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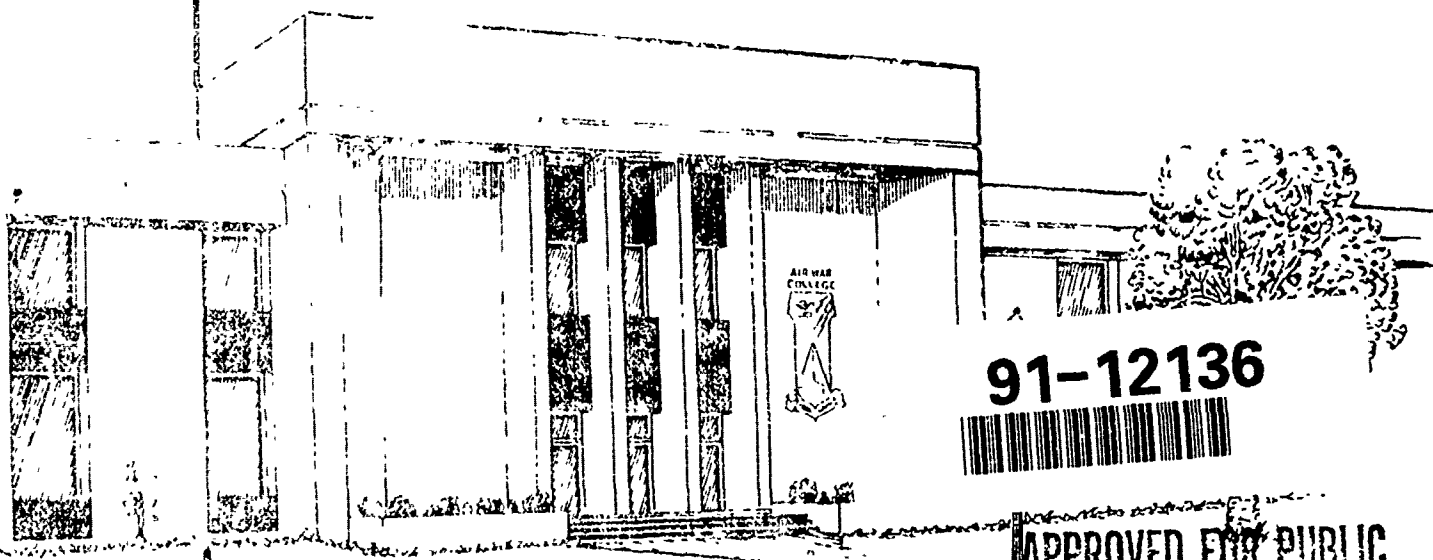
RESEARCH REPORT

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE
COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN PLAN

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COLONEL EMMANUEL L. NAVARRETE, PAF

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE
COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN PLAN

by

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A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM

REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Colonel David G. Kimball

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: An Assessment of the Philippine Counterinsurgency
Campaign Plan

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The challenge posed by this paper is to determine why, after four years of Corazon C. Aquino's presidency, the Communist Party of the Philippines/New Peoples Army (CPP/NPA) remains the most potent threat to national security of the Philippines. When She took office, most Filipinos expected that with the removal of the Marcos dictatorship, which was believed as the cause of the growth of communist insurgency in the Philippines, the CPP/NPA will lay down their arms and join the Filipino people in reestablishing freedom and democracy. After an offer of amnesty, peace negotiations and implementation of needed reforms, the CPP/NPA refused to go back to the mainstream of democratic processes and still true to their objective, the CPP/NPA wanted power on their own terms.

Their perception that the present government has not done much to alleviate the living condition of the poor fits very well into their propaganda to win the support of the masses to their side. The social and cultural character of the Filipino and its influence to the insurgency problem is discussed.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For one brief shining moment in February 1986, the Philippines captured the attention of the whole world when, in a massive but peaceful display of support, the Filipino people revolted against an oppressive government that saw the once powerful, but dictatorial leadership of Ferdinand Marcos collapsed. Some called the event "The People's Power Revolution." Others called it "The Miracle at EDSA" (Eplifanio de los Santos Avenue). Whatever it was, it saw a resurgence of democracy and freedom. For the Filipino people, it was a beginning of the rebirth of the country towards full restoration of democratic processes. A new government and a new leader, Mrs Corazon C. Aquino, ushered in new hope for the Filipinos.

But Mrs Aquino inherited a government whose economy is known to be the worst in Southeast Asia, except that of Vietnam.¹ And there was a worsening insurgency problem that has been there as long as the fallen dictator. About four years after that fateful revolution, the Philippines is still saddled with the same economic and insurgency problem, despite the drastic and necessary reforms that were immediately instituted. With the exception of an insurgency problem in Guatemala, the

Philippine communist insurgency is the longest lasting among the 19 active low-intensity conflicts (LIC) in the world today.²

The case is therefore nothing new. Extensive study and research have been undertaken and all the elements for failure or success in any counterinsurgency campaign have been identified. But something seems to prevent the attainment of victory.

Statement of the Problem and Methodology

The challenge posed by this paper is to determine why, after four years of Corazon C. Aquino's presidency, the CPP/NPA (Communist Party of the Philippines/New Peoples Army) remains the most potent threat to the national security of the Philippines. When she took office, most Filipinos believed that the economy would grow robustly and the communist insurgents will come down from the hills and lay down their arms in surrender. After the offer of amnesty, peace negotiations, implementation of drastic and needed reforms, nothing seem to happen. The economic problem, hardly recovering from the plunder and neglect of the past administration, compounds the insurgency problem. Mrs Aquino was faced with a dilemma of which problem to face first. Considering, however, that these two problems are closely related, one has to look from a broader perspective so that this relationship is not lost in the maze of selecting an alternative solution for these problems. Likewise, it would become necessary to look into the influence of the Filipino social-cultural character based on historical data. This should include the Filipino attitudes and response to

rebellion, insurrection, and insurgency. The communist perception of the present government and how it will fit its strategy within the context of this perception shall also be discussed in order to appreciate the effect of the present Philippine counterinsurgency plan.

Historical data and events, together with study and research conducted on the subject are the basis of this report. The experiences of the author as the Chief Inspector for Intelligence and Security while assigned at the Office of the Inspector General, Armed Forces of the Philippines also reinforces the content of this report.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF INSURGENCY IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is a young democratic nation located within the region of an economically and politically unstable Southeast Asia. First to achieve independence among Southeast Asian nations after World War II, it also became known as a nation colonized by the United States. Basically, an agricultural nation it has a long history of rebellion and insurrection that challenged the very foundation of its political structure.

Discovered by Magellan in 1521, it was named after Prince Philip of Spain. But it was not until 1565 that a Spanish settlement was established and a governor was appointed. By 1700, Spanish authority had expanded throughout the archipelago, and it became very apparent that economic exploitation of the vast natural resources of the new colony, rather than development, was the primordial goal of the colonizer. The propagation of the Catholic faith became secondary and even the priests became political authorities where government functionaries were absent. The ownership of vast tracts of land (hacienda) became the practice of the powerful few that established the semi-feudal agrarian system of

tax farming. From the dominance and oppression of the Spanish military rule, the seed of insurrection grew among the Moros in the south and the

Igorots in the north. The lack of unified effort and educated leadership among the ethnic groups however, proved to be no match to the learned and powerful Spaniards. By the middle of the 1800s, young people found it possible to acquire an education in Manila. Others went to Europe to further their acquisition of knowledge. When they came back, the cry for independence broke out and the revolt against Spain materialized. But again, it was put down. However, it marked the beginning of an organized insurgent force against an oppressive government.

In February 1899, the Philippines was acquired by the Americans from Spain. The Filipinos, thinking that they had just changed masters again rose in revolt against the new colonizer. But the Americans, showing a sympathetic stance to the national aspiration of the Filipinos soon made the leaders of the revolution realize that the intention of the United States was for better Philippines. A commitment by the United States to grant independence once a stable government shall be established made leaders of the revolt surrender. By 1935, the Commonwealth Act was passed and the Philippines became a self-governing state. Education, public health, and self governance became the legacy of the American rule in the Philippines.

While the transition period to full independence was underway, the Japanese attacked the Philippines on 8 December 1942. Manila was declared an open city and in 1943, a puppet government was setup. A promise of independence was also made by the Japanese. But the three-and-a-half years of Japanese occupation were the most oppressive and violent in the history of the Philippines. Their economic program led to poverty, discontent, and disorder. The death toll rose, largely as a result of inadequate medicines and supplies. Filipinos were subjected to indignities and other maltreatments. In desperate response, organized guerilla units were all over the country. Known as the Hukbalahap, (Hukbo Ng Bayan Laban Sa Hapon) it became the only viable alternative against the oppressive government while the nation lay in hopeful anticipation of the return of General Douglas MacArthur.

