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**DEVELOPING THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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With the passage of its Modernization Bill, the Armed Forces of the Philippines will embark on planning for new defense equipment acquisitions. A National Defense Strategy that considers not only potential threats but also a net military assessment of its allies and potential enemies, a hierarchy of national interests, a time frame for its military strategy vis a vis the domestic insurgency, among others, will facilitate strategic planning, force development and capability determination. Securing public support and establishing credibility are challenges that leaders must face. There are lessons from other countries defense models.

Purpose This study seeks to provide concepts to improve the process of developing a National Defense Strategy (NDS) and its components in relation to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Modernization Program passed by Congress in February 1995. It is necessary to review the Republic of the Philippines' (RP) defense strategy in order to seek the most efficient and appropriate capabilities to be developed considering:

1. The huge budget necessary to implement the strategy;
2. The military modernization of neighboring states spawned by uncertainties in the region and developing economies;
3. The declarations of China about the disputed islands in the South China Sea;
4. The effect of new technology on warfare;
5. The remaining Communist insurgency and Southern separatist problem.

The defense strategies of selected nations were considered to provide insights, commonalities and deviations for purposes of comparison. While threat assessments are different among nations, each one follows a logical process in developing defense strategies.

Lidell Hart defined strategy as the " art and science of employing the political, economic, psychological, and military forces of a nation to afford maximum support to adopted policies in peace and in war."¹ This is also called national or grand strategy. National Security Strategy is defined as the art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments

of national power (diplomatic, economic, military and, informational) to achieve the objectives that contribute to national security. For the purpose of this study the terms "national defense strategy" and "national military strategy" will have the same meaning, i.e. " the art and science of distributing and applying military power to attain national objectives in peace and war"²

Background. The RP Administrative Code of 1987 states that "the defense establishment shall be maintained to maximize its effectiveness for guarding against external and internal threats to national peace and security, and provide support for social and economic development. The AFP is " the protector of the people and the State. Its goal is to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory."³

In 1991, the Citizen Armed Forces of the Philippines Reservist Act was passed which provides for "the maintenance of a standing or regular military force that is in consonance to the actual peacetime needs of the State but which can be rapidly expanded by the Citizen Armed force in the event of war, invasion, or rebellion."⁴ The citizen-soldiers can be called to assist in relief and rescue during disasters or calamities and in the operation and maintenance of essential government or private utilities.

Effective January 1995, as a partial implementation of The Philippine National Police (PNP) Law, which abolished the

Philippine Constabulary and created a civilian national police, the PNP has started taking over the counter-insurgency mission of the AFP in specified areas of the country.⁵

The most significant legislation with profound impact on national defense is the AFP Modernization Act which was passed in 1995. This Act declared the policy of the Government to modernize the AFP "to a level where it can effectively and fully perform its constitutional mandate to uphold the sovereignty of the nation." The program shall be implemented for 15 years with the amount of 50 billion pesos to be provided during the first five years. The principal thrusts are: a) the development of an armed force along the concept of a "citizen's armed force"; b) reforms in the management of AFP personnel; c) development of AFP doctrines; d) acquisition of appropriate technology and equipment; e) relocation, improvement of and construction of base and other facilities."⁶

There are seven objectives of the Program:

1. Developing the capability of the AFP to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country;
2. Developing its capability to assist civilian agencies in the preservation of the country's natural resources;
3. Enhancing its capability to protect the people from natural and man made disasters;
4. Improving its capability to assist other agencies in the enforcement of domestic and international covenants against crime;

5. Enhancing its capability to assist law enforcement and internal security operations;

6. Enhancing its capability to fulfill the country's international commitments;

7. Developing its capability to support national development.⁷

The AFP will have the capability to engage in conventional and unconventional warfare. The following force capabilities are sought in the Modernization Program:

<u>Naval</u>	<u>Air</u>
Naval defense	Acquisition of multi role aircraft
Amphibious warfare	Area Defense missile system
Sealift and Transport	Maritime Patrol and reconnaissance
Surface Warfare	Early Warning and control system
Naval gunfire support	Strategic and battlefield airlift
Detection and maritime	Limited ground attack capability
Surveillance	
Search and rescue	
Disaster Response	<u>Ground</u>
Anti-air	Ground defense
Anti-submarine	Internal Security
Mine Warfare	Assistance to national development
	Search and rescue
	Relief and rehabilitation
	Natural Resources and environmental protection ⁸

RP Security Defined The Philippines subscribes to the broad definition of national security i.e. which includes "the protection of the vital economic and political interests, the

loss of which could threaten the fundamental values and the vitality of the State itself."⁹ It declares that true security is anchored on the welfare and well being of the people and is best realized through people empowerment. The following elements constitute the concerns of national security:

a) Territorial integrity, b) Ecological balance in the Environment, c) Socio-political stability, d) Economic solidarity e) Cultural cohesiveness, f) Moral-spiritual consensus, g) External peace with neighbors.¹⁰

The Organization for National Security (ONS) is mainly responsible for the management of the national security planning process which has three functions:

1. Formulation of national security policies
2. Preparation of national intelligence
3. Preparation of Departmental intelligence and policies

The principal advisory body to the President on the proper coordination and integration of plans and policies affecting national security is the National Security Council (NSC). Three other consultative bodies maybe tasked by the President: "Cluster E" of the Cabinet, National Economic and Development Authority, and the Council of State. The Secretary of National Defense sits in "Cluster E".

The coordination of national intelligence activities and the preparation of national intelligence reports is the responsibility of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency

(NICA) which is assisted by the National Intelligence Board (NIB).

