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U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE
TO
PHILIPPINE GROUND FORCES

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

JAMES A. HARRIS, MAJ, USA
B.A., The Johns Hopkins University, 1975

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↙ This study examines the suitability of current U.S. military assistance to Philippine ground forces. The research hypothesis is that the scope and form of current military assistance to the Philippines is not optimum and that more, or different, aid is warranted.

The study profiles the communist insurgency; the Aquino administration's counterinsurgency policies; and the composition of AFP ground forces and their counterinsurgency programs. It investigates and analyzes the extent of U.S. military aid, both direct and indirect.

The study concludes that the insurgency presents a real and immediate threat to the Aquino administration; and that the Aquino administration has no clear national COIN strategy integrating civil and military efforts. It further concludes that both the U.S. and the AFP may optimize U.S. aid by adopting several initiatives; and that the use of U.S. advisors is appropriate only in a limited "train-the-trainer" role.

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Name of Candidate: Major James A. Horris

Title of Thesis: U.S. Military Assistance To Philippine
Ground Forces

Approved by:

Laurence W. Gavin, Thesis Committee Chairman
LTC Laurence W. Gavin, B.A., M.A.

Robert C. Leicht, Member, Graduate Faculty
MAJ Robert C. Leicht, B.A., M.A.

Walter S. Towns, Member, Consulting Faculty
LTC Walter S. Towns, Ph.D.

Accepted this 2nd of June 1989 by:

Philip J. Brookes, Director, Graduate Degree
Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D. Programs

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO PHILIPPINE GROUND FORCES by Major James A. Horris, USA, 110 pages.

This study examines the suitability of current U.S. military assistance to Philippine ground forces. The research hypothesis is that the scope and form of current military assistance to the Philippines is not optimum and that more, or different, aid is warranted.

The study profiles the communist insurgency; the Aquino administration's counterinsurgency policies; and the composition of AFP ground forces and their counterinsurgency programs. It investigates and analyzes the extent of U.S. military aid, both direct and indirect.

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I wish to dedicate this paper to COL James N. Rowe, and those Philippine soldiers and marines who have given their lives that others may be free.

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GLOSSARY

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Includes the Philippine Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and the Philippine Constabulary.

Barangay. A small village. Formerly called a barrio.

Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU). Civilian reserve forces. Developed to be the nucleus of local defense systems; trained and equipped by regular military forces to support military operations in the vicinity. Replaces Civilian Home Defense Force units.

Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF). Local militia groups raised and armed by the AFP for barangay and municipality self-defense. Disbanded by President Aquino for abusing the populace.

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Founded in 1968, it is the dominant communist organization in the Philippines. It follows a Maoist philosophy.

Counterinsurgency (COIN). The political, social, civic, and military policies pursued by a government to defeat an insurgency.

Economic Support Fund (ESF). Program by which economic assistance is provided on a loan or grant basis, to selected foreign governments having unique security problems, which are of strategic concern to the U.S. The funds are used to finance imports of commodities, capital, or technical assistance in accordance with terms of a bilateral agreement; counterpart funds thereby generated may be used as budgetary support. These funds enable a recipient to devote more of its own resources to defense and security purposes than it otherwise could do without serious economic or political consequences.

Foreign Military Sales (FMS). That portion of the United States security assistance authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act, as amended. This assistance differs from the Military Assistance Program and the International

Military Education and Training Program in that the recipient provides reimbursement for defense articles and services transferred. FMS includes DOD cash sales from stocks (inventories, services, training); DOD guarantees covering financing by private or Federal Financing Bank sources for credit sales of defense articles and defense services; sales financed by appropriated direct credits; and sales funded by grants under the Military Assistance Program.

Insurgency. An attempt by an organized group to overthrow a constituted government through subversion and armed conflict.

International Military Education and Training Program (IMET). That portion of the U.S. security assistance program which provides training to selected foreign military and defense-associated civilian personnel on a grant basis. Training is provided at U.S. military facilities and with U.S. Armed Forces in the U.S. and overseas, and by the use of Mobile Training Teams. Training also may be provided by contract technicians, contractors (including instruction at civilian institutions), or by correspondence courses.

Joint United States Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG). The title given to the U.S. Security Assistance Organization (SAO) in the Philippines. It is a joint military mission whose primary functions are liaison with the country's armed forces and management of country security assistance programs. It is tailored to the country in which it works. See also SAO.

May First Movement (KMU). A large leftist trade federation through which the CPP exerts political influence and orchestrates labor strikes. It also serves as a conduit for funds into the CPP.

Military Assistance Program (MAP). That portion of United States security assistance authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, which provides defense articles and services to recipients on a nonreimbursable (grant) basis.

Mobile Training Team (MTT). Team of U.S. DOD personnel on temporary duty in a foreign country for the purpose of training foreign personnel in the operation, maintenance, or support of weapon systems and support equipment, as well as training for general military operations. MTTs may be funded from either FMS or IMET Programs.

Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). A Muslim insurgency centered in Mindinao.

Nakasaka. A government-sponsored, nationwide program to organize unarmed vigilante groups in communities threatened by communist insurgents. Inspired by the success of armed vigilante groups in Davao City known as "Alsa Masa".

National Democratic Front (NDF). A communist umbrella organization.

New Peoples Army (NPA). Military arm of the CPP.

Philippine Communist Party (PKP). A pro-Soviet communist political organization outlawed in 1930; it spawned the CPP. It is no longer very active and has renounced violence.

Security Assistance Organization (SAO). Encompasses all DOD elements located in a foreign country with assigned responsibilities for carrying out security assistance management functions. Primary functions are logistics management, fiscal management, and contract administration of country security assistance programs. SAO is a generic term. In the Philippines, the SAO is called JUSMAG.

Security Assistance Training Management Office (SATMO). Currently located with the USAJFK Special Warfare Center (SWC) at Ft. Bragg, N.C. Responds to requests from the JUSMAG for training teams and for the provision of training support and literature. Organizes and deploys Technical Assistance Teams, Technical Assistance Field Teams, and Mobile Training Teams.

Special Operations Teams (SOT). Small AFP units used to "counter-organize" villages surrounding NPA base areas.

Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Team of U.S. DOD personnel deployed to a foreign country on TDY status to place into operation, maintain and repair equipment provided under the FMS or MAP programs.

Technical Assistance Field Team (TAFT). Team of U.S. DOD personnel deployed on PCS status, normally for one year or longer, to a foreign country to train local defense cadre personnel to operate, maintain and employ weapons systems and support equipment, and in other non-equipment specific military skills.

U.S. Army Security Affairs Command (USASAC). A major subordinate command of the U.S. Army Materiel Command (USAMC). AMC is the Army's executive agent for implementing, administering, and managing the Army's FMS, MAP, IMET Programs. USASAC performs executive agent functions for AMC in this arena. USASAC responds to country requests for hardware and equipment (vice training personnel). It determines the legitimacy of the request based on security assistance regulations, arranges for purchase, and shipment, and debits the country's appropriate security assistance account.

Vigilantism. The formation of community self-protection groups as a defense against the NPA. A number of these groups are armed and have proven to be effective deterrents to the communists. Some, also, have proven to be a problem for military authorities attempting to maintain order. First gained notoriety with "Alsa Masa" (Peoples Uprising), armed vigilante groups formed in Davao City in 1984. See also Nakasaka.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Research Question

The Philippine Republic faces the most serious threat to its existence since gaining its independence in 1946. The outlawed Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) now credibly challenges the Aquino administration politically and militarily. The CPP has recovered from the setbacks of Corazon Aquino's election in 1986 and controls significant portions of the countryside. Its military arm, the New People's Army, fights well at the small unit level and initiates most engagements with the Philippine armed forces.

The communist political infrastructure is elaborate and sophisticated. It influences the activities of both legal and extralegal political organizations, and its command and control appears to be excellent. The Aquino government, on the other hand, seems unable to decisively prosecute a national strategy against the communists. The Philippines, as a democratic republic, is fighting for its life.

The United States is vitally interested in preventing a failure of the Aquino administration. This thesis examines

one way we may assist the Republic of the Philippines in fighting the communist insurgency.

My research question is: What is the appropriate form and quantity of U. S. military assistance for the Philippine ground forces ?

Background:

Why the Philippines ?

Our ties to the Philippine Republic tend to fall into two categories: Those which are cultural-historical and extend back to 1898; and those which are pragmatic and tend to be more current. They do not bear equal merit on the world stage today, but their telling is appropriate in order to establish a context for our involvement there.

Historically, the reader must go back to 1898 and the defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War. The U.S. annexed the Philippine islands. We did not consider the Filipinos able to govern themselves nor did we desire to give up our new-found gains. Nevertheless, the U.S. "...gradually developed the sound national policy of educating and training the Filipinos toward eventual self-government."¹

Under the tutelage of U.S. territorial governors, the Philippines developed one democratic institution after

¹Boyd T. Bashore, "Dual Strategy For Limited War," in Modern Guerilla Warfare, ed. Franklin Mark Osanka (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), p. 190.

another in U.S. fashion. Following liberation from the Japanese and the end of World War II, the Republic of the Philippines was granted its independence. The U.S. continued its close associations with the Philippines, developed over 50 years of common heritage and a world war. Now its role became that of staunch ally and supporter.

The U.S. image has tarnished in recent years due to its past support of now-deposed President Marcos. Nevertheless, America's influence over time has become an integral part of the national character, and the U.S. has proclaimed unflagging support for the current administration. The U.S. and the Republic of the Philippines continue as key economic and strategic partners in the Pacific Basin.

Most Americans, many of whom would be hard pressed to find the Philippines on a world map, probably would not dispute this account. Historically Philippine nationalists, however, have taken a less romantic, and arguably more accurate, view of U.S. involvement:

Following Dewey's destruction of the Spanish fleet, the U.S. ignored Emilio Aguinaldo's declaration of independence and claim of a Philippine Republic. U.S. troops excluded Aguinaldo's army from the mock Battle of Manila and did not allow Filipino soldiers to occupy the city. In February 1899, fighting broke out between Aguinaldo's army and U.S. occupation forces as the U.S. insisted upon a sovereignty the Filipinos refused to yield.

When President Theodore Roosevelt declared an end to the war on 4 July 1902, an estimated 225,000 Filipino soldiers and civilians were dead in some of the most brutal fighting Americans had seen.² On the other hand, much had been done in terms of nationbuilding, public health, literacy, and civic action. Nevertheless, the U.S. conquest of the Philippines had been sheer imperialism.

In the following years the Philippines was largely ignored by the U.S. Some would say benevolently so, but ignored nonetheless. Agreements guaranteeing tariff-free trade for Philippine raw materials had the effect of binding the non-industrial Philippine economy to that of the United States. Thus, although significant profits were made, and there was the illusion of resultant prosperity, the Filipinos were thoroughly dependent upon the U.S. economy.

Filipino politicians of the era, such as Manuel Quezon, also played their role in these developments. Quezon foresaw the effects of the trade agreements. He publicly protested them and clamored even more loudly for Philippine independence. Yet privately he indicated that there was no rush.³ The oligarchs were getting rich.

Later, as the Great Depression took effect, some American businesses resented the competition from

²Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, For The Common Defense (New York: The Free Press, 1984), p. 296.

³ William Chapman, Inside The Philippine Revolution (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1987), p. 34.

inexpensive Philippine produce and cheap Philippine labor. An anti-Philippine contingent developed within the American business community which would make its weight felt years later.

The second World War devastated the Philippines. Manila was second only to Warsaw in damage sustained by a capital city. The Philippines was economically in ruin and desperately needed U.S. aid after the war.

That aid was to come in a curious form. Although Americans had fought and died side by side with Filipino guerrillas to defeat the Japanese, that singleness of purpose waned after the war. The Philippine Rehabilitation Act provided for \$620 million in payments. However, much of this went to American business interests damaged in the war, not to Filipinos. Ironically, it was also less than that provided to India, Yugoslavia, or even Japan, the former enemy.⁴ As a final insult, the money was made available only with acceptance of the Philippine Trade Act.

The Philippine Trade Act restored colonial-era trade and investment benefits which American business had enjoyed before the war. Among its stipulations, it linked the peso to the dollar, and gave "parity" to U.S. entrepreneurs developing and exploiting Philippine resources. This meant giving Americans the same rights as Filipinos.

The law so blatantly tied the Philippine economy,

⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

again, to that of the U.S. that it was opposed by both the U.S. Treasury and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.⁸ In essence, it forced the Philippine government to amend its constitution (to accommodate the parity clause) in order to obtain Rehabilitation Act funds.

Nationalists may go on to cite other examples of U.S. exploitation; however most of these are now old grievances and no longer legitimate. The U.S. has done much in the last few decades to accommodate the Philippine people. More critically, historical ties and a comingling of cultures provide not nearly as compelling issues for continuing U.S. involvement as the bare economic and political realities of today.

The U.S. naval base at Subic Bay and the U.S. air base near Angeles City constitute the primary U.S. interest in the Republic of the Philippines today. America considers the role of these bases vital in deterring Soviet expansionism and in maintaining stability in East Asia and the Pacific Rim. The Soviet naval and air bases at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, now give the U.S.S.R. the ability to interdict strategic choke points in a sustained manner. The economic leverage gained from such action would easily destabilize the entire region.

Through these choke points--the Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok straits--pass 50% of Asia's oil and 80% of its

⁸ Ibid., p. 39.

strategic materials.⁶ In Japan's case, 90% of its oil imports pass these straits. Additionally, the Lombok-Makassar route is the only strait capable of passing the newest deep-draught super tankers.

The U.S. military presence in the Philippines forms the only credible deterrent to such interdiction. Recent controversy over the bases, however, has caused the U.S. to consider other sites if the base lease, which expires in 1991, is not renewed. The U.S. would be unable to duplicate the advantage of such a regionally central location.

Nor is the U.S. the sole indorser of continued basing rights. Although Philippine Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus has said that he does not consider the bases critical in checking Soviet expansionist tendencies, others feel differently.⁷ President Aquino has come under pressure from her neighbors in the region, including Japan, to give early support to a new treaty for the bases. They and foreign investors fear instability in the region without U.S. presence. ■

⁶ Background On The Bases (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Information Service, 1987), p. 10.

⁷ Japan Economic Newswire, "U.S. Bases Not Helpful In Anti-insurgency Drive" (Kyodo, Japan: Kyodo News International), 21 April 1988.

■ Clayton Jones, "U.S. Bases, Part II. Bigger Battle Ahead With Philippines," Christian Science Monitor, 25 October 1988, p. 9.

Philippine nationalists focus on the bases as a symbol of undue U.S. influence, and the CPP finds them a fertile source of propaganda. They argue that because Marcos defended the bases, the U.S. uncritically provided him vast monies despite his corruption and abuses. This is not wholly true, especially in the last years of the Marcos regime. Recent indictments of Marcos by the U.S. have helped span the apparent gap between U.S. actions and ideals. Nevertheless, American credibility remains tarnished.

Not all Filipinos are hostile toward the U.S. presence. Indeed, most look amicably upon the United States and approximately 69,000 Filipinos are employed directly by the bases. Added to wages and compensation paid by the U.S. government, the economic spin-off from the 18,000 service members and their 19,000 dependents is enormously beneficial (on the order of 1\$ billion annually).^{*} In fact, there have been counter-demonstrations by Filipinos in Olongapo City in favor of retaining the bases.

A secondary U.S. concern is American business interests. This is a major consideration to the Aquino administration as well. American business represents 80% of all foreign investment, with the U.S. owning 50% of the

^{*} Background On The Bases, p. 32.

business assets.¹⁰ The United States' tertiary interests are probably ideological and would encompass popular, government, and military support for helping combat the communist insurgency, as well as general economic assistance.

What, then, is the bottom line ? Just as the U.S. cannot replicate the geostrategic value of the bases, neither can the Republic of the Philippines replicate their economic value. The economic void left by departing American forces could only be filled quickly by another superpower. Such a decisive Soviet influence in the Philippines is not acceptable to either the U.S. or the ASEAN countries. Public rhetoric aside, it is just as unacceptable to the Aquino administration.

With U.S. interests thus delineated and carrying the description "vital", the tasks to find a palatable accommodation to both parties, as well as prevent insurgent takeover, remain. More responsible rhetoric and astute information management will play key roles, as will substantial sums of U.S. dollars.

Limitations and Delimitations

The political situation in the Philippines is volatile. The basis for this study is the perceived need for more or

¹⁰Malcolm McIntosh, Arms Across The Pacific (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), p. 61.

different military assistance from the United States. Should a change in government render this study not applicable, it will be completed based on the situation existing as of 14 November 1988.

This thesis is unclassified.

For reasons strategic as well as historical, the U.S. is clearly interested in the survival of a free, democratic Philippine nation. Communist insurgents in the Republic of the Philippines pose a real threat to the current administration. The U.S. is committed to supporting the Aquino administration in its struggle to overcome the problems of the Marcos years. An integral part of that support has been, and will continue to be, security assistance to Philippine ground forces.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I will discuss the existing literature in the context of my four major areas of research: The Communist Threat; President Aquino's counterinsurgency policies; the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the conduct of the counterinsurgency by its ground forces; and current levels of U.S. security assistance to AFP ground forces.

The Communist Threat

I researched the Communist insurgency in order to provide background and a context for this thesis. In this regard I did not strive to present an original work. The topic is well-covered in periodical literature and to a lesser degree in newspaper articles. News and popular periodicals afford a modicum of information but tend to be superficial and report what they see or are told, usually with little analysis. Some of the more scholarly or regional journals, such as The Economist, The Far Eastern Economic Review, and The Pacific Defense Reporter provide information which, upon examination and cross-reference, is normally borne out as fact.

There are several books which deal with the Philippine insurgency in depth. One in particular, Inside The Philippine Revolution by William Chapman, is notable for its recency. It was published in 1987. Chapman's book also provides a degree of depth and continuity to historical incidents not achieved by periodicals.

Like Chapman's book, periodical and journal articles are most valuable for their recency. Book publication has not kept pace with political change in the Philippines. Articles, thus, are the only "accurate" literary sources. By reading a sufficient volume of articles, one overcomes their lack of depth and inconsistencies.

Since the situation does change so rapidly in the Philippines, only articles dating from the beginning of 1987 were used; of these, most were from 1988.

Counterinsurgency and the Aquino Administration

Mrs. Aquino's rise to office in February 1986 is so recent that virtually no texts other than those which chronicle the events of the "Miracle at EDSA" have been written about her administration. Thus, again, periodical literature provides the bulk of the available information. As with researching the threat, the quality of information varies. Generally, however, the periodicals and journals which produce reliable information on the insurgents produce the same for this topic as well.

