



OPLAN BAYANIHAN

The Philippine Government's Deceptive Counterinsurgency Program



**WHAT IS THIS
PICTURE FROM?**



MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE

- On the morning of November 23, 2009, in the town of Ampatuan in Maguindanao province (Mindanao), **57 people were kidnapped and brutally killed** while on their way to file a certificate of candidacy for Esmael Mangudadatu (vice mayor of Buluan).
 - **34 of the victims were journalists.**
 - There is evidence that at least **five of the female victims were raped** before being killed, while "practically all" of the women had been shot in their genitals.



**WHAT ARE THEY
PROTESTING ABOUT?**

**WORKERS!
YAN MUNA-
PARTYLIST**

**UNUPIL!
YAN MUNA-
PARTYLIST**

AGAI

**FREE
the 43
BAYAN-HEAD-KARAPATAN**

**FREE
the 43
BAYAN-HEAD-KARAPATAN**

**43 BIL ANGGONG
AL
AIN!
ANTE-
E 43
LY ARRESTED
TH WORKER
IGNANT**

**Freedom for
Jane Beltran-Baltes
Free the 43**

**FREE
the 43
HEALTH WORKERS
FREE MIL DELIA OCARLA**

**Freedom for
Jane Beltran-Baltes
Free the 43
Crispin S. Beltran Resource Center**

THE MORONG 43

- On February 6, 2010 in Morong, Rizal (Luzon), a group of 43 health workers and doctors conducting health skills training were **illegally arrested by Philippine police and military** who claimed they were members of the New People's Army.
- The health workers were **denied legal counsel** for three days and a team from the Commission on Human Rights was blocked from seeing them.
- When the detainees were seen by lawyers and human rights advocates, they gave accounts of **torture for forced confessions** of being rebels.



**WHO IS THIS? WHAT
HAPPENED TO HER?**

MELISSA ROXAS

- Roxas, an American citizen, was volunteering for a community medical mission in La Paz, Tarlac on May 19, 2009 when she was **forcibly abducted at gunpoint** along with her two companions
- She was blindfolded and thrown into a cell where she endured **physical and psychological torture** until finally being released 6 days later.



WHAT DO ALL THESE INCIDENTS HAVE IN COMMON?



OPILAN

BANTAY

LANYA





THE ARROYO'S GOVERNMENT'S **BLOODY** TRAIL OF TERROR

“Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) was by far the bloodiest and most brutal counterinsurgency campaign unleashed on the Filipino people by any president.

*President Gloria Magcapagal-Arroyo and her state security forces will long be remembered for having left a generation of victims of human rights abuses, and having deprived people of their lives and security.” -
KARAPATAN*



From January 21, 2001 (when GMA took office) to June 30, 2010, there were:

1,206 victims of extrajudicial killings

Extrajudicial killings include executions, arbitrary killings, assassinations, and massacres.

Diosdado "Ka Fort" Fortuna

On Sept. 22, 2005, Ka Fort, President of Union of the Nestle Cabuyao Employees Union, was shot dead on his way home by suspected military agents hired by Nestle.





From January 21, 2001 (when GMA took office) to June 30, 2010, there were:

206 victims of enforced disappearances

Enforced disappearances include kidnappings and abductions.

Jonas Burgos

On April 28, 2007, gunmen dragged Jonas from a restaurant in Ever Gotesco Mall in Quezon City to a waiting vehicle whose license plate was traced to a vehicle that was impounded last year at the 56th Infantry Battalion camp in Bulacan.





From January 21, 2001 (when GMA took office) to June 30, 2010, there were:

Other forms of Political Repression

Illegal Arrest and Arbitrary Detention

The “Tagaytay 5” (2006) – Peasant leaders from Cavite who were illegally arrested and detained, accused of being NPA rebels. Charges were eventually dismissed for lack of evidence.



Torture

Melissa Roxas (2009) – Filipino-American activist, abducted and tortured (along with her two companions). Due to worldwide pressure, was surfaced after 6 days.