Threat Assessment

Two sources of conflict or instability are of immediate concern to the Philippines: China's stand and recent actions in the South China Sea dispute and the intransigent Muslim armed separatist movement in Mindanao.

A Chinese attack to seize Kalayaan in the Spratlys is a distinct possibility. As the capability of the Chinese navy to project power improves over the long term, it may attempt to use force against the other claimants. The United States military involvement in this territorial dispute should conflict arise is not likely to trigger the RP-US Mutual Defense Agreement that calls for US military involvement.¹¹

While China is unlikely to resort to the use of force in the next 5 to 10 years unless the Taiwan situation goes beyond what is acceptable to it, its behavior would be more difficult to predict in the longer term. Since the late 80's, navy planners have been extensively working on extending and protecting China's defense perimeter. Three prerequisites for sustained long-range operations have been developed: underway replenishment ships, a long-distance communication system, and a global navigation system. These allows extended operations to be conducted farther into the South China Sea.

In Southern Philippines, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and sympathetic armed groups, with an estimated armed strength of 20,000, is expected to continue using their forces to gain leverage against the RP government in seeking autonomy during the current peace talks. It is expected to continue acts of terrorism like raids, harassments, and criminal extortion.¹² It is not likely that they will give up the use of arms to attain their objectives in the near and medium terms.

With the sustainment of national economic growth, the Communist insurgency problem is likely to continue receding, although it will continue to be a major peace and order problem in the next 5 years.¹³ The AFP will continue to support the PNP and continue to contain the rebels in their concentration areas. Meanwhile, intrusions in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and illegal exploitation of its marine resources are likely to increase.

The possibility of conflict with Malaysia over the Philippine claim to Sabah is remote since both countries, as members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), have agreed to resolve any dispute by peaceful means. RP leaders have considered the possibility of dropping the claim.

RP Defense Planning

Several factors are critical in RP defense planning:

- a. Until the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the

Cold War, it has been largely dictated by its alignment with the West as manifested by the 1951 Defense Treaty with the US and the presence of the US bases in Luzon until 1992. External defense was anchored on the treaty which assumed US military involvement if the RP was attacked. Defense planning focused mainly on internal security threats, particularly the Communist and the Muslim insurgencies.

b. The efforts to contain the Communist New People's Army and the Muslim separatist movement for almost three decades had consumed most of the defense budget and occupied much of security planning, operations, training and doctrines. It has hindered the AFP from being developed as a modern military force. Divisions are basically light infantry and the Air Force major assets, the helicopters, were primarily for use in the insurgency war. There are no modern attack helicopters. Armor assets are mostly personnel carriers and a few combat reconnaissance vehicles. Air defense is severely limited. Most of the Navy's ships are obsolete for modern sea warfare and have very limited patrol capability.¹⁴

c. Neighboring states in Southeast Asia have acquired and continue to procure modern weapon systems including multi-role fighters, submarines, guided missile frigates, airborne surveillance, and C2 capabilities, artillery and armor. Divergent perceptions of national interests seem to encourage individualism and opportunism that will threaten historic friendships and alliances.¹⁵

d. The slow and delayed growth of the economy places serious constraints on budgetary support for a credible defense capability. Consequently Congress and the public would be more scrutinizing and require more rationalization to defense needs. The AFP has the lowest defense budget as a percentage of the GNP or GDP compared to the states of ASEAN. It has also one of the least number of personnel as a percentage of population in the whole world.¹⁶

e. Chinese declarations about its intentions in the South China Sea, its new maritime strategy and its naval and air force modernization are real threats. The establishment of a Chinese outpost in February 1995 in the Mischief Reefs and well within the RP EEZ, despite RP protests, is an indicator of how China intends to deal with this issue.¹⁷

The National Defense Strategy

The RP National Defense Strategy (NDS) stresses the role of diplomacy as the "first line of defense" and recognizes the importance of ties with ASEAN and bilateral ties with its members. The initiatives of ASEAN are seen to be essential in assuring regional stability. It is a potential political buffer that would increase the political cost to an aggressor.

Thus when the Chinese established an outpost in the Mischief Reefs, the RP campaigned within ASEAN for an international awareness of the issue to bring pressure on Beijing. However, it failed to convince the Chinese to withdraw.

The Defense Treaty with the United States is considered a primary deterrent against external aggression. Its usefulness in a lesser conflict which the RP may be involved in, such as in boundary disputes like the Spratlys, is doubted. However, the possibility of the United Nations or a third party intervening when a shooting war erupts is recognized. Some would like to think that a unilateral intervention by the US is also a possibility. However, Washington exhibits no desire to assume primary responsibility for maintaining stability and security in the region.¹⁸ Southeast Asia is no longer a region of strategic immediacy for the US. The focus of the National Security Strategy of the US is largely toward Northeast Asia.¹⁹

Objectives The NDS objectives seek to uphold the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the state. They include providing support to the maintenance of internal peace and order, protection of natural resources and the environment, cooperation for the stability of ASEAN, and UN peace keeping operations.

There are five concepts in the national defense strategy:

1. Operational Strategy

A total defense posture is advocated which mobilizes the entire nation's resources in a war for national survival. RP forces will have to operate alone when bilateral alliances cannot be invoked or are deemed inapplicable. Defense forces are to engage any attackers forward and away from the mainland as possible. Designated sea lines of communication (SLOCS) will be denied to the enemy.

The NDS describes: the missions of the air force and the navy, ground defense, internal security role, and assistance to socio-economic development. It includes humanitarian assistance, protection of the EEZ and cooperation with ASEAN.

2. Organizational Strategy

A lean but mean standing force is envisioned centered on a highly trained, adequately equipped, rapid deployment force. It will be deployed initially to meet contingencies and until the reserves can mobilize.

