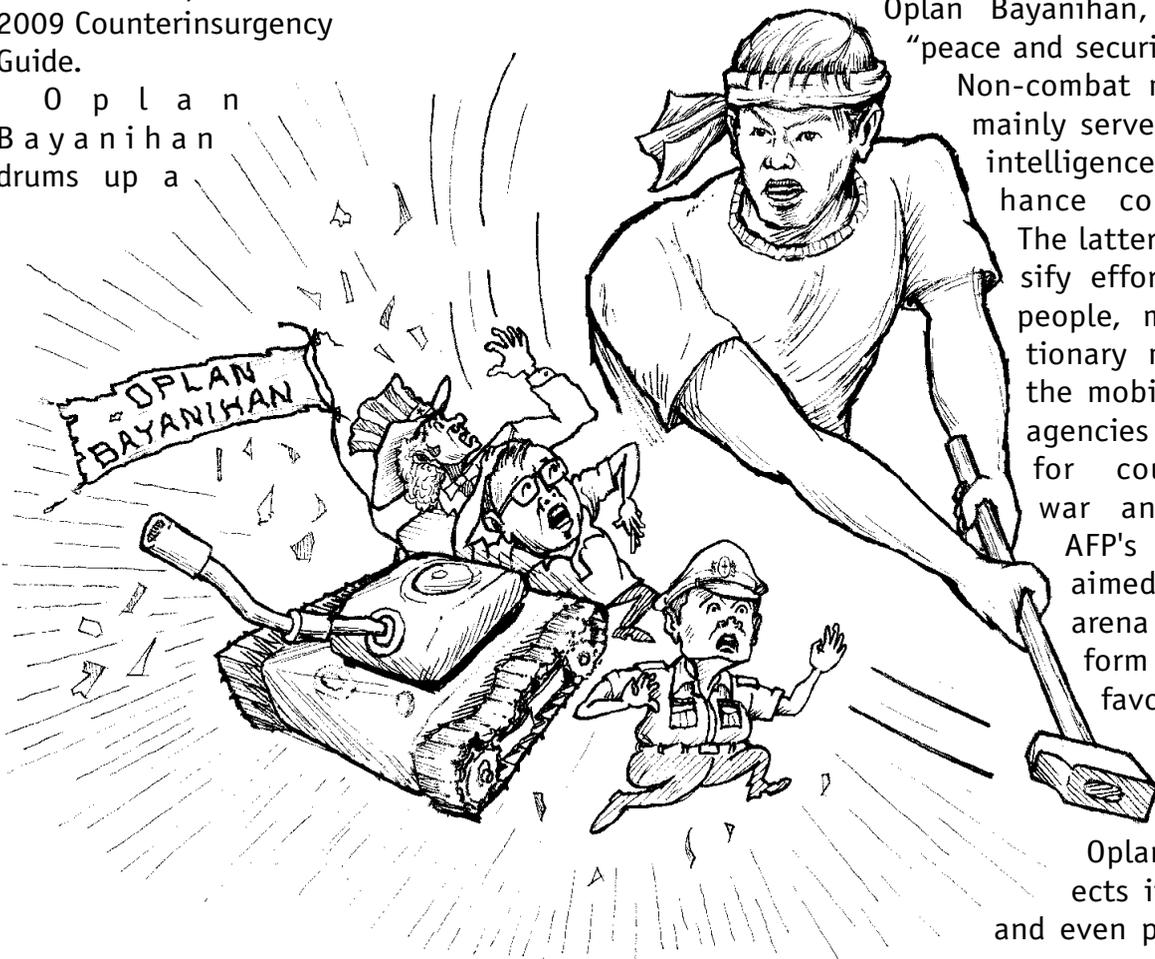
“people-centered strategy” and counterinsurgency operations within the frame of human security operations. It will allegedly strengthen and expand the role of “non-combat” military operations composed of civil-military operations (CMO) and developmental activities as so-called proof of its sincere objective to attain peace, reduce combat operations and comply with the Aquino regime's four pillars of government—good governance, delivery of basic services, economic reconstruction and sustainable development and security sector reforms.

I. Focus on Triad Operations

But the AFP was caught in the web of its own lies when it declared that Oplan Bayanihan is focused on Triad Operations to defeat threats to the security of the puppet state. Triad operations involve the synchronized conduct of combat, intelligence and civil-military operations. Under Oplan Bayanihan, these are called “peace and security operations.”