From January 21, 2001 (when GMA took office) to June 30, 2010, there were:

Other forms of Political Repression

Trumped-up and Politically Motivated Charges

The Batasan 6 (2006) – Progressive partylist representatives who were illegally charged and detained for supposedly attempting to overthrow the Arroyo government. Charges were eventually dismissed.



Repressive Legislation

The Human Security Act (2007) – Anti-”terrorism” law patterned after Patriot Act in the US. Definition of “terrorism” deliberately made vague to include anyone questioning Arroyo government’s policies.



WHAT WAS

OPIPLAN

BANTAY

LAYA ????

WHAT WAS OPLAN BANTAY LAYA?



Operation Plan Bantay Laya ("Freedom Watch") was a counterinsurgency program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) created in Jan. 2002 during former Philippine President Gloria Magcapagal-Arroyo's regime, and was extended under current President Benigno Aquino III thru Dec. 2010.

WHAT WAS OPLAN BANTAY LAYA?

OBL's strategic goal was to "decisively defeat armed insurgent armed groups in order to attain and maintain peace and security for national development." These armed groups included:



Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)

Southern Philippine Separatist Groups

- **Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)**
- **Misuari Breakaway Group (of the Moro National Liberation Front/MNLF)**

Local Communist Movement (LCM)

- **Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)**
- **New People's Army (NPA)**



What made OBL unique?

More than previous programs, it **targeted not just the armed revolutionary movement, but the legal democratic organizations** (i.e. BAYAN and its member orgs), media workers/journalists, and the political opposition (i.e. progressive partylists).

Impunity: Victims and their families continue to be denied justice. Thus making **activists and people opposed to the government fair game** for murder, abduction, and illegal arrest without anyone being held accountable.



Oplans
AND THE HISTORY OF
COUNTERINSURGENCY
IN THE PHILIPPINES



What is a Counterinsurgency Program?

According to the US Counter-Insurgency Guide of 2009:

- Comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes
- Integrates and synchronizes political, security, economic and informational components that reinforce government legitimacy and effectiveness while reducing insurgency influence over the population

According to the Philippine government's "Internal Peace and Security Plan":

- A military plan for protecting the state and the people
- A framework for dealing with armed "threat groups"
- Uses a "whole-of-nation" and "people-centered" approach with "equal emphasis on combat and non-combat dimensions of military operations"

Ultimately, counterinsurgency is aimed at protecting the status quo by repressing dissent and controlling the people



Counterinsurgency Programs under previous regimes:

Ferdinand Marcos - **Oplan Katatagan**

Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos - **Oplan
Lambat Bitag**

Joseph "Erap" Estrada - **Oplan
Makabayan, Oplan Balangai**

Gloria Magcapagal-Arroyo - **Oplan
Bantay Laya (OBL)**



Under President Noynoy Aquino:

Oplan Bayanihan (OB)

THE

NOY-NOY

PRESIDENCY



Who is President Noy-Noy????

- **15th president of the Philippines**
- **Son of murdered Presidential candidate Ninoy Aquino and former President Corazon Aquino**
- **Member of one of the Philippines' wealthiest landowning families**
- **Not that popular as a leader, but it is widely believed that the legacy of his parents helped propel him to the Presidency**





President Noy-Noy's Human Rights record so far...

(As of 7/31/2011)

- **48 victims of political killings**
- **Over 300 political prisoners**
- **No prosecution of Arroyo or any military commanders for the thousands of human rights violations committed under OBL**
- **Still no change in the unequal relationship between the Philippines and the U.S**





Same crap, different toilet...

Continuing the pattern of previous US puppet regimes:

- The US pledged to provide the RP with \$18.4-million worth of missiles and \$30 million in military aid
- US-RP joint military exercises are still held annually under terms of the Visiting Forces Agreement
 - Over 600 US Special Operations Forces are deployed in Mindanao
- Noy-Noy signed off on a US foreign aid package worth \$434-million



**WHAT IS
OPLAN
BAYANIHAN
???**

WHAT IS OPLAN BAYANIHAN?

OB is the new “Internal Peace and Security Plan” that aims to “provide the strategic guidance in the performance of the [AFP’s] mandated functions of protecting the state and the people.”

