A Neoliberal Landscape of Terror: Extrajudicial Killings in the Philippines

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Abstract

Neoliberalism is a set of economic policies emphasizing free trade, privatization, and the retreat of the state. In recent years social movements have emerged in many nations challenging its master narrative of unlimited progress through unfettered markets; states embracing neoliberalism have often engaged in violence to suppress these movements. In the Philippines, social movements have emerged to oppose neoliberal policies, resulting since 2001 in widespread extrajudicial killings of social movement participants. The killings must be understood in the context of Filipino society's domination by an oligarchy whose privilege has been increased by neoliberalism's disavowal of wealth redistribution and by the enhancement of the state's coercive powers during the "War on Terror." Extrajudicial killings in the Philippines demonstrate neoliberalism's propensity for violence through state terrorism.

I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death.
(Revelations 6:8)

Introduction

On 8 April 2002, in the Municipality of San Teodoro in the Province of Oriental Mindoro, on the island of Mindoro, Expedito Abarillo and his wife

Manuela were dragged from their home by a group of men in military attire and, despite their pleas for mercy, killed (Human Rights Now, 2008). The Abarillos, members of the left-wing political party *Bayan Muna* (one nation), had been involved in anti-mining activism and had received several visits from members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) during which they were accused of supporting the New Peoples Army (NPA), a Maoist group engaged in guerrilla warfare against the government, and had been urged to stop campaigning for *Bayan Muna* (Human Rights Now, 2008). Their deaths are symbolic of a widespread phenomenon occurring in the Philippines since 2001: the killing of activists by what are widely believed to be members of the AFP. This article examines extrajudicial killings in the Philippines as a way to understand the intersection of neoliberalism and violence.

The empirical research for this article consisted of a series of one-on-one open-ended interviews with approximately 30 key informants.[2] Interviews were conducted in the Philippines, United Kingdom, and Netherlands during 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2010. Most informants were chosen because they were involved in activism opposing the extrajudicial killings. They included public information officers and executive officers from human rights organizations, journalists, nuns, and priests. The article begins by introducing the concepts of state terrorism and neoliberalism. This is followed by a contextualization of neoliberalism in the Philippines and a description of the current spate of assassinations occurring there. The article concludes by discussing these killings as state terrorism and how neoliberalism can produce a landscape of terror. It is argued that the Philippines is dominated by an oligarchic elite that has accepted the principles of neoliberalism and, bolstered by the enhanced coercive powers of the state accompanying the "War on Terror," has set about ruthlessly destroying those who stand in the way of this neoliberal agenda. The blueprint for these killings is the Phoenix Program, a series of selective assassinations carried out by the United States in Vietnam to degrade the infrastructure of the Viet Cong.

Theoretical Framework

State Terrorism

An exact definition of "violence" is something scholars do not agree on (Nagengast, 1994), partly because violence occurs along a spectrum ranging from micro-scale acts of immediate physical violence to the macro-scale of unjust social structures often referred to as "structural violence" (Galtung, 1969; Springer, 2011). In its examination of extra-judicial killings in the Philippines this article focuses exclusively on the most extreme form of physical violence – lethal force – although with sensitivity to the context of structural violence in which extrajudicial killings occur.

[2] I have used informants' real names only with their permission, and have respected the wishes of those informants who asked to remain anonymous.

One of the most frequently discussed types of violence is terrorism, which Pred (2007, 363) defines as "deeds and statements, material practices and discourses, enacted policies and pronouncements, which are meant to terrify." Terrorism is designed to render people timid and compliant by inculcating them with fear. As Pred writes:

> To terrify is to frighten greatly, to instill intense fear, to drum up images of horrible disaster, brutal punishment, or death hovering just around the next corner, or the one after that, or at least some proximate corner- out of sight, waiting to pounce, to strike arbitrarily to perhaps target YOU. (Pred, 2007, 363)

Although much discussion of terrorism pertains to acts of violence committed by non-state actors (such as *Al Qaeda*), governments also employ terrorism against their own citizens, and state terrorism is one of the most nefarious kinds of terrorism consisting of a series of state-sponsored actions inducing widespread fear (Heryanto 2006). Frequently state terrorism involves the use of extrajudicial executions, the practice of assassinating those viewed as political threats (Islam, 2007). Such killings often target citizens deemed subversive, including labor organizers, journalists, activists, and academics.

According to McCamant (1991), state terrorism emerges from three types of political struggles: oligarchic, where an oligarchy is attempting to maintain its hold on power and is resisting calls for wealth redistribution; ethnic, where a dominant ethnic group is attempting to control other ethnic groups; and ideological, where a group of ideologues is attempting to impose its vision on the rest of society. In describing the third type of struggle, McCamant (1991, 54; see Hoffer, [1951] 1963) makes use of the term "true believers": those who commit themselves to a cause with a messianic zeal. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, aggressive capitalism has become the ideology gripping the faithful and it is as likely to constitute the ideological basis of repression as was communism (McCamant, 1991). These three types of struggle can overlap and the worst cases of repression often occur where there is overlap among them (McCamant, 1991).

Neoliberalism

The term "neoliberalism" refers to a set of economic polices emphasizing free trade, privatization, deregulation, and the retreat of the state from matters of wealth redistribution and social service provision (Ward and England, 2007). "Neoliberalism" is a theory proposing the advancement of human welfare through the liberation of entrepreneurial freedoms within "an institutional framework characterized by strong property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey, 2005, 3). Adding the prefix "neo" to "liberalism" indicates that neoliberalism is a revival of the teachings of the classical liberals, such as Adam Smith, who saw social order emerging as the consequence of everyone each seeking their own interest. A term frequently used in conjunction with neoliberalism is "globalization." Globalization is the tendency for economic interdependencies to

occur on a global scale; although activities have occurred on a global scale for years, neoliberalism, with its heavy emphasis on free trade, has led to such an amplification of globalization that Ward and England (2007, 12) call globalization the "international face of neoliberalism."

Neoliberalism is a project with reactionary origins (Peck, 2008). During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, when Keynesian economic policies (calling for the maintenance of capitalism through government intervention and income redistribution) achieved widespread acceptance, the original proponents of neoliberalism (Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich von Hayek, and Milton Freidman) toiled in obscurity attempting to swim against the intellectual tide of the day (Peck, 2008). These "true believers in the cause of free-market reconstruction" eschewed government intervention in the economy, reacted sharply to the view that capitalism had failed during the Great Depression, and wandered through a bleak and empty wilderness in search of disciples (Peck, 2008, 5). During this time, Keynesian economics became so successfully established that in 1971 Richard Nixon, a Republican, stated "we are all Keynesians now" (Harvey, 2005, 13). Eventually, the "stagflation" (high inflation concomitant with stagnant growth) of the mid-1970s provided these early neoliberal economists with an "interpretative moment" allowing them to persuade the broader discipline of economics (and a significant part of the policymaking elite) that Keynesian economics was rife with fundamental structural deficiencies (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). They argued that Keynesian economic theory, developed during the high unemployment of the 1930s, could do a reasonably good job of explaining how to address high unemployment (by increasing government spending) but it encountered substantial difficulty explaining how to address high unemployment occurring simultaneously with high inflation. By the early 1980s neoliberal precepts became widely accepted and were espoused by powerful institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization (Peet and Hartwick, 2009).

