THE PHILLIPINE CONSTABULARY AS A COUNTERINSURGENCY FORCE, 1948-1954

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AN IAS INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT REPORT

by

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to determine if the Philippine Constabulary was an effective counterinsurgency force and if this Philippine experience produced "lessons learned" appropriate for inclusion in US Army roles, missions, or doctrine.

Except for two brief interviews; research was limited to materials available in (or procured by) the USAWC Library, the USAMHRC, and the Pentagon Army Library.

To place the Constabulary in proper context, consideration was also given to the Communist insurgents, other government forces, and external support provided the opposing forces.

The evidence indicates that the Constabulary was an effective counterinsurgency force, however, success came only after political, social, and economic operations were combined with military operations. Although the Philippine Constabulary represents an ideal model for other developing nations faced with an internal defense problem, and although the US Army Military Police School, in conjunction with the CDC Military Police Agency, has the capability to develop appropriate doctrine for this type force; the US Army has generally neglected the Constabulary in its counterinsurgency program. Advisory and foreign aid responsibility for Constabulary-type units and other police forces should be transferred from AID to the US Army.

PREFACE

This individual Study Project Report was produced under the aegis of the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS), US Army Combat Developments Command, at Carlisle Barracks. The scope and general methodology were outlined by IAS. This study is designed to support a larger study effort, ARMY ROLES, MISSIONS, AND DOCTRINE IN LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT (ARMLIC). This study is based on unclassified material, although some classified references were used to gain background material and to verify some information contained in unclassified references. In the latter case, no significant deviations were noted. A limited number of classified references have been included in the bibliography as an aid to the reader.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to countless officers and men of the Philippine Constabulary who, for 70 years, have valiantly given their lives in the service of America and the Republic of the Philippines. Even today the members of the Constabulary are continuing to justify their motto: "Always Outnumbered but Never Outfought."

THE CONSTABULARY MAN

Do you know that careworn fellow
  with his shoulder strap of red,
With his woolen puttee leggins,
  campaign hat on his head?
Whose faded suit of khaki
  shows of service in the brush,
And tired and nearly petered out,
  is trying hard to rush?

CHORUS

Oh, its hoot man, hikeman,
  Constabulary man;
As half police and soldier,
  he does the best he can;
He is always in for fun or fight,
  and doesn't care a d---;
Foot or mounted, wet or dry,
  Constabulary man.

When the Country was turned over
  to the Government civil,
And the insular police began
  its journey long up hill,
Its road was rough and rocky,
  but was followed with a will,
And those of them who yet remain
  will follow that road still.

He is a doctor and a lawyer,
  and apothecary too;
He's a teacher and a padre,
  and has other things to do;
He's artillery, cavalry, infantry,
  and a sailor on the shore;
He's a sure United Service man,
  the member of this corps.

His clothes though may be ragged,
  and his spirits may be low,
His belly may be empty and
  his pocketbook also;
But when there's trouble in the wind,
  or enemy in sight,
You'll always find him ready,
  and willing for a fight.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On 16 May 1954 Luis Taruc, "el Supremo" of the Philippine Communist insurgents, walked into a remote barrio in his native Pampanga Province and surrendered to an assistant of Philippine President Magsaysay. For all practical purposes, Taruc's surrender signaled the end of the Communists' armed insurgency (in that decade) against the Republic of the Philippines.

In August 1948 Taruc had rejected an offer of amnesty and gone into the hills to take up arms against his country's government. During these seven years, Taruc had raised an army of fifteen thousand guerrillas backed up by perhaps fifty thousand active supporters. Taruc claimed the sympathy of over a million Filipinos and had made plans to capture Manila. The guerrillas led by Taruc had not only terrorized most of Central and Southern Luzon, they had caused many people to have grave doubts about the ability of this young democracy to survive as a free nation. In the end, however, Taruc saw his army crumble and his supporters fade away. He became convinced that he could not prevail by force of arms.

This study is an examination of this seven year insurgency in general and, in particular, will evaluate the effectiveness of the Philippine Constabulary as a counterinsurgency force. The study will also seek to identify any lessons to be learned by those responsible for the US Army's counterinsurgency programs.