OB’s ultimate objective

- the reduction of the “capabilities of internal armed threats...to a level that they can no longer threaten the stability of the state and civil authorities can ensure the safety and well-being of the Filipino people.”



OB is based on the US Counter-Insurgency Guide of 2009

WHAT ARE OPLAN BAYANIHAN'S STRATEGIES?

- OB's focus is on "winning the peace" and not just "defeating the enemy."
- Primacy is on the peace process with ideology-based "threat groups"
- AFP "shall continue using legitimate force and conducting combat operations with even greater vigor but only against armed insurgents"
- Conduct projects to show "that the government is sincere in addressing the [population's] real or perceived deprivation... Construction of short-gestation, high- impact projects such as irrigation systems and farm-to-market roads"



Defines threats as:

Ideology-based groups: New People's Army, Moro Islamic Liberation Front

Terrorist groups: Abu Sayyaf, Foreign Terrorist Organizations

Auxiliary threat groups: armed partisan groups, private armies

WHAT ARE OPLAN BAYANIHAN'S FLAWS?

- Denies the historical roots and basis of the armed conflict
- Offers no clear analysis of why people take up arms against the government
- Does not address root causes, only “perceptions” of inequality
- Conditions the peace process with abandonment of arms
- No change in the way the AFP views legal progressive organizations as being “communist fronts,” laying the basis for continued attacks on unarmed activists, journalists, clergy, union leaders and other civilians



OB allows a wide range of US intervention in the Philippines:

- Advisory roles * civil-military assistance * direct military assistance
- Foreign development aid



What does all this mean?

No Change

Funds will be used to beef up the military and Oplan Bayanihan.

“Unfortunately, P-Noy’s commitment to resolving the problem of ongoing killings, abduction, and torture of civilians in the country is to extend the very policy that is responsible for it – OBL,”

- BAYAN USA Vice-Chairperson Kuusela Hilo.