Neoliberalism: a Project to Restore Upper Class Power

Neoliberalism was succored by its appeal to members of the upper classes who were disturbed by the tumultuous events of the 1960s, namely the anti-Vietnam War movement, and the stagflation of the 1970s (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). In Europe, stagflation led to the appearance of socialist movements asking for even more state involvement in the economy, such as bank nationalizations (Harvey, 2005). To the traditional holders of power, neoliberalism's rejection of income redistribution as inefficient, and its view of the poor as failing to give their lives proper entrepreneurial shape, appeared highly attractive (Brown, 2003). Consequently, neoliberalism is often described as "an international project to reclaim, reconstitute, or establish capitalist class privilege and power, dating from the 1970s" (Heynen et al., 2007, 290). Neoliberalism may, therefore, be regarded as an excellent example of what Hoffer ([1951]1963, 10) would call a "revolution by the privileged." Neoliberal theorists were not talking about workers in factories or

peasants on plantations; to them the "free individual" meant the entrepreneur, the capitalist, the boss, and to them "freedom" meant the opportunity to make money (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). These theorists were against the state because it might limit the freedom of the rich to make money and could lead to a redistribution of wealth (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). Given neoliberalism's status as a revolution of the privileged, it is important to note that neoliberalism is quite different from what many call "political liberalism" (Brown, 2003). Neoliberalism is by no means a "progressive" movement seeking social equality but is, instead, a variant of traditional conservative political views augmented with a hyper-capitalist perspective on wealth's production and distribution.

Neoliberalism's Propensity for Violence

Neoliberalism is a project with a substantial propensity for violence, both structural and direct. Neoliberalism, with its resulting divisions of wealth, status, and power, has woven a pervasive structural violence into the fabric of the modern world (Springer, 2011). In many places, especially in the developing world, states embracing neoliberalism have engaged in direct violence to suppress those who oppose its dictums (and its resultant structural violence).

As corporations move from country to country in search of investment opportunities, social movements have emerged to challenge its unimpeded spread; what Polanyi (1944) referred to as "the double movement." These challenges have been acute in the developing world where multinational corporations, enthusiastically welcomed by neoliberal states, have encountered vigorous opposition from people adversely affected by their activities. Neoliberalism has seen conflict between agribusiness corporations and peasants, oil companies and indigenous peoples, and mining companies and adjacent communities (Holden et al., 2011). Many of these social movements have established links with groups similarly opposed to neoliberalism in the developed world. Although there is no consensus in the scholarly literature on the existence of a "global civil society" emerging to resist neoliberalism (Frago et al., 2004) there are many authors who see such a tendency underway (Florini, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Hilhorst, 2003).

States adhering to the principles of neoliberalism often act to destroy social movements that oppose neoliberal policy prescriptions. "In the developing countries," writes Harvey (2006, 155), "the role of the neoliberal state quickly assumes that of active repression even to the point of low-level warfare against oppositional movements." Many developing countries, supported militarily by the United States, have implemented "a system of repressions and liquidations to ruthlessly check activist movements" (Harvey, 2006, 156). Because the principal adherents to neoliberalism are unequivocal about its scientific efficacy and rationality, they have no problem ruthlessly crushing those who stand in its way. As Hoffer ([1951]1963, 114) wrote, ardent faith is needed "not only to be able to resist coercion, but also to be able to exercise it effectively."

The "War on Terror" initiated by the United States after 11 September 2001 has exacerbated the violence of many governments in the developing world. During the Cold War, many developing countries embraced a doctrine known as the National Security State (McSherry, 2005). This doctrine focused on using the military to fight communist enemies within the nation, in addition to fighting the militaries of other nations (McSherry, 2005). Under this paradigm, security forces were to target persons "based on their political ideas rather than on any presumed illegal acts" (McSherry, 2005, 34). The advent of the "war on terror" legitimizes "a general resurrection of the national security state [and] offers an opportunity for every group in the world to participate in the retrenchment of human rights in the name of the 'national interest'" (Glassman 2007, 105). Governments in the developing world can adopt neoliberal polices and if groups adversely affected by such policies protest they can conveniently be labeled with the opprobrious term "terrorist" and then ruthlessly crushed.

The Philippine Context

The Philippines: a Society Dominated by an Oligarchy

The Philippines (Figure 1), an archipelago of approximately 7,100 islands in Southeast Asia, is an ideal candidate for state terrorism according to McCamant's first type of struggle, because it has a society heavily dominated by an oligarchy (McCoy, 2009). This oligarchy's genesis was the Spanish colonial period (1565-1898) when the Spanish transformed the pre-colonial *datus* (chieftains) and *maharlikas* (nobles), along with Spanish and Chinese *mestizos*, into a privileged local class known as the *principalia,* who accumulated land, wealth, and economic power (Quimpo, 2009). While a small number of Filipinos became prosperous, the vast majority of the population became serfs mired in poverty; this led to agrarian unrest, which exploded into a continuous sequence of uprisings and revolts across the archipelago. According to Linn (2000, 16), "by the 1890s, much of the Philippines were in severe distress, plagued by social tension, disease, hunger, banditry, and rebellion." In 1896, under the leadership of Andres Bonifacio (a man of lower middle class origins) and his *Kataastaasan Kagalang-galang na Katipunan nang mga Anak ng Bayan* (Highest and Most Venerated Association of the Children of the Nation or *Katipunan*), full-scale revolt erupted against Spain. Bonifacio was killed, and leadership of the revolution was claimed by Emilio Aguinaldo, a member of the *principalia*, who represented the interests of the Filipino elite in opposition to the Spanish; what had started as a "struggle for national liberation turned out as liberation for the newly formed bourgeoisie" (Danenberg et al., 2007, 294).