3. Capabilities Development Strategy

The period for capabilities development is divided into 3-five year phases. Specific force capabilities and requirements were developed by the three Services and listed in the NDS. There is no time frame associated with each of the capabilities to be developed. For example, will counter-air capabilities be developed ahead of strategic airlift? Will surface warships be given priority over mine and countermine vessels? Will amphibious operations capability be given priority ahead of the naval reconnaissance requirements? The same observation is made with respect to the Army and GHQ capability plans.

4. Bases Development Strategy

The NDS recognizes the need for bases to be located so as to facilitate coordination and be mutually supportive. A geographical priority was given based on the emerging threats. There is a provision that revenues from the sale of military bases will be funneled to the modernization of the AFP .

5. Human Resource Development Strategy

Most of the objectives of this component deal with the professionalization of military personnel through training and education and includes the improvement of the quality of life of their families. A question that arises is how will they be synchronized and integrated with the overall capability development plan. Another important issue is what strategies will be adopted to attract the intelligent, skilled and technically qualified personnel necessary to man advanced technology systems?

6. Doctrines development

This calls for a reorientation to external defense. At what period or time frame, and what major units will shift to this orientation considering the Southern and Communist insurgencies, is not clear. For example, should the 5th Fighter Wing and the 7th Infantry Division be prioritized for the shift? Not all units can be transformed simultaneously because of their counter-insurgency (COIN) missions expected to continue at least until the medium term.

Included in the operational concepts to be developed are those on rescue and relief operations as well as protection of the natural resources. Which type units and degree of capability desired is not prescribed.

Defense Concepts of Other Countries

China has departed from Mao's restrictive principle of striking only after being struck. This is witnessed by their move

away from defensive war doctrine based on protracted land warfare and mobilization of society to that of forward deployment. In 1985, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) decided that the most likely form of future conflict is "Local War of Limited Duration". Although its capability to fight in a modern environment is still limited, forward planning has been catalyzed by lessons from the Gulf War.²⁰ The Navy (PLAN) is now regarded as the senior service with the Air Force (PLAAF) behind.

The Chinese observation of the use of high technology weapons systems and combined operations by the US and its allies in the Gulf War against Iraq were instrumental in promoting joint training and re-equipment. In the Chinese navy, single-ship training has grown to multi-arm, ocean going combined training. The PLAAF is now engaged in more flexible long-distance multi-aircraft maneuvers.²¹

A recent Beijing publication described a scenario of clashes over the Spratlys with the Chinese employing a force that envisions a conflict with one nation expanding into a region wide confrontation. The core of the force was to comprise six to eight guided missile destroyers with ten to fifteen frigates providing air defense. Ten to sixteen submarines and six amphibious assault ships capable of landing 1000 troops and 70 armored fighting vehicles or artillery pieces. The naval task group included a logistics force of 50 support and maintenance ships, plus ten minelayers. Land-based fighters were used to support the operations instead of naval aviation due to the distances from

bases.²²

China has adopted the "green-water, active defense strategy" up to the year 2000. A blue-water navy is envisaged by the year 2020. Its doctrine includes "active defense" which is defense exercised for anti-attack purposes. This defense does not exclude the possibility of offensive strikes for the purpose of self-defense, or for the purpose of self-reliance or for offensive actions after a period of defense.²³

In the light of its aspirations to be recognized as a superpower, the People's Republic of China (PRC) undoubtedly believes that it must achieve regional military supremacy and this is only possible by modernizing its navy. Its published scenario in the Spratlys reflect the political and military significance that it attaches to the area.

Indonesia The constitutional principle of *dwifungsi* or dual function has allowed the Indonesian military to maintain a nationwide political apparatus down to the village level. Although the armed forces have devoted more resources in recent years to defensive capacity, its organizational culture is designed primarily to facilitate political control. At least two thirds of army battalions are assigned to territorial rather than combat duties. These battalions are responsible for the maintenance of internal security. *Dwifungsi* is estimated to continue for another two decades.²⁴

In the 1994 defense white paper "Defense and Security Policy of the Republic of Indonesia", its strategic philosophy of

avoiding war is not based on the size of its military forces but rather the threat that to launch war on Indonesia will face opposition from all the people, the *strategic prevention concept*. The basic premise is not a balance of forces but a balance of interests. It subscribes to an "*active defensive*" policy for defense and an "*actively preventive*" policy toward internal security.²⁵

The Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) has announced plans to procure more F-16s to have a complete squadron. There are on going programs to upgrade its F-5Es, F-5Fs and A-4 Skyhawks. An additional purchase of 16 Hawk 200s is planned to supplement the 24 Hawk 100 and 200 in its inventory.²⁶

Taiwan has adopted the concept of *non-provocative defense* which is defined as "the build-up, training, logistics, and doctrine of the armed forces such as they are seen in their totality to be unsuitable for offense, but are unambiguously sufficient for a credible defense". It means "making the country hard to attack, expensive to invade, and difficult to occupy." It also means having strong denial forces which are not themselves suitable for long range offensive action and do not therefore pose an offensive threat to other countries.²⁷

In view of the threat from China, a policy of constructive engagement with the mainland together with frequent reassurances has been adopted. In addition to maintaining a credible defense capability it has sought to strengthen support from Japan and the US.²⁸

Japan The National Defence Program outline of Japan incorporates the concept of a *basic and standard defense capability*. This capability is defined as the possession of the minimum necessary defense capability for an independent nation. The intent is not to become a source of instability in the region by creating a vacuum of power. As opposed to being seen as seeking to directly counter any military threat. Japan aims to possess the assorted capabilities required for national defense, while retaining a balanced posture in terms of organization and deployment, including logistical support.²⁹

The following capabilities are outlined:

Ground Forces

1. Deploy its divisions and brigades in a balanced manner that conforms with Japan's geographical characteristics.
2. Possess one unit of each of the various types of forces used mainly for mobile operations (artillery, armor, aviation)
3. Staff its units with regular self-defense personnel to maintain a high level of proficiency.
4. Possess ground to air missile units capable of undertaking the air defense of divisions, other units and vital areas.