ROLE OF

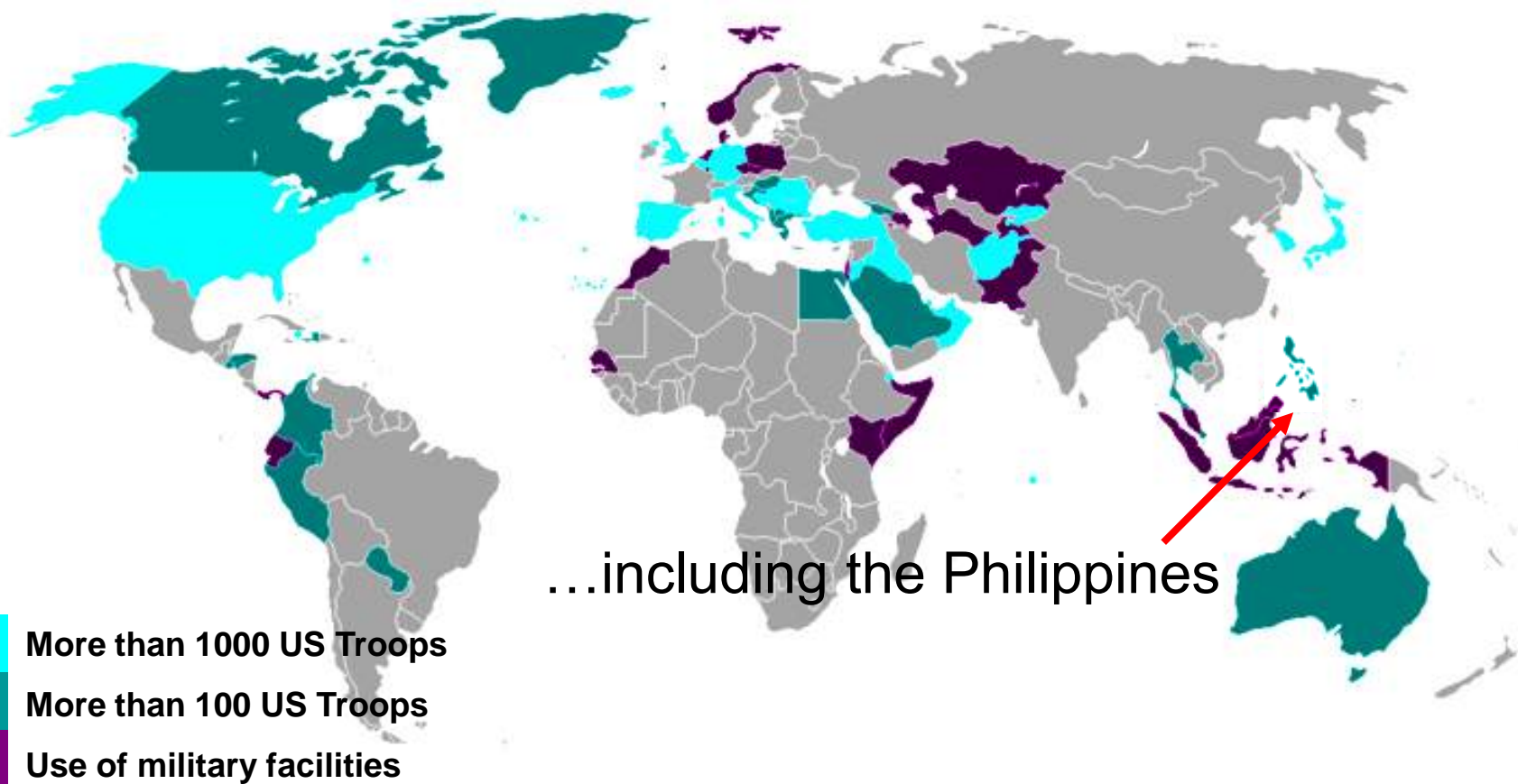


THE U.S.



U.S Military Intervention

Currently, the U.S has its troops and/or military bases in countries worldwide





U.S Military Intervention

...no surprise, considering the U.S' history of military intervention

ARGENTINA 1890 | CHILE 1891 | HAITI 1891 | HAWAII 1893 | NICARAGUA 1894 | CHINA 1894-95 | KOREA 1894-96 | PANAMA 1895 | NICARAGUA 1896 | CHINA 1898-1900 | PHILIPPINES 1898-1910 | CUBA 1898-1902 | PUERTO RICO 1898 | GUAM 1898 | NICARAGUA 1898 | SAMOA 1899 | NICARAGUA 1899 | PANAMA 1901-14 | HONDURAS 1903 | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1903-04 | KOREA 1904-05 | CUBA 1906-09 | NICARAGUA 1907 | HONDURAS 1907 | PANAMA 1908 | NICARAGUA 1910 | HONDURAS 1911 | CHINA 1911- | CUBA | PANAMA 1912 | HONDURAS 1912 | NICARAGUA 1912-33 | MEXICO 1913 | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1919 | MEXICO 1914-18 | HAITI 1914- | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1916-24 | CUBA 1917-33 | WORLD WAR I 1917-18 | RUSSIA 1918-22 | PANAMA 1918-20 | HONDURAS 1919 | YUGOSLAVIA 1919 | GUATEMALA 1920 | TURKEY 1922 | CHINA 1922-27 | HONDURAS 1924-25 | PANAMA 1925 | CHINA 1927-34 | EL SALVADOR 1932 | WORLD WAR II 1941-45 | IRAN 1946 | YUGOSLAVIA 1946 | URUGUAY 1947 | GREECE 1947-49 | GERMANY 1948 | CHINA 1948-49 | PHILIPPINES 1948-54 | PUERTO RICO 1950 | KOREA 1951-53 | IRAN 1953 | VIETNAM 1954 | GUATEMALA 1954 | EGYPT 1956 | LEBANON 1958 | IRAQ 1958 | CHINA 1958 | PANAMA 1958 | VIETNAM 1960-75 | CUBA 1961 | GERMANY 1961 | LAOS 1962 | CUBA 1962 | IRAQ 1963 | PANAMA 1964 | INDONESIA 1965 | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1965-66 | GUATEMALA 1966-67 | CAMBODIA 1969-75 | OMAN 1970 | LAOS 1971-73 | SOUTH DAKOTA 1973 | MIDEAST 1973 | CHILE 1973 | CAMBODIA 1975 | ANGOLA 1976-92 | IRAN 1980 | LIBYA 1981 | EL SALVADOR 1981-92 | NICARAGUA 1981-90 | LEBANON 1982-84 | GRENADA 1983-84 | HONDURAS 1983-89 | IRAN 1984 | LIBYA 1986 | BOLIVIA 1986 | IRAN 1987-88 | LIBYA 1989 | VIRGIN ISLANDS 1989 | PHILIPPINES 1989 | PANAMA 1989 | LIBERIA 1990 | SAUDI ARABIA 1990-91 | IRAQ 1990-91 | KUWAIT 1991 | IRAQ 1991-2003 | SOMALIA 1992-94 | YUGOSLAVIA 1992-94 | BOSNIA 1993 | HAITI 1994 | ZAIRE (CONGO) 1996-97 | LIBERIA 1997 | ALBANIA 1997 | SUDAN 1998 | AFGHANISTAN 1998 | IRAQ 1998 | YUGOSLAVIA 1999 | YEMEN 2000 | MACEDONIA 2001 | AFGHANISTAN 2001 | YEMEN 2002 | PHILIPPINES 2002 | COLOMBIA 2003 | IRAQ 2003 | LIBERIA 2003 | HAITI 2004-05 | PAKISTAN 2005 | SOMALIA 2006 | SYRIA 2008 | YEMEN 2009