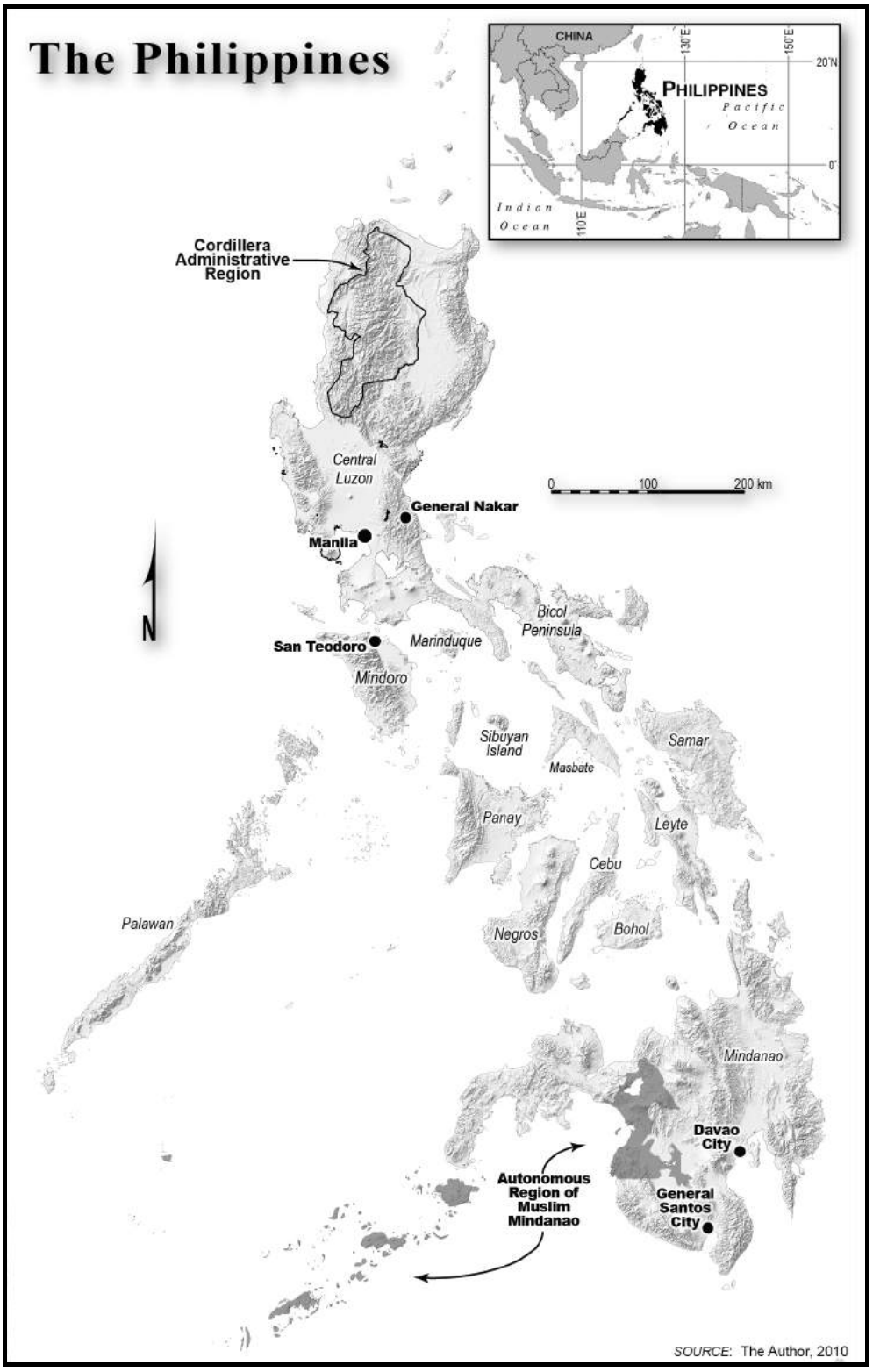

Figure 1: The Philippines

After the United States transformed its intervention in the islands from an adjunct of the Spanish-American War into a quest for an Asian colony, the Filipino-American War broke out and Aguinaldo led an insurgency against the Americans (Silbey, 2007). This insurgency soon lost its leadership as many members of the *principalia* collaborated with the United States, which promised to protect their economic privileges (Karnow, 1989). Ending the insurgency by accommodating its leadership may have been an ideal strategy for the outnumbered American Army operating in a strange land on the other side of the world, but it left untouched the deep social problems of the archipelago (Linn, 2000). As Karnow (1989, 198) writes, "the Americans coddled the elite while disregarding the appalling plight of the peasants, thus perpetuating a feudal oligarchy that widened the gap between rich and poor." This co-optation of the elite generated a society wherein the elite and government overlapped (Kerkvliet, 1977). For more than a century – the American colonial period (1902-1935), the Commonwealth period (1935-1946), and the Republic (1946 on) – the Philippine government has been dominated by the land owning elite; it consistently sides with the rich and powerful and employs repression against the poor and marginalized (Danenberg et al., 2007).

Neoliberalism in the Philippines

The Philippines is an ideal candidate for state terrorism because of its oligarchic socio-political structure, and also, as the present section argues, because its elites are dominated by ideologues aggressively implementing the principles of neoliberalism: "the Philippines has long been reputed to be among the most pliant in Asia to the neoliberal prescriptions of the Washington consensus" (Quimpo, 2009, 347). The acceptance of neoliberalism is widely attributed to President Fidel Ramos (1992-1998) who implemented a rigorous program of reforms entitled "Philippines 2000" aiming to make the Philippines a developed country by the year 2000 (Bello et al., 2009). To Ramos, the template for development was the Pinochet regime in Chile (1973-1990), and his administration invited Pinochet's finance minister, Rolf Luders, to speak in the archipelago (Bello et al., 2009).

Senator Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a Georgetown University-trained neoliberal economist, was instrumental in implementing a neoliberal agenda in the Philippines. While a member of the Senate, Macapagal-Arroyo sponsored several neoliberal reforms, including the Senate ratification of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Philippine accession to the World Trade Organization (Senate Resolution No. 97); laws facilitating comprehensive foreign investment liberalization (Republic Act 8179); banking law reform (Republic Act 7721); laws creating export processing zones (Republic Act 7916); mining law liberalization (Republic Act 7942); and oil industry deregulation (Republic Act 8479). Later, during her presidency (2001 to 2010), Macapagal-Arroyo accelerated the implementation of neoliberal policies by issuing Executive Order No.270 in 2004, which ordered removal of the "tedious permitting process" for mines in the Philippines; issuing Memorandum Circular No. 67 in 2004, which created the

Minerals Action Plan for mineral resource development; issuing Executive Order No. 469 in 2005, which founded the Minerals Development Council; signing the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement in 2006; and issuing Executive Order No. 807 in 2009, removing size limits on banana plantations.[3]

Macapagal-Arroyo's commitment to neoliberalism was so complete that she described herself as not merely the president of nation-state but also as "the 'CEO' of a profitable 'global enterprise'" (Rodriguez, 2010, x). In the words of Rodriguez (2010, x), "by calling herself a 'CEO' [Macapagal-Arroyo] represents herself not as a head of state but as an entrepreneur, the ideal neoliberal subject, who rationally maximizes her country's competitive advantage in the global market." Macapagal-Arroyo was determined to eliminate all forms of government intervention in the economy and unleash the power of market forces to propel the archipelago into developed world status. As Tyner (2009, 83) wrote:

> Macapagal-Arroyo identified the preferred course of action: 'Our basic strategy is to rely on market forces to push economic growth.' Accordingly, Macapagal-Arroyo's administration would intervene as little as possible, preferring instead to 'let the private sector be the main driving force of the economy.'