I could find no published national integrated plan to dictate the efforts of civilian and governmental agencies in concert with AFP operations.

Counterinsurgency and the AFP

As with the previous two topics, most information is gleaned from periodical literature, and for the same reason: recency. Few periodicals delineate the various counterrevolutionary strategies adopted by the AFP in recent years and so information must be sought or confirmed by interview.

Since 1981, the AFP has outlined its plans in the following documents:

LOI 2/81 KATATAGAN (1981)
LOI 5/86 MAMAMAYAN (FEB 1986)
LOI 1/87 PAGSUBOK (JAN 1987)
AFP Action Program For 1987 (MAR 1987)

I have been unable to locate any of the original documents. All are classified. However, I received access to an official synopsis of KATATAGAN. The synopsis deals with the plan in broad terms and reveals its heavy emphasis on Civil-Military Operations (CMO).

LOI MAMAMAYAN is briefly described and endorsed by General Felix A. Brawner, Jr. in his pamphlet, A Field Commander's Perception and Random Thoughts on the Philippine Communist Insurgency. Again no particulars are given, but General Brawner does list the major differences between LOIs KATATAGAN and MAMAMAYAN, and depicts MAMAMAYAN as a more

balanced approach to counterinsurgency.

It is presently unclear whether PAGSUBOK superseded LOI MAMAMAYAN in January 1987, or whether it was implemented in addition to MAMAMAYAN. PAGSUBOK is also unavailable. In his pamphlet, The AFP Broadfront Strategy Against The Communist Insurgency, General Ramon E. Montaña very briefly describes PAGSUBOK's emphasis on large unit sweep operations and the lack of success. The AFP Action Program of 1987 appears to be a sort of interim policy, as described by Montaña, and returns to some of the basic tenets of MAMAMAYAN. Again, it is unclear whether PAGSUBOK has been superseded or merely ignored.

A new AFP counterinsurgency strategy has emerged in the last year as chronicled in several regional news publications. The use of Special Operations Teams (SOT) is the new, unnamed plan's salient characteristic.

Current Levels of Military Assistance

The Congressional Presentation For Security Assistance Programs is an excellent source for determining the scope of our financial assistance to nations around the globe. It provides a synopsis of the history and status of current aid programs and also gives a three-year look at assistance, listed by nation, in terms of dollars. This is extremely useful in determining trends.

The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management

(DISAM) publishes a comprehensive text called The Management of Security Assistance. It gives the history of U.S. security assistance and discusses in depth the various assistance programs.

Articles in professional journals, laws, and regulations governing security assistance constitute the remainder of the literature consulted on this topic.

Plans For Military Assistance

There are volumes of information available on current theories of low intensity conflict and nation-building. Military journals provide a readily available pool of essays on these subjects. In tailoring U.S. assistance to the Philippines, a knowledge of Ramon Magsaysay's counterinsurgency policies from the 1950s also is useful. Numerous books and articles are available on this.

I have located no other studies pertaining specifically to this topic. At CINCPAC urging, the AFP has collaborated in a study program designed to examine problems within the AFP and recommend solutions. Studies were to be conducted on mobility, tactical communications, and training. According to a former aide to the Chief, JUSMAG, only the Joint Mobility Study was completed (1987) and the remainder of the program has foundered.

Several MMAS theses on hand in the Combined Arms Research Library (CARL), Fort Leavenworth, explore aspects

of the struggle in the Philippines. These topics include vigilantism, civil affairs, insurgency, and subversion. None, however, deal directly with military assistance.

In summary, periodicals (professional, regional, and popular) comprise most of the available useable literature on the current state of politics and insurgency in the Philippines. U.S. government publications provide background information on current military assistance, and AFP documents gave a broad overview of past counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies.

The pace of events is such that most books are too old, if even by a year, to provide still-current information. However, numerous volumes are available for developing an historical perspective.

A number of articles proposed strategies for resolving the insurgency in the Philippines, but only in very broad terms. I found none which really discuss structuring U.S. aid for optimum benefit to both parties.

There was adequate printed material to fuel my writings on the insurgents and the Aquino administration. However, the finer points of communist methodology, as well as the status of the AFP and its COIN operations, were only lightly touched upon in print. Little other than dollar amounts of aid was available on the specific topic of security assistance to the Philippines.

Correspondence and interviewing proved to be sources of critical information in the areas mentioned above. Without interviewing, in fact, there would not have been sufficient source material. In the next chapter, I will discuss the manner in which I pursued information and the qualitative impact non-printed sources had on my study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this thesis consisted essentially of three techniques: Reading, interviewing and corresponding.

I established a task list to guide my research efforts. My outline took the following form:

Threat

- Political philosophy
- Organization and strength
- Operations and current status

Aquino Administration and Counterinsurgency

- Administration's approach to COIN
- Policies regarding the insurgents
- Aquino and the AFP
- Problems within the administration affecting the COIN effort

Status of AFP and the conduct of COIN

- Organization and strength
- COIN plans and tactics
- Magsaysay's COIN strategy

Current Levels/Types of Military Assistance

Plan for Military Assistance

- Money
- Materiel
- Advisors

Although the outline implies strict sequencing, many sources provided information on more than one topic; and often, research on two or more topics was on-going. This was necessary to confirm information or provide a more in-

depth perspective from which to conduct an interview. On other occasions, deviating from the planned sequence of research was merely a result of capitalizing on the temporary availability of a source. This was particularly true with interviews.

Recency was a major qualifier in evaluating a literary source. In the Philippines, the political situation, status of forces, and COIN strategies constantly change. Year-old information is often of little value other than to reflect the attitudes of the time. As I stated in the previous chapter, periodical literature from credible publishers took on major significance in forming a base of background knowledge. Interviews were then used to validate this information.

It was quickly apparent that interviewing was a multi-purpose weapon. Not only could secondary source data be confirmed but a great deal of otherwise inaccessible information became available. My interview schedule included Philippine officers attending the Command and General Staff College, U.S. military officers recently associated with the Philippines (usually JUSMAG), and U.S. Special Forces officers who had conducted training missions there.

It proved extremely advantageous to be located at the college while conducting this research. I was able to interview not only fellow students but also a variety of

senior and middle-grade officers. I thus received views which sometimes conflicted but more often revealed different perspectives on the same truth.

The interviews with the Philippine officers proved particularly useful in resolving unanswered questions on Communist infrastructure and tactics. This was true also of AFP organization and tactics. I was able to clarify inaccurate generalizations from my readings and other interviews.

Discussions with former JUSMAG officers yielded significant detail on current U.S. aid, as well as trends and tendencies of the Philippine government in using that aid. Generally, opinions were based on a considerable depth of knowledge in a particular field, such as maintenance or logistics. In the case of General Teeter, former Chief, JUSMAG-Phil, opinions were very analytical and presented a unique macro-view of U.S. military assistance to the Philippines.

Conversely, the observations of Special Forces officers were almost entirely empirical. Balancing the snap-shot value of their observations was the fact that associations with Filipino counterparts were relatively short term. Thus, opinions were not clouded by either friendships or long-term working relationships. Once a frame of reference was established, these interviews provided excellent soldier-level information on conditions, attitudes, and

training status of various units in the AFP. Special Forces officers were also able to relate the personal views of a number of Philippine company-grade officers and NCOs, as expressed to them. I, thus, was able to gain some insight on how a few members of the AFP regarded themselves, their countrymen, the U.S., their president, their government, and their enemy.

Finally, I corresponded to gather information. I mailed questionnaires to both American and Philippine senior officers. Among the Filipinos to whom I wrote were the Undersecretary for National Defense, the Commanding General of the Civil Relations Service, the AFP J3, and the Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps. Among the Americans were the Chief of the Ground Forces Division, JUSMAG, and the Deputy, CINCPAC. The Chief, Counterrevolutionary Warfare, USACGSC, provided most of these contacts.

Sample questionnaires are shown in Appendix A. The basic version, as depicted on page A-1, was sent to U.S. officers. A second version, worded more diplomatically, was sent to Philippine officers. A third version I mailed to the Commanding General, Civil Relations Service with questions directed specifically to him.

Of the three techniques for gathering information, interviews provided by far the most useful data in generating a recommendation for military assistance, and it

afforded opportunities to confirm or deny information gathered in my readings. Correspondence, a very inflexible method of interviewing, gave me access to a number of senior officers whose opinions carry substantial weight.

The response rate from senior officers, however, was low. Of the nine letters mailed to Filipino and American officials, only two generated responses; both of these were from Filipinos.

Correspondence and telephone conversations with the U.S. Army Security Affairs Command (USASAC) and the Security Assistance Training Management Office (SATMO) produced valuable information on the form and quantity of security assistance currently being provided to the Philippines.

Perhaps the most productive part of my methodology was the use of the college, both student and faculty, to gather new information and establish contacts. The college infrastructure itself provided a tremendous vehicle for accumulating sources.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INSURGENT THREAT

By 1968, the economic surge begun a decade earlier had ground to a near-halt. The Philippine economy was growing slower than any of its non-communist southeast Asian neighbors. The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), unable to achieve political success, had splintered philosophically along pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese lines. In December of 1968, Jose Sison--a middle-class Maoist intellectual--and nine followers challenged the fading, older leadership and broke away from the PKP. Together they formed the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).¹

The Huks, who had joined the PKP, had been reduced to a collection of gangs. The dominant Huk leader, Faustino del Mundo, ran a mafia-like organization which worried less about Marxism and more about racketeering. In January of 1969, Sison met with Bernabe Buscayno, a Huk lieutenant of del Mundo who was bright and ruthless. Buscayno was disillusioned at del Mundo's collusion with authorities and self-serving ways. He was looking for another revolution.

The scholarly ideologue and the Huk killer joined

¹Edgar O'Ballance, "The Communist New Peoples Army," Military Review, 68 (February 1988): 12.

forces.² In March of 1969 they created the New People's Army as the military arm of the CPP. It consisted of 50 men with 39 rifles and pistols.

Today the CPP pursues political revolution through the National Democratic Front (NDF), an umbrella organization for 40-45 other leftist groups. The National Democratic Front provides the CPP a mouthpiece and has represented the CPP in truce talks with the government. The NPA is waging a protracted people's war for the CPP and current strength estimates range as high as 26,000 guerrillas, two-thirds of whom are thought to be armed.³ (See Figure 1.)

CPP Methodology

Militarily and politically, the CPP has been most successful in the countryside. It follows a simple but persistent methodology for establishing its infrastructure in rural areas. The CPP/NPA begins by sending a SemiLegal Team (SLT) into a barangay, or village. The SLT is a 3-5 person team which may use any of a number of cover stories to penetrate a barangay and begin its social investigation.

To give it a cover of legitimacy, it may pose as representatives of pharmaceutical or medical equipment companies conducting a survey; similarly, there would be

² William Chapman, Inside The Philippine Revolution, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co, 1987), p. 79.

³ Melinda Liu, "With the Rebels," Newsweek, 4 April 1988, p. 146.

COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

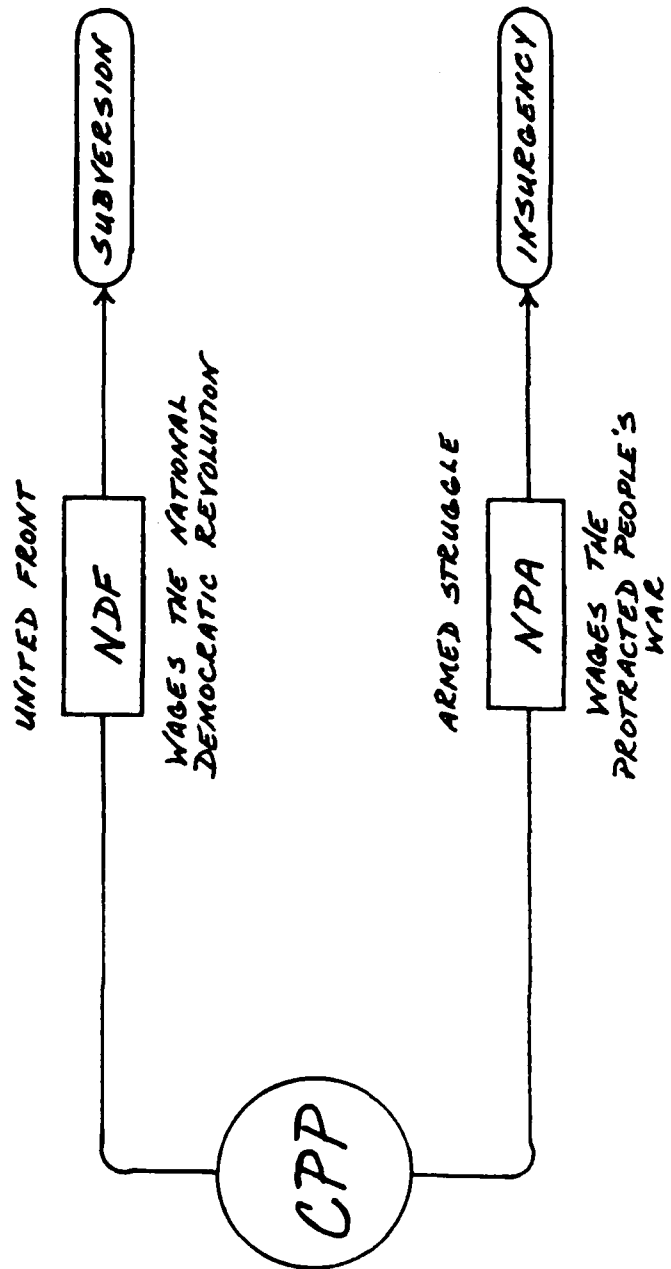


Figure 1.

little to suspect in a small group of men professing to be representatives of the Bureau of Fisheries, or Forestry, or other government agencies.

The SLT quietly ingratiates itself to the local people and begins to compile data. It acts with no noticeable malicious intent. Depending on its cover story and other circumstances, the SLT may remain in the barangay continuously, or depart and return later to resume its social investigation.

The SLT will pursue such information as grievances against local and national government, grievances against landowners, prevalence of disease and illness, and the number of school drop-outs. It will also recruit villagers for guerrilla training at an NPA training camp. Often this training is couched in terms of a "job offer" and school drop-outs are a favorite target.

The SLT identifies future leaders from within the barangay population, as well as those who may prove troublesome. Dossiers are compiled. Through informal discussions, these local leaders are gradually indoctrinated and together with the SLT form a Barangay Liaison Group (BLG). The BLG usually consists of relatives and close friends of the core group of leaders. At this point the SLT will begin to conduct teach-ins. (See Figure 2.)

As numbers grow, the Liaison Group becomes known as a Barangay Organizing Group (BOG). In this phase the SLT

CPD METHODOLOGY

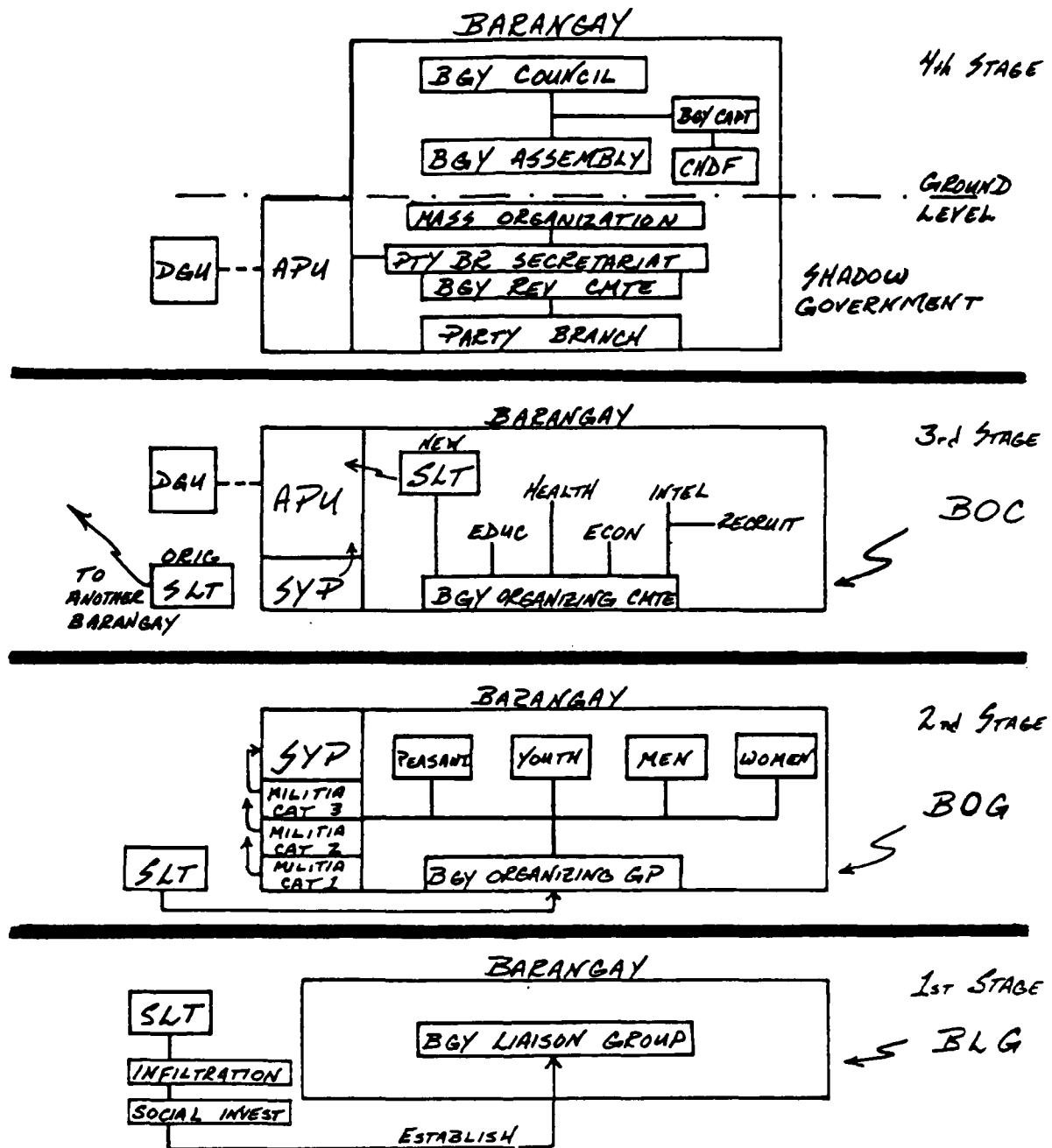


Figure 2.

organizes the people into sectoral groups such as peasants, men, women, youth, and laborers. A militia also is formed.