The Huks conducted effective guerilla operations against the Japanese. But, they likewise raided the homes of large hacienda owners and those associated with them. Led by Luis Taruc, a labor organizer and former editor of labor publications, the Huks became the core of the communist movement after World War II. Interested primarily in social and economic reforms, they vigorously opposed the new government which was still recovering from the ravages of the war. The Huks operated mainly in Central Luzon where land reform was long overdue. Huge haciendas covering most of the region are owned by a few families, leaving 70 percent of the people tenants.³ Rents were

intolerable and the level of life was simply pathetic. The supporters of the organization were discontented peasants and the others who wanted a better life for themselves and their families. They were not communist as were their leaders, but they shared the same grievances against a government they perceived as prejudiced in favor of the rich and the landlords. At that time, there was no proof of Russian or Chinese support, but it presented a target for communist influence and growth in Southeast Asia. The appointment of Ramon Magsaysay as Secretary of Defense in 1950 proved to be the turning point in the struggle against the insurgents. Estimated at 40,000 armed members, many times more reserves and approximately a million supporters; the Huks brought havoc and fear to Central Luzon and a grave threat to the national government.⁴ Magsaysay, with unquestioned integrity and deep appreciation of the situation, reorganized and brought a new sense of responsibility to the Army. On occasions, he personally led raids against the insurgents deep into the hills and mountains. He fought inefficiency and corruption at all levels of government. He offered amnesty and land for those who surrendered. Within a year, the threat was reduced, and in 1954, Luis Taruc surrendered.

It was not until late 1968 that the guerillas reappeared. This time they became known as the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Composed and led by a handful of motivated, dedicated, highly intellectual and ideologically

intense individuals, the CPP was organized as a break-away group from the urban-based and traditional Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) which had links to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).⁵ Initially a Maoist-oriented organization, the CPP focused its propaganda line against the government of President Marcos whose social-economic malaise was beginning to show. They easily gained a foothold among the masses. As graft and corruption and crony capitalism in government became apparent, the activities of the communists also grew. The New Peoples' Army (NPA) was then organized in Central Luzon as the military arm of the CPP. As if in concert with the growing threat of the CPP/NPA, the successionist movement of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Mindonao threatened to secede from the central government. Subsequently, the MNLF insurrection led to open conflict in the Southern Philippines. Fighting on two fronts and faced with growing restlessness of students and labor unrest in Manila, President Marcos declared martial law in September of 1972. As democratic and legal processes were supplanted by the rule of presidential decrees and executive orders, the CPP/NPA grew in numbers and areas of influence. The Marcos administration was unable to control the decline of the economy mainly due to corruption, inefficiency and favoritism, and the communist threat steadily escalated. After the assassination of Benigno Aquino, the leading political opponent of president Marcos and husband of the present president, August of 1983, the number of NPA members rose from

8,000 in 1980 to about 12,000 regular members by 1984.⁶ By the time the present government took office in 1986, the estimated number doubled to about 20,000.

National Security Environment

The Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,100 islands lying at the western rim of the Pacific Basin. To the west, it is bounded by the South China Sea, to the east by the Pacific Ocean, to the south by the Sulu and Celebes Seas, and to the north--cutoff by the Bashi Channel--is Taiwan. It is a jumping board from the Pacific to the Asiatic mainland and to the rest of the insular countries of Asia, including Vietnam. The country lies astride the naval and air corridors for international trade. The South China Sea is a major naval route which supports the buildup of Soviet military power in Vietnam and connects the Soviet naval fleet in the Far East with the Indian Ocean. Southeast Asia, of which the Philippines is a regional member, is becoming an arena in which the big powers are seeking to establish their influence.

The Philippines, which extend 1,150 miles north to south and 600 miles east to west at its widest, has a total land area of 300,000 square kilometers with 11 major islands comprising 94 percent of its land area. Topography is characterized by rugged terrain and narrow valleys. Most of the islands have irregular contours with narrow coastal plains and very thick vegetation. It has an irregular coastline of 34,000 kilometers. Geographically, the fragmented nature of the country poses great

difficulty in providing adequate defense, as it would require not only manpower, but vehicles and watercraft for mobility and patrol. The topographic features provide for natural habitat, operating, and training bases for communist insurgents.

Geopolitically, therefore, the Philippines stands in the vortex of a highly volatile region, perilously close to the communist bloc, and a prime target for communist expansionist ambitions. With its recognized strategic value and a rich source of raw materials, it is a valuable trophy to any nation who has military and economic influence over it.

Political Environment

The Republic of the Philippines is governed under a constitution adopted by the Constitutional Commission of 1986 and ratified by the people in February 1987. It is the third such document following the first 1935 Constitution and is similar to that of the United States and the 1973 Constitution formulated and adopted during the martial law regime of the past administration. The legislative branch is the Bicameral Philippine Congress; the two houses being the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 24 seats while the House of Representatives is authorized not more than 250 members. The judiciary is one of few non-political institutions in the Philippine government. It is composed of a chief justice and 14 associate justices, all appointed by the president. The executive branch is headed by the president who is elected every six years with no reelection. Other elected officials include

the governors, who are the heads of provinces, mayors who lead the cities/municipalities/towns; and barangay captains, who head the smallest political/community organizations.

Politics is a national passion for Filipinos, whether as a direct participant or just the man on the street. All political positions from the highest to the lowest are always tightly contested with deep personal involvement among members of contending parties. This is one of very few occasions where families and relatives become enemies because of differences in political beliefs. Violence, leading to deaths and destruction of lives and properties are not unusual during elections. Politics is a conversation piece to any Filipino--any time and any place.

But politics has a bad connotation. It is a common adage that, "if you want to get rich fast, enter politics." The past administration was riddled with graft and corrupt practices: it was not unusual to see a politician owning big houses and a fleet of expensive cars in just a year or two in politics. Politics has become synonymous with graft and corruption. Unfortunately, and ironically, there have been no charges filed, much less any convictions for corrupt practices. But certainly, there are also good politicians that really represent the true meaning of "public servant." With the downfall of Marcos, the peoples' confidence in government has tremendously increased. Despite this show of support, factionalism still exists. It reflects the traditional

political character and threatens constructive rivalry necessary in a healthy exercise of freedom and democracy.

Social Environment

The Philippine population is predominantly of Malaya origin with a visible mixture of Chinese, Indian, Spanish, and American descendants. It has an estimated population of 61 million which is rapidly increasing at a rate of 2.8 percent per year.¹ There are no less than 100 ethnic groups with 89 different dialects spoken. Filipino, or Tagalog, is the national language, but English is used as a medium of instruction. As a result, the Philippines is the third largest English speaking nation in the world. The literacy rate is 88 percent which is the highest in the Far East. The Filipinos are generally Christian with 5 percent Muslims.

The Filipinos are a mixture of different cultures that have developed attitudes and values unfamiliar to other nations. The closely-knit hierarchal barangay system of government in the pre-Spanish era is so ingrained into the Filipino character that loyalties based on group or personal relationships is still very much alive today. Very close family relationships and the Kumpadre system (Godfather) stand as a strong social and economic security system. This informal organization however, has seeped into the formal organizational structure in most government establishments so that favoritism has flavored every transaction. Knowing somebody is the key to fast and easy

service, otherwise, bribery becomes the next viable alternative. This has bred graft, corruption, and inefficiency.

Another disheartening social reality is the gap between the rich and the poor. A study at The College of Economics in The University of the Philippines in 1988 revealed that 85 percent of the total wealth of the Philippines is owned by only 12 percent of the population, and the remaining 15 percent is owned by 88 percent of the population. Without government intervention, one could see a deteriorating social environment over the next decade. In metro-Manila alone, one can see squatter shanties in any vacant area that could provide a space to erect huts. These makeshift homes then become the hiding places of urban terrorists and common criminal elements, not to mention the health hazards it poses to other people. The 88 percent of the population that are poor are the target of communist expansion and recruitment operatives. The poor, who have no other hope for a better life except miracles, are easily won by the promise of hope from the communists. While they may not agree to the ideological teaching of the insurgents, the promise of a better life is too tempting to resist. At this point, it is not a question of ideology, but a chance for survival.

The Economy

The free enterprise system of the Philippines is anchored in an agricultural economy that is greatly affected by an unpredictable number of natural calamities every year.