What do you think the US role in something like OB might be?

- **Design of OB is lifted from the US Counter-Insurgency Guide of 2009**
 - Military aid: From 2005-2009, the Philippines received at least **\$197 million dollars from the U.S** to fund its military and police operations.
- The Philippines receives a **majority of its arms and military equipment** from the U.S.
 - Through programs like the **Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA)**, the Philippine military receives technical support (such as “joint exercises) from U.S military forces on the islands.





Why do you think the U.S is so interested in the Philippines?

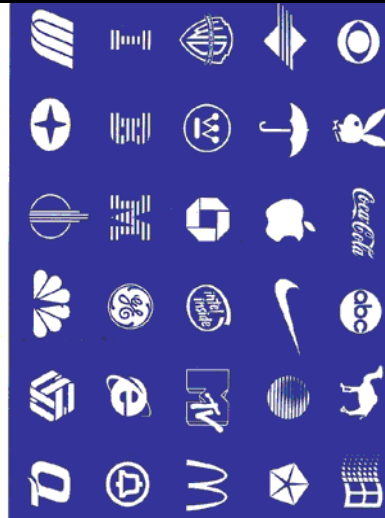
- The Philippine Islands are in a **strategic location** where they can keep an eye on powerful Asian nations such as China, Japan, and Korea. The Philippines has also been utilized as a jumping ground during the U.S' military operations in the Middle East.
- Raw Materials** such as gold, bromine, oil and natural gas
- Dumping ground for **surplus goods**



**So now that
we know
about what
OB and
COIN are...**

**...and who's
behind it...**

**...and who's
funding it...**



WHAT

CAN

WE DO...

• **Participate in discussions, forums, mass actions**

• **Join alliances and organizations that defend and promote civil liberties and human rights**