Formal training is now interjected. Using classroom lectures, the SLT indoctrinates villagers in such subjects as ideology and simple Marxist economics. Meanwhile informal training through discussion and teach-ins continues.

It is important to note how the barangay is organized. Men, women, and youths are all placed in different groups with different leaders. In this way, the communists unobtrusively subvert traditional family cohesiveness and further create vulnerability to their teachings.

The militia usually consists of 10-14 local males, and goes through an evaluation of its own. Each phase is called a category. In the first category, the militia men are new, unarmed, and used generally as informers. In the second category, they are given some small arms; these are usually few and often crude. As they become better trained, they will be fully armed and considered category three.

Once in the third category, five to seven individuals from the militia will be formed into a Sandatahang Yunit Pangpropaganda, (SYP). On the direction of the SLT and approval of District headquarters, The SYP will brutalize or kill selected inhabitants to enhance the propaganda effort. This may mean meting out "revolutionary justice" to a local criminal, AFP collaborator, or offending landowner; or it

may simply mean shooting an individual who resists indoctrination. The NPA is rarely arbitrary in selecting its initial victims. It establishes legitimacy in the eyes of the people by providing visible relief to an immediate problem, with an astute eye toward its propaganda value. When a SemiLegal Team and SYP are joined in this fashion, they are called an Armed Propaganda Team or Unit, (APT or APU).

As the communist hold over the barangay grows tighter, the BOG, growing ever larger, becomes known as a Barangay Organizing Committee, or BOC. Barangay leaders recruit for the NPA training camps, form intelligence (spotter) networks, and develop logistic support cells for the guerrillas.

The militia now falls under the direction of the District Guerrilla Unit (DGU) as well as the barangay party leadership. From time to time, the District Guerrilla Unit will call upon the militia to provide troops to augment DGU forces. As the militia expands, it will begin to send members to the DGU to become full-time guerrillas. Additionally, the original SLT may be replaced by one from the barangay itself. All these steps point to the final evolution of the barangay into a Party Branch.

The Party Branch is the highest form of political organization that the CPP/NPA will pursue in a barangay. It is the shadow government which essentially controls the

barangay and the lives of the people in it.

As their influence is consolidated in these guerrilla areas, or fronts, the NPA begins to extract revolutionary taxes from the people and protection money from plantation owners and local businesses.⁴ The take is estimated to be one million dollars per day, net, to the CPP who includes multinational corporations among its more lucrative extortion targets.⁵

The NPA is highly motivated, well-organized, and disciplined. In the past, the AFP has often looked ineffective by comparison. A political officer is placed in every NPA unit to enforce strict adherence to Mao's rules. There are few unintentional civilian casualties.

Working with the Party Branches, the NPA establishes extensive intelligence nets within its 73 guerilla fronts, making it virtually impossible for government troops to surprise the guerrillas. In 1984, the CPP/NPA claimed control of 20 percent of rural villages and by December 1988, some estimates reached 30 percent.⁶ AFP reports indicate that during March-June 1988 the rebels won all but one of their fifteen engagements with the AFP. Casualties

⁴O'Ballance, "New Peoples Army," p. 15.

⁵ Richard G. Stilwell, "Averting Disaster in the Philippines," Policy review, 47 (Winter 1988): 20.

⁶ Ibid.

for the rebels were reported as very low.⁷

The NPA story is not one of complete success, however. In the past it has killed its own in frenzied response to infiltration by government agents. In some rural areas it has executed numbers of local civilians accused of cooperating with the AFP. Discovery of the bodies has led infuriated inhabitants to form hostile vigilante groups rather than submit to NPA oppression. Also, documents captured in March 1988 reportedly indicate that the NPA has only enough functional weapons to equip 7,600 guerrillas, half the previously estimated number.⁸

Urban Operations

Urban areas, on the other hand, provide a vastly different environment. The CPP has kept up the fight in the cities primarily through the use of terror. By employing Sparrow squads--3-4 man assassination teams--the communists have further sought to destabilize the government.⁹ Among its victims was the Minister for Local Government, Jamie

⁷ Eric Guyot and James Clad, "Regaining The Initiative," Far Eastern Economic Review, 22 September 1988, p. 40.

⁸ Richard Vokey, "The NPA: A Paper Tiger ?," Newsweek, 13 June 1988, p. 40.

⁹ LTC Laurence W. Gavin, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 11 January 1988. It appears there is a pecking order among assassins. The most elite of the Sparrow squads are known as Scorpions. These are accomplished killers who are given only high-ranking government or AFP officials as targets.

Ferrer. Ferrer was an ardent proponent of the vigilante groups which have sprung up in response to the communists.

In February and March 1986, immediately following her election, President Aquino magnanimously released all political prisoners of the Marcos regime. Among these were Jose Sison, imprisoned since 1977, and other top CPP/NPA leaders. Many stayed in Manila, beginning a reversal of the lack of CPP infrastructure there and forming a legal political organization called the People's Party, (PP). This became another front for the CPP. Additionally, Sison, who left the country in September 1986, has been linked to the May First Movement (KMU). This is a large radical trade union federation (run by leftist Rolando Olalia before his assassination) and is a major implement of the NDF. It has coordinated unsettling labor strikes in the cities with NPA operations in the field.

In October 1987, the CPP made a public statement that it would target Americans assisting in the counterinsurgency down to the lowest level.¹⁰ Three U.S. servicemen were subsequently murdered outside Clark AFB, though their involvement in counterinsurgency was unlikely. In 1988, Sparrow squads averaged 12 killings per month in Manila; and in April 1989 a communist assassination team killed LTC James N. Rowe as he drove toward the Joint U.S. Military

¹⁰MAJ David Fridovich, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 21 December 1988.

Assistance Group compound.

Renewed development of rebel infrastructure in Manila has also led to some reverses for the communists. AFP raids in Manila in 1988 yielded several top insurgent leaders including NPA chief, Romulo Kintinar (later to escape). Government forces struck rebel computer and communications centers and an NPA hospital was uncovered as well.¹¹

The CPP has cultivated support in both urban areas and the countryside through the Christians for National Liberation (CNL). CNL is an organization of laymen and clergy which has become a "major logistical support base" for the communists. The CNL charter calls for mobilization of the church's resources for the people's revolution.¹² NPA cadres use priests' quarters and parish homes as safe houses. Foodstuffs destined for the field are stored here as well. About ten percent of the clergy supports the CNL. This leads to the CNL exerting significant influence over the distribution of Church assistance funds.¹³

The political and economic power of the Catholic Church in the Philippines is not to be underestimated. Chapman states: "It is a common joke in the Philippines that the

¹¹Japan Economic Newswire, "Aquino Says Government Has Counterinsurgency Program" (Kyodo, Japan: Kyodo News International), 5 February 1988.

¹²Chapman, p. 207.

¹³ Stilwell, "Averting Disaster," p. 20.

Catholic Church is one of only three national institutions that actually work with any semblance of efficiency and order. The others are the San Miguel Brewery and the NPA."¹⁴ The CPP recognized that the vast prestige and endorsement of Jaime Cardinal Sin and the Philippine Catholic Church played a key role in Aquino's rise to power.

Even though the Church is philosophically opposed to the CPP, the communists regard it as a source of enormous wealth to be tapped and exploited. Every priest who adopts Liberation Theology is a trained orator and social worker able to influence large numbers of people. (Liberation Theology in the Philippines, with its philosophy of "opting for the poor," is a version of the same liberal theology theories which have been adopted by many clergy throughout Latin America.)

The abuses and neglect of the Marcos regime provided fertile ground for Liberation Theology to take root among rural clergy. The communists, however, have not waited for disgruntled clergy to convert themselves to the revolution. The CPP actively attempts to infiltrate the church's organizations and seminaries. (See Figure 3.)

International Support

International support of the CPP has taken various forms. Until Mao died in 1976, the Chinese communists were

¹⁴ Chapman, p. 197.

COMMUNIST POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

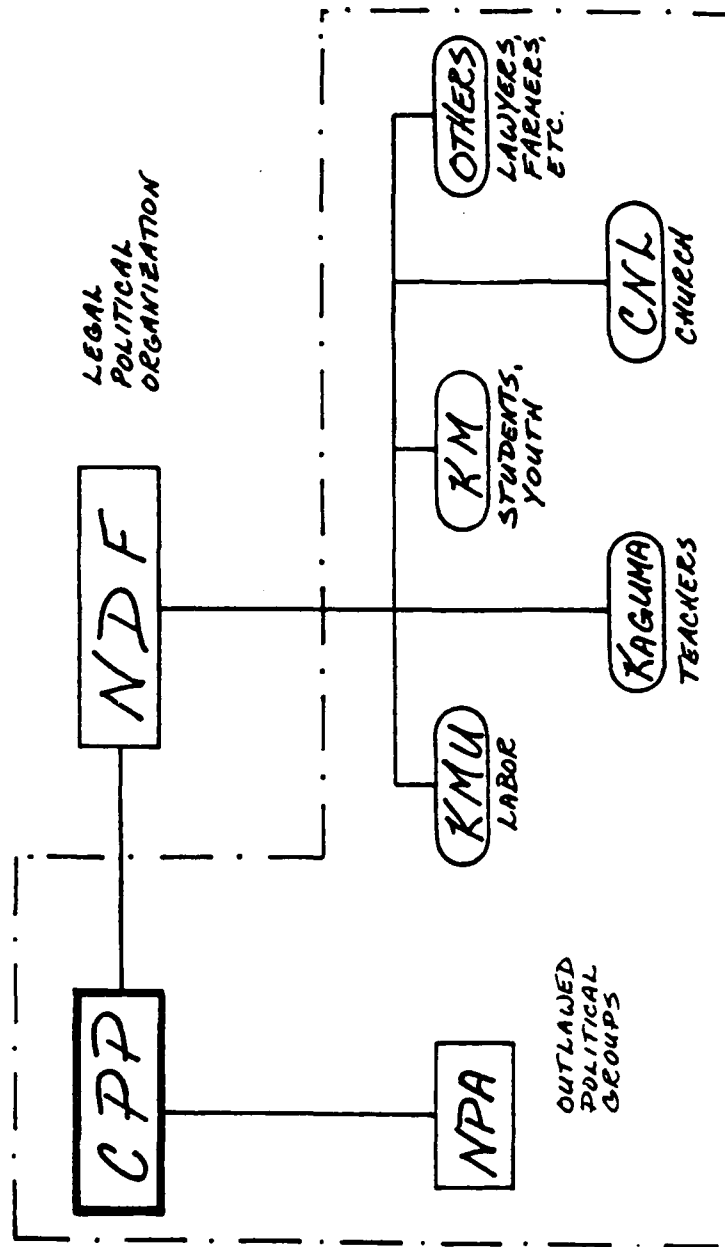


Figure 3.

supplying limited numbers of small arms and out-of-country training for insurgent cadres. Since then, CPP Central Committee member Luis Jalandoni has traveled to Europe, Africa, and throughout the Pacific to garner financial and material support. Operating under the auspices of the NDF, he has helped channel funds from "solidarity" groups in labor unions, as well as funds from religious and political groups, to analogous front organizations in the Philippines. For example, the KMU has received support and funding from Irish, Dutch, Italian, British, Norwegian, as well as Hawaiian, trade unions.¹³

Through the NDF, the CPP has supporters also in Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. The NDF has received funds from the Soviets indirectly for some years and it has admitted contact with the Vietnamese.¹⁴

Much of the funds received from outside the country are knowingly contributed to the left. However, hundreds of thousands of dollars intended for the needy, or farmers, or missionaries, also find their way into CPP coffers. An abundance of seemingly unrelated or vaguely named front groups accomplishes this diversion of funds.

Documents captured by the Army indicate that large contributions from Australia, for example, intended for the

¹³Richard D. Fischer, "Confronting the Mounting Threat to Philippine Democracy," Background, 67 (3 September 1988): 5-6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

poor have bought sophisticated communications equipment and computers for the NPA. Aid from Hong Kong has purchased hi-tech electronics allowing the rebels to use existing phone lines to communicate between elements.¹⁷

The Soviets have approached the situation by courting both sides. While Gorbachev has made overtures to Mrs. Aquino on various issues, there is also some evidence that the KGB has contacted the insurgents directly.¹⁸ Clergy from eastern Luzon report the presence of caucasians among rural folk claiming to be Dutch missionaries and occasionally attending Mass. Yet these "missionaries" do not associate with the priests and spend most of their time in the bush.¹⁹ Rumors abound. U.S. Army officers visiting the Philippines have been told of sightings of "non-Filipino advisors" working among the people in the same mountainous area north of Dingalan Bay.²⁰

Summary

¹⁷Dennis Warner, "Nol--Cory Aquino's Mandate," Pacific Defence Reporter, November 1988, p. 30.

¹⁸James B. Lindner, "The Security Situation in East Asia and U.S. Military Facilities in the Philippines," Global Affairs, 3 (Fall 1988): 163.

¹⁹Gavin interview, 11 January 1989. As related by LTC Gavin from a discussion with an American Catholic priest on home leave from the Philippines, 26 September 1988.

²⁰Fridovich interview, 21 December 1988. These sightings were made by the families of several Philippine Army officers who lived in the area in question. The officers spoke of these reports to MAJ Fridovich during a training exercise in the Fall of 1987.

No longer a small band of subversives plotting in a distant barangay, the CPP today manages its activities using modern technology. It has recouped much of the sympathy it lost among the people when Aquino was elected. It recognized its failure in boycotting the election and, aided by some of Mrs. Aquino's humanitarian policies, has redirected its efforts. The CPP has infiltrated all levels of government and has cultivated international support groups.

Still strongest in the countryside, the CPP is attempting to improve its urban infrastructure and attracts disaffected left-wing intellectuals from the cities and the universities. And although it has suffered the capture of important leaders in the last year, the CPP/NPA continues to seriously challenge the Aquino government for control of its own country.

Finally, it is crucial to grasp the point that the CPP/NPA has, in essence, governed some portions of the country for nearly two decades. Uncontested, the communists collect taxes, administer social justice, and in some cases perform municipal services such as public sanitation and health. In these areas, legitimacy lies with the party, and the federal government is the intruder.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE AQUINO ADMINISTRATION
AND
COUNTERINSURGENCY

After more than two years, the Marcos legacy to Corazon Aquino continues to inhibit the development of a comprehensive counterinsurgency plan by the Philippine government. The corruption and abuses of the Marcos era clearly made their impression on Mrs. Aquino. Shortly after her rise to office in February 1986, Mrs. Aquino began releasing political prisoners. She sought immediately to distance herself and her administration from the repression of the Marcos regime. She arguably had been greatly influenced by the imprisonment and assassination of her late husband, Benigno.

No doubt Mrs. Aquino viewed the release of political prisoners as an inspired blow for human rights. The newly freed Communist leaders, however, saw this as an opportunity to revitalize their infrastructure in Manila and recover some of the ground lost when Aquino was elected. The military, traditional favorite son of Marcos, was outraged and appalled. Thus began a mutual distrust between the two most critical players in any counterinsurgent effort, a nation's leader and its military.

As the communists reorganized, so too did the AFP. Mrs. Aquino began revamping the command framework which had been executing the counterinsurgency under Marcos. To her credit, Mrs. Aquino saw the wisdom in a system of Area Unified Commands (AUC) which had been conceived prior to her rise to office. Their implementation had been blocked, however, by AFP Chief of Staff (under Marcos) GEN Fabian C. Ver. With Ver out of the picture, Aquino established six Area Unified Commands and greatly increased cooperation between the services.¹

The Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) were given back to the municipal leaders and governors. The CHDF were local militia groups whose penchant for abusing the citizenry had caused many to go the way of the NPA as the lesser of two evils. Mrs. Aquino eventually disbanded the CHDF altogether.

When Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and acting AFP Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos threw their weight to Aquino in February 1986, it stopped the military from disallowing her rise to office. Mrs. Aquino retained both men on her staff out of personal debt. As time went on, however, Enrile openly criticized her for what he termed "a sense of drift."² Ramos remained loyal and in July 1986 used his

¹ LTC Danny Matabalao, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 13 January 1989.

²John Andrews, "The Philippines: A Question of Faith," The Economist, 7 May 1988, p. 10.

influence to quell the first coup attempt on Mrs. Aquino's presidency. A former Marcos vice-president, Arturo Tolentino, together with rebel soldiers had seized the Manila Hotel and proposed to claim the president an imposter. The plotters went essentially unpunished for their crime.

Meanwhile, Enrile became a spokesman for many in the military who felt that a number of liberal lawyers in the Aquino administration--principally Joker Arroyo, executive secretary and longtime supporter of Aquino's husband--were subverting the war against the communists.³ The ill-disguised "Enrile Plot" to wrest power away from the president took place in November 1986. It, too, was opposed by Ramos and eventually lost momentum. The next month saw Enrile, Arroyo, and three others dismissed by Mrs. Aquino.

On December 10, 1986, the president called for a 60-day cease fire between government security forces, the MNLF, and the NPA.⁴ It was a peace initiative in an effort to negotiate with the communists. She offered amnesty to the rebels and a reward for each weapon turned in. The NPA, however, moved swiftly to collect weapons to prevent their loss.⁵ And there were few takers for Aquino's amnesty

³Ibid.

⁴O'Ballance, "New Peoples Army," p. 18.

⁵ CPT Frank Miller, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 8 November 1988.

program.

A third coup attempt occurred in January 1987. This time a Manila TV station was seized by soldiers and held for over 50 hours. Again Ramos lent his influence to quell the revolt and again the perpetrators were merely chided and released. Nevertheless, the government's credibility at the negotiating table was damaged.

On January 30, 1987, the CPP/NPA withdrew their NDF-nominated representatives from the negotiations when government soldiers fired on demonstrators in Manila, killing fifteen. Despite the failed peace talks, Mrs. Aquino optimistically maintained her amnesty program.

A month later, the Philippine people struck a decisive blow for democracy as they overwhelmingly approved Mrs. Aquino's proposed new constitution. The constitution now restricted the president to a single six-year term, placed specific restrictions on the imposition of martial law, and provided for a bicameral Congress.

Many in the military, however, remained unimpressed if not completely frustrated at Mrs. Aquino's humanitarian approach to dealing with insurgents. Officers criticized her as politically and militarily naive and felt her policies to be a betrayal of the soldiers in the field. By March 1987, Mrs. Aquino was forced to admit that her "peace policy" had failed.* She ordered the AFP to begin

* O'Ballance, "New Peoples Army", p. 21.

operations against the NPA once again.