Typhoons occurring at an average of twenty times annually, alternating with occurrences of long spells of drought, take a heavy toll on production output. Sometimes whole production for one season is destroyed leaving the peasant nothing but crumbs that may be shared by his Kumpadre. Otherwise, he borrows from usurers and therefore, buries himself in debt before another production cycle is completed. Still a long way from industrialization, the Philippines lingers along a low economic growth level caused by long years of unsound economic policies. History would show that the only Spanish interest was to exploit the rich natural resources of the country and failed to establish long-lasting economic programs and policies. The hacienda system established during that period is now the major obstacle in both social and economic development.

In the ensuing American rule, the primary focus was on the establishment of a national government that reflected the US democratic legacy. But, the Americans also failed to institute sound and lasting economic policies. The Japanese occupation during World war II only compounded the problem. Interestingly however, the economic growth after the war was the highest in Southeast Asia. Due to poor economic policies in the 1960s, the growth started to go down. When Marcos took over the government, it enjoyed a brief upsurge of economic growth. For the first time, the Philippines exported rice to other countries. But the martial rule produced an unstable economic and political environment that drove away foreign investors.

The fuel crisis in the mid-1970s, together with the lack of international markets for its traditional products proved to be devastating to the Philippine economy; not to mention the siphoning out of much needed dollar reserves by Marcos and his cronies. When Mrs Aquino ascended to power, the government was saddled with a huge budget deficit, negative economic growth, and a \$27 billion debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Servicing the interest of these loans alone takes 40 percent from current budget allocations. The current state of peace and order caused by terrorist activities of communist insurgents and several coup-de-etat attempts by right-wing military rebels has discouraged the infusion of much needed capital, both domestic and foreign, to finance industrial ventures. Without no other recourse, the government is again forced to resort to foreign borrowing.

CHAPTER III

NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNIST INSURGENCY IN THE PHILIPPINES

He who knows the enemy and himself, need not
fear the result of a hundred battles.

Sun Tzu, 500 B.C.

Strategic Objectives

In the simplest terms, the Philippine communist insurgency is a "conflict between the government and the governed."¹ Insurgency is a revolution from the lowest rung of the Philippine social structure led by a few, committed hard-core ideologues. Their political actions are oriented towards making the people to wage protest actions and armed struggle against the existing government. The Communist Party of the Philippines has never masked its single and overriding objective, to overthrow the existing government and replacing it with socialist/communist social-political system.

Organization

To advance the movement's objective, the CPP employs a two-pronged attack on the government's political and military arms. The first is an armed struggle. The second is parliamentary, or a legal struggle, using its two main

instruments--propaganda and terrorism. To coordinate its two-pronged effort, a central revolutionary party is needed to provide leadership for the whole movement. Under the central party, a military arm carries out the terrorist activities, and a united front undertakes propaganda activities.

In the Philippine setting, the CPP is the revolutionary party. Composed of members of the communist elite, they share the same ideology and are united in action within the context of the Marxist-Leninist teachings as endorsed by Mao which states, "The Communist Party is the highest organization which leads all other forms of struggle."² This organization operates using criticism and self-criticism, and maintains a strong link with the masses who are to undertake the armed struggle--or the Peoples' War.³ The New Peoples' Army (NPA) is charged with the responsibility to organize, train, and employ the peasantry/poor farmers in carrying out the armed struggle and terrorist activities. Acting as guardians of the masses in the countryside, where government services and military influence are very minimal, they conduct summary courts which render swift justice to known criminals, abusive and corrupt government, military/police personnel, and other individuals who they perceive are enemies of the people. Through guerilla warfare, they slowly strengthen their organization, stockpile arms, and expand their influence. Ambush, raids, and assassination are primary tactics used to achieve their assigned goals.

The National Democratic Front (NDF) is charged to

undertake the development of the united front in the urban and population centers. Using a legal or open form of struggle, they infiltrate existing groups and/or organize the youth, labor, women, and other formal organizations through actual involvement themselves, to take to the streets for mass demonstrations, nationwide strikes, and other forms of civil disturbances. These political activities are used to expose "issues," real or imagined, such as faults, graft and corruption, abuses, omissions, and shortcomings of people in government, which threaten to weaken the foundation of the political and social system.

Strategy of a Protracted War

For the insurgents, time is the all important factor in the advancement of the Peoples' War. They need time to build the party; time to expand and upgrade their capability; to politicize and mobilize the people in the countryside; and to organize a broad and united front.⁴ The more the government delays in resolving issues, the more advantageous it is for the insurgents. From its humble beginning in the late-1960s, the insurgency has grown considerably into a potent force that has influence over a broad spectrum of the society including the clergy, business communities, and even government offices at the executive level.⁵ Given more time, without appropriate response from the government, they will gain strength until the balance of power tilts in their favor. Their protracted war is planned to evolve through three phases. These are the strategic

defensive, the strategic stalemate, and the strategic offensive phases.

The strategic defensive phase is the crucial period of building up the party apparatus, building an armed force, and organizing the united front. At this point, the overall insurgent strength is small in relation to the government forces. This phase has three substages: the early substage, the advance substage, and the strategic counteroffensive stage.⁶ In 1988, the CPP/NPA is estimated to have reached the advance substage and is about to move to the third substage, where more insurgent activities will be initiated in urban centers and larger-scale tactical offensive will be undertaken in the countryside.

The strategic stalemate phase may be achieved when the NPA forces become more capable of launching their own offensive campaigns on a limited scale. While they may achieve a relative parity with government forces, they are still incapable of launching a direct offensive against government troops. Raids of towns and municipal halls and concentrated attacks on military detachments and facilities undertaken by an insurgent force of 200-300 are activities that characterize this stage.

Strategic offensive phase would indicate that the military balance has been reversed. The NPA forces are now capable of launching offensive campaigns against government forces. The AFP is forced to take a defensive stance and is tied to defending vital installations, cities, and towns. This

then allows the insurgents freedom of movement in other areas. To attain their ultimate objective, the NPA would then launch a general military offensive and at the same time stage a general strike and massive demonstration to facilitate the final takeover and seizure of political power.

Establishment of the Base Area

The general strategy of the CPP/NPA is to setup as many base areas as their capability would allow. Starting from the countryside, they expand towards the urban areas. This strategy is based on the analysis that the great majority of the population is composed of poor and landless peasants living in the countryside and are easy prey for the propaganda and terrorist activities of the insurgents. These base areas are composed of different barangays covering two or more towns or provinces where guerilla units have established control and influence through their mass organizations (see Illustration 1).⁷ Having a base area means having mass support. These areas are classified by the AFP as "influenced" barangays. As differentiated from guerilla base areas, guerilla zones are areas where their control and influence is still not very strong. It is categorized by the AFP as "infiltrated" or "threatened." Guerilla zones adjoin areas outside the limits of the base areas where insurgents exercise control only in their presence. Once they leave, the control is lost. The objective of the CPP/NPA is to transform guerilla zones into base areas until they expand to establish links with other base areas.