This Philippine counterinsurgency experience has many features to commend it to serious consideration by US military personnel. First, there is the American "special relationship" with the Philippines wherein we have been successful in exporting American-type democracy to a developing Asian nation. Secondly, a Communist vidtory in the Philippines would have not only meant the loss of our strategic military bases but would have also eroded our political and economic strength around the world. Thirdly, this conflict is one of the few where both the Communist forces and the counterinsurgency forces were virtually all native-born. Finally, the Constabulary's performance provides the widest possible range of "do's and dont's" in counterinsurgency operations.

To put this seven year conflict in focus, it is necessary to review the history of both the Philippine Constabulary and Philippine Communism.

HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINE CONSTABULARY

The Philippine Constabulary officially dates from 8 August 1901 and provides a good example of a paramilitary force. In effect, The Philippine Constabulary, as originally constituted, was a national police force organized generally along military lines. The purpose of the Constabulary was to furnish the Governor-General of the Philippines with a force capable of providing internal security and to enable him to be independent of the US Army, which had suppressed the Philippine Insurrection but was not considered suitable for general police work.[1]

Initially the Constabulary was officered by personnel on loan from the US Army, but gradually the US officers were replaced by Filipinos, most of whom were promoted from the ranks, and by 1917 Brigadier General Rafael Crame became the first Filipino to be appointed Chief of the Constabulary.[2] Following General Crame, however, three more Americans served as Chief. By the 1920's about 95 percent of the Constabulary officers were Filipino.[3] Since 1934 only Filipinos have served as Chief of the Constabulary.[4]

The Philippine Constabulary (PC) was originally under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce and Police. The police nature of the Constabulary is best illustrated by the words of the Manual for the Philippine Constabulary 1915:

> Members of the Constabulary are peace officers and are authorized and empowered to prevent and suppress brigandage, unlawful assemblies, riots, insurrections, and other breaches of the peace and violations of the law. They are empowered and required to execute any lawful warrant or order of arrest issued against any person or persons for any violations of the law, and to make arrests upon reasonable suspicion without warrant for breaches of the peace or other violations of the law.[5]

The 1922 Manual for the Constabulary contained identical language except that the Constabulary had been placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.[6]

The value of the Constabulary as a counterinsurgency force was immediately put to the test. During the first year of its existence (and without adequate training or equipment) the Constabulary engaged in over one hundred actions against various armed groups. During this period the Constabulary killed 674

insurgents and captured 4,926 while suffering 22 members killed in action and 41 members wounded in action.[7]

In addition to police and peacekeeping activities, the Constabulary also engaged in what today would be known as civic action or nationbuilding. In many areas the Constabulary represented the primary contact between the central government and the common people. In other areas the Constabulary provided much needed support to the other elements of the insular government.

Between combat operations the Constabulary participated in such projects as roadbuilding, construction of schools and markets, and the stringing of telephone and telegraph lines. The Constabulary also provided the first line of disaster relief in case of disease, epidemics, and natural calamities.[8] It should not be assumed, however, that the Constabulary was free from problems. Its effectiveness was sometimes hampered by corrupt local officials or undermined by unscrupulous national politicians. There were also infrequent cases of misconduct on the part of Constabulary personnel. On balance, however, during the period prior to World War II the Constabulary enjoyed a well deserved reputation for both honesty and efficiency resulting not only from its combat operations but also from its less glamorous functions.[9]

In 1936, after the Philippines had become a commonwealth with a Filipino President, the Constabulary was transferred to the newly created Philippine Army and was known as the Constabulary Division. A State Police force was created to assume the routine police function of the Constabulary but soon proved unequal to the task,

and in June 1938 was dissolved. At this time the Constabulary passed back to the Department of Interior and once again assumed primary responsibility for law and order.[10]

From the viewpoint of the Constabulary, the merger into the Philippine Army, even though short lived, resulted in some long term benefits. The members of the Constabulary became members of the Army Reserve, Constabulary service became active service for military retirement, and personnel became transferrable from and to the Army without loss of seniority or longevity. The fledgling Philippine Army also greatly benefited from this arrangement as many experienced Constabulary officers attained senior positions in the Army.

When the Japanese attacked the Philippines the Constabulary, along with the Philippine Army, was incorporated into what was to become known as United States Army Forces Far East (USAFFE).[11] The overall performance of Constabulary units and individuals during World War II represents an outstanding and heroic achievement but is really a collection of individual stories which is well beyond the scope of this study. Some Constabulary units surrendered in compliance with General Wainwright's orders, some fought to the end against overwhelming odds, and others took to the hills and became components of the various guerrilla units that harrassed the Japanese until the return of General MacArthur.