Two months later in May 1987, at a military function, the president redressed the AFP for lacking aggressiveness and competence. Meanwhile, those units of the AFP which were in fact pressing the fight found themselves bound by numerous legal restrictions. Positive identification as NPA was required before troops could engage by fire. When suspected NPA guerrillas were captured, they were required to be court processed in 36 hours or released. Long detention without proof of NPA association was prohibited. At the same time, she continued to retain out of personal loyalty cabinet ministers who were unsuited to their tasks.

Feeling hamstrung and unsupported, factions in the military became increasingly critical and resentful. In August 1987, Colonel Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, then commander of the AFP Special Warfare Center, led 1,300 troops against Malacañang Palace and other government installations. Significantly, many in the Philippine Army, senior officers included, stood by to see the outcome but did not participate. In some cases, Army units entrucked and attempted to join Honasan in Manila but were prevented from doing so by Filipinos who blocked the roads as the word of the uprising spread.

The coup attempt was finally defeated with the help of the Philippine Marines but not before 53 people died. Honasan evaded capture at the time but later was arrested

and imprisoned. In April 1988, he escaped from custody aboard a Navy ship in Manila harbor and, as of February 1989, is still at large.

And so, what is the current state of the national counterinsurgency effort? Mrs. Aquino is often cited for poor leadership yet one must acknowledge some remarkable progress. The new Constitution is providing a viable foundation for government. The Marcos oligarchy has been transformed into a nation where civil leaders at all levels are legitimately elected. With the firing of several more cabinet members in December 1987, only a handful of Aquino's original team remains. Her government at last is appearing reasonably cohesive.

Additionally, she has moved steadily to the right during the last year in her rhetoric toward the insurgents. This has diluted some of the political clout of Enrile and his followers.⁷ And in 1988, the economy improved for the third consecutive year; still, to many Filipinos, the growth is imperceptible and difficult problems remain. Mending the economy will legitimize the present government while silencing much of the grumbling upon which the communists build their case. Yet the people, the business community, and foreign investors alike are exasperated at Aquino's

⁷ Opposition from the political right was renewed in September 1988 when Vice-President Salvador Laurel divorced himself from the Aquino administration and joined Enrile. Together they have formed an opposition party known as the Union For National Action.

failure to act decisively.

Land reform is, without doubt, the most visible issue. Ninety percent of the land is owned, and often mismanaged, by ten percent of the people.⁹ In a fertile land, malnutrition is ubiquitous. Mrs. Aquino's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) calls for reapportionment of all croplands, without regard to ownership. Yet as one of the landed families, and not being a directive person by nature, she has left it to the Congress to hammer out details. Unfortunately, a Senate "dominated by lawyers and a House of Representatives dominated by landowners are talking CARP to death...."¹⁰

Likewise the program for the sale of state assets to reduce foreign debt (and help raise living standards) is foundering; little has been done yet those in charge continue to be well paid.¹⁰ The Philippine bureaucracy also has managed to stifle a number of foreign investors. In a country where foreign money, business, and jobs are badly needed, investors are put off interminably. Grinding poverty and little reform continue to fuel the insurgency.

The relationship between President Aquino and the AFP has been adversarial almost since her election. Although there has been some improvement on the last year, Mrs.

⁹O'Ballance, "New Peoples Army," p. 12.

⁷Andrews, "Question of Faith," p. 15.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Aquino is justifiably distrustful of the military after continued coup attempts. She has held the military at arm's length and charged it with fighting the insurgents; yet many of her edicts inhibit execution of a sound counterinsurgency. She has prioritized the improvement of living standards over defense spending. Still, much of the Army is poor, ill-equipped, and virtually without medical support.¹¹

AFP Chief of Staff General Renato de Villa has expressed the need for revised security laws. The Aquino government is treating counterinsurgency as a law enforcement problem. Rebellion has become a "bailable offense" and these constraints have dampened morale and hampered operations.¹² Emergency legislation, as is possibly needed, is unlikely due to the memories of martial law under Marcos.

Nor is the AFP without fault. The corruption and attitudes of the Marcos years still persist in some sectors. The repeated escape of politically sensitive prisoners from AFP custody further highlights the problems. In April 1988, Honasan's guards aided and accompanied him in his escape by rubber boat from the ship on which he was held. More recently, Romulo Kintinar, NPA chief captured in March 1988,

¹¹ Ibid., p. 12. Numerous other sources, interviews in particular, corroborate this.

¹² Stilwell, "Averting Disaster," p. 23.

escaped from a Manila prison when he was allowed out of his maximum security cell to attend a birthday party.¹³ An inference of collusion on a grand scale is easy to draw.

In addition, failures to enforce discipline, lack of training, and an inability to police its own ranks have all contributed to mediocre AFP performance and Presidential misgivings. In his article, "Averting Disaster in the Philippines," Richard Stilwell claims there is no punishment for "...malfeasance or command failure in combat."¹⁴ And military rebels such as Gringo Honasan carry a kind of folk hero status.

The result is mutual distrust and low morale. Some of the AFP units best suited to counterinsurgency are essentially suppressed due to involvement in coup attempts. Officers may not be promoted until cleared of abuses by a Commission on Human Rights. Yet civil law often has NPA suspects back on the streets in short order after arrest. Not surprisingly, taking prisoners holds little attraction for many military men.¹⁵ Clearly there is the need for unity of effort.

Corazon Aquino must address COIN as a national priority, not just a military priority. She must gather all

¹³ Associated Press, "Communist Rebel Chief Escapes Filipino Guards," Kansas City Star, 13 November 1988, p. 20A.

¹⁴ Stilwell, "Averting Disaster," p. 22.

¹⁵ Andrews, "Question of Faith," p. 12.

the assets of government--economic, social, political, military--and forge them into a single self-reinforcing strategy. Here lies the principal failure in Aquino's conduct of the counterinsurgency.

For all its shortcomings, the AFP is the only effective facet of the administration's COIN effort. While there is no lack of government agencies, there is a distinct failure of will on the part of the government to organize and commit these agencies to solving the problems of the people.

All the national resources needed to execute a sound plan of civil-military action exist. Yet there is "...no integration, no codification..." of the roles to be played.¹⁶ Civilian leadership is failing to back-up the Army's strategy of "counterorganizing" CPP-influenced barangays. This has caused resentment and there is "...within the Armed Forces a restive and dangerous view that while they are doing their part, the Government is not."¹⁷

Professional government civilians must act in concert with the military, matching reform with effective counter guerrilla operations. So long as the government fails to address local grievances, the communists will go

¹⁶ MG Charles Teeter, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 6 December 1988. MG Teeter was Chief, JUSMAG-PHILIPPINES, 1986-1988

¹⁷ Dennis Warner, "No 1--Cory Aquino's Mandate," Pacific Defence Reporter, November 1988, p. 32.

unopposed.

Finally, Mrs. Aquino must temper her social justice objectives with the exigencies of economic, military, and political reality.

CHAPTER SIX
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
AND
COUNTERINSURGENCY

Introduction

After years of bad press, the AFP is finally receiving favorable reviews of its fight against communist insurgents. A casual observer might make the mistake that at long last the AFP had hit upon an effective strategy. In reality, there has never been a lack of viable COIN theory in the Philippines. The armed forces, however, have undergone extraordinary changes in the last twenty years. They, too, bear the burden of the Marcos legacy. In this chapter, I will discuss the composition of the AFP ground forces, AFP counterinsurgency programs and strategy, and ground force strengths and weaknesses.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the AFP had been mostly apolitical. After the 1972 martial law declaration, the AFP's role in national affairs changed radically and many saw it more as a political instrument than a protector of the nation. Marcos expanded the armed forces to accommodate the requirements of emergency legislation. Between 1972 and 1982, the AFP nearly tripled in size, reaching a strength of almost 143,000. As the corruption of Marcos' regime

penetrated the AFP, discipline and professionalism broke down.

The Army, in particular, began to lose its effectiveness in the field. Despite a great deal of waste in upper echelons, the soldiers themselves were poorly supported. Leaders lacked professionalism and aggressiveness. Units fought poorly and soldiers often looked and acted less disciplined than guerrillas.

As Marcos replaced commanders with cronies, the philosophy and values of the officer corps changed. Less attention was paid to fighting communists and more toward securing one's financial and political position. A huge Manila-based praetorian guard, the Presidential Security Command, was established to protect the Marcos regime and insure its continued rule.

As discipline and tactical effectiveness dropped, abuses rose. Summary executions in the field inevitably led to injustices. Soldiers were known to take food and medicines from the people without compensation. The press has portrayed these and other incidents as characteristic of all units in the AFP. This is simply untrue. Nonetheless, the Army gained a reputation for lack of discipline and ineffectiveness; the Constabulary gained one of corruption.

The Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) also fell from grace. As the economy deteriorated, military force equated to power, money, and food in the far-flung barangays. Often

CHDF members were undesirables with no jobs and little supervision. Corruption and abuses by the militia became commonplace. To many, supporting the NPA was a better option.

In opposition to martial law, a number of senior officers retired including then-Vice Chief of Staff, LTG Rafael Ilete.¹ In 1981, Marcos installed General Fabian Ver, a close aide and friend, as the AFP Chief of Staff. Provincial commands were also bestowed as political favors, rather than for merit.

In 1983, Ver expanded a unified command system and imposed it over the PC Regional Command (RECOM) framework. Designed to integrate the actions of armed forces units in a given area, these new Regional Unified Commands (RUC) were a duplicate system controlling geographic areas identical to the 13 RECOMs. Ver created the RUCs ostensibly to achieve unity of command. While this is probably true, some have voiced professional jealousy at the power of the Constabulary Chief as a reason also.²

In response to the state of the AFP, a number of officers formed "RAM", short for Reform the Armed Forces Movement. Then-Minister of Defense, Juan Ponce Enrile led

¹ Shuhud Saaid, "The New Armed Forces of The Philippines," Asian Defence Journal, January 1987, p. 11.

² LTC Danny Matabalao, Philippine Army, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 13 January 1989.

this group in denouncing corruption and lack of professionalism in the Armed Forces. They called for changes and openly questioned the ability of the AFP to defeat the growing Communist insurgency. In 1984, the CIA predicted that within three years the AFP would no longer be able to defeat the insurgents.³

Conversely, several organizations maintained their integrity, discipline and combat effectiveness. Most well known among these are the Scout Ranger Regiment and the Philippine Marines. If these units also deteriorated, it is not reflected in their reputations among the Filipino and American military.

A revolution within the armed forces accompanied the political revolution of February 1986. The battle lines were clearly drawn between the Marcos-Ver faction and the reformists led by Enrile and General Fidel V. Ramos. It was the intercession of Enrile, Ramos and RAM, along with the indorsement of the Catholic Church, which prevented Marcos' supporters from keeping him in power.

With Mrs. Aquino's rise to office, General Ramos began the difficult process of reform as new AFP Chief of Staff. Characteristically the rhetoric of reform was quick and astute. Actual change was less easily achieved.

Enrile and Ramos began by purging many of Marcos'

³Edgar O'Ballance, "The Communist New Peoples Army," Military Review, 68 (February 1988): 20.

incompetent appointees. Senior officers overstaying their terms in office solely for pecuniary benefit also retired. By June 1986 Ramos had replaced 115 senior officers with younger, presumably more competent ones.⁴ This included 46 of flag rank.

In July 1986, rebellious soldiers supporting former Marcos vice president Arturo Tolentino seized a hotel in a weak attempt to stage a coup. General Ramos quelled the uprising; but political polarization in the AFP again surfaced as right-wing "RAMboys", led by Enrile, voiced dissatisfaction at the leadership of Mrs. Aquino and General Ramos.

Mrs. Aquino dismissed Enrile in December 1986 for his outspoken lack of support. His participation in a poorly-disguised plot to unseat Mrs. Aquino a month before was widely known. January 1987 saw a third coup attempt by soldiers. Mrs. Aquino's decidedly humanitarian approach to counterinsurgency had caused great resentment in the military. Those who saw her leadership as weak, particularly those in RAM, discounted reforms made thus far and called for sweeping hard-line changes.

Meanwhile combat effectiveness and civil relations in the field continued to be a function of the quality of the local commander. The soldiers remained poorly supported and

⁴ Saa'id, "New Armed Forces," p. 26.

equipped.

In August 1987, Colonel Gregorio Honasan, commander of the Army's Special Warfare Center at Fort Magsaysay, led the last coup attempt. Many in the military took no action and stood by to observe the outcome. The coup failed; 53 people died. It had taken the Philippine Marines, some Army units and members of the PC Special Action Force to defeat the uprising. Once again the armed forces were victims of a highly politicized officer corps.

In retrospect, the effect of the August 1987 coup was cathartic. At the time, however, it galvanized Aquino's distrust of the military and caused some of the participating units to be severely censured. Since then, the AFP has made significant progress, both in reform and in its fight against the communists.

By the spring of 1988, the outlook was dismal. The guerrillas were outfighting the army in Northern Luzon and elsewhere. Few Americans familiar with the Philippines were optimistic. The communists appeared close to a strategic offensive.

The strategic offensive never materialized. By late 1988, the AFP had implemented a new counterinsurgency strategy using Special Operations Teams (SOT). Coupled with the capture of several top CPP leaders and communications centers, the AFP finally seemed to be holding the line.

The Area Unified Command (AUC) system installed in 1987

has been beneficial. A framework of six unified commands was superimposed over the previous regional military commands. Although the RUCs and RECOMs have not been dismantled, the AUCs have helped eliminate the lack of cooperation between army and constabulary units.

The six commands are:³

Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) -- RUC/RECOM 1,2,3

National Capital Region Defence Command (NCRDC)

Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) -- RUC/RECOM 4
(less Palawan),5

Visayas Command (VISCOM) -- RUC/RECOM 6,7,8

Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) -- RUC/RECOM 9,10,11,
12

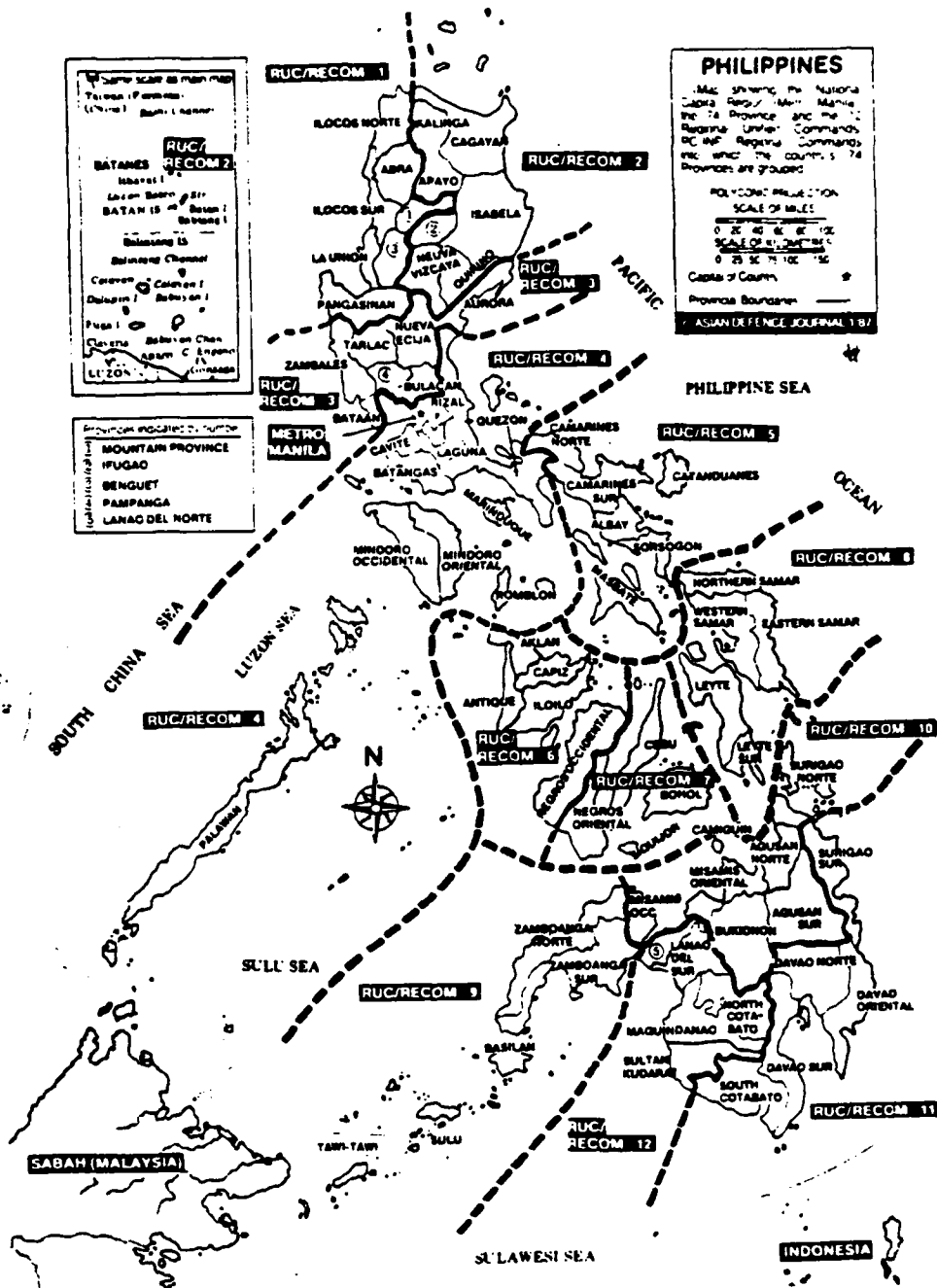
Western Command (WESCOM) -- RUC/RECOM 4(Palawan
and Spratly Islands)

Though progress has been made, streamlining command and control in the AUCs should remain a priority. A senior Philippine Army officer maintains there is still much "fat" to be trimmed in the RUCs.⁴ Interservice and intercommand rivalries still neutralize much of the effectiveness of the AUCs.

³See Figure 4.

⁴ BG Felix A. Brawner, Jr., A Field Commander's Perception and Random Thoughts on Philippine Communist Insurgency, (Quezon City, R.P.: People's Independent Media, 1988) p.13.

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
MAJOR COMMANDS



Reprinted with permission from Asian Defence Journal (January 1987, p.6)

Figure 4.

Composition of AFP Ground Forces

The Philippine Army constitutes the bulk of the ground forces. It has a strength of 65,000 soldiers, most of whom are in six infantry divisions. It includes one light armored brigade, one independent infantry brigade, three engineer brigades, four artillery regiments, the Scout Ranger regiment, and various headquarters and special purpose units. There are 76 infantry battalions in all; twelve are stationed in Northern Luzon with responsibility for operations in specific geographic areas. These are controlled by RUC/AUC headquarters. At least one new infantry battalion has been activated each year since 1986.