TYPICAL LOCATION OF BASE AREA

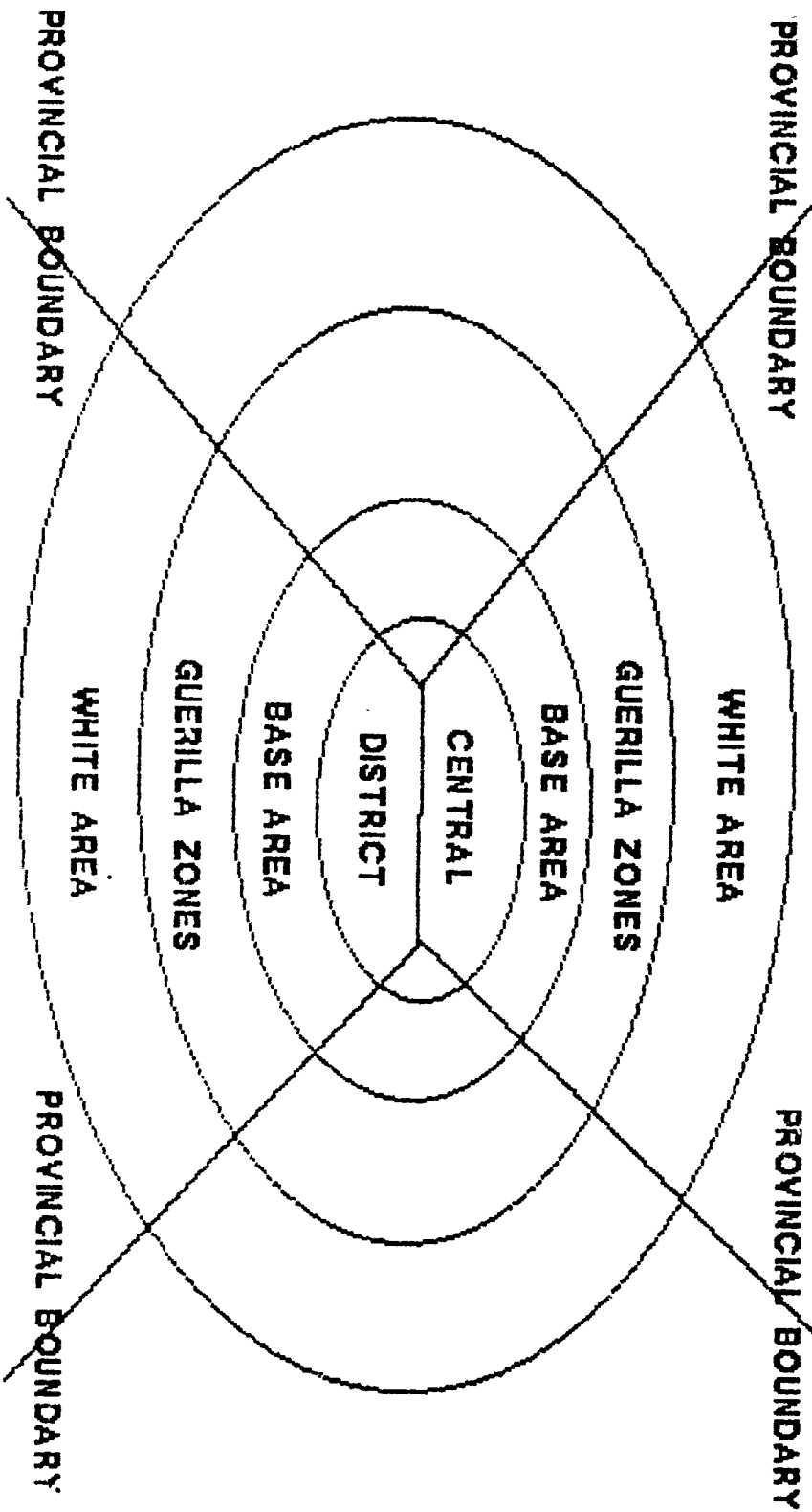


Illustration 1

Aside from these areas, there are white zones surrounding the base and guerilla zones which are still not organized. Location of a base area is very important to the insurgents. They are usually located in border areas of two or more provinces to be able to exert influence and control over two or more provinces. The organization of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) is such that provincial commands exercise authority only within the geographical boundaries of their assigned province. When pursued by the PC, an insurgent force merely shifts across nearby boundaries for safety.

Mass Works

Mass work is undertaken by the NPA to gain popular support. Insurgent leaders are well aware that the source of their strength is mass support or mass base. Mass support means a source of manpower and logistics. It also provides a crude, but effective, communication network and a highly efficient intelligence system. Absence of mass support means easy exposure of their forces, starvation, lack of replacement personnel and annihilation. Mass work involves social investigation, propaganda, and integration with rural population.

The first activity for mass work is social investigation. This step includes the collection of information by conducting of small meetings or just talking to right people in the barangay. Through this phase, the rebels learn the problems in the barangays, issues against the government, and

even personal problems affecting individuals. This information is then synthesized, and when there is an occasion to meet with the people, these problems are discussed at a level they understand. At this stage, discussion of communism, imperialism, capitalism, and other subjects are omitted and avoided. The main objective of the social investigation is to feel the pulse of the barangay and to determine who are potential friends and allies. It will also identify who their enemies are, such as landlords, rich peasants, military families, and relatives of AFP personnel.

Propaganda follows next and is one of the more important aspects of mass work. Mass meetings, newspapers, leaflets, posters, and wall-painted slogans are mediums for propaganda dissemination. The main ingredient of rebel propaganda is "truth." CPP/NPA place great importance on credibility and they do not resort to lies and half-truths. Simple deeds are also a very strong propaganda element of the insurgents. Strict party discipline, especially when dealing with the people, is such that the slightest abuse is immediately and severely dealt with. This high degree of discipline earns the sympathy and respect of those who come in contact with the insurgents.

Personal integration as part of mass work involves establishing closer rapport with the families by way of assistance in farming activities, helping household chores, and extending medical assistance by squad medics. Personal and minor barangay problems are also dealt with discreetly.

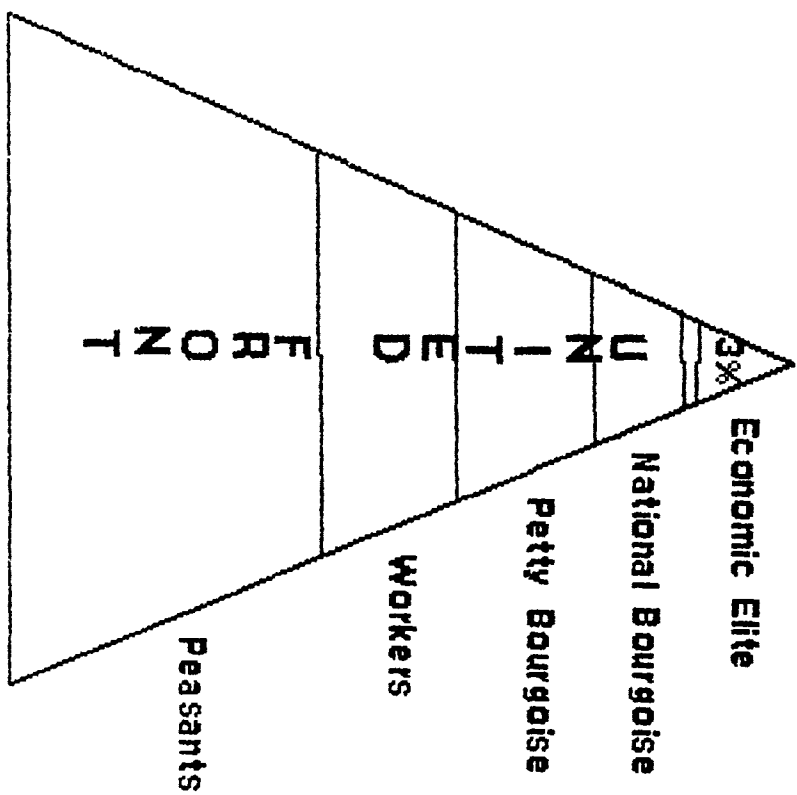
Recruitment for membership to the NPA is done through strict screening process. Social background, class origin, motives in joining, and willingness to risk their lives in the fight for their cause without monetary consideration are some requisites for membership. This is to ensure that no infiltrators are admitted into the system. Most of the members of the NPA are young, unmarried men and women who join the movement voluntarily. Coercion and intimidation are never resorted to in the recruitment process.

Establishment of a United Front

The communists see the Philippine society as divided into classes represented by a pyramid (see Illustration 2).⁸ On top of the pyramid is the ruling class composed of rich landlords and capitalists representing approximately 3 percent of the population. From their viewpoint, these elite group utilizes the government only to enhance and protect their class interests, thereby leaving the rest of the population to mend for their own selves. They believe that democracy as practiced by Western civilization is a myth; that what really exists is a government by the few and for the few. As long as this remains, they believe social change cannot be realized. The purpose of the united front is to win to their side the majority of the population in waging the People's War.

Organizing the peasantry, which comprises more than 70 percent of the population, is the primary objective of the National Democratic Front (NDF). They seek to win the peasantry

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNITED FRONT



STRUCTURE OF PHILIPPINE SOCIETY

Illustration 2

to their side through the implementation of their own "agrarian reform" program. This includes reduction of land rent, withholding part of the crops without the knowledge of the landlord, reduction of interest rates, arranging better prices with merchant middlemen, and default on government loans. In cases where landlords abuse their tenants, the landlords are given strict warnings or are summarily punished.

The urban working class is considered as the most advanced class. If the main force of the revolution is farmers, the working class is the lead force. The establishment of a worker's liaison group in an enterprise is the first step in organizing the workers. This liaison group then introduces party cadres to other workers in the same environment and will then form secret workers' organized groups. From these groups are selected the members of the workers' organizing committee who then prepare workers' demands. The majority of the workers are then made aware of the workers' demands and a trade union is organized. This trade union is placed under a party branch which then abolishes the organizing committee, the liaison group and the workers' organized group. To keep these various trade unions secret, they are not placed under a legal federation. The CPP controls and links all these trade unions.