In June 1945 the internal law and order mission was assigned to the Military Police Command (MPC), Philippine Army. In March 1946 the operational control of the MPC was transferred to the

Secretary of the Interior. On 1 January 1948 the MPC was redesignated as the Philippine Constabulary but retained its position as part of the Army Reserve.

HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNISTS

Communism arrived in the Philippines in the early 1920's and the first direct contact between international communism and Filipinos occurred in May 1924 when an American Communist Party leader, William Janequette, arrived to invite local labor leaders to a workers' conference to be held in Canton. Five Filipinos attended the conference and organized the small group of Communist sympathizers on their return. In July 1925 Tan Malaka, the Comintern special agent for South East Asia, arrived in the Philippines disguished as a musician and traveled throughout the islands preaching freedom for Indonesia. He even lectured at the University of Manila before he was deported in 1927.[12]

In May 1927 Philippine Communists attended the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Conference in Hankow and in 1928 they traveled to Russia, where they attended a Labor conference in March and the Sixth Comintern Congress held from July to September.[13] By 1929 there was both a Marxist-oriented Peasants' Union and a Marxist-oriented Workers Party of the Philippines (CPP) was officially organized by means of a public rally held in Manila on 7 November 1930. The date was chosen to celebrate the 13th anniversary of the Communist take-over in Russia. The constitution and by-lays

of the CPP were read at the rally along with the following five point program:

> . . . (1) to overthrow American imperialism; (2) to overthrow capitalism and feudalism; (3) to seize power in the government; (4) to establish a labor dictatorsl · and (5) to bring about class consciousnc ıd class struggle, and establish Communism pr· ·. [14]

Communist rallies held in May 1931 resulted in considerable disorder and the arrest of most of the known leaders. On 14 September 1931 a Manila court declared the CPP to be an illegal association and sentenced several of the leaders to eight years confinement. The outlawing of the CPP and the conviction of its leaders was confirmed by the Philippine Supreme Court on 26 October 1932.[15]

Although this legal setback forced the CPP underground, it did not seriously hamper the movement. Gradually the CPP began to infiltrate the Socialist Party of the Philippines which had been organized by Petro Abod Santos, who was later to exert a great deal of influence over Luis Taruc. The Socialist Party had originally been independent of Comintern control but promoted agrarian reform and was responsible for strikes and violence among the peasants and workers. After he became the first President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines in 1935, Manuel Quezon was quietly pressured by various political elements, including the Communist Party of the United States, on behalf of the imprisoned CPP leaders and by 1938 they had all been pardoned and the CPP had attained "de facto" legal status.[16]

On 29 October 1938 the CPP and the Socialist Party were formally merged with the CPP designation being retained. This

action had the approval of the Comintern and the Communist Party of the US, which donated four thousand dollars to the new CPP.[17] During the next three years the CPP devoted its efforts to the dual mission of promoting agrarian unrest in Central Luzon and establishing front organizations, especially in the labor movement, in Manila.

When the Japanese occupied the Philippines the CPP went underground again and eventually the three top leaders, Crisanto Evangelista, Santos, and Guillermo Capadocia, were arrested by the Japanese. Evangelista, generally regarded as the founder of the CPP, and Santos, the founder of the Socialist party, died in prison. Capadocia was released by the Japanese but was expelled from the CPP for collaborating with the Japanese.

In March 1942 the military bureau of the CPP announced the organization of a "People's Anti-Japanese Army" with the Tagalog name "Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon" which was shortened to "Hukbalahap" and later to "Huk." (Hereafter the term Huk(s) will be used in this study.)

Prior to a discussion of the Huk operations during the Japanese occupation, we should consider the general situation in the Philippines immediately following the Japanese attack. The war came as a surprise to most Filipinos, but they were confident that the Philippine military forces together with the American military forces would prevail against the Japanese. They were certainly not emotionally prepared for the early Japanese successes. It also appears that the initial optimism was shared, at least in

part, within the American military command. In any event, there is no evidence that American defense plans addressed the possibility of extensive guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. As a result, guerrilla efforts by organized military forces of both US and Filipino were uncoordinated and haphazard. Although the departing American GHQ sanctioned guerrilla efforts, and later provided arms and equipment along with an attempt to consolidate all the efforts, the initial encouragement was almost an afterthought. Most US troops on Luzon were involved in the defense of Bataan and Corregidor and were either destroyed or captured. There were, however, many US personnel with the various Philippine units throughout the other islands. Many of these Americans, along with many Philippine units and individuals, refused to surrender, avoided capture, and engaged in guerrilla warfare. The strength, composition, weapons, and tactics of these units varied greatly and to some extent their effectiveness was a function of the Japanese occupation timetable and the importance the Japanese attached to a particular garrison. In general, throughout the period of Japanese occupation, Japanese control was limited to the lines of communication and population centers where they stationed troops.