Non-combat military operations mainly serve to strengthen the intelligence network and enhance combat operations. The latter are used to intensify efforts to deceive the people, malign the revolutionary movement, expand the mobilization of civilian agencies and organizations for counterrevolutionary war and deodorize the AFP's image. These are aimed at molding the arena of battle into a form that will be most favorable to the most lethal utilization of the AFP's armed strength.

Oplan Bayanihan projects itself as pro-peace, and even pro-peace with jus-



tice. But there is no serious or studied peace agenda behind such posturing. Peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) have a low priority under the Aquino regime and there is as yet no indication that the regime desires or is ready to go beyond the frame of scoring propaganda and psywar points and demanding the NDFP's surrender. The bureaucrats who play a truly decisive role in the peace talks are rabid anti-communists and are arrogantly dismissive of the revolutionary movement. Pacification is the

real objective behind Malacanang and the AFP's peace concept and program.

Oplan Bayanihan's ambition is to create a surging anti-communist military, political and propaganda offensive that will engulf the NPA and the entire revolutionary movement. Psyops on peace and public relations posturings on the peace talks and social reforms fall under this. Oplan Bayanihan's discourse is replete with the words "peace" and "development" and the jargon of civil society as well as that of international NGOs, multilateral

agencies and especially the US Counterinsurgency Guide so it could appear fresh and far-reaching. It arrogates the language of bourgeois and petty bourgeois reformism in order to deny and cover up the actual fundamental problems of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and the historical correctness and need for people's democratic revolution. What lies at the core of Oplan Bayanihan and the puppet regime's posturings are the defense and perpetuation of the rotten semicolonial and semi-feudal system.

II. Intensifying Red Area and White Area Clearing Operations

Oplan Bayanihan's real focus is to intensify and relentlessly conduct Red Area and White Area Clearing Operations. The AFP has been granted another extension to crush the NPA and the entire revolutionary movement, up to the third year of the six-year Oplan. The second three-year period will ostensibly be devoted to transferring the main responsibility for internal peace and security operations to the PNP and restoring to the AFP the role of defending the national territory.

In the countryside, Triad operations will continue to scour and wreak havoc in NPA guerrilla zones and bases to pursue and crush the people's army, deny it of its mass base and support and deprive it of its capacity and will to fight. As before, SOT operations, now called Peace and Development Team operations will concentrate on destroying the mass base through white terror (abductions, torture, killings, forcing people to become informers, conduct surveillance and join counterrevolutionary or-

ganizations), psyops and divisive and deceptive tactics. Surveillance operations will focus on identifying and zeroing in on guerrilla units, Party cadres and members, people's militia and leaders and activists of mass organizations in order to attack them through combat operations or abduct, kill, imprison or force them to turn traitor. Combat operations are focused on "relentless pursuit and repression" in order to crush and cripple fulltime guerrilla units.

It also continues to implement the concepts and methods of gradual constriction (win-hold-win), one-on-one (one to two battalions per guerrilla front, with the operational command at the brigade level), and clear-hold-consolidate-develop. It makes sure that all operations and activities within the Triad are closely combined, are clearly focused and directed, and synchronized. Its model is the Red Area Clearing Operations of Cougar 69IB, based on OBL's experience in Central Luzon. This focuses on

shaping the arena of battle depending on three area categories: guerrilla base or constriction area (where the key-hole approach or deep combat operations are used); areas of intense AFP intelligence operations (wherein the Venus Fly-trap approach is used—guerrilla units are pursued and driven towards these areas where a network of informers can pinpoint their location and they can be attacked through a planned strike operation); and expansion areas where AFP intelligence operations are weak (here, combat, intelligence, CMO and CAFGU operations are used in order to prevent NPA expansion). Also part of the operational concept of Cougar is Bayanihan which aims to obtain the support and participation of the local government, civilian agencies and NGOs in the "counterinsurgency" campaign.

The AFP's so-called peace advocacy is all for show. It pretends to respect and advocate human rights even as it relies on white terror and a fascist iron fist to destroy revolutionary and progressive organizations and clear territories and sectors of revolutionary and

progressive influence. They resort to all manner of maligning, demonizing and criminalizing the revolutionary and progressive movements, as well as all independent organizing and collective action and acts of resistance by ordinary folk to portray them as legitimate targets of state fascist violence. There has been no letup in the policy of assassinating leaders and activists not only from the underground movement but from legal progressive organizations—the only change being finetuning the excuses, denials and coverups. The AFP is developing expertise in utilizing legal loopholes in order to justify or make their fascist crimes appear legal. They plant and manipulate evidence and provide false testimonies, file one criminal case after another and utilize other methods borrowed from the arsenal of corrupt courts and lawyers, as well as resort to torture, threats and coercion. The AFP's arrogance is grounded on the belief that it could plant the banner of human rights and claim to be its champion while it intensifies militarization and fascist violence in the countryside and cities.