Organizing the national elite is secondary to the workers and the peasants. They comprise a larger portion of the urban population and include small and medium entrepreneurs, professionals, intellectuals, middle and lower-ranking members

of the AFP, members of the clergy, and teachers. Compared to the workers and peasants, they are better off, but are also affected by the effects of inflation, rising prices, unemployment, rising production costs, and therefore, have their own legitimate grievances against the government. This makes them ideal targets for CPP propaganda.

Establishment of International Network

The three factors for a successful insurgency are favorable terrain, popular support, and foreign assistance.⁹

The geographical features of the Philippines, especially in Luzon and Eastern Visayas are highly favorable for guerilla warfare. The long coastline is also a positive factor for the insurgents, and a big problem for the AFP which cannot afford the personnel and logistical support to patrol the shores. These are given factors that the government can do little about, and which provide freedom of action for the insurgents.

Popular support is enjoyed in varying degrees in the countryside and in most depressed areas. Of the 40,761 barangays in the Philippines, about 8,000 are either influenced or infiltrated barangay. This means that 20 percent of these areas provide a level of support to the insurgents.¹⁰

The third factor, which is foreign assistance plays a very important role, especially today when the rebels are experiencing logistic problems. Considering the international organization of communism and its support of revolutionary struggles, it would be naive to assume there are no foreign

networks from which the Philippine rebels get foreign assistance from their counterparts in other countries of the world. A captured CPP document confirmed that there exists an extensive foreign network working towards the creation of formal relations with the Soviet bloc.¹¹ In 1987, Satur Ocampo, a CPP central committee member, claimed there were support networks from 25 countries. To further prove this claim, an International Department (ID) has been created within the CPP to manage international relationships/activities. Acting as their international front is the Ecumenical Partnership for International Concerns (EPIC).¹²

Western Europe

Since 1976, CPP activities in Europe have been managed by Luis Jalandoni, an ex-priest and CPP Central Committee member who resides in Utrecht Holland.¹³ In 1987, after his release from a long stay in prison during the Marcos era; Jose Ma. Sison, Chairman of the CPP Central Committee joined Jalandoni in Holland. Jalandoni claims that there are "solidarity" committees in 15 countries that support the CPP activities. It is believed that Jalandoni attended the French Communist Party Congress in 1987. Additionally, the captured documents show that a total of 428 Europeans went on a CPP arranged tours to the Philippines in 1986-87 period. The majority of the meeting of the visiting Europeans were with CPP front organizations like the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), a labor organization; Kilusang Mombubukid ng Pilipanan (KMP), a farmers union; BAYAN, a

political party front; and GABRIELA, a women's organization.¹⁴

Asia Pacific Committee (ASPAC)

This organization in Manila maintains links and support from Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Japan. A captured document disclosed that the CPP has been a recipient of substantial material support from organizations outside the socialist bloc. The ASPAC document notes that there are two CPP/NDF members who are now in Australia and hope to establish an office there. The document further claims that some of the Labor Party members like senators, parliamentarians and others, recognize and support the NDF in some capacity.

United States Connection

The CPP International Department reveals that CPP members are also in various places in the United States and Canada. It has links to the Washington DC-based Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (CCHRP). In 1987, 132 Americans went on a CPP organized tour to the Philippines.¹⁵ Another support group stationed in Los Angeles, the Alliance of Philippine Concern (APC) is also reported to have been supporting the CPP. In 1987, this group launched an attack on the human rights record of the Aquino administration. In the same year, a delegation led by former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark visited the Philippines and, relying heavily on the testimony of CPP front organizations KMU, and Gabriela, concluded that the, "trend could lead to human rights condition far exceeding that of the Marcos era."¹⁶ This report

acknowledges the assistance extended by CCHRP and EPIC.

The Soviet Connection

Earlier, Sison was opposed to a formal relationship with the CSPU. The CPP leadership today believes that relationships with the Soviet bloc will favor the CPP movement. The KMU now enjoys the support of the Soviet front World Federation of Trade Unions. Gabriela has also sent a delegation to the 1987 Soviet Women's Congress. The ID of the CPP enjoys considerable attention from the different communist fronts in different countries today from which material and other forms of support come.

Campaign Strategies

The overall strategy of the CPP hinges on the Principle of Protracted War. Basically, it is implemented through the establishment of base areas in the countryside slowly expanding and encircling the cities and urban areas until control and influence is established. This strategy is further subdivided into substrategies that employ the seemingly simple and harmless "16 character" formula of Mao which states: "When the enemy camps, we harass; when the enemy tires, we attack; when the enemy withdraws, we pursue."¹⁷ This dictum applies in all levels and stages of conflict. It applies the principles of initiative, flexibility, and planning. Another principle that seems to contradict the protracted war concept is the campaign and battles of quick decisions.¹⁸ This concept is most important to the rebels because of their limited personnel and

logistics. This is best applied in ambushes, raids, and other guerilla warfare tactics that takes full advantage of position and avoids direct confrontation with the enemy.

Weaknesses

Leadership plays a very important role in any communist insurgency. Recent developments show signs that a power struggle has been going among the top membership of the CPP since the departure and protracted stay of their known founder and leader Jose Ma Sison in Utrecht Holland. While there had been assurances from Sison himself of his desire to return, it would appear otherwise due to his application for political asylum in that country. In his absence, Benito Tiamson became the acting CPP Chairman. Considered to be the one responsible for the security lapses that resulted in the capture of 41 top CPP/NPA leaders in 1988, Tiamson was relieved. Promptly, Antonio Zumel, Saturnino Ocampo, and Jose Luneta contested the vacated position. As a result, Jose Luneta was appointed Chairman in a compromise agreement among the three. This situation created a state of uncertainty, factionalism, and polarization within the CPP leadership that radiates into the whole CPP/NPA/NDF movement.

Morale and Discipline

In a captured document in 1988, the CPP listed morale and discipline as one of their problems. This is brought about by the difficult living conditions in the field while some know leaders live in a comfortable life-style in the cities and

abroad. The question of leadership is also a factor in the ebbing morale and discipline of the rebels. Lack of war materials is another factor causing discipline problems. The more intense and more frequent encounters with government troops have rendered the rebels short of firearms and ammunition. They feel that they could remedy the situation through a more intensive and stronger initiative from their international network to provide a continuous supply of assistance.

The 1986 February Revolution toppled the Marcos dictatorship--a primary target of the communist insurgents. Unfortunately, for them, they were not a part of that swift, peaceful transition to power of Mrs Corazon Aquino. Thinking that they, too, were for democratic reforms, and in the spirit of trust and reconciliation, Mrs Aquino released their leaders, who had been incarcerated under the Marcos rule. Amnesty was offered, peace negotiations, and a cease-fire were initiated and agreed upon, and elections were scheduled. But in the end, the CPP/NPA showed their true colors and refused to acknowledge the government offer. Hostilities resumed in 1987 and fighting was even carried into metro-Manila. While the support of the people for Mrs Aquino and the government have been overwhelming, the CPP/NPA strength has not substantially diminished, though there are indications of modest gains by the government. Records published by the DND/AFP show that the insurgents' strength went down from 25,000 in 1987 to 23,600 in 1988. The affected barangays, however, show that there was a slight increase in

favor of the rebels. Out of 40,761 barangays, 4,999 are shown to be affected in 1988; higher than the 1987 figure of 4,993.²⁰ The degree of insurgent influence over these barangays, however, shows a decrease in favor of the government.

CHAPTER IV

NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

For the Philippine Government, the objectives of the CPP to seize and take over the political power and establish a communist government are very clear. The rise of insurgency during the Marcos regime has provided this government a chance to study and understand more about the insurgents. The prevailing political, economic, and social conditions at that time have created a perfect laboratory environment where one could scrutinize the root causes of insurgency. Poverty, ignorance, and injustice brought great suffering and dissatisfaction among the people. Gross inefficiency, rampant and endless graft and corrupt practices, and poor economic policies across the spectrum of the government bureaucracy created an economic situation that increased the suffering of the poor and favored the rich. Poverty was everywhere. The martial law years have shown an oppressive government that further compounded the problems of the poor. This is manifested by records on military abuses, human rights violations, arrogant and indifferent public officials, slow dispensation of justice, and predictable outcome of charges filed against rich and high-ranking public officials, if charges were filed at all.

These issues were exploited by the propaganda machinery of the insurgents and broadened the establishment of front organizations and support of the masses. It was also an ideal target for them to exercise their own system of swift justice. Ambush, assassination, summary execution, or intimidation against military and public officials whom they perceived as instruments of Marcos' dictatorship were common.