The elite Scout Ranger Regiment holds the title of National Maneuver Force. Its four battalions and ten separate companies deploy throughout the country in response to AFP headquarters. Additionally, the army is planning to activate a fifth battalion.

The Scout Rangers tarnished their reputation slightly when some in the Regiment participated in the August 1987 coup attempt. Otherwise, Filipino and U.S. officers alike consider the Scout Rangers to be highly professional. They have long been successful at sustained counter guerrilla operations, and they are showing equal aptitude for employment as Special Operations Teams (SOT).

The Philippine Marine Corps also has a first-class reputation for discipline as well as loyalty to the

government. The Marines have a strength of 9,500, organized in four brigades. One brigade is kept in Manila as an AFP strategic reserve and to secure President Aquino. The Marines keep most remaining units deployed on Mindinao to combat the communists.

The Philippine Constabulary (PC), with a troop strength of 45,000, is a considerable force within the AFP. It is both a military and law-enforcement organization. Down to company level, Constabulary commanders hold corresponding positions in the Integrated National Police (INP). The PC is thus able to apprehend CPP/NPA suspects as well as combatants.

The Constabulary is formed into 225 provincial companies which report through 13 Regional Commands to the Chief of Constabulary. These Regional Commands are divided geographically and fall under the operational control of the six Area Unified Commands.

During the days of Ramon Magsaysay and into the 1960s, the Constabulary had an excellent reputation. Individual Constabulary NCOs who have trained with U.S. Special Forces in recent years were rated as very professional.⁷ Yet some Americans and Filipinos consider the Constabulary to be corrupt throughout. It has a reputation for abuses and, in some parts of the country, paying off the constabulary is

⁷ MAJ David Fridovich, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 21 December 1988.

considered part of the cost of doing business.

The Philippine Congress has ordered the AFP to deactivate the Constabulary by 1990. Congressional fervor for this has slackened, however, and there are some indications that deactivation may be postponed.[■] In any event, assimilation of the Constabulary into the INP and other branches of the Armed Forces poses a sticky problem, particularly for senior PC officers. Upon dissolution of the Constabulary, law enforcement duties will be performed by the Integrated National Police (INP) and local law officers.

The remaining ground force component is the Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit, or CAFGU. The AFP classifies it as paramilitary and recently upgraded it to reserve status. A CAFGU is a local militia unit. CAFGUs have been instituted to preserve democratic infrastructure and provide for barangay self-defense. CAFGU is a successor to the CHDF disbanded in 1987 by President Aquino.

The Army is paying particular attention to insure that CAFGUs avoid the pitfalls which caused CHDF to be so damaging. And as reserves, they are eligible for U.S. security assistance.

[■] LTC Hermogenes Ebdane, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 15 november 1988.

Counterinsurgency

During the Marcos regime, the AFP operated on a counterrevolutionary strategy of hunt-and-kill. While military suppression worked to a degree, it also led to injustices and a body-count mentality. Coupled with a corrupt administration, this approach was ineffective by the early 1980s and the communists were making substantial gains in the countryside.

In 1981, the AFP published LOI 2/81 KATATAGAN. This addressed counterinsurgency in terms of "security and development." It called for integration of small-unit counterguerrilla operations, home-defense forces, intelligence and civil relations. The LOI terms this integration civil-military operations (CMO) and discusses the importance of civil relations and government services.

KATATAGAN adheres to what the U.S. Army generally considers the fundamentals of counterinsurgency. It was a workable strategy, never conscientiously implemented. General Felix Brawner reports success with KATATAGAN in RUC 11 only after creating a task force of hand-picked men and units.⁹ It was largely ignored elsewhere.¹⁰

LOI 5/86 MAMAMAYAN followed KATATAGAN in 1986. According to General Brawner, this was a more balanced plan

⁹Brawner, Field Commander's Perception, p.2.

¹⁰ LTC Franklin Brawner, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1 May 1989.

with equal emphasis on "...CMO, Intelligence Operations, and Tactical Operations...." ¹¹ Task Force Spider was activated in RUC 2 as a pilot unit to test the strategy.

Although successful, Task Force Spider and MAMAMAYAN suffered the fate of KATATAGAN. Other COIN plans passed with limited impact. The knowledge required to conduct counterinsurgency was clearly evident. The AFP was failing to execute.

Large organizations are slow to change. Despite the revolution in government and reforms directed by General Ramos, the AFP on whole was negating the actions of a few enlightened commanders. Government casualties were high and credibility was low. In many places communism still offered a better option to the people. Then in late 1987, on Mindinao, the first Special Operations Teams (SOT) were fielded.

Special Operations Teams

The SOT program is the child of General Mariano Adalem (now Commanding General, Philippine Army) and the centerpiece of the AFP's new "war of rapid conclusion." ¹² It is an outgrowth of the counterinsurgency programs General

¹¹ Brawner, Field Commander's Perception, p. 3.

¹² Gwen Robinson, "No.2--SOTs: A Solution to the Insurgency?," Pacific Defence Reporter, November 1988, p.36.

Adalem refined while commander of the 4th Infantry Division and RUC 10 on Mindinao. The SOT concept was practiced before General Adalem's time. It was Adalem, however, who documented the concept into applicable doctrine.¹³

An SOT is a 7-10 man unit specially trained in psychological operations (psyops), civil affairs, and intelligence collection. Its purpose is to openly enter a communist-influenced barangay and "counterorganize" it. To do this it conducts a social investigation to identify local grievances. The SOT corrects what problems it can, and identifies others to the government.

A specific day is allotted for local government agencies (especially those whose services are found wanting) to participate in a seminar with barangay citizens. This gives the people opportunity to vent their frustations and enables government representatives to explain to the people programs undertaken to alleviate their grievances.

The SOT lives and works in the community. It assists the local populace and carries out civic action projects. To convey its message to the people, the SOT holds teach-ins. It also conducts skits, using villagers whenever possible and appealing to the peoples' sense of humor. Though this kind of program may seem odd to Americans, Filipinos are receptive to it. Psyops themes stress family

¹³ Brawner interview, 1 May 1989.

unity, traditional Catholic ideals, and the advantages of democracy and capitalism. These themes are intended to neutralize the CPP's Maoist organizing philosophy.

There are additional reasons for associating so closely with barangay inhabitants. By living among the people and treating them with respect, the SOT gains their confidence. It then develops an intelligence network. Upon realizing they will not be mistreated, the people are often eager to assist. The SOT is thus able to target communist infrastructure within the barangay, as well as track NPA movements outside it.

A platoon-sized unit, sometimes known as a strike force, accompanies the SOT. Its mission is to secure the barangay and the area surrounding it. This prevents NPA intrusion while the team is working.

Another AFP goal in employing an SOT is to organize a CAFGU as a self-defense force. Once organized, it is trained and controlled by the AFP ground force commander in whose area of responsibility the barangay lies. In some areas, the Philippine Army has employed its own Special Forces to train these reserves.

A CAFGU is an essential force multiplier in the counterinsurgency. The AFP does not have sufficient force structure to leave a unit in each barangay. Without a CAFGU, the departure of an SOT leaves a barangay again vulnerable to domination by the communists.

The CAFGU presents the AFP with several challenges. The first is to prevent it from following in the footsteps of the hated CHDF, which it replaces. This requires careful selection of members as well as civil-military agreement over utilization. The next is to train, resource and arm it. The last is to raise CAFGU strength from 45,000 to the AFP goal of 80,000.

According to General Adalem the principal advantage of the SOT program is flexibility.¹⁴ It does not use stock formulas, but rather adapts to an area and its people. It attempts to find solutions to each barangay's particular problems. The SOT also provides a means to harness vigilante groups. This is particularly important if the vigilantes are armed.

The Philippine Army's goal is to retrain all its battalions to implement the SOT concept. Retraining quickly, though, will be difficult. Lack of money prevents rotating battalions through a centralized facility.

The Army's response to this dilemma is to have parent battalions train SOTs in the field; however, quality control is a concern. The first teams fielded performed admirably. Reports indicate, though, that this standard may be difficult to sustain as the AFP attempts to field SOTs Army-

¹⁴ Robinson, "SOTs," p. 36.

wide.¹³

War of Rapid Conclusion

The "war of rapid conclusion" strategy came about as a result of an internal AFP report submitted in May of 1988 by Colonel Victor Corpus. The controversial report was leaked to the press in July 1988 and forced the AFP to face certain facts.

Corpus, a former member of the NPA, compiled statistics showing that the army had lost 14 of 15 major engagements with the NPA during the period of January-March 1988.¹⁴ The AFP had sustained 146 casualties versus 26 for the NPA. Corpus also called for "re-configuration of units to parallel NPA command structures" and "the elimination of superfluous command layers."¹⁷

Corpus' report and Adalem's success on Mindinao caused the AFP to re-evaluate its strategy. BG Lisandro Abadia, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, eventually produced the "war of rapid conclusion," so named for the plan's intent to halt the insurgency across a broad front in minimum time.

¹³ Clayton Jones, "Winning Filipino Hearts and Minds," The Christian Science Monitor, 22 February 1988, p.6.

¹⁴ Eric Guyot and James Clad, "Regaining the Initiative," Far Eastern Economic Review, 22 September 1988, p. 40.

¹⁷ Robinson, "SOTs," p.36.

The new strategy calls for a campaign of "gradual constriction," wherein the Army isolates a number of communist-influenced areas, or fronts. Using SOTs, the Army progressively tightens control as it destroys the NPA infrastructure. By denying access to the people, the AFP seeks to force the guerrillas in the cordoned area into a decisive battle.¹⁷

The military intends to avoid further protracting an already-long insurgency. Some SOTs complain, however, that no matter how successful their program, lack of civilian follow-up will render military efforts ineffective.¹⁸ Government credibility is the goal and only the provision of public services, land reform, and civic programs will sustain military gains.

Barangay Immersion Program

Since the late 1960's, the Philippine Marine Corps has pursued a counterinsurgency program of its own, and with a fair amount of success.¹⁹ The Marines call it the Barangay Immersion Program, and it is reminiscent of the U.S. Marine Corps Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program used

¹⁷ Guyot and Clad, "Regaining the Initiative," p.40.

¹⁸ Jones, "Hearts and Minds," p. 6.

¹⁹ Ebdane interview, 15 November 1988.

successfully in Viet Nam.

Barangay Immersion is essentially a defense and population-denial strategy. It is aimed at neutralizing the insurgent infrastructure. In it, a Marine platoon, or other small unit, occupies one or more barangays. The Marines live, work, eat, and sleep in the barangay. Their missions are to assist the inhabitants, deny the insurgents access to the people and establish (or re-establish) the credibility of the government.²⁰

The Marine units in the Barangay Immersion Program are highly disciplined, and the people receive them well. They also carry their own rations or are funded to purchase them.²¹ This keeps the Marines from going to the people for food, as the Army has sometimes been forced to do. I have found no reports of abuse or poor performance. The Marines have deployed Barangay Immersion units principally on Mindinao and the Bataan Peninsula.

Concerns

The single greatest problem facing the AFP is lack of resources.²² The AFP has endured declining budgets and

²⁰ LTC Laurence W. Gavin, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 11 January 1989.

²¹ Ibid.

²² MG Charles Teeter, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 6 December 1988.

declining security assistance funds in recent years. AFP Chief of Staff General Renato de Villa has called the AFP "... the poor man's armed forces."²³ A senior American officer states that the AFP knows COIN theory; its failures have been in execution. He adds that these failures are almost always traceable to lack of resources.

Responsibility for these failures also lies in poor leadership. Though it is several years since Marcos departed, the senior officer corps remains highly politicized. U.S. officers have observed that those "reared" under Marcos are unwilling to coalesce against the communists.²⁴ In his book, General Brawner talks of the need to reduce cumbersome command structures. He also calls for the elimination of redundant general officer billets which produce little and consume resources.

U.S. Special Forces officers training with the Philippine Army report problems also at lower levels.²⁵ For example, NCO squad leaders demonstrate sufficient leadership when acting independently. Once under the control of a platoon leader, however, they relinquish all initiative and practice little subordinate leadership.

New lieutenants, particularly PMA graduates, are

²³ John Andrews, "A Question of Faith," The Economist, 7 May 1988, p.12.

²⁴ Fridovich interview, 21 December 1988.

²⁵ Ibid.

motivated and eager to learn. Yet, they tend to overindulge in machismo and sometimes treat subordinates poorly.²⁴ On occasions when only squads were trained, officers often failed to attend. These tendencies have contributed to a general lack of discipline at the company level.

Training is a critical issue and AFP J3, General Lisandro Abadia, has clearly identified it as a top priority. Yet most of the ground forces do not train well. Nor do they train consistently. The AFP acknowledges this but is constrained by resources. Senior military leaders have discussed the concept of Regional Training Centers, but cannot fund it. Rotating battalions through the Philippine Army Training Command (PATRACOM) training center is also unfeasible for both manpower and money reasons. The training center itself, even though the home of the elite Scout Ranger School, is poorly supported.

Leadership also impacts on training. To a degree, good leadership can compensate for lack of resources in training. Where both were missing, training has disintegrated and conduct under fire has been dismal.

The AFP does not have a combat ration. Centralized messing either fails to reach the troops or causes field operations to halt. As a result, troops forage, buy, or take their food from the local populace.

²⁴ CPT Frank Miller, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 9 November 1988.

Medical Support in the field has been virtually non-existent. There are few medics and aero-medical evacuation is rare. Medical supplies often do not reach troop units, forcing soldiers to buy their own. Lack of medical support, in particular, has seriously degraded the morale and aggressiveness of the average line soldier.

The Army provides adequate individual equipment to soldiers in newly-formed battalions. Resupply of uniforms and individual equipment, however, is insufficient. Some items like jungle boots have been made so poorly in the past that they disintegrate after a short period in the field. The result is that many soldiers must do without.

Quality control has affected weapons as well as equipment. U.S. officers report mortar tubes cracking from metal fatigue during gunnery training.

Lastly, in using security assistance funds the AFP has traditionally chosen hardware over training. When buying equipment it also has often chosen major end items which it can little afford and barely maintain. The Cadillac-Gage

V-150 Armored Personnel Carrier is a prime example. At \$289,386 each, it is enormously expensive. The AFP has no rebuild capability, and repair parts are both expensive and difficult to get (unit price for a tire:\$1,700).²⁷

²⁷LTC Joseph A. Steve, Jr., interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 23 December 1988.

Strengths

The AFP's greatest successes in recent years are the steps it has taken to reform itself. Promotion is now based on merit and senior military leadership has clearly expressed the intent to abandon the Marcos ethic. The AFP is slowly becoming more professional and less political. Hopefully the imperative for reform will continue.

The ground forces are well-versed in counterinsurgency theory. They understand the nature of their enemy and the requirements to defeat him. The writings of Philippine military leaders indicate a perceptive grasp of the military role in a counterinsurgency. The implementation of the SOT program and the continuance of the Barangay Immersion Program indicate a solid commitment to a civil-military solution.

Additionally the AFP has scored a number of intelligence victories since January 1988. These are a result of better networking at the national level. They also stem from access to new eavesdropping technology and better training at the tactical level.²⁰

The reorientation of the National Intelligence and Security Authority (NISA) has contributed to this improvement as well. Under Marcos, NISA's focus was internal and its purpose was to maintain the President's

²⁰ Robinson, "SOTs," p. 36.

authority. It concentrated on rooting out dissension rather than communist subversion. Renamed the National Intelligence Coordinating Authority (NICA), it now operates according to its charter and organizes the efforts of the government, the Armed Forces, and other collection agencies.²⁹

Finally, it is appropriate to list the Filipino soldier as a strength. When properly led and supported, he has proven to be a tenacious fighter. Though his performance in the past warrants improvement, he has continued to march with little provision, little pay, and little prestige.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines face extraordinary challenges. As in any country, leadership will be key. A corporate act of will by the officer corps is needed to adopt a new professional ethic and offset the years of politics and corruption to which the AFP succumbed. Action must follow rhetoric. Meanwhile, the SOT program and the elite units of the AFP stand in quiet testimony to the potential of well-led Filipino soldiers and marines.

²⁹ Brawner interview, 1 May 1989.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CURRENT SECURITY ASSISTANCE
TO
PHILIPPINE GROUND FORCES

Introduction

In Fiscal Year (FY) 1989, the United States will provide almost \$8.3 billion in security assistance to nations around the globe. Security assistance is both an indicator of commitment to our allies worldwide and a method of pursuing our national strategies in each region. Indeed, it is often the only appropriate manner of pursuing those strategies.

As large as \$8.3 billion may seem, it represents the third consecutive reduction in the security assistance budget in as many years. This should not be construed as a lessening of U.S. commitment to allies, world, or our strategies. Rather, it is a result of budget-constraints brought on by the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Deficit Reduction Act.

This forced difficult choices upon the Reagan administration in presenting to Congress a proposed distribution of funds. Due to earmarking and prioritizing, the distribution has been disproportionate. The result has been a lessening of confidence, particularly in the third

world, in our commitments to our allies. In some areas, the cuts have eliminated our influence altogether.¹ In most other countries it has caused concern over future allocation of funds. It has caused turmoil, as well, as nations attempt to cope with changes induced in their own budgets. The Republic of the Philippines (RP) is one such nation.

In this chapter I will review the U.S. security assistance program for the Philippines and how it is administered. I will briefly profile the organization tasked with administering security assistance, the programs through which funds are provided, current funding levels and what the funds are buying. Finally I will discuss other avenues through which the U.S. directly or indirectly provides assistance to Philippine ground forces.

Provision of Funds

The U.S. provides security assistance funds through several programs. The U.S. agency in each country charged primarily with administering these programs is called a Security Assistance Organization (SAO). Each country to which the U.S. provides security assistance has a SAO. Department of Defense personnel, both military and civilian,

¹ Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance Programs, Fiscal Year 1989, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt Printing Office, 1988), p.1, 425-426. Of this \$8.29 billion, Israel receives \$3 billion, Egypt \$2.1 billion, and Turkey, \$623 million. Thus three countries receive \$5.7 billion or 68% of the security assistance budget.

comprise the SAO.

In the Republic of The Philippines, the SAO is known as the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG). Forty-seven personnel are assigned to the JUSMAG. The Chief, JUSMAG is a Major General. The name given a SAO varies from country to country, as does the number of personnel assigned to it. The scope of the SAO's duties beyond administration of assistance programs is tailored to the country as well.

