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For turning the screws on hot issues, Bulatlat has been awarded the Golden Tornillo Award.

Bu-lat-lat (boo-lat-lat) verb: to search, probe, investigate, inquire; to unearth facts
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American Rights Lawyer Deported by Philippine Airport Authorities

Blacklist of foreign lawyers and priests confirmed

BY BULATLAT



BLACKLISTED: Human rights lawyer Brian Campbell with other activists in one of the international fact-finding missions to the Philippines

PHOTO COURTESY OF KILUSANG MAYO UNO

Philippine immigration authorities denied the travel rights of an American human rights lawyer by deporting him immediately back to the United States upon arrival at the international on Dec. 6.

A news dispatch sent from Washington, DC by Rachel Lovis of the International Labor Rights Fund (ILRC) to Bulatlat said Brian Campbell, staff attorney for ILRC, was detained at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and denied access to the country "because of his support for Filipino human rights activists."

After showing his passport to airport officials, Campbell was questioned about his past trips to the country on fact-finding missions.

The American lawyer had traveled to the Philippines in April on an International Solidarity Mission sponsored by the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights and the Ecumenical Institute of Labor Education and Research where he met several families of victims of political killings including Luz Fortuna, the wife of Diosdado "Ka Fort" Fortuna, a murdered union organizer.

An airport security officer showed Campbell a list of names of international human rights advocates who would not be allowed to enter the country. Also on the list were members of the U.S.-based National Lawyers Guild who recently published an article about the Philippines as well as a number of priests.

The existence of the blacklist has been confirmed by Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez in an Associated Press article published on December 7.

To silence critics

Campbell was traveling to the Philippines at the invitation of several Filipino human rights organizations to gather further information about the situation in the Philippines.

Campbell said, "You can rest assure that I am being denied entry into the Philippines as just another small part of the government's concerted long-standing campaign to silence the critics of the Arroyo regime and the continuing political killings."

The Philippines remains one of the most dangerous countries for unionized workers and human rights activists. Labor groups said that from the Chong Won garment factory where workers have been on strike after management violated their rights to freedom of association, denied workers bathroom breaks and forced workers to take on 24 hour shifts, to the murder of Bishop Alberto Ramento of the Philippines Independent Church, a supporter of striking workers in the Cavite



Iskandalo Cafe

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Economic Zone, the government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has grown increasingly repressive over the past few years.

Despite the attacks on human rights advocates, the International Labor Rights Fund will continue to support the demands for the protection for human rights activists in the Philippines, the group said.

A complaint of human rights violations perpetrated against trade union workers and organizers was filed last month at the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva. **Bulatlat**

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