There is general consensus that many, and perhaps most, of the people who joined the Huks during the period of Japanese occupation had no political motives beyond resistance to the Japanese and accepted at face value the Huk leaders' pledges of loyality to the Commonwealth government and to the United States.

It must be understood, however, that the Huks were organized by an element of the CPP, that party control and party discipline were quickly established and maintained by the leaders, and that political considerations were given priority over military considerations. Further, the initial organization occurred in Central Luzon where the CPP had enjoyed wide support from the Peasants Union and where agrarian unrest had become a way of life.

For a variety of reasons the Huks grew rapidly and became the most effective of the guerrilla forces operating against the Japanese. The Japanese contributed to their own problems. Their harsh treatment of the Filipinos, often for little or no provocation, drove normally peaceful citizens to active support of the guerrillas. The areas of greatest Huk strength were the densely populated provinces of Central Luzon, which were also the "rice bowl" of the Philippines.

By May 1942 the Huks were strong enough to establish a political and military training school, complete with Chinese instructors, under the supervision of Colonel Ong Keit, formerly of Mao Tse-tung's Eight Route Army.[18] Military experience was also provided by former members of the Philippine Army. As the Huks increased in strength they took advantage of the situation to eliminate many landowners and public officials who they termed "collaborators." The war also provided the opportunity for individual Huks to settle personal grievances. There were also clashes between Huks and other guerrilla units.[19] In all, the

Huks killed about twenty-five thousand persons during the Japanese occupation, only five thousand of which were Japanese.[20]

When American forces returned to liberate the Philippines the Huks, along with other guerrilla units, made a significant contribution to the defeat of the Japanese. As the liberation was completed the various guerrilla units were incorporated into the Philippine Army and certified for backpay in recognition of their efforts against the Japanese. The Huks demanded that they be allowed to maintain their own organization and retain their weapons. For this reason, and perhaps because of their refusal to cooperate with other guerrilla organizations during the occupation, their claims for recognition and backpay were generally disallowed. (Some Huk units did cooperate and were recognized.) The two top Huk leaders, Luis Taruc and Casto Alejandrino, were arrested by the Counterintelligence Corps and the US Army made a cursory and ineffective effort to disarm the Huks. After a few months Taruc and Alejandrino were released from jail and returned to their leadership positions.

During the several months preceeding the 4 July 1946 date of full Philippine independence, the Huks appeared to be somewhat disorganized as to overall policy. There were conflicting opinions among the top leadership, but it was finally agreed to support President Osmena and the Nacionalista Party in the April 1946 elections against Manuel Roxas and the Liberal Party.[21] Following the election of Roxas the Huk leaders began to reorganize their military force and prepare for an armed attack on the government.

PRELUDE TO CIVIL WAR

The social, economic, and historical factors which resulted in conditions suitable for insurgency have been documented in detail in the preconflict portion of this ARMLIC study. However, the following points are of such significance to merit additional emphasis:

1. The impact of World War II on the Philippines. It is estimated that during the Japanese invasion, Japanese occupation, and Allied liberation of the Commonwealth over one million Filipinos, or six percent of the total population, were killed. With the possible exception of some of the remote mountain tribes, almost all Filipinos were influenced by the war. Manila was devastated and industry and commerce were virtually destroyed.

2. Although Philippine history is overcrowded with revolts and unrest, the strict control of firearms and their relative absence among the general population had tended to minimize the violence of the unrest during the twentieth century. Following the defeat of the Japanese, however, modern weapons were abundantly available with some estimates as high as five weapons for every adult male.

3. The war had widened the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" at least in the minds of the tenant farmers of Central Luzon. They had been told by the Huk leaders that their landlords were collaborating with the enemy at their expense. For many of these people the end of the war meant only the return

of the landlords and tax collectors. Even the much heralded independence of 4 July 1946 did not improve their status.