Security assistance is not funded in the biannual defense budget cycle. It is appropriated annually. The JUSMAG recommends funding levels in the Annual Integrated Assessment of Security Assistance (AIASA). This is passed up through security assistance channels to the State Department. These recommendations are forwarded to the Administration who then makes its own presentation to Congress. Congress takes into consideration the recommended funding levels, incorporates its own priorities, and ultimately appropriates funds. (See Figure 5.)

Security assistance funds are administered to the Republic of The Philippines through the following categories of programs:

MILITARY

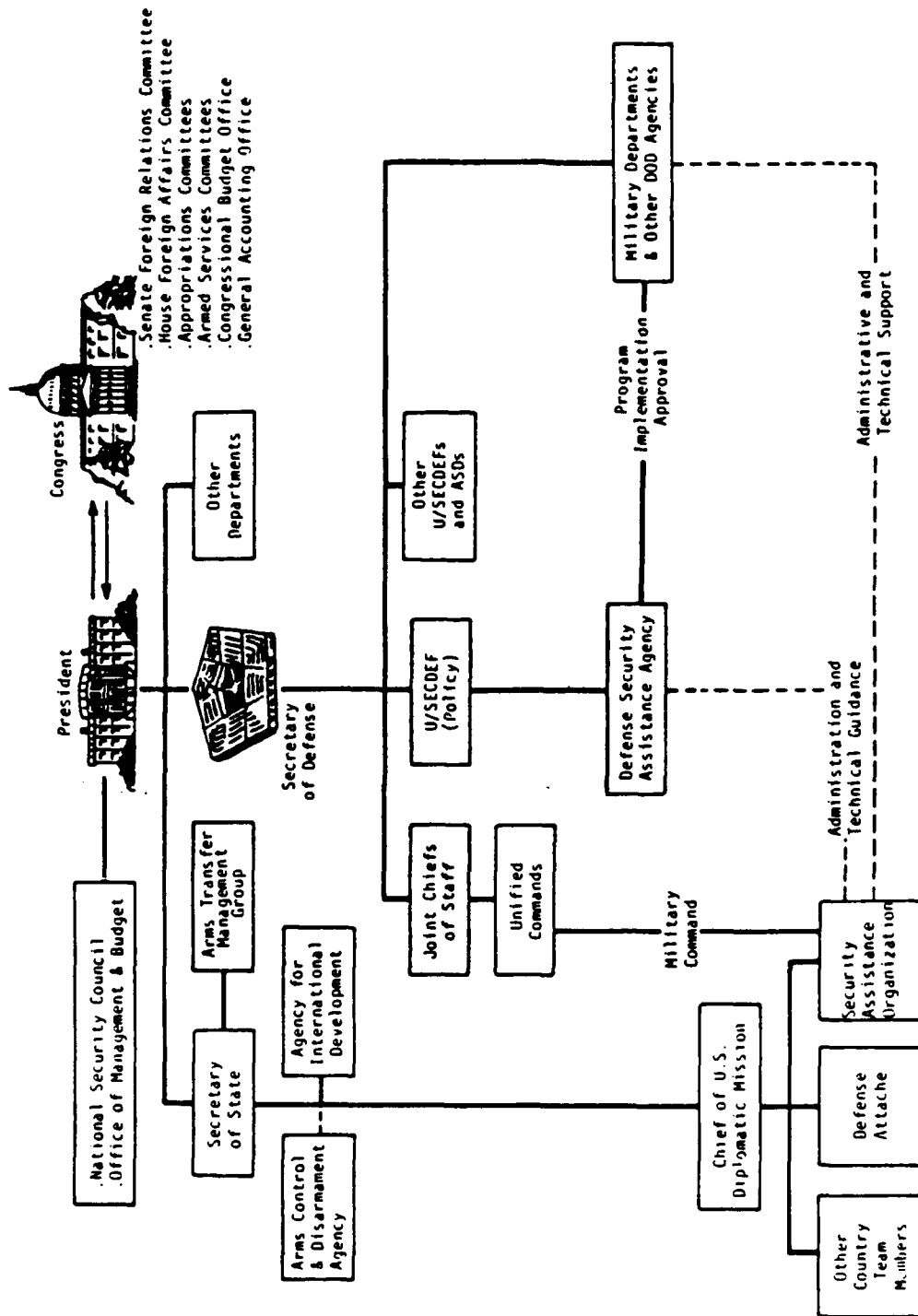
Military Assistance Program
Foreign Military Financing Program
International Military Education
and Training Program

ECONOMIC

Economic Support Fund
Development Assistance
P.L. 480
Peace Corps
Intl Narcotics Control

Philippine ground forces benefit primarily from the military

United States Government Organization for Security Assistance



Source: The Management of Security Assistance, (Wright-Patterson AFB, OH: Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, 1988), p. 5-2.

Figure 5.
77

assistance programs. I will discuss these briefly in gross terms and how they interrelate.

Under the generic heading of foreign military sales, a country may procure arms and defense equipment from the U.S. in several ways. The types of arms and equipment which may be bought, whether government or commercial, are regulated by law. The types of funds involved in these sales are usually referred to as cash, grant, or loan (credit). Sales of arms and equipment to AFP ground forces are almost always made through grant or loan programs.

The Military Assistance Program (MAP) provides money on a grant basis. Recipients may use MAP funds to purchase government arms, equipment, and services (such as Technical Assistance Teams). MAP funds may not be used for direct commercial sales from U.S. industry. However, countries may transfer these into a MAP Merger program where they can be applied against Foreign Military Sales (FMS) loans.

Funds provided under the Foreign Military Sales program are often referred to as credit, or FMS Credit (FMSCR). This program was originally designed to provide funds on a reimbursable basis and DOD would guarantee financing. The recession of the early 1980s led to a legislative mandate in FY 85 for "forgiven" (nonreimbursable) FMS financing, in order to help alleviate the debt problems of FMS recipients. In FY 88, FMS financing took the forms of FMS Forgiven, and FMS Credit (concessional, or reduced, interest rate loans).

In FY 89, Congress formalized these financing options under the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP). FMS funds are now provided as either "FMFP grants" or "FMFP loans".² Consistent with the Reagan Administration's precedents in seeking to reduce foreign debt, virtually all FMS funds in FY 89 were FMFP grant.

The U.S. has also provided funds to the Philippines under the International Military Education and Training Program (IMET). This program provides training to selected foreign military personnel and defense-associated civilians. Training takes place both in the U.S. at service schools, and in-country by Mobile Training Teams (MTT). In the case of the Philippines, the IMET program also pays for On-The-Job (OJT) training at Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Base.³ IMET program funds are non-reimbursable (grant).

Requests for arms, equipment, or training for AFP ground forces normally go to the U.S. Army. The Army employs two agencies to fulfill country requests. The U.S. Army Security Affairs Command (USASAC) handles requests for

²Samelson, Louis J., "Fiscal Year 1989 Military Assistance Legislation: An Analysis," The DISAM Journal, 11 (Winter 88-89): 12. FMFP loans will be made available at concessional rates but no lower than 5% per annum.

³LTC Laurence W. Gavin, correspondence with author, 31 March 1989. Both Clark and Subic run extensive OJT programs for their Philippine counterparts. These include such skills as firefighting, airframe maintenance, C-130 turbine maintenance, and training with U.S. Navy SEALs.

materiel, both government and commercial. The Security Assistance Training Management Office (SATMO) fulfills requests for training and provides Mobile Training Teams, Technical Assistance Teams, and the like. (See Figure 6.)

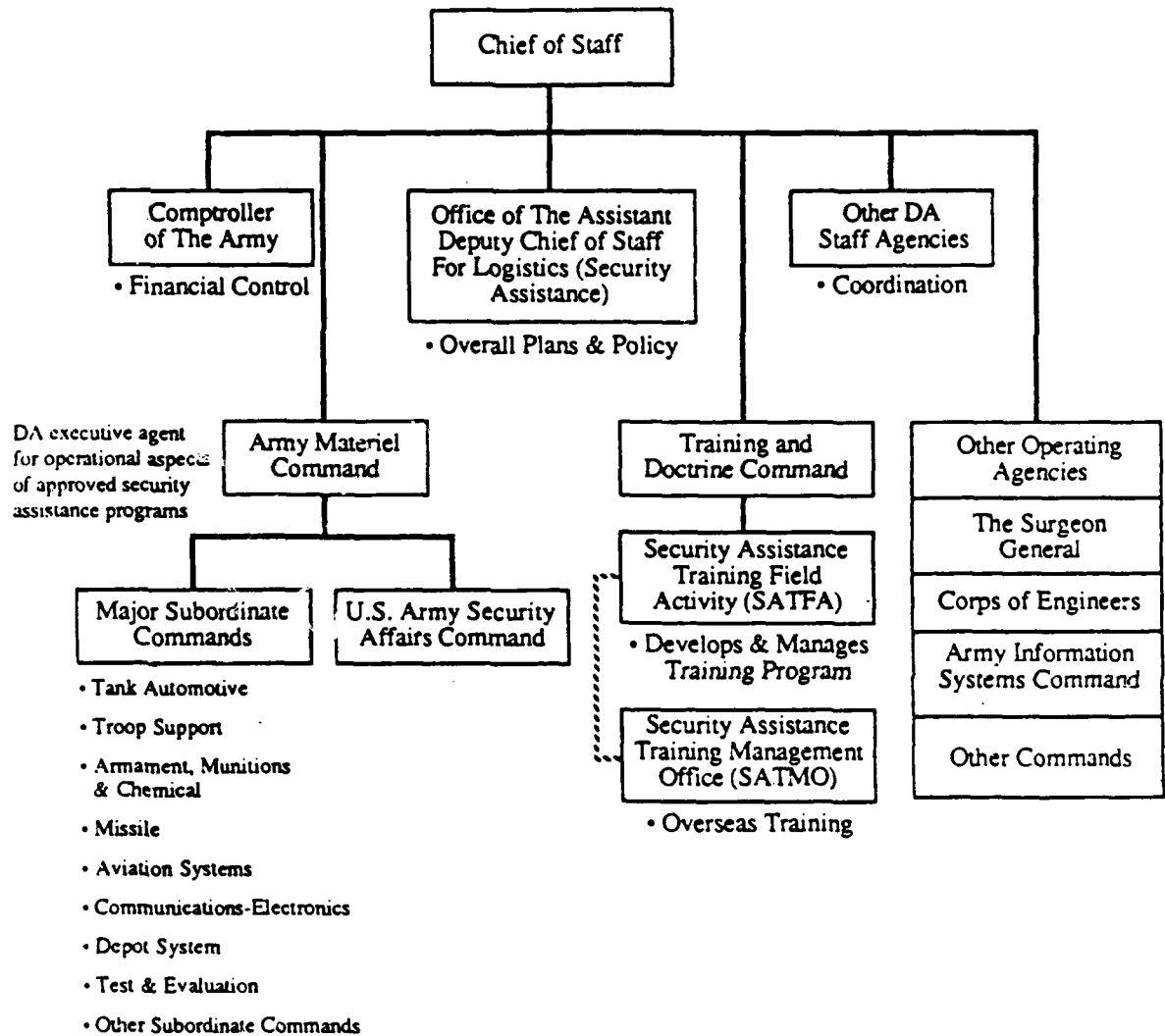
In order for the Philippines to use its military assistance funds, it must place requests through the JUSMAG. The JUSMAG then forwards these requests to USASAC or SATMO. Thus begins a tortuous, and often lengthy process. If a norm can be cited, it generally takes 8-12 months to fill a request for equipment. (See Figure 7.)

It is only at the JUSMAG level, in the processing of requests, that the U.S. can influence the expenditure of these funds. De facto, the philosophy of the application of aid is based on the personal relationships between the Chief, JUSMAG, his subordinates, and their counterparts in the AFP.⁴

In the past, the philosophy of the JUSMAG-PHIL has been to foster the purchase of "training" as a higher priority than "hardware". When acquiring arms or equipment, the JUSMAG has tried to discourage the purchase of expensive new commercial defense items when greater quantities of used U.S. government equipment can be bought for the same price. Judgement exercised by the JUSMAG as to whether used U.S. equipment will satisfy the requirement as well as new

⁴ MG Charles Teeter, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 6 December 1988.

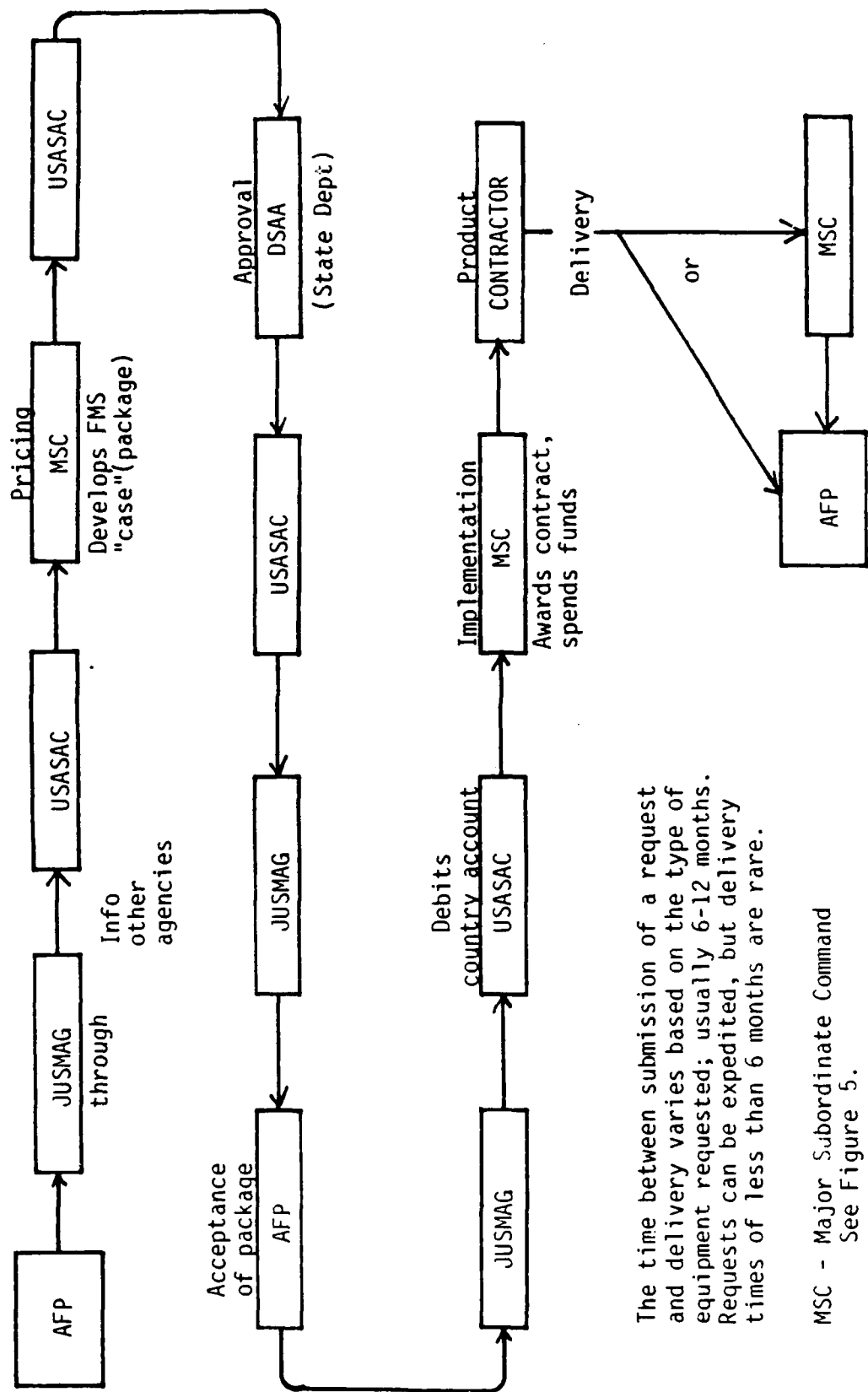
U.S. Army Organization for Security Assistance



Source: The Management of Security Assistance, (Wright-Patterson AFB, OH: Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, 1988), p. 5-19.

Figure 6.

EQUIPMENT REQUEST FLOW



The time between submission of a request and delivery varies based on the type of equipment requested; usually 6-12 months. Requests can be expedited, but delivery times of less than 6 months are rare.

MSC - Major Subordinate Command
See Figure 5.

Figure 7.

equipment preferred by the AFP has been the source of some disagreement between the JUSMAG and the AFP.

Current Funding Levels

Security assistance funding levels across the board have shown a downward trend in recent years. This is true for the Philippines though it has not been as dramatic as for some nations. Congressional earmarking in FY 88 and FY 89, in fact, has resulted in greater sums of assistance dollars than requested by the Reagan Administration.⁵ Figure 8 shows current and past funding levels as well as some gross economic trends such as per capita GDP, and total national debt.⁶

Since 1983, security assistance funding levels for the Philippines have been anchored in the compensation agreements on U.S. military bases. A brief chronology is shown in Figure 9. Congress' appropriations for FY 85-89 have exceeded the 1983 pledge. The Administration's proposals for ESF and FMFP grant for FY 90 are exactly half

⁵ Samelson, "FY 89 Legislation", p 17. MAP funds allocated by Congress to RP in FY 89 totaled \$125 million, \$15 million more than requested by the Administration. In FY 88, Congress augmented a \$124 million request for ESF monies by \$50 million for a total of \$174 million. Additionally, the \$40 million allocated in FY 89 for Developmental assistance was \$25 million more than the Reagan administration has proposed.

⁶ Figure 8 data compiled from FY 88, FY 89, and FY 90 Congressional Presentations for Security Assistance Programs.

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE SUMMARY**

SECURITY ASSISTANCE RESOURCES
(Dollars in Millions)

	Actual FY87	Actual FY 88	Est FY 89	Proposed FY 90
<u>Military</u>				
Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP)				
Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
Loan	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Military Assistance Program (MAP)	150.0	125.0	125.0	0.0
Intl Mil Education and Training Program (INET)	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6
<u>Economic</u>				
Economic Support Fund (ESF)	250.0	174.0	124.0	160.0
Developmental Assistance	n/a	13.0	40.0	55.0
P.L. 480	n/a	11.2	12.7	31.5
Peace Corps	n/a	5.4	5.4	0.0
Intl Narcotics Control	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<u>Total Foreign Assistance</u>	n/a	331.3	309.7	449.3
<u>Actual FMS Agreements</u>	107.7	133.0	130.0	130.0
<u>Value of Commercial Export Deliveries</u>	4.9	7.3	21.6	13.0

ECONOMIC DATA
(Millions)

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
<u>GDP</u>	39,883	34,086	31,583	31,797	32,134	34,638
<u>Per Capita GDP\$</u>	786	750	640	580	560	590
<u>Total Budget</u>	n/a	3,107	3,403	3,706	n/a	n/a
<u>Total Debt</u>	25,795	26,055	26,221	28,007	29,278	n/a
<u>FMS Debt</u>	158	189	199	220	228	222

n/a Not Available
\$ U.S. Dollars

Figure 8.