Perhaps the best example of how neoliberalism has been embraced by the government is its aggressive promotion of mining by foreign multinational corporations (Holden et al., 2011). In the words of an unnamed mining company president, "the Philippines has taken great strides in the last two years to attract investors through policy and promotion" (Fraser Institute, 2008, 24).[4]

The Extrajudicial Killings

Assassinations have occurred in the Philippines since the American colonial period (McCoy, 2009). These are not confined to people involved in political activism, as demonstrated by the killing of street children, petty criminals, and drug dealers in Davao City (Human Rights Watch, 2009). However, since 2001 there has been a wave of assassinations targeting activists involved in left-wing causes. According to Karapatan[5] (2010), from 21 January 2001 until 30 June 2010, 1,206 activists have been killed in the Philippines (see Table 1). The killings peaked in 2006 when 235 people were killed, exhibited a downward trend during 2007 (100 victims) and 2008 (90 victims) and then showed an upsurge during 2009 (130 victims) before falling off during the first half of 2010.

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[3] Macapagal-Arroyo left the Presidency in July 2010 but, in an unusual move, ran for the House of Representatives and became a Congressional Representative. There is little indication that Macapagal-Arroyo's successor Benigno Aquino will cease to follow the neoliberal direction established by Ramos and Macapagal-Arroyo.

[4] The Fraser Institute is a neoliberal think tank located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

[5] The Filipino human rights nongovernmental organization (NGO) Karapatan is described by Pratt (2008, 774) as "highly visible and widely respected internationally." "*Karapatan*" is the Tagalog word for "right."

Table 1: The Extrajudicial Killings, 21 January 2001 – 30 June 2010

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010[6]	**Total**
100	124	130	85	194	235	100	90	130	18	**1206**

(Source: Karapatan, 2010)

According to Girlie Padilla, the International Liaison Officer of Karapatan, the victims tend to be members of organizations on the left of the political spectrum (Padilla, 2007). Audrey Beltran, the Public Information Officer of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, indicated that those killed often belong to organizations, such as peasant or labor groups (Beltran, 2007). Santos Mero, the Deputy Secretary General of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), made it clear that most victims are activists and "the more vocal people are, the more vulnerable they become" (Mero, 2007). Both genders have been targeted and the victims have included church workers, community organizers, human rights activists, journalists, local government officials, and political activists (Amnesty International, 2006). In the words of Human Rights Now (2008, 6), "the majority of targets are people who are lawfully criticizing governmental policies by means of peaceful measures such as speeches, writing, and mobilizing people." Most of the killings seem to follow a methodology wherein the victims are shot while carrying out routine activities by men riding motorcycles; after being shot, nothing is taken from the victims and they are left to die (Beltran, 2007; Padilla, 2007). The nature of these attacks indicates that the assailants had little fear of any police reaction (Human Rights Now, 2008, 24).

Agreement is widespread that most killings can be attributed to the government in general, and to the AFP in particular. Instead of an unrelated series of murders carried out by criminals, the killings "constitute a pattern of politically targeted extrajudicial executions" (Amnesty International, 2006, 2). The term "extrajudicial executions" is used because they are "unlawful and deliberate killings carried out by order of [the] government or with its complicity or acquiescence" (Amnesty International, 2006, 2). Human Rights Watch (2007, 25) similarly held the state responsible, concluding that "our research, based on accounts from eyewitnesses and victims' families, found that members of the AFP were responsible for many of the recent unlawful killings." Franco and Abinales (2007, 315) concluded that "agreement is widespread that the killings have AFP written all over them."

[6] To 30 June

Operation Plan Bantay Laya: the Motivation for the Extrajudicial Killings

The context for the killings is the forty-two year old conflict between the AFP and the NPA (see Table 2 and Figure 2), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Since the reestablishment of the CPP along Maoist lines in December of 1968, and the inception of the NPA in March 1969, this conflict has claimed over forty thousand lives and appears to show no sign of imminent conclusion (Santos, 2010). Since the 1996 peace accord between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) the secessionist conflict between the AFP and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has attracted substantial media attention.[7] Nevertheless, the AFP-MILF conflict is confined to the vicinity of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) (Santos and Santos, 2010). In contrast to the MILF, the NPA (with approximately 7,000 armed cadres and a nationwide presence) is considered the most serious threat to the security of the Philippines because it operates in all

Table 2: Organizations Involved in Conflict against the Philippine State

Organization	Description	Acronym
Armed Forces of the Philippines	The armed forces of the Philippines state, includes the Philippine Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines.	AFP
Communist Party of the Philippines	Maoist organization formed in 1968 replacing the old Marxist *Partido Komunista ng Philipinas*.	CPP
New People's Army	Armed wing of the CPP. Founded in 1969. Engaged in conflict with the AFP since 1969.	NPA
Moro National Liberation Front	Islamist organization formed during late 1960s that sought independence for the Muslim inhabitants of the southern Philippines. Signed a peace agreement with the Philippine government in 1996. Content to have autonomy over Muslim areas in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).	MNLF
Moro Islamic Liberation Front	Islamist organization that broke away from the MNLF during the late 1960s, not content to have autonomy in the ARMM the MILF seeks an independent homeland for the Muslim inhabitants of the southern Philippines.	MILF

regions of the archipelago with the notable and important exception of the ARMM (Santos, 2010). According to Adolfo Espuelas (2008, 1), a Major in the Philippine Army, the NPA is the most serious threat to the security of the Philippines,

[7] The *Abu Sayyaf* ("Bearer of the Sword") is another Muslim group attracting substantial media attention. According to McCoy (2009) this was a group created by the AFP during the 1990s to create internal conflict within the MNLF, which then morphed into a ruthless kidnapping ring.

"because of the breadth of its influence and the seriousness of its political struggle." Similarly, Jonathan Hastings, a Major in the United States Army, and Krishnamurti Mortela, a Major in the Philippine Army, wrote that the NPA is the most serious threat to the Philippine state, "because it affects a considerably large portion of the Philippine territory" (Hastings and Mortela, 2008, 106).

There are also indications that the NPA and the MILF have a loose alliance; in 1999, the NPA and the MILF entered into an agreement to avoid encountering each other in areas proximate to their operations (Santos and Santos, 2010). According to Von Al Haq, the Chair of the MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities, the MILF and the NPA "have a common enemy" (Al Haq, 2005). Professor Jose Maria Sison, a former English professor from the University of the Philippines, was the founder of both the CPP and the NPA. Today Sison serves as the Chief Political Consultant of the Negotiating Panel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the umbrella organization containing the CPP and the NPA (as well as several other left-wing groups). Although he is no longer involved in any leadership capacity with the NPA, Sisson stated that the NPA and the MILF have an "understanding" and do not want "to collide" with each other; both groups also have an alliance in terms of sharing a common enemy (Sisson, 2007).