Maritime forces

5. Possess one fleet escort force as mobile operating ship unit in order to respond to aggressive action. The fleet escort force must be able to maintain at least one escort

flotilla on alert at all times.

6. Possess ship units assigned to coastal surveillance and defense.

7. Maintain submarine units, patrol helicopter and minesweeping units providing the capability for surveillance and defense missions.

Air forces

8. Possess aircraft control and warning units capable of surveillance throughout the national airspace on a continuous basis.

9. Possess fighter units and ground to air missile units for air defense to provide the capability of maintaining continuous alert and take immediate steps against violations of Japan's territorial airspace.

10. Possess units capable of engaging in the interdiction of airborne or amphibious landing invasions and air support for land forces as necessary.

11. Possess units capable of effective operational support including air reconnaissance, air transport and other operations as necessary.

Japan views that its alliance with the US is indispensable to her security and economic progress. It is the instrument of maintaining balance of power in the region.³⁰

Korea The basic direction of South Korea's defense policy is: First, to construct a tight defense posture; second, to develop domestic and foreign military relations; third, to

develop mid and long term development policies; and fourth, to establish the image of the armed forces that is trusted by the people.

While the focus is on securing combat essentials to prepare for a possible North Korean provocation, the intention is to convert gradually from a manpower heavy force to one that emphasizes equipment and technology, *qualitative build-up*.³¹

The plan examines: the improvement of the armed forces organizational structure to guarantee the exercise of integrated combat capability; gradual reduction in numbers, but qualitative improvement of troops of the standing army; qualitative improvement of the reserve forces; securing early warning and battleground surveillance systems; and acquiring strategic strike and three-dimensional high speed mobile combat capabilities for future warfare.

In view of the increased difficulty of acquiring and the unwillingness of the more advanced countries to transfer advanced military technology, Korea aims to expand a nationwide research and development system. The purpose is to link industry, academia, and the research institutes, as well as cooperate in technology with other countries.

Noteworthy are the five reform projects that are being undertaken to secure the support of the armed forces from the people. A campaign to eradicate irregularities and corruption was mandated. In reorganizing, redundant functions will be merged and ad hoc organizations abolished. The paradigm of combat capability

will be shaped to emphasize technology rather than manpower.

A new budget formulation system is also being sought. Likewise, the need to make available to the public more information on defense operations, and to gather all opinion before decision-making is seen as essential in building a consensus between the population and the military.

Singapore The mission statement of the Ministry of Defense (MINDEF) is "to improve the manpower resources of the Singapore Armed Forces, strengthen its technological edge and foster close defense relations with friendly countries in the region and beyond so as to enhance Singapore's peace and security, and should diplomacy fail, to secure a swift and decisive victory on the aggressors."³² The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) is a credible force in the region.

United States In the 1960s Secretary Robert McNamara instituted the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting system (PPBS) to the Defense Department. The concept was to provide a method of clarifying for top defense management the relationship between defense outputs, expressed in terms of military mission capabilities, and the associated resource inputs. This was accomplished in a three phased process which progresses from military strategic plans to programs, and then from programs to the annual Service budgets. The principal feature of the PPBS was the development of a Five Year Development Program (FYDP) a bridge between strategic planning and budgeting. The purpose of the FYDP is to make defense budget decisions responsive to future

military operational needs, as expressed in strategic planning.

The Revival of US Strategic Planning

In 1981, Deputy Secretary Frank Carlucci directed an overhaul of the defense Programs, Plans and Budget (PPB) management system to be developed under the lead of the Undersecretary for Policy, then retired four-star General Richard Stilwell. The first complete plan, the *Defense Guidance 1984-88*, was published in March 1982.

Defense guidance is a strategic plan for the conduct of operations by US military forces to defend the US, its interests, and its allies and friends against possible threats worldwide in a period two to seven years in the future. The long-range time period is essential because of the long lead times for weapons development. Although ten to twenty years into the future is also considered, it is not emphasized due to the limited capacity of humans to foresee world events in such a time frame.³³

Defense Guidance

There are six major sections in the Defense Guidance: Threat Assessment, Policy, Strategy, Force Planning Guidance, and Fiscal Guidance. National security objectives are first articulated followed by potential threats to their achievement. National objectives are stated in a very broad plane and have remained generally constant for years e.g. " Preserve the US as a free nation with its fundamental institutions and values intact". Threat assessments are based on intelligence estimates that have been agreed on by the national intelligence community.

A defense policy and military strategy are then formulated to counter these threats, followed by the development of the military forces and resources necessary to execute the strategy. The Defense Guidance outlines a number of defense policies, often political or economic in nature, to facilitate the military planning of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the Unified Commanders and the Services. It is expected that there will always be shortfalls in defense capabilities and a need to allocate limited resources to minimize risks. The Defense Guidance gives priorities for allocation among regions of the world and the major categories of military force capabilities: readiness, sustainability, modernization, and force structure. These priorities facilitate the consideration of trade-offs at the various levels of the DoD.

The JCS develops a military strategy to counter future threats to the national security. They present this strategy to the Secretary of Defense annually in the Joint Strategic Planning Document (JSPD). This recommendation forms the basis for the Defense Department's Strategy enunciated in the Defense Guidance. The strategy must be sufficiently broad and flexible to respond to all threats, while also providing appropriate guidance for the allocation of resources.