A unique characteristic of Oplan Bayanihan is its particular focus on the role of civil-military operations (CMO). It will further strengthen counter-revolutionary propaganda and psyops, dismantle revolutionary and progressive mass organizations, conduct a legal offensive and deodorize the AFP's image. Oplan Bayanihan stresses the role of CMO and intelligence in preparing for a military offensive. CMO will also continue to play a major role at the hold-consolidate-develop stage in the form of establishing counter-organizations (CVO [Civilian Volunteer Organization, BDS [Barangay Defense System], SDS [Sector Defense System]),

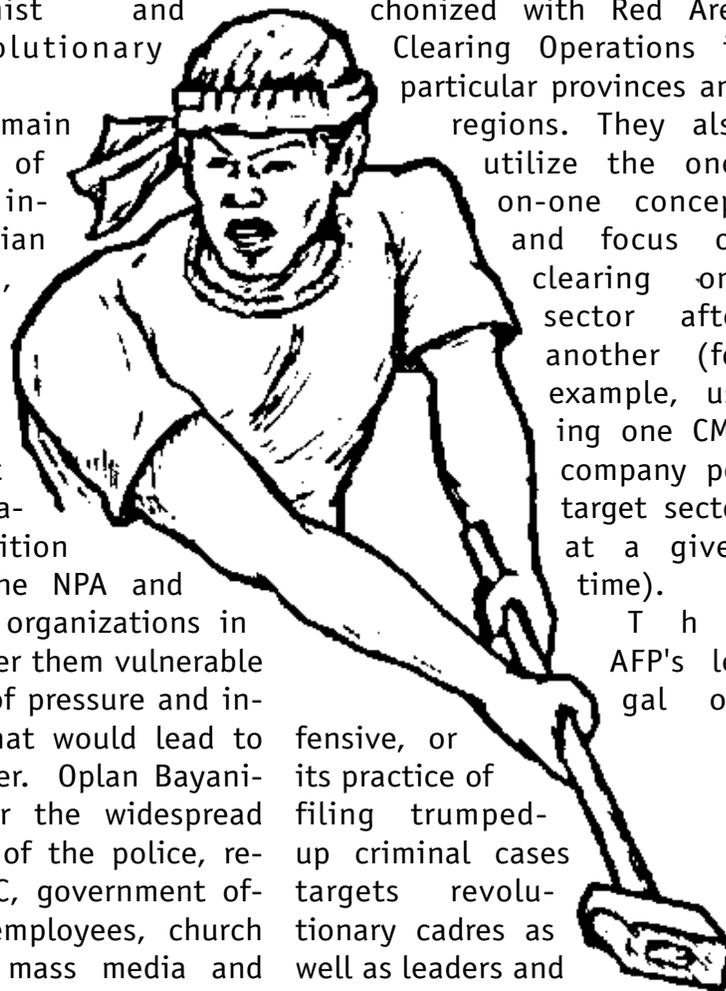
forming a widespread intelligence (BIN [Barrio Intelligence Network], TIN [Technical Intelligence Network], SIN [School Intelligence Network], FIN [Factory Intelligence Network] and the like) and barangay defense system (ITDS [Integrated Territorial Defense System]), conducting mass meetings and anti-communist rallies, anti-communist propaganda and legal offensives, and initiating livelihood projects and the like. They are increasingly resorting to radio broadcasts, audio-visual presentations and movies for anti-communist and counterrevolutionary propaganda.

Another main objective of CMO is to involve civilian agencies, civic organizations and NGOs in "counterinsurgency." It is Oplan Bayanihan's ambition to isolate the NPA and revolutionary organizations in order to render them vulnerable to all types of pressure and intimidation that would lead to their surrender. Oplan Bayanihan calls for the widespread mobilization of the police, reservists, ROTC, government officials and employees, church people, the mass media and other sectors of society for various "counterinsurgency" plans and campaigns.