4. The American government, caught up in the end of the war clamor to "bring the boys home," was anxious to grant the promised independence and disentangle itself from Philippine government affairs as quickly as possible.[22] This fact, plus the American preoccupation with Europe and the beginnings of the cold war, meant that the United States politically abandoned the young republic just at the time the Filipinos needed political assistance the most.

5. The leaders of this newly independent nation were, at least as a group and by political bent and training, the same leaders who had served during the commonwealth period and were imbued with the power politics of a small elite based on family, tradition, and wealth. They were unresponsive to the needs and aspirations of the average man, they grossly underestimated the strength of the Huks, and they completely failed to recognize the basic problems in the countryside which provided the opportunity for the Huk strength.

This rather long introduction has been intended to provide a background review and set the stage for an examination of the low intensity conflict phase of the Huk insurgency which is the purpose of this study. Although there was some armed conflict between the Huks and government forces in 1946, 1947, and early 1948, the preconflict phase is generally considered to have terminated on 15 August 1948, when the amnesty proclaimed by President Quirino expired without the Huks turning in their arms.

CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES

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3. Ibid., p. 28.

4. Ibid., p. 83.

5. Philippine Islands, Manual for the Philippine Constabulary 1915 (1 June 1915), p. 9.

6. Philippine Islands, Manual for the Philippine Constabulary 1922 (1 August 1922), p. 9.

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9. George A. Malcolm, First Malayan Republic (1951), p. 382.

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11. Uldarico S. Baclagon, LTC, PA, Philippine Campaigns (1952), p. 134.

12. J. H. Brimmell, Communism in South East Asia (1959), p. 101.

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14. Shen-Ya Dai, Peking, Moscow, and the Communist Parties of Colonial Asia (1954), p. 78.

15. Congress of the Philippines, House, Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, Report on I. The Illegality of the Communist Party of the Philippines. II. The Functions of the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, 2nd Cong., 1st Sess. (1951), p. 58.

16. Brimmell, p. 110.

17. Congress of the Philippines, House, Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, Communism in the Philippines, 2nd Cong., 3rd Sess. (1952), p. 8.

18. Brimmell, p. 213.

19. Baclagon, Philippine Campaigns, p. 224.

20. Chicago University, Area Handbook on the Philippines (1956), Vol. III, p. 1204.

21. Luis Taruc, Born of the People (1953), p. 220.

22. Andrew D. Sens, A Summary of the US Role in Insurgency Situations in the Philippine Islands 1899-1955 (1964), p. 13.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTABULARY FIGHTS ALONE

During the time frame previously specified as low-intensity conflict (1948-1954), the period wherein the Constabulary was the primary counterinsurgency force is limited to that of August 1948-December 1950. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the Constabulary was returned to the control of the Interior Department on 1 January 1948. At that time the strength of the Constabulary was twelve thousand officers and men with an additional eight thousand personnel temporarily attached from the Philippine Army.

ORGANIZATION

At the national level, Constabulary Headquarters was organized functionally with most of the staff activities that would be found in either a General Staff or a Special Staff of a US Army unit. Below the national level the Constabulary divided the country into four zones. Each zone commander was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in his zone. In each of the 50 provinces (there were 50 in 1949, however the number continued to increase) there was a Constabulary Provincial Commander assisted by a very small staff.

The Constabulary Company was the primary unit and there were from one to fifteen PC companies in each province. The normal authorization was three officers and 95 enlisted men but there was some variation.[1] There was also a signal detachment and a

medical detachment in each province. Other major units of the Constabulary included the Presidential Guard Battalion, the Constabulary Band, and the Constabulary School.

TRAINING

Training during this period was undoubtedly one of the serious Constabulary weaknesses. In theory the Constabulary was supposed to receive both military and police training, but generally it excelled in neither. Police type training was conducted at the Constabulary School in the form of refresher training for officers and specialist training for enlisted men. Standards at the Constabulary School were fairly high but, due both to operational requirements and fund limitations, only a small number of personnel could attend. Military training was the responsibility of the company commanders and was based on US Army doctrine.[2] It consisted of Infantry-type individual and small unit training but for the most part was conducted on an "OJT" basis. This training was also hampered by operational requirements and the not uncommon fragmentation of the company into small detachments.