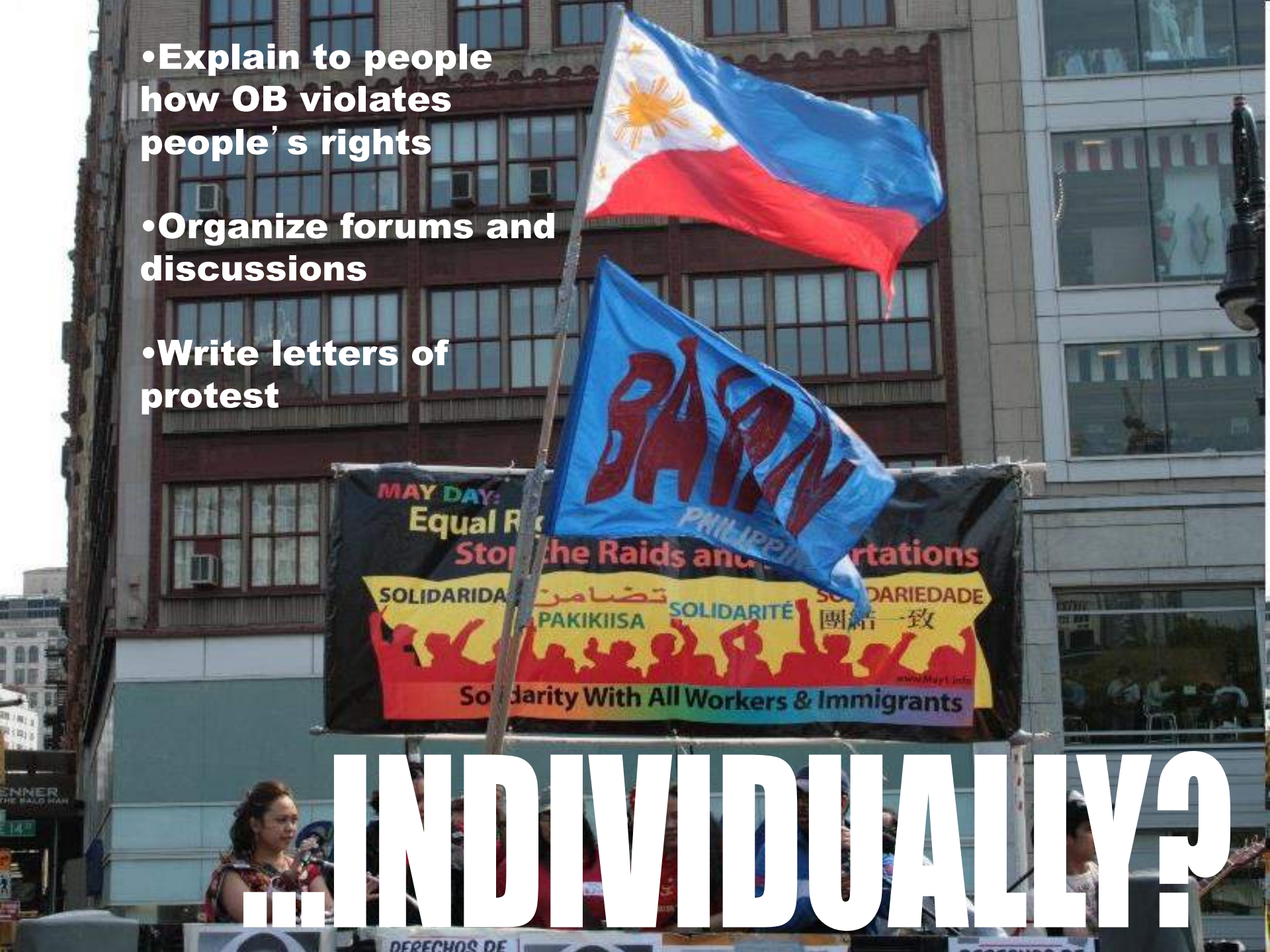


... TOGETHER?