Some elements of the military strategy which are normally in a strategic plan include the expectations on the use of nuclear weapons, the requirements of deterrence, regional military priorities with regard to major military functions i.e.

readiness, sustainability, and the modernization of the forces, and relationships with allies. The criteria for sizing the future conventional forces which is always one of the central aspects of the future strategy is necessarily based on assumptions about reactions to simultaneous multiple contingencies.

The next step in the Defense Guidance Planning Process is the development of the Force Planning guidance, which provides guidance for the development of the future military forces needed to execute the strategy. It prescribes the capabilities which the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine and the mobility forces should have in terms of operational missions. It sets forth the military missions which the forces should be able to execute in order to carry out the strategy. To be of value, strategic plans must consider the resource constraints. A two step approach which divides into long term goals (8 or more years into the future) and mid-term objectives (2 to 7 years) is then applied. Cost estimates are made to ensure that mid-term objectives are attainable. Force objectives are trimmed back to meet resource constraints and accept a concomitant degree of risk. The planner's task is to minimize that risk in his resulting long term objectives. Through this process the objectives set for the Service programs by the Defense Guidance are assured of being consistent with the realistic expectations of resource availability.³⁴

Analysis of RP Defense Planning

Some observations about the current national defense strategy and planning are:

1. The defense objectives are too many.
2. The concept of defense in depth may not be applicable at the strategic level due to the geographic characteristic of the country.
3. Some organizational strategies i.e. the reserve force development and employment are not coherent and are doctrinally questionable due to the characteristics of modern conflict.
4. Due to absence of planning guidance, major services planning are parochial and not oriented to joint operations.
5. There is a weak link between national security planners and the defense planners. The Department of National Defense (DND) lacks qualified personnel who can do strategic planning.
6. There is a lack of strategic studies to guide planners.³⁵

In a 1995 paper submitted to the Australian College of Defense and Strategic Studies, Cristolito Balaoing of the Philippine Army recommended that a national level strategic guidance should be issued to guide defense planners and that the national security objectives must be defined and priorities for the allocation of resources determined. Furthermore, the linkage between national security and defense planners must be improved. The need to improve the quality and staffing of DND and the Committee on National Defense in the Congress was also observed.³⁶

The importance of strategic plans at the national level

cannot be overemphasized. They provide the AFP with the basis to identify and establish priorities for strategic military objectives. They are the basis for planning for future military capabilities and facilitate the integration of the operational planning and the strategies of the unified commanders. Without a strategic plan there is a void in the rationale for assignment of service functions and the development of joint doctrine.³⁷

A pitfall to be guarded against in strategic planning however, is to be influenced excessively by the technology of new weapons systems rather than determining first how military forces will be used (strategy). Consequently, a determination of how the systems will be employed and integrated given the type of threats envisioned in the near, medium, and long terms will have to be decided. Multi-role aircraft, tactical air defense systems, long range artillery, and SAMs are major investments whose effectiveness can only be maximized if deployed under an integrated warfighting strategy. What are and how will the competencies of the major services be integrated?

The Counter-insurgency Role The prolonged involvement of the AFP in the protracted insurgency war against both the Communist and Muslim separatists has not provided it with the military tradition of victory. After almost three decades of campaigning, the nation has not attained the end state of military operations i.e. a return to complete peacetime conditions. Certain areas of Mindanao are still off-limits to the AFP; thousands of armed rebels are still poised to strike or to harass the populace. The

probability of major clashes in the South is ever present.

There is a need to review the military strategy in the operational and strategic levels. The Tripoli Agreement of 1976 between the RP and the MNLF, providing for a cease fire must not be used to alienate any territory or segment of the population from the national government. Is the AFP force level adequate for the present tasks given? Could the process of insurgent decline be accelerated by capabilities?

While an improved economy will indeed provide for a lasting solution and while peace negotiation are going on at the national level, will improved battlefield capabilities and the accompanying successes influence the outcome of the talks? What technology and doctrine could be brought to the battlefield to improve mobility, intelligence collection, and targeting with little or no collateral damage? After the success of the Special Operations Team (SOT) in liberating a sizable number of villages from Communist influence, is there a more effective strategy?

The NDS has to clarify in the near and medium term the role of the AFP. Is there a need to change force levels at this stage of the insurgency? Downsizing the AFP in the near term without providing force enhancers will downgrade its capability further. Complete police takeover of COIN operations is not likely in the near term and the AFP is expected to continue with this mission.

Another area of concern is the need to review the adequacy of legislation in dealing with insurgent and terroristic actions. The strategic goal is to hasten the termination of this problem

so the nation can devote more resources to the development of external security capabilities and consequently spur the economy. Strategic and operational lessons from Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia in their dealing with insurgency may prove valuable.

The Citizens' Armed Forces A review is needed to evaluate the role of the reserve force in relation to the modernization of the AFP. Isidro Agunod's study which indicated that The RP strategic planning process "keeps insisting and blindly applying the clearly irrelevant and ineffective basic concepts of the 1935 National Defense Act" cannot be ignored.³⁸

There is a need to look into the implications of the Citizen Armed Forces Law as they apply to the development of the national military strategy in the light of modern warfare. It appears that the development of this law was largely influenced by the internal security experience borne out of a long insurgency war; a take-off from Mao's people's war concept.

Adiong et al's study at the National Defense College of the Philippines in 1982 advocated a strong citizen army: a concept of territorial defense with a well trained and organized reserve.³⁹ Crisol's study (1972) enunciated the concept of resistance warfare with citizen guerrillas supporting the AFP units; clearly a derivation of Mao's doctrine.⁴⁰ Both studies were premised on a general war situation, where the country will be invaded and occupied by a foreign power. These concepts are questioned in a limited war scenario e.g. when RP air bases or ships are attacked

in a limited objective war such as possible in the Spratlys; or when a maritime blockade is imposed by another state against RP shipping within its territorial waters.