THE CONSTABULARY IS HANDICAPPED

In addition to the status of training, there were several other factors which mitigated the chances of success in the Constabulary's efforts against the Huks. While it is difficult to assign a scale of importance to these factors, their cumulative effect was almost enough to bring disaster to the young republic.

One of the most serious obstacles to an effective campaign against the Huks was the lack of urgency at the national level of civilian authority. Whether this was the result of outright political corruption or of a failure to fully understand the Huk menace is of little importance. The net result was a lack of both moral and material support for the Constabulary. Initially, the Constabulary was armed only with billy clubs, sidearms, and carbines although later some rifles, machine guns, and mortars were obtained. The Constabulary was also critically short of vehicles and communications equipment. In fact, logistical support was so poor that rations were often not provided and the Constabulary had to live off of the land.[3]

Closely associated with the lack of urgency on the part of the national leadership was a general apathy on the part of many citizens, especially those not directly concerned with the events in "Huklandia." (Originally the term "Huklandis" referred to the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Nueva Ecija just north of Manila on the Central Luzon plain. Later the term was used to designate any area where the Huks were especially strong.)

In a sense, the Constabulary personnel were their own worst enemies. Many of the most experienced and dedicated Constabularymen had become casualties either during the Japanese invasion or occupation. Also, many of the officers who survived the war were not on duty with the Philippine Army. As a result, standards of leadership and conduct were considerably below both prewar

performance and prewar reputation. Because of the breakdown in civil government in many parts of "Huklandia" the Constabulary was cast into the role of tax-collector and protector of property belonging to the landlord "oppressor." The public image of the Constabulary was not enhanced by the requirement to requisition food from the people without payment.

The Constabulary became emeshed in a vicious circle. In the beginning the peasants did not cooperate either because of fear of the Huks, sympathy for the Huks, or natural distrust of government authority. This lack of cooperation caused the Constabulary to adopt a hostile attitude in dealings with the peasants which, in turn, produced even less cooperation. The full extent of terror and oppression inflicted on the people by the Constabulary has not been documented. It is undoubtedly somewhat less than the amount claimed by the Huks and somewhat more than the amount acknowledged by the government. In any event, elements of the Constabulary were guilty of misconduct in some degree and each incident was skillfully exploited by Huk propagandists.[4]

The Huk propaganda campaign against the Constabulary was aided by a historical accident in terminology from the period of Japanese occupation. After the Japanese had replaced their first line combat units with less qualified occupation troops and established a puppet government, they organized an indigenous "Bureau of Constabulary" to assist their occupation forces in the maintenance of law and order. Although some former PC members served in this Bureau of Constabulary,[5] there is no evidence of

any wholesale induction of organized PC units into this force. On the contrary, the Constabulary performed valiantly against the Japanese as was discussed in Chapter I. The Huks, however, constantly sought to identify the Philippine Constabulary with the Bureau of Constabulary which had been extensively used by the Japanese in Central Luzon in an effort to control the rice.[6] This propaganda was accepted at face value by many of the peasants of "Huklandia," some of whom were naturally suspicious of and hostile toward government authority. The success of this Propaganda on the peasants is not surprising since even George Malcolm, a former Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court, apparently had difficulty distinguishing between the Philippine Constabulary and the "Bureau of Constabulary."[7]

Another serious deterrent to Constabulary success was the curious legal situation which prevailed in the Philippines. Because of a strong belief in individual freedom, the Philippine constitution and criminal codes, like those of most democratic states, contained stringent procedures to protect the rights of individuals. For example, a Huk captured in the field enjoyed the same rights as any other citizen. He should be taken before a judge within six hours after arrest and a prima facie case must be presented against him within 24 hours. If the charge was less than murder the prisoner was entitled to release on bail. Even allowing for travel time, it was possible for a Huk to be captured in a fire fight and rejoin his unit within three days.[8] Thus the Constabularyman was caught on the horns of another dilemma. If

he obeyed the law, and turned Huk prisoners over to the proper civilian authority, he failed in his mission of suppressing the Huk rebellion. If he shot the prisoner, or even used harsh methods to interrogate him, he was guilty of terror and oppression.