1947 Military Bases Agreement Chronology*

1947 Military Bases Agreement (MBA) signed between U.S. and RP. Ninety-nine year lease.

1966 MBA lease reduced to 25 years.

1975 Compensation agreement signed.

1979 5-year MBA Review Amendment.

1983 First 5-year review. Reagan pledge to Marcos: provide \$900 million in security assistance for 5-year period beginning 1985. Congress appropriates more than \$900 million by FY 1988.

1988 Second 5-year review. "Best efforts" pledge. Reagan Administration pledges "best efforts" to provide \$962 million to RP in FY 90 and FY 91 in exchange for continued basing rights. (RP had demanded \$1.2 billion).

MAP	\$400 million
ESF	\$320 million
Developmental Assistance/ Food Aid	\$192 million
Housing Investment Guarantee	<u>\$ 50 million</u>
	\$962 million ^b

*Background On The Bases (Washington D.C.: U.S. Information Service, 1987), p. 35.

^bSamelson, Louis J., ed., "U.S.--Philippine Military Bases Agreement Review, 1988," The DISAM Journal, 11 (Winter 88-89):55.

the amount pledged in the October 1988 agreement. Presumably the remaining half will be paid in FY 91, thus keeping U.S. funding on line with agreements. The trend for FY 1990 appears to be upward; in reality, there are some problems.

ESF funding levels in particular appear substantial. However, as of January 1989, \$248 million of the \$298 million appropriated in FY 88 and FY 89 remains undisbursed. This is due to a dispute over how the money should be spent.⁷ ESF monies may not be used to purchase defense items or services. However, they do provide budgetary relief. This gives a recipient nation the opportunity to redirect its own assets to its military, if it so chooses.

As a final note the reader should keep in mind that not all military assistance funds are spent in support of Philippine ground forces. The Philippine Air Force and Navy also receive a substantial portion of these monies.

⁷ Nayan Chanda, "A Clogged Pipeline," Far Eastern Economic Review, 5 January 1989, p 15. Philippine head of the National Economic Development Authority, Solita Monsod, argues that ESF monies are rent for U.S. military bases and that the Philippines should be free to use it to reduce international debt. The Reagan administration countered that the funds are not rent, but aid; that U.S. law requires supervision of the expenditure of aid; and that it would be hard pressed to convince Congress to allocate funds for payment of interest (on Philippine debt) to other creditor nations. As of May 1989, the Bush administration has not changed this position.

Recent Assistance Activities

The Security Assistance Training Management Office (SATMO) has deployed the following teams in support of AFP ground forces: •

January 1986-June 1986. Supply MTT. Assisted AFP in depot-level reorganization of storage facilities. Included 100% inventory, as well as disposal of obsolete items. Restocking of appropriate Class IX initiated. SATMO has stated that more follow-up is needed.

January 1986-June 1986. Vehicle Maintenance MTT. Assisted AFP in developing a maintenance facility to recondition several hundred used tactical vehicles shipped to the RP from U.S. forces on Okinawa and Oahu. Considered very successful by SATMO. Accompanied the purchase of these used vehicles. Eventually rendered large numbers of these vehicles operational.

November 1986-November 1988. Aviation Maintenance TAIT. Assisted AFP in maintenance of UH-1H helicopters purchased from the U.S. Established an in-country aviation maintenance course of instruction prior to departure. Team chief will remain in-country until November 1990.

April 1988-May 1988. Intelligence MTT. Instructed Philippine AFP officers in tactical intelligence collection.

January 1989. Ordnance TAT. Civilian Team from Red River Arsenal, sent to evaluate Philippine potential capability to rebuild M113s. Team determined that the Philippines did not have the ability to develop a rebuild facility as would be needed. Cost of such a project would be near \$10 million. As a result, 30-40 M113s will be rebuilt in South Korea, while remainder of the M113 fleet will be used for parts as vehicles become non-operational.

• LTC Thomas R. Simmons, SATMOO, telephone interviews by author, 26 October 1988 and 17 March 1989.

April 1989 (projected). Intelligence MTT.
Similar to MTT deployed in August 1987. This MTT
will teach tactical intelligence collection to
senior NCOs.

A tally of the equipment and arms purchased by the AFP with security assistance funds is included in the Country Point Paper in Appendix B. Also included is a list of items projected for delivery in FY 1989. The recent emphasis on tactical mobility and communications is evident. Also evident is the large number of small arms (albeit older models) for use in arming the Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU).

Not listed in Appendix B but reported in the media is the acquisition of high-technology eavesdropping and communications equipment used for intelligence purposes. "Technology has made "all the difference", according to one senior intelligence officer." * Apparently it was instrumental in the arrests of several high-ranking communists in February and March of 1988.

The IMET program is another source of assistance to Philippine ground forces. Congress has allocated \$2.6 million in both FY 88 and FY 89. More than half of the \$2.6 million each year will be allocated for the training of Philippine Army personnel.

* Gwen Robinson, "No 2--SOTs: A solution to the insurgency ?," Pacific Defence Reporter, November 1988, p. 36.

Many consider the IMET program to be the most cost-effective and far-reaching facet of the U.S. Security Assistance structure. For example, it funds training teams to directly address problems in-country with the personnel who must solve the problems. It also allows Philippine officers and NCOs to attend our tactical, technical, and career development schools in the U.S. This fosters an exchange of ideas, and a marrying of cultures. The mutual understanding thus generated helps provide a basis for later mutual cooperation, particularly in the arenas of security assistance, military basing and strategic interests.

Other Assistance to Philippine Ground Forces

U.S. interaction with the people and institutions of the Philippines occurs through a number of channels beyond military assistance programs. An inevitable result of this interaction is spin-off benefit to the AFP. Often the benefit is direct. In some cases, however, it is indirect, thus allowing the redirection of Philippine effort and assets to its armed forces. I will discuss several areas in which this assistance is most visible.

The U.S. Pacific Command conducts an Expanded Relations Program (ERP) with the armed forces of Pacific rim nations. Under the ERP, U.S. armed forces conduct several exercises annually with the AFP. One such combined exercise is called Badge Pack.

During Exercise Badge Pack, U.S. Special Forces soldiers deploy to the Philippines to train, and train with, units of the Philippine Army. Several operational detachments with support and command/control personnel comprise the U.S. contingent. The U.S. Army supports the exercise with large quantities of training ammunition. The training period varies from five to ten weeks and the exercise is conducted at the Philippine Army Training Center (PATC) at Fort Magsaysay.

Normally, a newly formed Philippine Army battalion participates. PATC provides a location and limited facilities to support a program of instruction which includes individual and small unit tactical training; small arms training, mortar gunnery, and weapons maintenance; leadership and soldier medical training; and patrolling. U.S. Special Forces soldiers train selected Philippine Army personnel as snipers, and conduct combined exercises with Philippine Special Operations personnel as well. Specifics of the program of instruction are dictated by the AFP in coordination meetings prior to the exercise.

Since training the armies of other nations is a mission of U.S. Special Forces, the U.S.S.F. soldiers involved derive considerable training benefit from this exercise. Similarly the Philippine Army receives the advantage of having one of its new battalions trained by proficient instructors and bears no training ammunition costs.

In conjunction with the exercise, the U.S. often conducts ancillary projects such as road repair in and around the training center, as well as medical civic action programs (MEDCAP) and dental civic action programs (DENTCAP). Though the benefit here is not direct, it frees resources for other uses and builds the image of the AFP, as well as the U.S., among the local people.

The following are additional examples of indirect assistance or aid not falling under the category of Security Assistance:

With the help of the JUSMAG, the Philippine government purchased \$15 million worth of heavy construction equipment using ESF monies. Upon completion of the project for which it was bought, the equipment reverted to the control of the Philippine Army.¹⁰

U.S. Army Reserve Engineers and U.S. Marine Corps Engineers completed construction of a large modern barracks/administration building at Fort Magsaysay in September 1988. U.S. personnel were provided by PACOM. Construction materials were classified as training materials and bought with military assistance funds.¹¹

JUSMAG personnel have completed construction surveys for a new airstrip and hospital at Fort Magsaysay. These projects are awaiting resources.¹²

JUSMAG has assisted in planning reconstruction projects at the Philippine Military Academy for a gymnasium and a dining facility. JUSMAG has also assisted the AFP in enumerating

¹⁰ Teeter interview, 6 December 1988.

¹¹ MAJ Franklin Garabato, telephone interview by author, 5 March 1989.

¹² Ibid.

educational needs. This includes computers for use by PMA cadets.¹³

Both Clark AFB and the U.S. Naval Base at Subic Bay periodically conduct civic action projects. These include road, school, and other facility construction in the communities surrounding the bases, as well as MEDCAPs and disaster assistance.¹⁴

Whether or not the Philippine resources freed up by these projects ever come to benefit the AFP is unknown. Certainly the potential exists.

Conclusion

U.S. security assistance to the Philippines has the same fundamental problems which plague all security assistance relationships.

The allocation of resources is an annual uncertainty and the application of funds is a lengthy and tortuous affair. In addition there are irritants which are specific to the Philippines. Philosophies differ and conflicts arise between supplier and recipient. A senior Philippine official has stated that more coordination, not supervision (by the U.S.), is desirable.¹⁵

The U.S. is interested in maximizing cost-effectiveness through the purchase of used-but-adequate equipment. This

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Background on the Bases, p. 24-26.

¹⁵ BG Lisandro C. Abadia, correspondence with the author, 3 January 1989. General Abadia is Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, J3, Armed Forces of the Philippines.

has led to some differences of opinion over equipment such as types of helicopters and armored vehicles. The JUSMAG has followed the philosophy that a number of used end items are of more service than one state-of-the-art end item. In view of the AFP's historical lack of acumen in equipment maintenance, this philosophy has merit.

The AFP has expressed justifiable dissatisfaction at the receipt of obsolete U.S. equipment (e.g., the M880 half-ton military pickup truck, a vehicle with a deplorable performance and maintenance history) and lengthy processing times for requests. Often however, delays in delivery are due to AFP failures to execute the required documentation. On one such occasion President Aquino publicly chided the U.S. for slow delivery of helicopters.¹⁴ In actuality, it was an AFP failure to submit requests which caused the delay. Additionally, many of the needs of the AFP which have been identified and serviced are more a result of initiative on the part of the JUSMAG than the AFP.¹⁵

The U.S. security assistance program is cumbersome. Add to it differing priorities and a shortage of resources and the reader begins to realize the magnitude of the JUSMAG's responsibility. Questions like, "Whose money is it

¹⁴ Edgar O'Ballance, "The Communist New Peoples Army," Military Review, 68 (February 1988): 20. On Air Force Day, 4 May 1987, Aquino openly complained that the promised helicopters had not been delivered despite reminders.

¹⁵ Teeter interview, 6 December 1988.

to spend?," and "What will be bought?" are the essence of the diplomatic challenge of an agency charged with acting in the best interests of both nations. The reader, and indeed some Filipinos, may take exception to some of the items the JUSMAG has helped the AFP procure. However, the JUSMAG's philosophy of training-over-gadgetry and cost-effectiveness seems, at this juncture, to be the most appropriate.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE

U.S. security assistance to Philippine ground forces is just one facet of foreign assistance and indeed of the US-RP relationship as a whole. It is, however a facet at the cutting edge of the counterinsurgency. Both the U.S. and the Republic of the Philippines should approach this arena with more realism and, ideally, mutual priorities. The situation warrants a series of initiatives by each nation. Political and military leadership must provide the will to carry these initiatives to fruition.

Conclusions

The U.S., for its part, must improve its security assistance mechanism. The U.S. Congress possesses ultimate authority here. It now must provide the will, and also accept the responsibility, for change. The 12 security assistance reforms recommended by the Regional Conflict Working Group apply almost categorically to the U.S.-R.P. relationship.¹ Current laws provide a complicated and self-

¹ Commission on Integrated Long Term Strategy, Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict, Report by the Regional Conflict Working Group (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1988), 29-30.

defeating program. Responsive, timely military assistance is an exception rather than the rule.

The Philippines in turn, should spend more on defense. It currently spends less per capita on defense than any other ASEAN nation.² It must also take a more realistic and responsible approach to military assistance. The unglamorous issues of training (all types) and tactical capabilities must take priority over unnecessary force modernization.³ The AFP must also act to insure that defense items reach the field. Substantial waste and pilferage has occurred in the past.⁴

For the short term, the priorities for security assistance must be in the areas of tactical mobility, tactical communications and intelligence. This is not a

² R.S. Sassheen, "PAF and JUSMAG in Dispute Over Choice of New Helicopter," Asian Defence Journal, March 1988, p. 154.

³ The issue of helicopters provides a case in point. The AFP has shown a preference for buying MD-500 gunships costing \$1 million each. The U.S. Army can provide neither repair parts nor maintenance assistance for this aircraft. The JUSMAG has encouraged the purchase of UH-1H utility helicopters to enhance mobility, medical evacuation, and resupply. A refurbished, stock UH-1H costs \$200,000, and the U.S. has provided extensive maintenance and training assistance for these aircraft. Although the gunships provide devastating fire support when able to engage, it means little if there is no troop mobility to exploit it. As of April 1989, twenty additional MD-500 helicopters were approved for sale to the AFP. (Source: USASAC)

⁴ LTC Laurence W Gavin, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 11 January 1989.

revelation. The JUSMAG has pursued programs in each of these areas, but has met with an unresponsive security assistance system. Likewise, the AFP has paid lip service to these priorities but often prefers to spend its money on hi-tech hardware.

As a philosophy and long term first priority, training is the key. Resources spent on training will provide the best return on investment. Training will increase combat effectiveness, intelligence collection, and end-item hardware availability. It will improve medical and maintenance capabilities. It will provide a self-sustaining support structure. Training directly benefits the soldier and is not pilferable. Most importantly, leader training at all levels is the only method of imbuing an ethic in the AFP capable of defeating the insurgents and creating a self-sustaining quality force.

It is appropriate to address the issue of U.S. advisors. The AFP have expressed two primary objections: political assailability and security of U.S. personnel.⁵ Advisors could provide just the grist CPP propaganda mills need to stir up nationalist, anti-U.S. sentiment; and the AFP cannot guarantee protection from communist attacks. A former Chief, JUSMAG, has echoed these concerns and they are

⁵ Fortunato U. Abat, Undersecretary of National Defense, RP, correspondence received by author, dated 16 February 1989.

valid.⁴

Conversely, both the U.S. and the AFP have expressed satisfaction over the results of the Badge Pack exercises, particularly the one most recently concluded (December 1988). The dilemma of providing assistance beyond the scope of a combined exercise and yet avoiding CPP propaganda remains.

In researching a suitable role for U.S. advisors there is a third major consideration: Undue U.S. influence. In light of these points, both the U.S. and RP reject the possibility of U.S. personnel as advisors to combat units. However, the concept of U.S. personnel in a train-the-trainer role promises a substantial long-term gain and is the only appropriate scenario at this time for advisory assistance.⁷ While ultimately keeping the solution "Philippine", it is selective and maximizes U.S. expertise.

U.S. Initiatives

Given the programs already pursued by the JUSMAG (particularly those affecting mobility and communications), I recommend the following initiatives:

⁴ MG Charles Teeter, interview by author, FT Leavenworth, KS, 6 December 1988.

⁷ Ibid.

1. Fund MAP at the \$200 million level (minimum) for up to five years.⁸ This will allow continuity in the AFP's planning and programs, as well as fostering adherence to a long term strategy.

2. Institute "package" assistance. This would involve making basic defense items (e.g., UH-1H, PRC-77, M16A1/A2) available in packages at a fixed, minimum cost. The Regional Conflict Working Group refers to this as creating a "LIC catalog".⁹ It would also require some legislative manipulation of the current Special Defence Acquisition Fund (SDAF) but could be done in conjunction with long term planning by recipient nations. Expeditious delivery of defense items is a principal benefit here.

3. Relief from Congressionally-mandated contracting redundancy and constraints. This applies particularly to single-source contractors (Colt, M16A2). In the procurement process, production time is a constant. Contracting time, however, can vary greatly and causes substantial delays. Streamlining the contracting portion of procurement can

⁸Multiyear appropriations recommended by the Regional Conflict Working Group and MG Teeter. \$200 million figure recommended by MG Teeter and Richard G. Stilwell, "Averting Disaster in the Philippines," Policy Review, 47 (Winter 1988): 24.

⁹ U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict, p. 29.

reduce delivery times by months.¹⁰

4. Fund specific training initiatives. Offer to provide funds, in addition to MAP allocations, dedicated solely to training incentive packages. For example, estimate the cost to rotate a battalion from the field through a combat refresher/SOT training course at the Philippine Army Training Center. Determine the number of possible rotations per year, then provide these funds on case-by-case basis solely for this purpose. Another example might be a Regional Training Center package, complete with construction materials and a train-the-trainer program. (As discussed, U.S. advisors to the AFP is a politically volatile issue. Training of Philippine cadre could be accomplished on Okinawa, Hawaii, or in CONUS.)

5. JUSMAG audit of defense item distribution beyond AFP Logistics Command. Military assistance equipment and supplies often fail to reach the soldier in the field because of "inventorying" (pilferage) and poor accountability procedures in AFP Logistics Command.¹¹ The AFP should identify to the JUSMAG tactical command-level recipients. It should also provide documentation of receipt by that command within a given suspense after arrival in

¹⁰ Commander William Hall, USN, Defence Security Assistance Agency (DSAA), telephone interview by author, 26 April 1989.

¹¹ Gavin interview, 11 January 1989.

country.

6. PACOM-sponsored combined psychological operations/civil affairs training. In the context of a combined exercise, U.S. and AFP psyops and civil affairs units could exchange techniques, utilize U.S. resources and technology, and pass on "lessons learned" from neighboring ASEAN nations.

Philippine Initiatives

The AFP should take the following steps to maximize military assistance funds:

1. Develop a long range (3-5 year) procurement/security assistance strategy. This should incorporate training as well as the current imperatives of mobility, communications, and intelligence.