Ignorance on the other hand, is a social phenomenon that arose from the failure to establish an open, two-way communication system between the government and the people. It is ironic that with the high literacy rate and national passion of the Filipinos for politics, the majority of the people are ignorant about government affairs. The latter is true because interests are tied to personalities rather than issues. On the other hand, even with the advent of communications technology with radio and television available in remote areas, people are still ignorant of government activities. The people primarily listen and watch programs on soap operas, comedy, and light entertainment as an escape from their depressed living conditions. Even reading material is limited to these subjects. This is referred to as the Cinderella or Nova Aunor Syndrome.¹ It is not uncommon to see people in public market places limiting their purchases of food just so they can buy or rent Filipino Komiks Magazine. In remote areas, this magazine will change hands from one end to the other end of the barangay. It is read and reread until the fine print is lost in wear and

decay. The poor Filipinos live in a dream, in wishful thoughts that maybe one day, like Cinderella and Nora Aunor in the Komiks magazines, on television, or on radio, their dreams will come true. It is a way of insulating themselves from the physical hardship and harsh realities of being poor. The insurgents exploit with propaganda that offers an alternative way of life, and change for the sake of change becomes an attractive, undeniable option.

Such are the lessons from the Marcos regime on which the Aquino administration has anchored her program of government.

Political

Amidst the euphoria, cheers and celebration following the success of the February 1986 revolution, a Freedom Constitution was adopted and a transitory government was organized and Mrs Corazon C. Aquino was proclaimed President. Immediately, the political machinery was put into motion to address an economy at its rock-bottom level, and political system that had long curtailed individual freedom and most of its institutions were known for graft, corruption, and inefficiency. Setting up a political infrastructure that would ensure the exercise of true freedom and democracy became an utmost imperative.

1. The Constitution. By appointment of the President, members of a Constitutional Commission were named to draft a new Constitution. Although members of a Constitution Commission would normally be elected by the people, the immediate need for

a new constitution became so urgent that appointing the members of the Commission became the only option for the President. While there were protests against this procedure, the desire of the President prevailed. In October 1986, the new Constitution was adopted by the Commission and ratified in a nationwide referendum in February 1987. This Constitution replaced the 1973 Constitution which was written and adopted during the martial law years. That Constitution, most people believe, legalized the almost unlimited authority and tenure of Marcos. The new Constitution removed all provisions of the old Constitution found to be oppressive, ineffective, and unnecessary. New provisions to forestall another Marcos type of government were introduced.

2. The Legislature. The new Congress replaces the old Parliament "Batasang Pambansa," which to most was a rubber stamp institution for Marcos' desires and objectives. The new Congress provides for a bicameral body composed of 24 senators and no less than 250 congressmen. Working in a manner similar to the US Congress, senators are elected every six years while congressmen are elected every three years. Winners in the ensuing election for Congress were 22 senators and most of the congressmen from Mrs Aquino's party. The others belong to the once powerful party of the deposed President "Kilusang Bagong Lipunan" (KBL).

3. The Judiciary. The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body of the system. The previous members of the court were

known to be biased in favor of Marcos oppressive policies and decisions. When Mrs Aquino took office, the members of the Supreme Court submitted their resignations to give Mrs Aquino a free hand in appointing new members of the Supreme Court. As authorized by the Constitution, it is composed of a Chief Justice and 14 Associate Justices, all appointed by the President. Under the transitory provision of the Constitution, the Supreme Court was mandated to adopt a systematic plan to expedite the decisions or resolutions of cases on matters pending in the Supreme Court or lower courts.² This is to correct a well-established belief that the disposition of justice takes too long. In most cases, people settled their dispute outside the courts, due to the loss of confidence in the judicial system, sometimes in bloody fashions. Additionally, conviction in cases of rebellion and sedition filed by the military are often long and difficult. The military/police could only shake their heads in frustration and disgust, paving the way for a less enthusiastic attitude in filing similar cases in the future.

4. The Executive. The almost unlimited and often abused powers of the presidency under Marcos prompted the Constitutional Commission to restrict, but not disable the powers and authority of the President. Presidential emergency powers were limited and the powers to issue decrees and orders in place of legislation was curtailed. Tenure of office was also redefined to one six-year term without reelection. In the case of Mrs

Aquino, she could still run for another term as stipulated in the transitory provision of the new Constitution.

While the formal infrastructures were being put in place, the task of "demarcosization"² was initiated. Sequestration, a little known provision in the old Constitution and re-stressed in the Freedom Constitution, provides for the government to issue freeze orders and take control of properties believed to have been acquired through dubious means. This was immediately put into effect with the organization of the Commission on Good Government. Primarily organized to recover ill-gotten wealth of Marcos and his cronies, which many believed amounted to several billions of dollars, it had the task of identifying properties belonging to Marcos and his associate whether in-country or abroad. In short time, no less than 200 companies and corporations were sequestered. Bank accounts found in several countries were frozen.

Reorganization of the executive was also studied and implemented. Departments which under Marcos were found ineffective and unnecessary were abolished. Thousands of government employees were removed from their jobs, but it was a necessary action for better and more effective government.

The Commission on Human Rights was also organized to "investigate on its own or on complaint by any party, all forms of human rights violation involving civil and political rights."³ This section was provided to take over the Presidential Commission on Human Rights organized under the

Freedom Constitution. The establishment by the Aquino administration of a formal structure to investigate to the violation of human rights was much welcomed by the people and International Human Rights Organization. The report of Amnesty International on their first mission in May 1986 noted, "strong evidence that the Aquino Government's commitment to the protection of human rights and the establishment of legal safeguards had led to major improvements."⁴ It went further on to describe that "there is little evidence of the kind of systematic and complicated torture prevalent under Marcos' administration."⁵ On their second mission a year later, Amnesty International reported that, "There had been sharp escalation in political violence and that the government appears to be unable to persuade security forces to respect the safeguards it had promoted so vigorously a year earlier."⁶ In response to this observation, a nationwide seminar was conducted involving the military commanders, members of the bar, judges, prosecutors, and local officials. But the issue of the efficiency and capability of the Human Rights Commission to resolve issues remained.

The military, on its own, was renamed The New Armed Forces of the Philippines. Long regarded as an instrument of Marcos' dictatorial rule, it regained some lost ground during the February revolt. Reorientation programs were soon implemented to redirect attitudes and behavior of personnel towards loyalty to the Constitution and service to the people.

For the communist insurgents, they were given a chance to reconsider their stand. In the spirit of reconciliation and trust, Mrs Aquino released all political prisoners including the founder and Chairman of the CPP. The Communist Party members were offered amnesty and a cease-fire and peace negotiation was agreed upon. Many believed that without Marcos, as the "biggest NPA recruiter," the insurgency would end. But that was not the case. Still true to their objective, the CPP wanted power on their own terms and not through democratic means. Their refusal to participate in the ensuing electoral process, alienated them from many people.

Marcos loyalist on the other hand, also wanted to regain power. A few months after the revolution, an attempt to proclaim Mr Arturo Tolentino as President was organized at the Manila Hotel. Supported by a handful of military personnel and known pro-Marcos politicians, this attempt was crushed. In January 1987, another coup was again attempted. This time more military men were involved. But, without definite objectives and lines of support from the people, it was again stopped. A third attempt was conducted on 28 August 1987. This was considered the most serious of the coup attempts. In contrast to the "loyalist" groups who attempted the earlier coups, this was composed more of organized personnel of the AFP representing the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) and other military personnel who believed there were real "issues" and grievances against the government. Low pay and allowances, the soft method in dealing

with the insurgents, and left-leaning members of the government were some of the grievances that were aired. The most severe and bloodiest coup attempt, however, took place from 30 November through 7 December 1989. This time, with a more extensive plan and more clearly defined issues, it almost succeeded. With timely help from the United States at a crucial stage of the uprising, it was again thwarted. But dissatisfaction in the military remained, alongside the issues of inefficiency and corruption in government and worsening economic conditions. Increase in the price of oil can escalate already high prices of commodities, and thereby adding to the suffering of the people.