There was an almost unbelieveable lack of cooperation between the Department of Defense and the Department of Interior at the civilian control level. The Philippine Air Force (PAF) had excellent capability of providing air support to the Constabulary, but there was no interdepartmental arrangement for such support. Some air support was provided on the basis of friendship between commanders of the two services, but it took on an all but surreptitious nature; and one senior PC Commander was ordered to delete all references to air support from his after action reports.[9] Even at the working level, cooperation was not always exemplary. One senior FAP officer described an incident wherein Huks attacked a PC detachment guarding the outer perimeter of an airbase. Philippine Air Force personnel witnessed the attack but took no action because the Huks weren't bothering them.[10]

A final impediment to Constabulary success, and closely related to the aforementioned lack of urgency at the seat of government, was the political situation and its impact on military dispositions and operations.

The Huk movement was generally confined to Central and Southern Luzon (there was some Huk activity on the islands of Panay and Negros) but the Constabulary had to police the entire country. Even in "Huklandia" the Constabulary was required by

political pressure to provide guards for towns and large estates.[11] The Constabulary Provincial Commander was, in theory, independent of the Province Governor; but from a practical standpoint he had to cooperate with him, as a soldier without strong political backing of his own was unlikely to be successful in any dispute with a politician. On one occasion an operation designed to capture Taruc was abruptly cancelled at the request of a Provincial Governor.[12] It should also be noted that the Constabulary had only about three thousand troops in the four provinces of "Huklandia" while the Huk forces there were estimated to be between eight and nine thousand.

COMBAT OPERATIONS

Constabulary operations during this period, for the most part, consisted of routine patrolling in the vicinity of the required garrisons and guard posts; the establishment of highway checkpoints; screening of villages near known or suspected Huk activities; and an occasional large scale sweep mounted, in the conventional field manual manner, in response to pressure from politicians or the press as a result of some Huk outrage. These operations were not especially successful but they did maintain some pressure on the Huks.[13]

There were two operations, however, which deserve consideration not only because they were each an unqualified success, but also because they demonstrate the capabilities of Constabulary units when provided with effective leadership and adequate authority.

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Constabulary operations during this period, for the most part, consisted of routine patrolling in the vicinity of the required garrisons and guard posts; the establishment of highway checkpoints; screening of villages near known or suspected Huk activities; and an occasional large scale sweep mounted, in the conventional field manual manner, in response to pressure from politicians or the press as a result of some Huk outrage. These operations were not especially successful but they did maintain some pressure on the Huks.[13]

There were two operations, however, which deserve consideration not only because they were each an unqualified success, but also because they demonstrate the capabilities of Constabulary units when provided with effective leadership and adequate authority.

The first action occurred in 1948 when a Constabulary Battalion Commander, displaying both initiative and imagination, carefully selected 50 men from the 116th PC company for a special mission. This group was designated as "Force X"; and for four weeks at an isolated training site the members of "Force X" underwent an intensive training program designed to make them look, talk, think, and act like Huks. They were divested of all military equipment and personal items, and provided with completely genuine Huk items of clothing, equipment, weapons, and personal effects. Their cover story was based on the recent death of a Huk leader in Southern Luzon and the actual, and well known to the Huks, confusion that the leader's death precipated. "Force X" included two men with actual wounds who had been taken from a military hospital. After a carefully staged battle with two PC companies on the edge of Candaba Swamp, "Force X" withdrew into the swamp carrying the two wounded men. Within four hours contact was made with a Huk outpost. News of the battle had preceeded "Force X" via the Huk intelligence net and the Huks were very curious about the strangers that were fighting the PC. After extensive interrogation "Force X" was guided to base area deep in the swamp and ultimately joined four Huk squadrons. After six days with the Huks; wherein a great deal of information, not only about the Huks, but also about Huk supporters and Huk spies in other PC units was obtained; the Lieutenant commanding "Force X" felt the Huks were becoming suspicious and gave the order to attack. Although "Force X" was outnumbered more than three to one, the

element of surprise enabled it to kill 82 Huks and scatter the rest in a 30 minute battle. Additional PC companies summoned by radio ultimately killed 21 and captured 24 members of these Huk squadrons.[14]

At the other end of the spectrum was a large operation involving two PC battalions reinforced with an Infantry battalion, an artillery battery, and reconnaissance-car companies from the Philippine Army for a total force of more than four thousand men. The operation was launched following the death of the widow and daughter of President Quezon in a Huk ambush on 28 April 1949. This operation included extensive small unit patrolling in advance of the main body, relentless pursuit of the Huks into a mountain area not previously penetrated by troops, successive attacks on four Huk mountain bases, and use of extraordinarily valid information obtained from prisoners. The operation was terminated on 11 September 1949 when it was determined that every member of the ambush squadron had been accounted for. In all, this operation netted 146 Huks killed, more than 40 captured, and the destruction of a Huk Regional Command.[15]

It is also significant to note that during this period Constabulary units were conducting successful operations against real outlaws, instead of Huks, on Panay and Sulu. It was also necessary for the Constabulary to suppress intertribal wars among the aborigines of Agusan Province on Mindanao.