Figure 2: NPA Cadres Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), December 2008 (Photo: Keith Bacongco; used with permission)

To eliminate the NPA, the AFP implemented Operation Plan (OPLAN) *Bantay Laya* ("Freedom Watch") in 2002 and followed it with OPLAN *Bantay Laya* II in 2006 (McCoy, 2009). According to Philip Alston (2007, 8), the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions, Operation Plan *Bantay Laya* is a plan focusing "on dismantling civil society organizations that are purported to be 'CPP front groups.'" Civil society organizations are targeted because the AFP considers them the political infrastructure of the NPA and its intelligence network (Alston, 2007).

The blueprint for such a plan comes from the influence of the USA on the AFP. The Philippines was a colony of the United States from 1898 until 1935, an American protectorate from 1935 until 1946, and then a nominally sovereign nation hosting the two largest American foreign military bases in the world from 1946 until 1992. This heavy American influence resulted in the AFP becoming a military "steeped in United States support, strategies, and tactics" (Alamon, 2006, 153) and "more oriented toward and influenced by the United States than the armed forces of any other country in the developing world" (Thompson, 1996, 66). In the words of McCoy (2009, 19), "in the half century since independence, the United States has intervened almost every decade, working through its natural allies in the Philippine police and military to introduce aid, advisers, security doctrines, and covert operations." The United States has influenced the AFP through training its officers; virtually all senior Filipino officers receive advanced training in the United States and military advisors are often sent to the Philippines (McCoy, 2009); as McCoy writes:

> Building on the institutional foundations laid during colonial rule, US advisors have fostered an extralegal dimension in Philippine security operations through the introduction of macabre psychological warfare tactics in the 1950s, training in sophisticated torture techniques during the 1970s, violent vigilante operations during in the 1980s, and tacit approval of widespread extrajudicial killings since September 2001. (McCoy, 2009, 19)

Since the advent of the "War on Terror" the extent of United States influence on the AFP has increased substantially due to concerns about Southeast Asia, and specifically the Philippines, becoming a "second front" in the "War on Terror" (Glassman, 2007). Between 2002 and 2009, the United States allocated 520 million dollars in military assistance to the Philippines (McCoy, 2009). According to Docena (2007, 81), "since 911, the Philippines have been by far the largest recipient of US military assistance in all of East Asia." From 2002 to 2005, the Philippines obtained approximately 85 percent of all American military aid allocated to Southeast Asia and 846 members of the AFP received training in the United States, the largest contingent from any Southeast Asian nation (Docena, 2007).

The vast majority of American military aid was provided without monitoring to ensure that human rights were being respected (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005). Amnesty International USA (2002) asked Pacific Command, the integrated command in the United States military with responsibility for the Philippines, for information on its human rights policy and no response was provided. Whenever official acknowledgements have been made by the United States of the extrajudicial killings they have always been tempered by exculpatory statements indicating that the Philippine government is not the only actor engaging in violence, and that the Philippine government is taking steps to investigate the killings; such statements provide *de facto* diplomatic cover for the extrajudicial killings (McCoy, 2009).

The specific influence of the United States military on the extrajudicial killings of concern here was the Phoenix Program developed by American military planners during the Vietnam War, "the most intensive- and portentous- US imperial venture of the twentieth century" (Glassman 2007, 93). In Vietnam, the United States decided that the most effective strategy for defeating the Viet Cong lay with attacking its political infrastructure (Andrade and Willbanks, 2006; Andrade, 1990). The Viet Cong could be engaged militarily but as long as it remained able to maintain constant contact with the population it could not be defeated (Andrade and Willbanks, 2006; Andrade, 1990). The solution lay with destroying the Viet Cong's political infrastructure (Nagl, 2008). To achieve this, the Phoenix Program, a well-developed program of selective assassinations, was implemented in 1968, resulting in the deaths of over 26,000 people until its termination in 1972 (Andrade and Willbanks, 2006; Andrade, 1990). Phoenix proved to be controversial; "while killing large numbers of important insurgents, it did so at the cost of substantial human rights violations that lost public support among the people of both Vietnam and the United States" (Nagl, 2008, 142). Nevertheless, despite the controversy surrounding it, Phoenix was replicated by United States military advisers to El Salvador in the early 1980s when the Salvadorian military sought to suppress the *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) by eliminating rebel leaders and sympathizers (Lauria-Santiago, 2005). By the early 1990s, destroying insurgent infrastructure had become an established component of American counterinsurgency doctrine, even though General Paul Gorman, the commander of United States forces in Central America during the 1980s, described Phoenix-like Programs as "a form of warfare repugnant to Americans, a conflict which involves innocents, in which non-combatant casualties may be an explicit objective" (Lauria-Santiago, 2005, 101). As the United States Army and United States Air Force (1990: E-2) wrote in their *Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict Field Manual*:

> In order for the government to address the causes of insurgency through balanced development, it must also protect the people from insurgent violence and separate them from insurgent control. This requires

> rendering the insurgent leadership and organization ineffective by persuasion, prosecution, or destruction. Denied its infrastructure, the insurgent organization will lack direction and sources of personnel, material, and intelligence. The insurgent tactical forces will be cut off, forced to fight on the government's terms, and vulnerable to disintegration.

This manual also warned of insurgents using front organizations as "groups for intelligence, logistics, and recruiting requirements" (United States Army and United States Air Force, 1990, D-4), while highlighting the importance of "neutralizing" insurgents through "physically or psychologically separating insurgents from the people, converting their members, disrupting their organization, or capturing or killing them" (United States Army and United States Air Force, 1990, E-2). Perhaps the manual's most interesting aspect is its emphasis on counterinsurgency operations as a vehicle for advancing "US international goals such as the growth of freedom, democratic institutions, and free market economies" (United States Army and United States Air Force, 1990, 1-1).

Today there are many who view the AFP as committed to eliminating the NPA by replicating Phoenix and targeting legal organizations alleged to be "communist fronts." Roneo Clamor, the Deputy Secretary General of Karapatan, regards Phoenix as the template for OPLAN *Bantay Laya* (Clamor, 2010). To the International Coordinating Secretariat of the Permanent People's Tribunal and IBON Books (2007, 147), OPLAN *Bantay Laya* "evokes memories of Operation Phoenix conceived by the Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency during the Vietnam War." Revelli (2008, 8) also thinks the AFP has copied its counterinsurgency doctrine from "the Phoenix Program that the United States used during the Vietnam War. They target suspected civilian support for rebel groups."[8] In the words of Alamon (2006, 164):

> Some sectors see the hand of the United States in these counterinsurgency tactics since it is reminiscent of the counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam dubbed as OPLAN Phoenix. Identified peasants suspected of being sympathetic to the Vietcong were liquidated to effect fear in the community and discourage support for the rebels.