Role of the Reserve in Modern War The value of a large reserve in today's wars has changed. Primarily it lies in the ability to involve the national consciousness in the defense effort: to get national public support. This is the significant lesson from Vietnam, and reflects the US policy of drafting the troops. But, winning swiftly and defeating lethal pockets found in modern war, or limited wars, is the task of well trained and equipped fighting forces. This has been reinforced by many militaries, including the People's Liberation Army particularly after studying the Gulf War.

The question raised is: what is the relevance of a "people's war" in the near, medium, and long terms? How does this concept relate to the type of fighting likely in the future for which the AFP is modernizing? What are the cost implications, and budget trade-offs, in maintaining a small, modern and effective force while simultaneously developing a large and presumably, modernized reserves?

There is a need to resolve these issues early on, through a strategic defense guidance and possibly through a revision of legislation. Reserve Programs should ensure that valuable technical, scientific, and leadership skills in the Reserve components are not tied up to a geographic political unit but assigned where the mission requires them. This need was addressed

by Korea in its White Paper on Defense.

Absent a defense guidance, the balance of combined arms and the mix of combat forces necessary for modern warfare may not be established. Planners must be able to overcome the effects of the territorial, anti-insurgency experience in which light infantry forces are predominant and all other Services simply exist to support it.

Developmental Missions. A major observation in the NMS is the importance given to the developmental and environmental role of the AFP in addition to its purely military (employment of combat power) role. It is necessary to place in its proper perspective the relative importance of the various military or non-military roles assigned to the AFP. The *dwifungsi* role of ABRI for example has not been without cost to the development of a modern military force. Any defense budget allocation for special equipment or training to fulfill this Operations Other Than War (OOTW) role is a cut from the procurement of warfighting hardware. It must not be lost that the AFP Corps of Engineers' primary mission is to support the maneuver forces by e.g. construction of bridges, tactical airfields, barriers etc., and train for these in simulated wartime conditions. A defense level guidance is needed to clarify priorities to force planners.

Developing the National Defense Strategy

The Need to Provide a Hierarchy of Interests The
problem that must be solved first is to identify those interests

which the country intends to defend by force of arms. The second will be to determine their order of precedence.⁴¹

The survival of a nation depends on its vital interests. Therefore, the first objective of a defense policy is to ensure, alone if necessary, the ultimate defence of this vital interests against any threat. A vital interest for Japan (and many other countries), for example, would be uninterrupted flow of its oil supply. When the Tripoli Agreement was forged in 1976 in Libya, the supply of oil to the Philippines from the Middle East was considered vital. To some countries, unhindered passage through a particular sea lane is vital.

Other interests which do not endanger a nation's life when threatened but nevertheless are very important and have profound impact fall into a lesser category of concern. The peripheral interests are the third category. To China, for example, the declaration of independence of Taiwan may be an important interest but not necessarily a vital one.

Which are vital, important and peripheral? Is trade with China vital or peripheral? How is retaining control of the Spratlys classified as an interest when compared to the interest attached to trade with China? This is for the political leadership to determine. But giving too precise a definition of them must be avoided, in order to preserve the free evaluation and action of the state authorities, in the event that they are threatened. Besides the political options, what are the military options if the lives of overseas Filipinos are threatened? What

if the banking system is sabotaged through electronic means by a foreign power?

Some strategists believe that the borderline between vital interests and important interests does not have to be drawn in advance; this should be left to the political authorities.⁴² An argument maybe raised however, that knowing the categories of interests is an important step in determining the national security strategy and consequently the military strategy. What would the military commander of the Spratlys and his troops think if the Philippines continues to solicit trade with China? How would the officers and men of the AFP think about it?

Deterrence is a state of mind brought about by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counter- action. But because it depends on a state of mind and subjective judgments about the ability of one's opponent to strike back, deterrence is prone to misperception and misjudgment. The concept of deterrence involves the will and the capability to make any adversary, whoever he may be and whatever facilities he may possess, fear unacceptable damages that are out of proportion with the stakes of the conflict if he tries to attack the vital interests.⁴³ Assuming that the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty is viewed by both nations as mutually beneficial and reciprocal and therefore does not need to be modified, downgraded or terminated, its deterrence value against a major conflict is valid. In the near and medium terms, this maybe a reasonable assumption. Over the long term however, it is best to plan along a capability for unilateral deterrence.

To assume that the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) will blossom into a regional security alliance is not possible at this time. A military strategy of deterrence such as that of Taiwan entails the willingness and the capacity to invest in forces necessary to dissuade the enemy from making a hostile action.

Credibility of National Defense Credibility is two-fold: political and technical.⁴⁴ For a defense strategy to be credible, the leadership of the nation must be perceived as possessing the will to use military forces. A prerequisite of this is the existence of a viable command and control structure that linking the leadership with the forces. A technically proficient force is often perceived as capable of performing its mission. Therefore the NMS must be able to project these two qualities. The existence and nature of the Armed forces bears witness to a nation's will for defense and contribute by their action to implement the government's objective. Normally these actions are in favor of peace, preservation of stability and respect for international law. Prolonged military campaigns with no victory in sight however, have the tendency of demoralizing the troops and worse, losing credibility in the eyes of the citizenry. Conventional forces maybe deployed in three military modes: limited military action, combat or general war, and operations other than war including peacekeeping. Limited action aims to keep an open or incipient crisis at its lowest possible level, either through preemptive action, or by acts of retaliation to bring about a reduction of the adverse military potential.⁴⁵

Need for restructuring the Armed Forces Without going to the details, major force components need closer examination. A broad guidance could be given to Unified commands and the major Services: their mission, capabilities to be developed, and broad organizational structures. It is proposed that the implications of jointness be given serious study: in command and control relationships, in compatibility of equipment between the Services, in battle doctrines, etc. What changes in the roles and missions of the major services and GHQ are foreseen?