2. Develop or revitalize a directorate to manage security assistance. This directorate would be intimately familiar with U.S. security assistance laws and take a proactive role in the application of funds. It would insure timely submission of requests in accordance with AFP planning and would audit delivery of items to field commands. Importantly, it would clearly delineate AFP requirements for equipment. In the past the AFP has requested items from specific contractors (most often as a result of contractor pressure) rather than requesting a type item with specified capabilities. The result invariably is

higher costs to the AFP.¹²

3. Invest in training. This is the only method of creating long-term positive change in the ground forces. This means adopting a training philosophy which pervades service schools and carries forward to units. The AFP should also continue to request maintenance, intelligence, and logistics training by MTTs or TAFTs.

If the ground forces adopt centralized combat training for units, then training cadres and curricula must be assembled. If constrained resources dictate continued decentralized training, then the AFP should establish a formal train-the-trainer program for selected unit personnel. U.S. Special Forces trainers can provide expertise in instituting combat and medical training programs.

4. Invest in maintenance and support infrastructure. Maintenance in the AFP is generally ignored. This applies to APCs as well as M16s. Maintenance at all levels is a leadership imperative; at the major end item level, it also requires a capital investment in infrastructure. An AFP failure to subscribe to this will neutralize any gain from new equipment or technology.

5. Develop a combat ration. Recommend a dried ration featuring a menu palatable to Filipino tastes. During the

¹² Reka Slater, Program Manager, USASAC, telephone interview by author, 26 April 1989.

Viet Nam War, an "indij" ration was manufactured in Japan and issued to indigenous troops by U.S. Special Forces in lieu of American combat rations. The AFP could engage a U.S. contractor, or utilize foreign assistance funds as seed money to develop domestic production of the ration.

6. Crack down on corruption in the application of security assistance funds. Improving quality control in domestic contractors and reducing graft, waste, and pilferage will result in savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars. It will also place resources in the field where most needed.

Summary

By its own and the AFP's admission, the Philippine government's solution to the insurgency must be more political than military. This does not diminish the criticality of the military's role; rather it redefines the scope and nature of its operations. The SOT concept requires resource-intensive retraining of personnel. It also requires support by effective ground combat forces which are mobile and can strike decisively based on solid intelligence.

The JUSMAG is at the critical interface here. It is able to judge the operational tempo of the AFP's role in the counterinsurgency and is the U.S. agency most capable of exercising initiative in meeting the needs of AFP ground

forces. It is through the JUSMAG that mutual priorities must be negotiated. Unfortunately, the U.S. security assistance program is cumbersome and the AFP has shown a lack of focus. These obstacles have hampered programs which, in the JUSMAG's judgement, best suit the country and U.S. national interests.

U.S. security assistance can significantly enhance the AFP's fighting capabilities. But it must be of sufficient magnitude, it must be consistent, and it must be focused.

APPENDIX A

Correspondence Questionnaires

1. Is the AFP conducting a successful counterinsurgency? What are the strengths of the AFP effort? What are the shortfalls or areas needing improvement?

2. Is the materiel assistance currently provided by the U.S. to the AFP adequate, appropriate, and timely?

3. If the U.S. agreed to provide additional types/supplies of equipment/ammunition/fuel/communications/etc., and deliver in-country within 90 days, what specific items would be of greatest use to AFP ground forces?

4. Do you think U.S. advisors are needed? If so, what type and in what roles?

5. I have been told of a survey allegedly done by USPACOM in the last year on the materiel needs of the AFP in fighting the insurgents. This was mentioned by a former battalion commander from Northern Luzon. Do you know of such a study and its outcome?

1. Is the AFP conducting a successful counterinsurgency? What are the strengths of the AFP effort? What are the shortfalls or areas needing improvement? How can U.S. military assistance add to those strengths or reduce shortfalls?

2. Is the materiel assistance currently provided by the U.S. to the AFP adequate, appropriate, and timely?

3. If the U.S. agreed to provide additional types/supplies of equipment/ammunition/fuel/communications/etc., and deliver in-country within 90 days, what specific items would be of greatest use to AFP ground forces?

4. Is there a need for a long term supply commitment of U.S. military materiel support? What general type of support will be beneficial over the long term ?

5. Are on-the-ground U.S. consultants/advisors desirable to assist the AFP upgrade its internal security capabilities? If so, what types of assistance should they provide?

1. Is the AFP conducting a successful counterinsurgency? What are the strengths of the AFP effort? What are the shortfalls or areas needing improvement? What civic action initiatives are the AFP pursuing? Is civil relations training integrated into AFP leader training?

2. Is the materiel assistance currently provided by the U.S. to the AFP adequate, appropriate, and timely?

3. How can the U.S. be of assistance in the area of Civil Relations? LTC Gavin has mentioned augmentation in printing capabilities and communications. What are your thoughts on this?

4. What are your thoughts on U.S. support of Civic Action projects? Would U.S. personnel working on the ground in conjunction with Filipinos be suitable? Politically acceptable?

5. Would periodic deployment of U.S. non-combat military units (e.g. medical, engineer, etc.) be suitable/acceptable?

APPENDIX B

Country Point Paper

17 January 1989

COUNTRY POINT PAPER

SUBJECT: Republic of the Philippines (RP)

1. PURPOSE: To provide summary of the Security Assistance Program of the Republic of the Philippines, as of 17 Jan 89.

2. BACKGROUND:

- o The U.S. - Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty became effective 27 August 1952.
- o A subsequent collective Defense Treaty was signed in September 1954 between the RP, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, United Kingdom, and the United States.
- o The Mutual Defense Assistance agreement of July 1953 promised U.S. military assistance to RP. The 1979 amendment to the Philippines - U.S. Military Bases Agreement of 1947 assures unhampered military operations involving U.S. forces in the Philippines and provides for U.S. use of certain facilities at Clark Air Base, Subic Naval Base and other locations. This agreement is reviewed every five years until termination.
- o In 1985 the Security Assistance program was redirected to emphasize logistics, tactical mobility and communications. Efforts are also being made to assist in overcoming chronic deficiencies in materiel, consumables, and spare parts for existing equipment.
- o The FY89 Military Assistance program is designed to enhance the AFP's counterinsurgency-oriented tactical mobility (air and ground), tactical communications, and logistics capabilities. Continued funding will permit the AFP to increase operational readiness, reduce reaction time, and field better trained and equipped forces. Modest sums are also proposed for soldier support items such as boots, uniforms, and medical care. There is continuing emphasis on improving existing assets through better maintenance and logistics support.
- o 1991 - The Philippine/U.S. Military Bases Agreement expires.

3. SECURITY ASSISTANCE FACTS:

a. Military Assistance Program (MAP):

- o Date program initiated - 1963; Continuing Program.
- o Total materiel/services program: \$236,421,000.
- o Total undelivered materiel/services: \$129,747,000.
- o Materiel/services program current FY: \$68,167,022.
- o Materiel/services program FY89: \$125 Million (Tri-service).

b. International Military Education and Training (IMET):

- o Date program initiated: 1963; continuing program.
- o Total IMET Program: \$44,056,796 (cumulative from inception).
- o IMET Program FY88: \$2.6 Million (Tri-service)
\$1,661,000 - Army.
- o IMET Program proposed FY89: \$2.6 Million (Tri-service)
\$1,552,000 - Army.

c. Major End Items Delivered and Supported: MAP (Grant Aid) and MAP funded FMS.

Item	Quantity
Truck, Forklift, 4000 lbs	7
M816, Truck Wrecker, 5 Ton	26
M109A3 Truck, Van Shop 2-1/2 ton	20
M342A2 Truck, Dump 2-1/2 Ton	62
M135A2 Cargo Truck 2-1/2	2
V150 commando Dual Machine Gun	35
M113A1/M113A2 Carrier, Personnel Armd	56/49
M41 Tank, Combat, 76mm	7
M101A1 Howitzer, Towed, 105mm	92
M60 Machine Gun, 7.62mm	1,114
UH-1H Helicopters	89
Trailer, Tank Water 400 Gal, 2-1/2T	5
M35A2 Truck, Cargo, 2-1/2 ton	430
.45 Cal Pistols	10,000
.45 Magazine Assy	30,000
M16 Magazine Assy	250,000
M1 Rifles	10,000

M1 Carbine	14,000
M2 Carbine	6,000
AN-PRC Radios	2,516
M60 MG, 7.62	740
Crawler Dozer	32
Payloaders	11
Vibrator Roller	10
Motor Grader	24
M880 Vehicles	280
Truck, Maintenance	2
Mortars, 81mm	101

d. Major End Items Undelivered and Delivery Forecast:

Item	Quantity	Forecast
M880 Vehicles	200	Approx 50 per Mo.
Boots	35,225	2QFY89
Generators, 7.5KVA	72	3QFY89
V-150 Armored Veh	10 ea	2QFY89
90mm recoilless rifles	180	3QFY89
M1 Rifles	140,000	1&2QFY89
81mm Ctg	351 rnds	1QFY89
AN/PRC-77 Radios	1,350	2QFY89
OE-254 Antennas	450	2QFY89
M998 HUMMV, Trucks	288	1QFY90
TA-312/PT Telephone	402	4QFY90
Switchboard SB-22A	40	3QFY89
M60D MG	60	4QFY89
40mm Cartridges	102,024	1QFY89

e. Reports of Discrepancy (RODs):

Total number of RODs - 9.

Total value of RODs - \$10,718.

f. Leases Ongoing: None.

g. Current Security Assistance Issues: None.

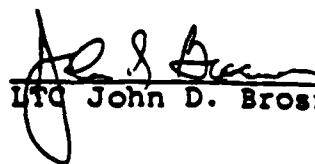
h. Potential FMS Requirements:

Communication Equip (Tactical and fixed)	
M352A2 Trucks, 2-1/2 Ton (rebuild)	165
105mm Ammo, HE67	20,000 rds
Helicopters	20
Engr Equipment	25 items
RF-2301A HF/SBB Radios	105

- i. Coproduction Programs: None
- j. Date of last IPR: 16-20 May 1988

POC: Ms. Slater
46655

Approved by:


LtJ John D. Brosnan

APPENDIX C

Replies To Correspondence

BG Lisandro C Abadia					
AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, J3	.				C-1
Fortunato U. Abat					
RP Undersecretary of Defense	.	.	.	.	C-5



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS, J3
CAMP GENERAL EMILIO AGUINALDO, QUEZON CITY

3 January 1989

MAJOR JAMES A HORRIS
19 Dragoon Drive
Ft Leavenworth, KS 66027

Dear Major Horris,

I am humbled that you should consider me as a rather good authority for your thesis. But one thing I've learned in my years of getting to learn the intricacies of an insurgency war, no one really gets to be an "expert" in the field. The best that one can do is to be attuned to all changes occurring and developing your own set of strategies and rules of engagement that best suit the culture and temperament of the people. Rather clearly, a home grown solution is better than aping the success (or failure) of other countries with experience in the same field of conflict.

I would try to be as candid in my responses, staying within the limits of security my government imposes on me. I would premise my answers on the "truism" that an insurgency is a political question needing a political solution with the military component playing only a key role in addressing the armed component of insurgents' political infrastructure.

To your first question, it would be self serving on my part if I should judge the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP's) success in her current counter-insurgency drive considering that I'm the main proponent in the drafting of new strategies now being implemented. The new AFP campaign strategies were put in place during the last quarter of 1988. And its implementation is in mid-stream with the full offensive scheduled for early 1989. Judging from the military gains posted since, I would say we are starting to succeed. We succeeded in reducing the armed strength of the New People's Army (NPA), captured several of the key political leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and dismantled the political infrastructure of the CPP in over a thousand "barangays" (i.e. the AFP "tags" as insurgent influenced some 20% of the total "barangays" in the country).

The strength of our present efforts lies in the following:

a. we have recognized and learned from the follies of past efforts;

b. we are starting to address the problem both from the grass roots (at barangay level) and at the national level addressing the root causes.

c. we have in-place a pragmatic plan which we believe will work being a product of field experience and having accepted the fact that we can only afford so much. The organization and fielding of the "Citizens Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) Active Auxiliaries (CAA), a new component that will free our maneuver forces in securing terrain and infrastructures, will provide the multiplier in manpower so vital in counter-insurgency.

Since the plan is in its inception, we are just starting to identify possible shortfalls. In anticipation, we may encounter problems in:

1. putting in-place the necessary training infrastructure that will permit us to re-train AFP units in-the-field on a larger scale;

2. improving the equipment fill up of units that will translate into improved capability to shoot, move and communicate; and

3. effects on the AFP of any adverse unforeseen changes in the socio-political and economic conditions of the country over the next three (3) years.

Should there be a sincere desire on your part (US Military) to provide assistance, your efforts will be appreciated in the following areas.

1. expeditious and unhampered implementation of FMS contracts and Military Assistance Programs (MAP) to improve our equipment state, and

2. close coordination with RP counterparts not closer "supervision" on your part as there are aspects in our struggle bordering on our ethnic mores and traditions that may not be fully appreciated by foreigners.

On the question of whether US materiel assistance is adequate, we cannot really get away from the question of how much the US can spare, considering that you have to deal with your own economic difficulties. Speaking for myself, I would be candid to say that your support can be improved even if it were only to improve your own defense posture in the Asia-Pacific region.

I find too hypothetical your third question because it presupposes full US support. Again, speaking for myself, the AFP can benefit from the following:

1. On Equipment:

- (a) Utility and Attack helicopters.
- (b) Wheeled armored vehicles.
- (c) Secured command communication equipment and systems from battalion level and up. In an insurgency environment, design for communication equipment and systems may be entirely different considering the wide dispersal of forces over varying terrain conditions. Also, "frequency hopping" radios (or the "Park Hill" type) is needed considering the capture of some of our own radio sets by the OPFOR.
- (d) Land transport vehicles.
- (e) Artillery pieces.
- (f) General Purpose Night Viewing Devices. (GPNVDe).
- (g) FAX machines to facilitate transmittal of plans and orders (with overlays) to widely dispersed forces.
- (h) Engineer Construction Equipment.

2. Ammunitions.

- (a) Conventional artillery ammunitions.
- (b) Mortar ammunitions.
- (c) Grenades and claymore mines.
- (d) Air-Ground rockets compatible with the weapon systems of our aircrafts.
- (e) Bombs.
- (f) Linked ammunitions (50 Cal .30 Cal, M60 GPMG).

3. Spares for AFP air/land transport, armor and artillery equipment still in the US inventory.

Long-term supply commitment of US military materiel support can take the general form of:

- 1. spares for all AFP equipment still in the US military inventory, and
- 2. replacement units for weapons, communication and transport equipment damaged or rendered non-operational.

Your last question can best be answered by your own people. My personal perception, however, is that, indubitably, US consultants and advisors serve only as the mouthpieces for foreign US military policies affecting my country. Hence, it is good policy to assume that consultants and advisers will not go beyond what is required by their positions. If there were irritants in the past, I would like to think that they were not over individual differences but more on policy matters even extending to matters that had political undertones. If assistance is to be ever provided, they should be limited to advising on the proper maintenance and utilization of AFP equipment coming from the US and training. How the insurgency situation should be handled on the ground should best be left to the AFP.

I hope I was able to satisfy your requirements.

In parting, it is my wish that the relation between our two countries remain cordial if not real good and warm in the days ahead.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'L' and 'A' intertwined, with a horizontal line crossing through the middle.

LISANDRO C ABADIA
Brig General AFP

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo
Quezon City

16 February 1989

Major JAMES A HORRIS
19 Dragoon Drive
Ft Leavenworth, KS 66027

Dear Major Horris:

This pertains to your letter dated 27 November 1988 requesting pertinent information for your thesis on the US Military Assistance to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Please find attached herewith, the questionnaire you have sent and the corresponding information.

I hope the data given will serve its purpose.

Sincerely,



FORTUNATO U. BAUTISTA
Undersecretary

1. Q. Is the AFP conducting a successful counter-insurgency? What are the strengths of the AFP effort? What are the shortfalls or areas needing improvement? How can U.S. military assistance add to those strengths or reduce shortfalls?

Ans. The success of the government's counter-insurgency effort is demonstrated in the fact that in 1988, we have stemmed and reversed what has been a rising tide of the communist insurgency, as indicated by the following:

- a. 8.4% decline in the strength of the CFP/NPA/NDF
- b. 7% reduction in the number of insurgent-influence barangays.
- c. High number of ranking CFP/NPA/NDF leaders captured.
- d. More government initiated encounters.
- e. More firearms recovered than lost.
- f. More favorable combat fatality ratio.

Our units are hampered by the lack of mobility and communications equipment. It is in these areas that assistance would be most welcome.

2. Q. Is the materiel assistance currently provided by the U.S. to the AFP adequate, appropriate, and timely?

Ans. We could certainly use more materiel assistance from the U.S., especially if these were of current vintage and compatible with those in our existing inventory. Some logistics assistance we have received in recent times are in the category of surplus or items phased-out or about to be phased out in the U.S. inventory. This practice has resulted in problems of product and support and maintenance. Moreover, the lead time required for the delivery of assistance material are generally long such that sometimes, the need for these are overtaken by events.

3. Q. If the U.S. agreed to provide additional types/supplies of equipment/ammunition/fuel/communication/etc., and deliver in-country within 90 days, what specific items would be of greatest use to AFP ground forces?

Ans. Mobility and communications equipment, APCs, mobile field hospitals, counter-insurgency weapons and equipment, and FOL would be among the items of greatest use to the AFP. Our Citizen Armed Forces Geographic Units (CAFGUs) and Civilian Volunteer Organizations which are components of our three-tiered defense system could also use additional small arms and ammunition.

4. Q. Is there a need for a long term supply commitment of U.S. military materiel support? What general type of support will be beneficial over the long term?

Ans. We could appreciate some form of long term supply commitment inasmuch as this would allow us to plan and program our requirements. We feel, however, that such assistance package should not only include our immediate requirements but also some capital equipment and technology that will enable us to eventually produce in-country most of our basic military needs.

5. Q. Are on-the-ground U.S. consultants/advisors desirable to assist the AFP upgrade its internal security capabilities? If so, what types of assistance should they provide?

Ans. This is not an advisable arrangement at the present time. Aside from being politically assailable, it could present serious security problems for U.S. personnel and civilians and could eventually lead to a Vietnam-type U.S. involvement. Both the Philippines and U.S. governments, have made separate public pronouncements against such an arrangement.

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USACGSC
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-6900
5. LTC Walter S. Towns
9690 Coachman Court
Pensacola, FL 32514
6. Chief, Ground Forces Division
JUSMAG-Philippines
ATTN: JPGF-L (LTC Barry Lumpkin)
APO SF 96528-5000