According to Andrade and Willbanks (2006, 18), "operations under the Phoenix Program sought to target and neutralize members of the Viet Cong infrastructure." Perhaps the best evidence of the influence of Phoenix upon the

[8] Phoenix is not the only Vietnam era program emulated by the AFP; it has also implemented the *Kalayaan Barangay* (Barangay Freedom) Program, modeled on the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) Program, to provide development in insurgent prone areas. This program has been criticized for placing military objectives, such as intelligence gathering, above poverty alleviation (Nicolas, 2007). Similarly, just as the Americans implemented the strategic hamlet program for population control, the AFP requires the production of tax certificates in NPA affected areas to prove residency (Alamon, 2006).

AFP comes from the latter's frequent use of the word "neutralize" in discussions of eliminating the NPA. In his testimony before the Melo Commission[9] (2007, p.14), AFP Chief of Staff General Hermogenes Esperon stated "the AFP aims to neutralize the leaders of the guerrilla front, who are *bona fide* members of the NPA." Regarding the use of the word "neutralize", the Melo Commission (2007, 54) concluded:

> The armed forces consider the so-called left wing and some party list organizations, and their members, 'enemies of the state,' who should be 'neutralized.' They qualify their statement by stating that the word 'neutralize' does not necessarily mean killing, but should be taken in the context of their holistic approach to the war on communism – that is, to include socio-civic and other works designed to bring communist rebels back to the fold of the law and thus 'neutralize' their threat. Nonetheless, the fact that certain elements in the military would take the more direct approach to 'neutralizing' the enemy cannot be discounted.

Today, the AFP is set upon eliminating the NPA by replicating Phoenix, and is not just targeting its underground guerrilla organizations but is also seeking to destroy legal organizations constituting its political infrastructure. Father Frank Nally, an Irish Priest who spent nine years on the island of Mindanao, regards what is happening in the Philippines as an example of how the United States has trained militaries to conduct counterinsurgency warfare (Nally, 2007). According to Kelly Delgado, the Karapatan Representative for Southern Mindanao, the policy under OPLAN *Bantay Laya* is eliminating the NPA by eliminating its alleged legal fronts (Delgado, 2007). In Girlie Padilla's opinion, the AFP has taken the view that those they kill are "part of the NPA at night, and activists by day" (Padilla, 2007). As Pratt (2008, 755) wrote, "this is a study of low-intensity warfare currently directed towards civilians."

In 2005 the AFP strategy of targeting legal organizations became apparent when a compact disc prepared by Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security became public. On this compact disc was a power point presentation entitled *Knowing the Enemy: Are We Missing the Point* (Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security, 2005). This presentation listed a number of organizations considered to be "front organizations" of the CPP-NPA including organizations ranging from *Bayan Muna* (the political party to which the Abarillos belonged) to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Another dimension of the AFP strategy of targeting civil society organizations is its "order of battle," a prioritized list of those who are to be assassinated (Wailan, 2007). People are listed for opposition to dams, mining,

[9] This commission was reluctantly established by the government in 2006 to investigate the killings in response to international outcry about the rising rates of killings.

militarization, human rights violations, or Macapagal-Arroyo's efforts to change the constitution; essentially, "any type of social activism will get one's name on the order of battle" (Wailan, 2007). In 2009, Carlos Conde, a journalist writing for the International Herald Tribune, had his name placed on the order of battle for authoring stories about human rights violations in the Philippines (Conde, 2009).

Consistent with Phoenix's "establishment of files and dossiers on suspects" (Andrade and Willbanks, 2006, 19), the AFP engages in target research before someone is killed. According to Audrey Beltran there is usually a three month surveillance period (Beltran, 2007). Usually the AFP conducts this surveillance by attending rallies, photographing speakers and confirming the names of those they photograph (Beltran, 2007; Mero, 2007). Mero photographed them, and the Philippine National Police (PNP) confirmed that they are members of the AFP (Mero, 2007).

Although the number of killings decreased from 2006 to 2008 (Table 1) and has not returned to 2006 levels, they are not ending (Alston, 2009). In the words of Alston (2009, 5), "while current levels are significantly lower than before, they remain a cause for great alarm." Not one member of the AFP has been convicted for killing activists and there is no evidence of any reforms to prevent the targeting of activists. Although the killings have diminished, "too many cases continue to be reported and far too little accountability has been achieved for the perpetrators" (Alston, 2009, 12).

The Government Response: a Political Maneuver to Distract Attention

The government is aware of the attention drawn to the Philippines as a result of the killings (Alston, 2009). As foreign commentators cannot be silenced, a government engaging in such activities must provide a counterargument to explain events occurring within its territory (Heryanto, 2006). In this case, the government response is to claim that the killings are an NPA internal purge, similar to one in the 1980s, when the NPA responded to concerns that AFP agents had infiltrated it by killing hundreds of its members (Human Rights Watch, 2007; Abinales, 2008).

Activists concerned about the killings reject this assertion outright. Sister Crescencia Lucero, the Executive Director of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), a human rights NGO, bluntly stated, "this is a very lame excuse" (Lucero, 2007). To Sister Crescencia, attributing the killings to an NPA internal purge is a political maneuver to distract attention from the fact that the state is behind these killings (Lucero, 2007). Girlie Padilla rejects this explanation for two reasons: first, she sees it as an excuse ventured by the AFP to deflect attention away from the fact that they are carrying out the killings; second, the victims are not members of the NPA (Padilla, 2007). Father Frank Nally thinks that the government should prove that the killings are an NPA internal purge instead of simply attributing the killings to this explanation and then doing nothing further (Nally, 2007).

Professor Jose Maria Sison was imprisoned by the government from 1977 until 1986 and thus denies any responsibility for the purges, which Sison describes as a "bloody witch hunt" (Sison, 2007). Sison categorically denies that the current rash of killings is an NPA internal purge (Sison, 2007). According to Sison (2007), if the NPA is conducting another internal purge why does the AFP often indicate the person in advance on their order of battle? Why is it that the victims are placed under close surveillance by the AFP, and denounced as enemies of the state? And why is it that a considerable number of extrajudicial killings occur near military camps and police stations?

Although the NPA kills people there are striking differences between how it kills and the recent killings of activists. First, the NPA issues statements indicating that someone has been found guilty by a "peoples' court" and owes a "blood debt to the revolutionary movement." Then, after they have been killed, the NPA issues a statement claiming responsibility for their death. As Human Rights Watch (2007, 72) wrote, "The NPA is typically vocal when it does in fact kill." If the extrajudicial killings were the result of an NPA internal purge one would be hearing statements from the NPA accepting responsibility for most of these killings. The fact that such statements are not being made undermines this explanation. According to Human Rights Watch (2007, 71), "experts on the NPA have found no evidence that large-scale intra-NPA killings have persisted beyond the early 1990s, and that the current killings do not reflect the typical pattern of killings by the NPA."

The Political Uses of Political Violence

The extrajudicial killings exemplify the link between neoliberalism and violence in three ways: first, by eliminating the NPA, a hindrance to the government's efforts to encourage foreign direct investment is removed; second, the killings facilitate the elimination of social movements opposed to neoliberal policies and programs; third, they enhance the power of the archipelago's elite.