There is a need for a clearer picture of the likely conflict or battles the AFP will fight in the near, medium and long terms. A military net assessment which compares the military capabilities of the AFP, its allies, and potential enemies has to be done to provide a clearer picture of capability requirements. A potential adversary's doctrines must be studied. The possibility of an enemy using chemical and biological weapons should be evaluated. The PLAAF has deployed SU-27s in Hainan Island air bases; what are the implications on Philippine Air Force capability development?

Time Frame Needed It is proposed that for strategy formulation three time frames be considered: the *near term* which is up to two years; the *medium term*, from two to seven years, and the *long term* which will be from seven to fifteen years. A disadvantage in focusing at the AFP Modernization Program alone as the core input to the NDS is the possibility of downgrading the near term issues i.e. the insurgency threats from the

Communists and the Southern rebels. More significant is the need to synchronize defense acquisitions with the time phases of the strategy.

The length of the acquisition process for modern equipment, given the inadequacy of experience of the Defense organization in an undertaking of the magnitude in the Modernization Program, is a major factor in shaping the NDS. Fighter plane acquisition and adequate pilot training alone would need at least three years before the systems became fully operational. In the near term, how would the AFP react to varying contingencies? What other military deployment options could be made?

Human Resources A defense guidance that causes a review of the new roles of the civilian component of the DND world is necessary. Korea saw the need for integrating the expertise of the academia, the scientists and engineers in modernizing defense. New legislation to access the pool of highly specialized skills groups such as those in the information technology, logistics acquisition, and advanced research fields may be needed. Likewise the replacement by qualified civilian staff of military personnel in mainly administrative functions that does not need military expertise, such as those in the support and service functions should be considered.

Civilian Supremacy: another look The Constitutional provision of civilian supremacy over the military reflects the notion that the military element of power is an instrument available to national leaders for use in fulfilling national

objectives. Military power should not be used for the purpose of waging war itself but, its objectives must be a means of attaining higher level political objectives which support national, foreign and security policies.⁴⁶

In this regard the objectives sought by the use of force, even in a defensive strategy, should be reasonable and attainable. If they are not, an appropriate balance between the means and the ends cannot be reached. If military force is to be used rationally in support of national military objectives, political decision makers must determine the value of the desired objectives and compare their value with the cost and risk of their attainment. An acceptable cost benefit ratio must be achieved. The potential of cost becoming unexpectedly high is great when the objectives are considered essential and vital to the nation's well being.

The concept of political supremacy, according to Robert Osgood, should work diligently to place the limits on the political objectives of war, and further, that a nation's leaders must inform the enemy of the limited nature of their objectives. This is apparent in Taiwan's defense concept. The more valuable objectives are likely to evoke a strong response from the enemy which can encourage a chain reaction that could soon run the cost higher than the value of the objective. This consideration is very apparent in the Spratlys dispute where the value of sovereignty has been attached by the RP government.

On the other hand, a degree of flexibility must be retained

by the political decisionmakers since wars are basically crude and unpredictable. In such situation though, subordinating military operations to political considerations might mean sacrificing the military success indispensable for attaining the national objective.

After the armed hostilities have erupted how and when is violence to be limited? Control of the level of violence is important and critical but when limitation of violence becomes the goal instead of accomplishing the objective, the question of employing the armed forces in the first place is to be questioned. Becoming involved in war is pointless if the primary purpose is merely to limit the level of armed violence.⁴⁷

Information Warfare and Electronic Warfare In the past, wars were won by controlling airspace and the seas, delivering overwhelming firepower and deploying combat forces rapidly, and sustaining them. Today, by being able to control the enemy's access to information while preventing him from getting one's own is a significant function of modern armies. While there is nothing new to this military imperative, the state of information and electronic warfare today can isolate a commander from his troops and render his operating forces blind. An enemy's command and control (C2) systems can be disabled and his information systems neutralized using electronic means. The dependence on electronic and digital communications as well as data storage is a two-sided coin of vulnerability and advantage.⁴⁸ Even without crossing a country's borders, a potential adversary can cripple

and manipulate major civil and military support operations including banking and financial activities, transportation, and media communications.

Defense planners need to look into and reduce the RP's information systems' vulnerabilities. At the same time planning to develop the capability of exploiting potential adversaries' weaknesses in this field should be undertaken. The cost effectiveness of such capability is worth it.

Conclusion

Military power is the final arbiter in conflicts among nations. When hostilities occur between nations, diplomacy is tentatively set aside and the outcome of the conflict becomes a major determinant of the nature of diplomacy that follows. Commitment of the armed forces are directed only towards one objective: that of imposing the nation's will on the adversary by thwarting his intentions or defeating him.

The present NDS is focused on the vision of a modernized AFP and describes what is to be done to defend the Philippines (policy). Potential threats were assessed and capability requirements were listed. The range of conflicts that the AFP will likely find itself fighting range from counter-insurgency campaigns against rebel formations in the South, or a limited war against expeditionary conventional forces. The following considerations will improve formulation of the NDS.

1. A hierarchy of national interests i.e. vital, important,

and peripheral, to be defined by the President, will facilitate strategy formulation, capability determination, and force development.