In the cities, White Area Clearing Operations will be conducted mainly by CMO Battalions that are formed in every Division. SOT-WA and CMO units focus on clearing sectors considered as influenced by revolutionary and progressive organizations. These sectors are categorized as NPA supporters or fronts and are thus targets of military operations under Oplan

Bayanihan. The objective of CMO in the cities is to identify, expose, isolate and suppress revolutionary and progressive parties and organizations, repress revolutionary and progressive propaganda as well as struggles and mass actions and organize sectors into various counterrevolutionary organizations and activities. Among these are Sector Defense System, anti-communist organizations and parties and intelligence networks. SOT and CMO in urban areas have parallel operational stages which are synchronized with Red Area Clearing Operations in particular provinces and regions. They also utilize the one-on-one concept and focus on clearing one sector after another (for example, using one CMO company per target sector at a given time).

The AFP's legal offensive, or its practice of filing trumped-up criminal cases targets revolutionary cadres as well as leaders and activists of the legal democratic movement. It is widely used in the countryside and cities, although it has particular usefulness in the cities in providing a legal veneer to the fascist suppression of legal democratic organizations. The legal offensive also aims to protect AFP officers and troops who have been exposed or accused of involvement in criminal and illegal acts in the performance of their missions.



III. Oplan Bayanihan will surely fail

Oplan Bayanihan's counterrevolutionary ambition will surely fail. There is no stopping the blows of the grave crisis of the international capitalist system in the country and the entire world. Various regions of the globe are in the throes of widespread and intensifying political turmoil and mass uprisings due to the Great Recession. No amount of magician's tricks can cover up the worsening socio-economic and political crisis resulting from the rapidly rotting semicolonial and semifeudal system in the country. The AFP itself lies smack in the middle of a multibillion peso corruption scandal and continues to be isolated from the people due to its continuing fascist crimes that it is relentlessly trying to cover up. The revolutionary forces have the correct line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It abides by the line of widespread and intense guerrilla warfare that enjoys ever expanding and ever deepening mass

support. The Party and people's army enjoy the wide support of the masses in the countryside and cities and are steeled in life-and-death struggle.

Nonetheless, it will not be easy to defeat Oplan Bayanihan. The Party, people's army and revolutionary movement will need to exert their utmost effort and fight firmly. We must further expand and intensify guerrilla warfare and advance people's war to a new and higher level. More effort must be exerted to overcome shortcomings and weaknesses, resolve problems, overcome obstacles and further improve on the fulfillment of tasks in waging widespread and intense guerrilla warfare. We must give particular attention to propaganda and education work, the mass movement and alliance work in order to resist the AFP and the puppet state's particular intensification of deception and psy-ops.

IV. Major tasks in resisting and defeating Oplan Bayanihan

1 Expose Oplan Bayanihan to the hilt. Expose the puppet US-Aquino regime's counter-revolutionary schemes and pretenses.

❖ Expose the AFP and the puppet regime's posturings on peace, human rights and international humanitarian law and on social reforms.

❖ Expose and resist antinational, antimasses and antidemocratic rule and policies defended and advocated by Oplan Bayanihan and the AFP.

❖ Further expand and intensify propaganda and political education on the country's fundamental problems and the need for a people's democratic revolution.

❖ Leading committees and commands at all levels must pay particular attention to the constant monitoring and issuance of prompt rejoinders to counter-revolutionary psyops, deception, slander and intrigues

2 Further expand and strengthen the anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist movement and struggles in the countryside and cities.

❖ The most effective way of exposing the pretenses of the puppet state and the AFP is the actual expansion and intensification of people's movements and struggles against imperialism, feudalism and fascism.

❖ Give stress to strengthening antifeudal campaigns and mass struggles in the countryside. Implement on a wide scale the minimum program of agrarian reform at the municipal, district and higher levels. Establish on a wide scale the organs of political power and revolutionary mass organizations in accordance with the antifeudal class line.

❖ Expand and strengthen mass campaigns and struggles of workers and other urban poor against poverty, hunger, unem-

ployment and the lack of basic needs and services.

❖ Expand and strengthen mass campaigns and struggles of the youth and students against government neglect of education, rising costs of education and living and suppression of democratic rights. Expand and strengthen campaigns and struggles of employees, ordinary professionals and small businessmen for livelihood, a decent life and adequate services.

❖ Expand and strengthen propaganda and the protest movement against militarization and fascism and for democratic and human rights. Hold to account the fascist criminals who are behind the killings, abductions, torture and other transgressions against democratic rights.

❖ Expose and assail the widespread rottenness and corruption in the AFP and the puppet state.