Appearing with Cardinal Sin at a religious shrine constructed on EDSA--the symbolic birthplace of her 1986 rise to presidency, Mrs Aquino called again for people power.⁷ In a tough and fiery speech, she accused Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, Vice-President Laurel and her estranged cousin Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco of involvement in the latest coup attempt. In the same instance, Cardinal Sin attacked nepotism in government. Sin called on the President to eliminate nepotism in her office and inefficiency in many branches of the government. Before the coup attempt, the Mayors League of the Philippines asked for the removal from office of seven cabinet secretaries for inefficiency. Sin called for a broad and drastic government reform. But action was slow in coming. In the words of Elliot Richardson, a former US Attorney General, "She seems totally dedicated to democratic principles--to the point where she will

not do things that smack of authoritarianism."⁸ This may account for the show of strength in her speeches following several attempts against her government. Says a young officer who backs the government: "I think Cory will have to be hard on the rebels (soldiers). But to balance out the harshness," he says, "she must also be hard on the corrupt politicians around her."⁹ Professor Felipe R. Miranda of the University of the Philippines said, "In the context of government that really refuses to govern, that refuses to lead or take sides, the military can live with mistakes, but not with endless indecisions and things hanging and hanging."¹⁰ Her weaknesses notwithstanding, she has overcome all challenges against her government, and at the same time reestablished the pillars of freedom and democracy. President Bush called the Philippines a "Beacon of Democracy worthy of emulation throughout the world."¹¹

Social-Economic Reforms

Economic recovery, the key to solving the insurgency problem, became foremost in the minds of those in government and the people. Redistribution of wealth is an accompanying objective of this vision. As an initial presidential project to attain this objective, a multi-billion five-year development plan was formulated and implemented. Designed to reach the farthest and most needy people, it include construction of roads, bridges, schools, houses, and irrigation projects, thereby creating at least one million jobs for the unemployed. Sadly, however it was stalled when corruption was discovered in

the initial implementation of the project. This type of situation destroys the credibility of the administration and gives the NDF ammunition for their propaganda machinery.

A rush to formulate a more meaningful and effective land-reform program became a preoccupation of the Office of the President and the Congress. In June of 1988, a comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law was signed. The program, which aims to divide big farm estates into smaller plots, is to be implemented by the government buying the land and redistributing it to the landless farmers. The farmers will make payments for the land from their farming proceeds. Covering an area of approximately five million hectares, the program would go in three phases from 1988 to 1989. But land reform is a very ticklish and explosive matter, involving about eight million Filipinos. Farmers claim that the government lacks the political will to implement a genuine land reform program because many of the elected and appointed officials in government are large landholders themselves. This sensitive issue includes the Aquino family who owns one of the largest haciendas in Central Luzon. Additionally, other quarters questioned it as being confiscatory and that the government does not have enough money to implement the program. Big commercial farms in Mindanao, where plantations account for 45.5 percent of national agricultural production including 23 percent of rice and 66 percent of corn production, considerable apprehension exists that multinationals plantation operations may be driven out. Left in its place

would be tenants without sufficient capital to continue productions. Other landowners who do not agree with the land reform program have threatened to use arms. Other peasants turn to the NPA's Land Reform Program. The initial implementation of the program, was again tainted by corruption. It was discovered that in the Bicol region, personnel of The Department of Agrarian Reform paid excessive prices for lands.

But there were also several positive gains of the Aquino administration. Trust in government has been translated into gains in the economy with foreign investments on the increase. Inflation has fallen from as high as 40 percent four years ago to about 1-2 percent today. The gross national product also showed a growth of 7.4 percent in 1987, compared to a -5 percent figure 4 years ago. But it would take more than these modest gains to put the Philippines back on its feet without big infusion of capital from foreign investors. Additional loans will only exuberate the problem of how to pay it back. Forty percent of the budget is already required just to service interest on existing loans.

A mini-Marshall plan, originally endorsed by former President Reagan and presently known as the Multilateral Aid Initiative, is an international program that has already obtained \$3.5 billion in pledges from different countries. It offers great promise for the development of the Philippines.

Military Organization

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is currently

organized with a General Headquarters (GHQ) and four major services. The Philippine Army (PA), The Philippine Constabulary (PC), The Philippine Air Force (PAF), and the Philippine Navy (PN). It has an authorized strength of 160,000 personnel augmented by about 90,000 police forces, who were integrated into the military in 1976. In response to the need for unity of command, and to be able to maximize the utility of scarce resources, the AFP has organized five area commands. These commands have their own Army, PC, PAF, and PN components. All of these components are placed under the OPCON of the area commander.

In terms of budget, the AFP receives about 1.5 percent of the GNP--the lowest in Southeast Asia. This budgetary constraint puts severe strain on the ability of the military in pursuing its assigned tasks. Lack of combat clothing and individual equipment and inadequate vehicles and communication equipment are some of the problems of the commanders and personnel in the field.

The years immediately following the 1986 revolution were very productive years for the military. It has undergone a great transformation since the Marcos years. As BGen Jose T. Almante said, "This monolithic structure, oiled by personal loyalties, martial law sanction, and material rewards led to unprecedented corruption and uncontrolled abuses. . .! It became a military partner in maintaining power and accumulating ill-begotten wealth."¹² In order to correct this, the

reorientation program for the AFP was implemented. It has a three-fold objective: people-orientation, spiritual and moral renewal, and professionalism. These activities are undertaken to correct abuses under the previous regime, to establish promotion and assignment based on merit, to improve leadership by example, and to reform the procurement system. But some have failed to follow the line. The involvement of military personnel in criminal activities has not escaped the observation of the President. She called on the leadership of the PC/INP to put a, "complete stop to the involvement of their members in criminal offenses like carnapping and illegal gambling. . . . It is absolutely intolerable that certain elements of the military are implicated in illegal gambling and carnapping"¹¹ While these activities are few and represent a small percentage of the military, it reflects a bad image for the AFP which the insurgents can exploit in their propaganda activities.

AFP Campaign Strategy

The new campaign strategy is directed towards the enemy's strategy of protracted war in order to achieve strategic victory at the earliest possible time. It revolves around the following three concepts:

1. Campaign of Rapid Conclusions. This seeks to force an early strategic defeat of the insurgents' military arm using major AFP resources in a concerted and deliberate effort to deprive the CPP/NPA of more time to expand its forces and guerilla fronts. It works on the idea that if the AFP is to prevail, it must

strive to do so in the shortest possible time.

2. Gradual Constriction. This concept seeks to strangle and constrict the guerrilla base areas by progressively organizing the affected barangays. This reverses the insurgents' method of expanding from a barangay to a section, to district and finally, to guerilla fronts. This is complemented with efforts to win decisive engagements at every opportunity.

3. Clearing, Holding, Consolidating, and Developing. This concept involves a three-tiered defense system which requires the interplay of three vital components: (1) The military ground combat units backed by readily deployable air and naval forces; (2) The territorial forces consisting of the PC, INP, and the Citizens Armed Force Geographical Units (CAFGU) manned by reservists on active duty. The CAFGU replaces the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF) which was utilized during the previous administration; and (3) The Bantay Beyan mainly composed of committed citizens who have organized themselves into Civilian Volunteer Organizations (CVO). These organizations are authorized under the provisions of the new Constitution.

The clearing phase calls for the removal of the enemy's political structure/organization through the use of force if necessary. The holding phase requires the establishment of counter-guerilla organizations to maintain the gains made during the clearing phase. The consolidation phase aims to reestablish grass-roots democracy and win back the support of the people through the delivery of urgently needed services. The role of

the military at this stage is to provide security and coordinate the different activities to be undertaken by local government executives who now play the key role. The development phase involves the full implementation of high-impact projects that strike at the root cause of insurgency. The introduction of the Special Operations Team (SOT) is the major factor in this program. The SOT, which became an integral part of any battalion, is specifically trained to gather intelligence and to undertake psyops and security activities. This will include activities like the New Peoples Armys social investigation in the barangays. Another activity undertaken by the SOT is the handling of insurgents who surrender. It includes interrogation and documentation of events.

After an area is cleared, the CAFGU and the CVO team can take over and the mobile forces leave the area for employment in other areas. The CAFGUs are necessary forces to compliment government forces nationwide. To make the AFP strategic concept viable, the support of the civil government in establishing a parallel strategy is very necessary. Capabilities of the mobile and territorial forces to move, shoot, and communicate must be improved. The synergistic relationship between each of the three components of the system is the key to the success of this program. Failure of one may cause the failure of the whole program.