2. A *military net assessment* is needed that compares the present capability of the AFP, and its allies, against the present and future military capabilities of potential threats. A broad strategic scan is inadequate as a basis for formulating a military strategy.

3. A time frame is recommended for the NDS as: near, medium, and long term. Synchronization of the equipment acquisition programs to the military strategy to the according to the time frame will ensure that near term contingencies and medium term threats are met.

4. A strategic level review of the military capabilities and options against the MNLF and similar groups should be done with the purpose of determining how to improve the warfighting effectiveness of the AFP. Intelligence, firepower, mobility, sustainability, command and control, can be enhanced tremendously with new technology. The use of electronic warfare, night vision equipment, surveillance and target acquisition systems, improved communication systems, attack helicopters, armor, may produce battle dividends that will improve the government position in the negotiating table. Modernization therefore, while primarily targeted for external defense, will have its application in low intensity as well as limited wars.

5. A review on the premises and the provisions of "citizens

armed forces" concept is necessary to determine if they are valid in a modern war situation which is of limited duration, highly lethal, and capitalizes on speed, stealth, and precise weapons.

6. The full implications of *jointness* in operations need to be addressed at a higher than GHQ level. A redefinition of roles, and reorganization for the major services and GHQ, is seen if this path is taken.

7. Securing public awareness and support to the requirements for national defense should be given priority. The credibility of the AFP as an institution, which is mission-capable, and led by a professional officer corps, will enhance support from the citizenry.

8. It is helpful to reflect on significant events of the past, conflict involvements, personalities of key defense officials, and evaluate the key patterns that shaped earlier defense thinking. Those no longer useful should be discarded.

9. Since cooperation with ASEAN military organizations are envisioned a determination of the extent of cooperation will be necessary. If a military coalition is foreseen, then the compatibility of doctrines, equipment and C2 systems will be important factors in planning. How will this factor affect the modernization program?

Bernard Brodie, in his book, "Strategy in the Missile Age, noted that almost all military professionals, from Napoleon to Dwight Eisenhower, believed that handling forces in the

battlefield (tactics) was far more challenging and difficult than bringing the forces to the battlefield in a more favorable position (strategy). Some patterns from the past as well as those from other nations will work to RP advantage, others will not. In any event, the Philippines must begin now to sort out which of them will guide strategic thinking and posture in the new world and emerging regional order. Budget constraints will be certain. Military forces are an integral of the backdrop of international relations and will continue to be so even if some measure of diplomacy is achieved. This reality necessitates that the Armed Forces must be structured to meet well-defined strategic objectives, objectives that are consistent with the nation's vision of the future and its checkbook.

Definitions

(Source: Joint Pub 1-02, 1994)

Coalition Operations - operations conducted by military forces of a temporary alliance of nations formed for some specific purpose

Center of Gravity - that characteristic, capability, or locality from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength or will to fight. i exists at the strategic, operational and tactical levels of war.

Combined - between two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies.

Contingency Operations - operations usually in response to an emerging or unexpected crisis. They maybe terminated or evolve into sustained military operations.

Contingency Planning - the development of plans for potential crisis involving military requirements that can reasonably be expected in an area of responsibility.

Crisis - an incident or situation involving a threat to the nation, its citizens , military forces, and vital interests that develops rapidly and creates a situation of such diplomatic, economic, political, or military importance that commitment of military force and resources is contemplated to achieve national objectives.

Doctrine - fundamental principles by which military forces guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.

Joint Operation - a military action or the carrying out of a strategic, operational, tactical, training, or administrative military mission by forces from two or more military services.

Limited war - armed conflict short of general war, exclusive of incidents, involving the overt engagement of the military forces of two or more nations.

Military capability - the ability to achieve a specified wartime objective (win a battle, destroy a target, ...) It includes four components: force structure, modernization, readiness, and sustainability.

force structure - numbers, size and composition of units that comprise the forces; e.g. divisions, ships, air wings.

modernization - technical sophistication of units, forces, weapons systems, and equipments.

sustainability - the ability to maintain the necessary level and duration of operational activity to achieve the military objectives. It is a function of providing for and maintaining those levels of ready forces, material, and consumable necessary to support the military effort.

Military objectives - at the national level, the derived set of military actions to be taken to implement the national command authorities' guidance in support of national objectives. It defines the results to be achieved by the military, and assigns tasks to commanders e.g. to keep SLOCS open.

Military options - a range of military force responses that can be projected to accomplish assigned tasks. It could be one or a combination of the following: civic action, confidence building to reduce military tensions, military activities to develop positive relationship with other countries, psychological operations, deception, blockades, quarantines, intervention campaigns, armed conflict, support for law enforcement, counterinsurgency, etc.

Mission - the task together with the purpose that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason for taking it.

National Military Strategy - the art and science of distributing and applying military power to attain the national objectives in peace and in war.

National Objectives - the aims, derived from national goals and interests, toward which a national policy or strategy is directed and the resources of the nation are applied.

National Security - (US) a condition that results from the establishment and maintenance of protection measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences.

National Security Interests - the foundation for the development of valid national objectives that define nation's goals and interests. They include the preservation of national institutions, fostering the economic well-being, etc.

National Security Strategy - the art and science of developing, and applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military and informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security

Operational level of war - the level of war in which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to

accomplish the strategic objectives ... within areas of operations.

Strategic direction - the guidance expressed through the national security strategy, national military strategy, and theater strategy relative to the attainment of strategic goals and objectives.

Strategic level of war - the level of war at which a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multi-national security objectives and guidance, and develops and uses national resources to accomplish these objectives.

Tactical level of war - the level of war at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces.

Strategic intent - the expression of the goals and desired ends of a strategy.

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