3 Intensify guerrilla warfare.

❖ Maximize the current strength and spread of guerrilla fronts nationwide in order to intensify tactical offensives. Strengthen our offensive military and political posture and struggle to the hilt against conservatism, passivity and bureaucratism. Raise the fighting spirit and exercise tight leadership. Every guerrilla front and guerrilla platoon and company must target a definite number of tactical offensives and a significant addition to the number of weapons and personnel annually and have a clear plan on how to achieve these targets. We must continue to strengthen and improve planning, coordination and cooperation at the front, inter-front, regional and national levels.

❖ Ensure vigorous and continuing expansion. Expand from our former areas in order to achieve a denser distribution of organs of political power, mass organizations, militia units and local Party organizations. At the same time, we must prepare and open new guerrilla fronts to ensure the widest possible field of maneuver for the people's army for the purpose of intensifying guerrilla warfare. Encourage the initiative and participation of advanced activists from the barrios in expansion work under a clear and centralized plan and leadership. Encourage and continue to strengthen the initiative and participation of the broad masses in struggles and various other propaganda, educational, organizational and military tasks.

❖ Value and develop the people's militia as an essential force in strengthening the people's army and advancing widespread and intense guerrilla warfare. Form squads and platoons within the people's militia in barrios and sitios, ensure that they receive regular training

and political education and encourage their participation and support in tactical offensives and other military work in the barrios.

❖ Expand and invigorate campaigns in the cities to support peasant struggles and the people's army in the countryside. Strengthen the urban-based movement's support for the revolutionary armed struggle through campaigns to expose and assail Oplan Bayanhan and by exposing and assailing widespread militarization and fascist abuses, conducting recruitment campaigns for the people's army and gathering material and other support for the countryside

❖ Expand propaganda and agitation work and links with rank and file soldiers, police forces and CAFGU elements. Establish underground cells of patriotic and progressive soldiers and police elements. Encourage and support the fight of soldiers and police against corruption and criminality in the AFP and PNP, their use by big comprador-landlord politicians and their servility to US imperialist dictates.

4 Expand the national united front. Call for and exert efforts in forming the broadest possible unity among progressive classes, strata and forces for genuine and fundamental national, social and political change.

❖ At all levels, especially at the district, provincial, regional and national levels, there must be clear plans and measures to expand and strengthen alliance work and advance campaigns and struggles based on broadest participation of the broadest array of democratic and progressive sectors.

❖ Expose and oppose the AFP's White Area Clearing Operations and exert efforts to expand and strengthen the under-

ground movement and the legal democratic movement in the cities. Strengthen coordination and cooperation among legal democratic organizations and forces at the regional and national levels in order to work on and cooperate in the fight against militarization and fascism, assert and fight for democratic rights and expand and strengthen the legal and democratic movement in all regions.

❖ Firmly advance the line of just and lasting peace and resist the GPH's surrender line. Expand propaganda and mass education on the correct line in the peace talks. Promptly and actively struggle against the GPH and AFP's deceptions in the peace talks. Leading committees and commands at all levels must pay particular attention to issues and developments related to the peace talks in order to promptly and continuously keep abreast of the latest information and be able to report and expose the AFP and GPH's violations.

❖ Persist in expanding dual tactics in reactionary elections and supporting the work of progressives within the reactionary congress. Expose and oppose the AFP's continuing demonization and attacks against progressive parties.

5 Further expand and strengthen the Party and people's army for the difficult struggle against Oplan Bayanhan.

❖ Strengthen and consolidate the Party and people's army ideologically, politically, organizationally and militarily. Struggle to the hilt against conservatism, adventurism, 'left' and right opportunism, bureaucratism and lack of discipline. Constantly protect the ideological, political and organizational health and vigor of the Party and people's army. Continue ensuring our links with the broad masses of the people and ad-

advance the style of simple living and hard struggle. Thoroughly resist bureaucratism and veteran mentality and actuations among elder cadres.

❖ Continue expanding and deepening the underground movement in the cities and countryside. Continue improving

on and ensuring the stricter implementation of rules and methods of secrecy and clandestine operations. Continue resolving problems related to basing, communication and modes of operation under conditions of extreme fluidity and intense engagements with the AFP's fas-

cist troops and minions.

❖ Develop expertise in summing up experiences in order to draw lessons from our wealth of experience in armed struggle, the mass movement, alliance work and Party building. Continue enhancing our ability to learn from experience. **AB**