In addition, the judicial system has yet to come up with a more credible accomplishment. In a speech by Mrs Aquino at

Camp Crame, on the occasion of the 87th anniversary of the PC, she deplored the slow prosecution of cases filed before the court when she said, "the almost complete ineffectiveness of the judicial and prosecutorial arm of the government is matched by its near total paralysis in all other cases. . . ."14

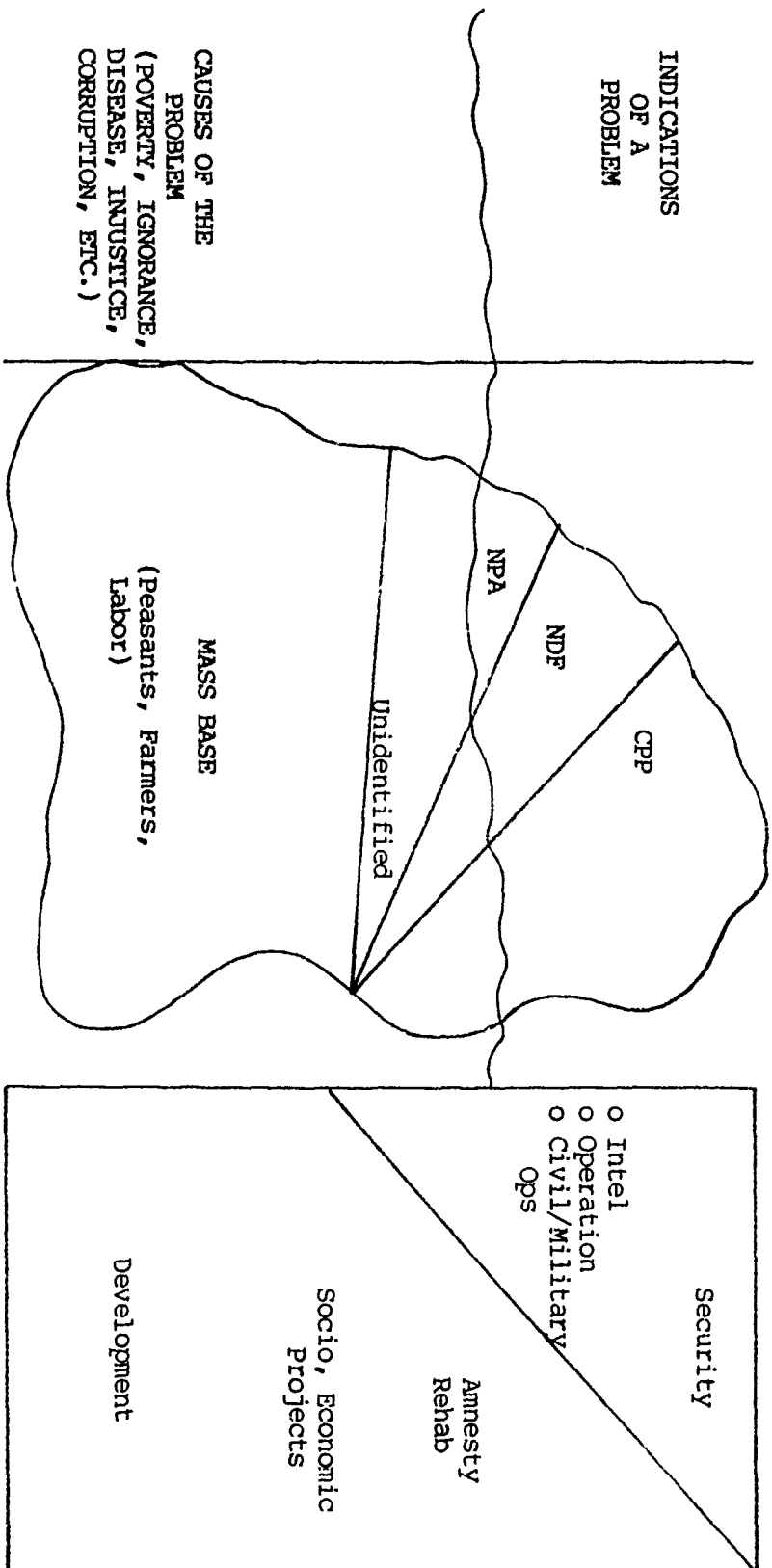
CHAPTER V

ASSESSMENT

1. Nature and Characteristics of Communist Insurgency. The nature and characteristic of the communist insurgency in the Philippines could be represented by an iceberg (see illustration 3). The tip of the iceberg represents the CPP/NDF/NPA and their different activities which is considered the indication of the problem. The submerged part represents the mass base of the insurgency movement whose legitimate and/or perceived grievances against the government are the causes of the problem. As shown, the different elements are distinctly defined and appropriate measures are identified. Military action is necessary and appropriate against the insurgents and their activities while high impact projects undertaken by the civil government is necessary to address the causes of insurgency. Military action alone will not solve the problem. Neither, will development activities alone will assure the end of insurgency. To be effective, it needs the integration of both activities from as early as the planning stage to the implementation and conclusion of the counterinsurgency campaign plan.

The government's campaign strategy is highly concentrated in military actions with unclear civil government

NATURE OF INSURGENCY



ICEBERG MODEL, Illustration 3

participation. While there appears to be both security and development programs to address the whole spectrum of the problem, there is no national program to integrate both activities. Civil government participation is coordinative in nature and with this arrangement, it may not have the resources to address problems discovered by the military during the clearing and holding phase. At the start of the campaign, a national program integrating all the military and civil government actions must be established and ready for implementation when appropriate.

2. Objectives. The communist insurgents from the very start have established clearly defined objectives that are transmitted and understood at every level of their organization. This allows priorities to be set and methods established to accomplish secondary objectives. In addition, all the other members understand how their individual and collective participation fits into the overall strategy. On the part of the government, the overall objective is unclear. It would appear that the implementation of reforms after the revolution was an objective in itself. Succeeding actions were not undertaken to consolidate the gains of those reforms. Inefficiency, graft and corruption followed the actions of the government became reactive in nature. It should be noted that government reorganizations and other reforms immediately followed coup attempts in response to the issues raised by the coup plotters. Still, good projects are often greeted with

corruption and inefficiency.

The military, on the other hand, is proceeding on its own. The new campaign strategy addresses what the military is to do. But, it can only inflict damage to the enemy; it cannot solve the insurgency problem. This will require a parallel civil and military program with integrated programs and activities.

3. Leadership. In most successful campaigns and human endeavors, the role of the leader in providing the guidance, direction, and bringing out the best in his followers has always been the key factor.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) at present is experiencing problems in leadership. But judging from their past experiences, this may only be a temporary problem. The CPP Central Committee is composed of highly intelligent and dedicated individuals with a strong motivation to achieve their strategic goals. It should be recalled that for approximately seven years, their leader and founder was in jail during the Marcos administration; but, nevertheless, it was during this period that the CPP/NPA grew to its biggest strength. This demonstrates their capacity to satisfy party leadership requirements. Within the party, discipline is primordial. Stiff punishment is meted out to personnel found violating strict party rules and policies. As in the case of Tiamson, inefficiency is never condoned. He was promptly removed when there were signs that he was responsible for the lapses of

security that resulted in the capture of party leaders and members.

On the side of the government, Mrs Aquino has provided a leadership quite different from the style of her predecessor. Where Marcos was authoritarian, she is democratic; where Marcos was unforgiving, she shows compassion and understanding. But, in her strict observance of these principles, members of the government understand that it as be a sign of weakness. Government leaders have committed acts of indiscretion and allowed graft and corruption to occur in their respective offices. In such cases, Mrs Aquino is faulted for not meting out immediate punishment. The revamp of her cabinet on three occasions following coup attempts would indicate her reactionary method of leadership. On several occasions, she has been slow to match her words with action, and contradictions have confused her followers even more. This style of leadership has created a problem in the fight against the insurgency. This is not to say that the leadership style of the CPP/NPA is more acceptable, but the results show the effectiveness of their adherence to strict party discipline.

4. Logistics. The leader's objectives cannot be attained without adequate logistics. At present, logistic problems are being experienced by both the government and the CPP/NPA. As a consequence, the CPP/NPA has resorted into a stiff forced taxation in the towns and barangays, which is undermining their propaganda campaign. People are now turning to the side of the

government because of this NPA practice. However, their ability to survive and successfully operate on relatively minimal resource is what makes them more effective than the government troops. On the other hand, the government side is also experiencing shortages of equipment and other resources. The military budget receives the lowest priority in the national budget allocation. At present, the military budget is hardly enough to fight the insurgents. To fight and win is another matter. The present budget allocation to the military will prove to be costly in the end if the insurgency is not resolved at the most expedient manner.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The insurgency in the Philippines is a revolution from the below. It involves the social, political, and economic dimensions of society and it is greatly influenced by historical and cultural values. The history of the Philippines shows that the Filipinos have risen in arms against oppressive and inefficient governments. They have also laid down their arms in respect to our efficient and compassionate government.

The present leadership reflects a compassionate and democratic government. The suppression of freedom and human rights by the past administration have been significantly reduced if not eliminated. However, inefficiency and corruption in government persist that compound the unstable political and poor economic situation. This problem fits very well into the propaganda activity of the CPP/NPA who perceives that the present government is not different from the past administration whose programs favor only the rich.

In finding a solution to the problem, one must look to the interplay of the different dimensions of power and examine what dominant factor is needed without forgetting the integration of all factors in the formulation of a national

campaign plan.

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CHAPTER IV

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