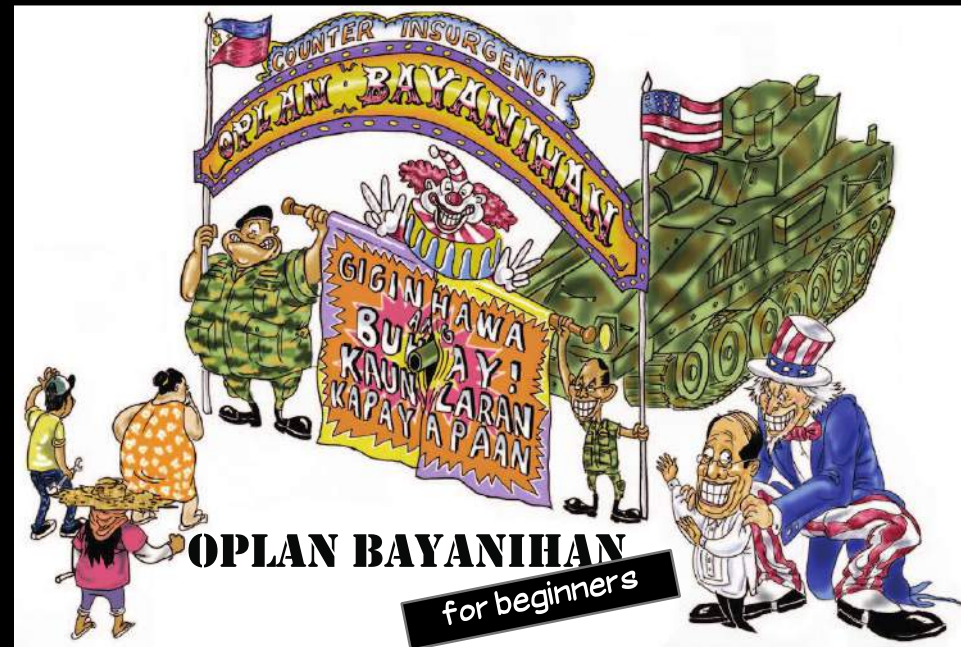
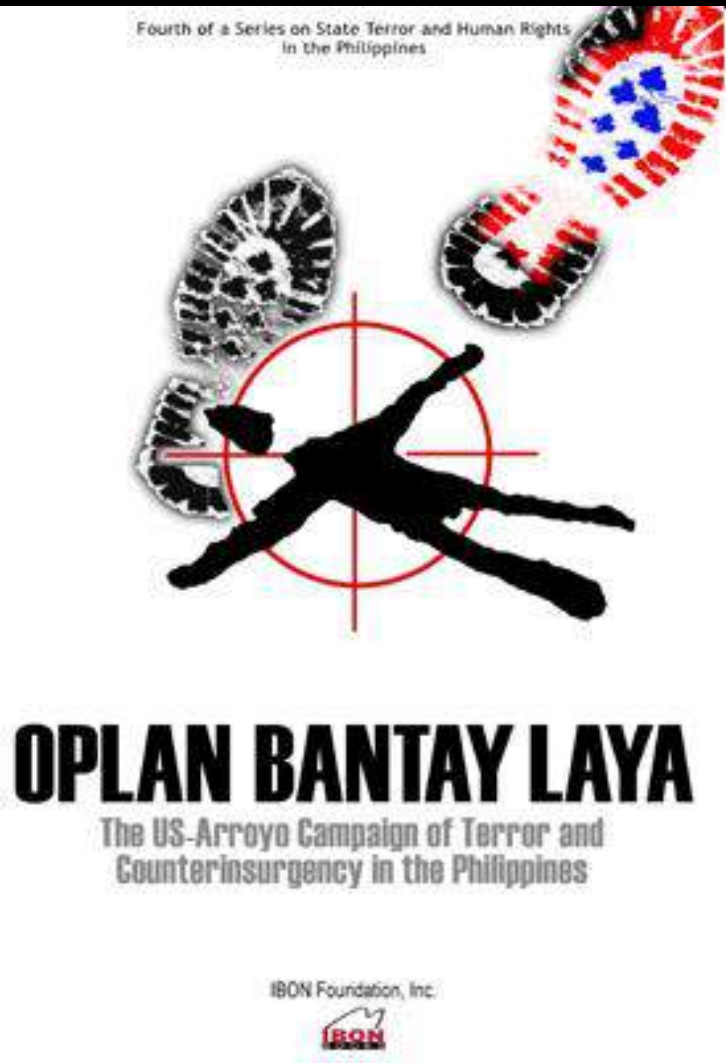
- Explain to people how OB violates people's rights
- Organize forums and discussions
- Write letters of protest



INDIVIDUALLY?



For more details about Counterinsurgency and Oplans:



Pick up one of these books!

www.ibon.org www.karapatan.org

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

BAYAN
USA

**ISANG
BAGSAK!**