The NPA are seen by the government as an obstacle to economic development because they extract revolutionary taxes from businesses (Hastings and Mortela, 2008). The NPA will approach businesses, such as mining companies, and demand that they pay revolutionary taxes to support the peoples' government. Should these businesses fail to pay, their facilities are sometimes destroyed and, on some occasions, their security personnel have been killed (Holden et al., 2011). Earlier, it was pointed out how the government is aggressively trying to encourage mining investment. In the 2010/2011 Fraser Institute survey of mining companies, 64 percent of the 494 respondents indicated that they viewed the security situation in the archipelago as a deterrent to investment, and 28 percent of the respondents indicated they would not invest in the Philippines due to the security situation (Fraser Institute, 2011). An armed group articulating an anti-capitalist ideology, extracting revolutionary taxes from corporations, and sometimes attacking their

property, clearly impedes foreign direct investment; any Phoenix-like destruction of such an organization certainly serves as a conduit for foreign direct investment.

The killings also exemplify neoliberalism's connection to violence by facilitating the elimination of social movements opposed to neoliberal policies and programs. The Philippines contains a thriving and vibrant civil society, which McCoy (2009, 515) called "the most elaborate citizens' network anywhere in the developing world." This civil society contains NGOs involved in a variety of different types of activism such as advocacy on behalf of agrarian reform, environmental protection, indigenous peoples' rights, labor organizing, and the plight of the urban poor. By no means are all, or even a majority, of these NGOs opposed to neoliberalism, but many of them generate stiff resistance to neoliberal policies (Figure 3) and this resistance constitutes a significant barrier to their implementation. The opposition of social movements to mining, for example, includes protests, litigation, administrative proceedings, and the implementation of mining moratoriums by local governments (Holden, 2011). One unnamed exploration company president was quoted by the Fraser Institute (2008, 24) stating: "[In the Philippines], local interest groups stop mining with backing from NGOs supported by European Greenies." Another unnamed mining company president was quoted by the Fraser Institute (2011, 49) stating: "[In the Philippines], NGOs, peasants and church groups override [the] government constantly. You can spend millions developing a property in the Philippines, only to have it swept away by peasants, lobby groups [and] churches." Clearly, the government's enthusiasm for neoliberalism is not shared by the entirety of the archipelago's population. Those social movements that oppose neoliberalism's rubric of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation refer to it by the acronym LAPIDA, which means "tombstone" in Tagalog (Labong, 2007).

Many of the victims of extrajudicial killings are not members of the NPA, but rather activists against projects implemented in adherence to the government's neoliberal development paradigm. According to Audrey Beltran, the victims are often critical of development projects (such as agribusiness plantations, export processing zones, and mines); the killings are an attempt to silence criticism of these projects and policies by killing their opponents (Beltran, 2007). Girlie Padilla stated that the AFP is often deployed in areas where multinational corporations have projects; this is done to eliminate opposition to these projects as "less opposition from below means less opposition to the project being implemented" (Padilla, 2007). To Padilla (2007), the killings are an example of a violent dimension of globalization being implemented in the Philippines. Kelly Delgado (2007) echoed Padilla, stating that the government is trying to silence the objections of the people to projects which are being advocated by the World Bank. There have been instances where union representatives at banana plantations have been killed; the government is trying to eliminate unions and stop the struggle of

Figure 3: Anti-Mining Mobilization, Metro Manila, April 2005 (Photo by by author)

the workers (Delgado, 2007). If the multinational corporations operating agribusiness plantations are not behind these killings, they at least benefit from them by receiving a union free workforce (Delgado, 2007). In the export processing zones of Luzon and Cebu, union organizers are frequently killed; as Legaspi (2007, 107) wrote, "Union formation has become an activity as difficult as a [water buffalo] passing through the eye of a needle." Santos Mero indicated that opposition to mining is viewed as a "front" for the NPA and many leaders of anti-mining groups are threatened by the AFP; if one opposes development activities, one is viewed as an enemy of the state (Mero, 2007). Jun Saturay was a former member of the Alliance against Mining in Oriental Mindoro (and the former Provincial Chair of Bayan Muna) before seeking refugee status in the Netherlands. According to Saturay, a large percentage of extrajudicial killings occur in areas where development projects are located (Saturay, 2007). Many of the victims are activists from community organizations opposing these projects and the government has reverted to a policy of "elimination by assassination" (Saturay, 2007). Multinational corporations deny having anything to do with the killings of activists who oppose their projects, but still benefit from having the AFP do it for

them (Saturay, 2007). To Saturay, the extrajudicial killings are clearly a manifestation of neoliberalism's propensity for violence (Saturay, 2007). Father Frank Nally also views these killings as a policy of "elimination by assassination" and, referring to how the killing of anti-mining activists (such as the Abarillos) reduces opposition to mining in the Philippines, stated, "Mining companies are making a killing because of the killings" (Nally, 2007).

Similarly, many of the victims are also activists against policies implemented in adherence to the government's neoliberal development paradigm, such as bilateral trade agreements. Daniel Conejar, the Mindanao Coordinator of TFDP, indicated that the opposition of people to bilateral agreements, such as the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement, is silenced by having them executed (Conejar, 2007). To Carlos Conde, the advocacies of the victims is a glaring example of how neoliberalism creates violence; whenever activists are killed one will find a powerful neoliberal interest being opposed (Conde, 2009).

A term frequently used in discussions of the extrajudicial killings is "development aggression." It can be defined as "the process of displacing people from their land and homes to make way for development schemes that are being imposed from above without consent or public debate" (Nadeau 2005, 334) or as "development projects that destroy [a community's] traditional economy, community structures, and cultural values" (International Coordinating Secretariat of the Permanent People's Tribunal and IBON Books 2007, 185). Andres Wailan, Kelly Delgado, Daniel Conejar, Father Frank Nally, Sister Crescencia Lucero, and Carlos Conde all viewed these killings as development aggression. Since the opposition faced by many projects is eliminated though violence, neoliberalism, a utopian project envisaging the achievement of economic order through freedom, actually constitutes an aggressive form of development denying freedom to those who stand in its way. Proponents of neoliberalism view it as a process where providing global capital unimpeded access to a developing country's economy will generate prosperity and, ultimately, an improvement in the welfare of that nation's citizenry. In the Philippine context, however, providing global capital unimpeded access to the archipelago's economy has generated protests and controversy, which is squelched by killing those who object to it. This hardly resembles a situation consistent with the principles of freedom and liberty upon which neoliberalism is ostensibly predicated.

Although OPLAN *Bantay Laya* is ostensibly a counterinsurgency template implemented to eliminate the NPA many see it as a wholesale plan to eliminate all political opposition to the government, what Pion-Berlin and Lopez (1991) call "politicide." Indeed, "the scope of the enemy's influence has been identified to be so wide as to expand the target to almost anyone involved in economic, political, social, environmental, and cultural concerns" (Manzanilla, 2006, 99). The government "is attacking not just armed rebels but the whole network of leftists who are becoming increasingly powerful and increasingly discontent in the

Philippines" (Beller, 2006, 148). In the opinion of Sister Crescencia Lucero, "this is an effort by the government to eliminate its political opponents" (Lucero, 2007).

The earlier discussion of McCamant's (1991) three types of political struggles conducive to state terrorism noted that they often overlap, and that the worst cases of political repression occur where there is an overlap between them. To the elite dominating Filipino society neoliberalism is ideal because it expressly eschews any redistributive actions on behalf of the state. During the 1950s, alarmed by the growing insurgency carried out by the *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* (Peoples Liberation Army, HMB, or "Huks"), the United States recommended that land reform be pursued (Karnow, 1989). Members of the elite balked at the suggestion that they should relinquish the basis of their power in society, and no further pressure was brought by the United States to engage in land reform (Karnow, 1989). Today, under neoliberalism, such policies are viewed as inefficient and are discouraged by agencies such as the World Bank who consistently advocate economic growth over equity (Borras, 2007). If the elite prevented land reform during the 1950s, when redistribution dominated economic discourse, it is unlikely that land reform will be pursued today. This entrenchment of the elite contributes substantially to the extrajudicial killings. The coercive forces of the Philippine state have long been viewed as an army for the landed elite (Kerkvliet, 1977). Today, however, neoliberalism has solidified the power of the elite even further and their control of the state's coercive forces allows them to violently suppress actions on behalf of the poor and marginalized challenging their privileged position. To the elite the "War on Terror" serves as an ideal corollary to neoliberalism. As in many other countries in the world, the reemergence of the national security state in the Philippines has offered an opportunity for the archipelago's elite to participate in retrenching human rights in the name of the national interest (Glassman, 2007). Neoliberalism provides the elite with an ideological pretext for refraining from engaging in any redistribution of wealth to the poor and marginalized; concomitantly, the "War on Terror" provides the elite enhanced coercive powers to prevent the poor and marginalized from taking any wealth from them.

The Extrajudicial Killings: Creating a Landscape of Terror

The extrajudicial killings in the Philippines are an example of state terrorism wherein the state commits acts of violence against its own citizens to spread fear among the population. The essential characteristic of state terrorism is not the physical harm, or material destruction, of the victims but the reproduction of fear among the population (Heryanto, 2006). In the Philippines, victims see their organization listed as a communist front in *Knowing the Enemy*, find their names on the order of battle, receive death threats, or find themselves visited by the military regarding their political activities (as the Abarillos did before they were killed). If the sole objective of government was to kill these people there would be no need to provide them with advance warning of their deaths. However, when someone is sent a death threat (or discovers their name on the order of battle) they

are given an opportunity to tell others that they have been targeted. When they are killed their death sends a message to others that such threats possess veracity and they may be next; in this context, terror "becomes a communicative strategy that aims beyond the killings themselves to send a message to the survivors" (Oslender, 2007, 121).

Figure 4: AFP Black Propaganda Poster, General Santos City, April 2007 ("If you want the Philippines to become communist vote for: Bayan Muna, Anakpawis, Gabriela, Migrante, Suara, Anakbayan") (Photo by the author)

In many ways the campaign against the left in the Philippines has created a landscape of terror where the face of the earth itself becomes a proscenium upon which images of fear are written (Gregory and Pred, 2007; McCoy, 2009). Consider the use of AFP black propaganda posters against left wing political parties such as *Bayan Muna*, the party the Abarillos belonged to (see Figure 4).

In *Knowing the Enemy: Are We Missing the Point*, a plan was delineated for special operations teams to work against various left wing political parties (Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security, 2005), in part by producing posters threatening people with dire consequences should they vote for such parties (Padilla, 2007).

Figure 5: Salvaging Victim, General Nakar, Quezon Province, April 2006 (Photo: Karapatan; used with permission)[10]

Consider also the military practice of salvaging people (Figure 5). The term "salvaging" derives from the Tagalog word *salbahe*, meaning "wild" or "savage," and this comes from the Spanish word *salvaje*, meaning "barbarous" (McCoy, 2009). When someone is salvaged they are abused before being killed, and their mutilated body is disposed in public as a warning to others (McCoy, 2009).

To appreciate how neoliberalism in the Philippines has created a landscape of terror, consider the experience of one human rights activist, interviewed by the author under condition of strict anonymity. This person was abducted at gun point on a street in a provincial town, taken to an AFP safe house, flown blindfolded in a helicopter to Manila, and kept in ankle deep cold water for several days in a dark room while funeral music was played. To this person, there is clearly state terrorism in the Philippines. Human rights are not being respected. If the people cry out their opposition to development projects they will be threatened by the government, and being salvaged is always a possibility (Anonymous Human Rights Activist, 2007). As Rodriguez (2010, 15) wrote, "total war [has become] ultimately

[10] Marilou Rubio-Sanchez, from *Bayan Muna*, was summarily executed in General Nakar, Quezon Province, by what was believed to be the Philippine Army (Karapatan, 2011).

necessary for the Philippines to continue to implement neoliberal economic policies and to coerce the Filipino people into accepting them."

Conclusion

Neoliberalism is a set of policy prescriptions giving the market a centrality in the operation of society. Neoliberalism advocates free trade, foreign direct investment, flexible labor markets, and – while eschewing state interference in the economy – calls for a strong government providing a good business climate. The widespread inequality and socioeconomic disparities associated with neoliberalism can be perceived as a form of structural violence (Springer, 2011). The structural violence associated with neoliberalism has generated substantial opposition from those threatened by its policies, and many developing countries have implemented systems of repression to ruthlessly check activist movements. This article has examined the implementation of neoliberalism in the Philippines where substantial opposition to neoliberalism has arisen. Many of those involved in activism against neoliberalism have been killed in the wave of extrajudicial killings underway in the archipelago. These killings demonstrate the connection between structural violence and direct violence; the former leads to social movements opposing neoliberalism and the latter emanates from the state acting to destroy these social movements. Ultimately, these killings exemplify neoliberalism's propensity for violence and they epitomize state terrorism; they demonstrate that "terrorism" must be examined not just from the perspective of amorphous non-state groups seeking to disrupt the world order, but also from the orthogonal perspective of states acting to impose a given world order upon those unreceptive to it. In the words of Oslender:

> It is therefore necessary to stand up against the simplification of the 'terror concept' in contemporary dominant geopolitical discourses that define terrorism exclusively as directed against the Western neoliberal democratic state, while at the same time hiding 'other terrorisms,' including those applied by these very same Western neoliberal democracies. It seems ironic, to say the least, that the 'War on Terror,' led by the United States and its changing allies, actually helps to produce and sustain landscapes of fear and regimes of terror. (Oslender, 2007, 127)

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