CHAPTER II FOOTNOTES

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3. Robert Ross Smith, "The Philippines (1946-1954)," in Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Vol. 1, p. 495.

4. Charles W. Thayer, Guerrilla (1963), p. 35.

5. Baclagon, Philippine Campaigns, p. 300.

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8. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 66.

9. The RAND Corporation, Symposium on the Role of Airpower in Counterinsurgency and Unconventional Warfare: The Philippine Huk Campaign (1963), p. 24.

10. Ibid., p. 35.

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12. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 109.

13. Thayer, p. 31.

14. Napoleon D. Valeriano, COL, AFP (Ret.), "Military Operations," in Anthology of Related Topics on Counterinsurgency, Vol. 2, pp. 148-150.

15. Valeriano and Bohannan, pp. 117-122.

CHAPTER III

THE HUKS

As was indicated in Chapter I, the Hukbalahop was the military department of the CPP. This chapter will be an examination of the organization and operations of the Huk military units during the period 1948-1954. The interrelationship between the Huks and the CPP will also be considered, along with source of Huk strength.

ORGANIZATION

After the amnesty offer expired in August 1948 and Taruc dropped all pretense of cooperating with the government, he returned to the forest and began intensive efforts to prepare the Huks for total war. To facilitate the expansion and control of his forces he revived the system of Regional Commands (RECOS) as the military headquarters directly below the national military department. The RECOS were subdivided into Field Commands. The Field Commands were, in theory, further subdivided into battalions and the battalions, in turn, subdivided into squadrons which were the basic combat units of the Huks. In practice, battalions were almost never formed and often the squadrons reported directly to the RECO. There was no fixed number of units below RECO level. A squadron was composed of from 50 to 100 men and further divided into platoons and squads. On occasion special platoons were organized to perform security missions for leaders, production bases, and other noncombatants.[1]

At the height of their power the Huks had a total of 10 RECOS either organized or planned, with all but two of them on the Island of Luzon. RECO 6 included Panay and the other Visayan Islands and RECO 7 was planned for Mindanao but never really organized.[2]

There are many publications, both official and unofficial, which contain organizational diagrams of the Communist Party of the Philippines. There is some inconsistency among the various publications but there is general agreement that the Central Committee consisted of thirty-one members, the Politburo eleven members, and the Secretariat five members. It is further agreed by most writers that there were five national departments: military, organization, education, finance, and intelligence; and that each department was organized in echelons with vertical control and authority approximately that of the military department. It appears, however, that this picture is too concise and neat, and smacks of the American penchant for "wiring diagrams." Undoubtedly these five departments existed in Manila, but it would seem more reasonable that their control and influence was funnelled through the RECOS. Further, the leadership of the Regional Committees (subordinate to the organization department) and the leadership of the Regional Commands (subordinate to the military department) was composed of the same individuals who, in effect, constituted a Regional Politburo.

In any event, military and political functions were more clearly defined below Regional level, with the Regional Committees

being subdivided into District Organizing Committees and Section Organizing Committees which accomplished political tasks.

The mass organization of the Huks was the Barrio United Defense Corps (BUDC). The BUDC's, like other Huk organizations, were originally organized during the Japanese occupation as a means of providing local government and securing supplies for the Huk combat units.[3]

The BUDC's were run by a council of from five to twelve members and who, in theory, were elected by the residents of the barrio and were responsible only to the electorate. In practice, however, the BUDC's were closely controlled by the Section Organizing Committees.

The overt activities performed by the BUDC were a function of the degree of control the Huks exercised over a given area. In those areas where they had complete control the BUDC council appointed public officials, established courts and schools, and collected taxes. In other areas the BUDC was limited to intelligence and supply activities.[4]

Another organizational element that deserves special mention is the Economic Struggle (ES) units. These units specialized in robbery and extortion and often performed their duties wearing government uniforms to facilitate their entry into areas not under Huk control. Those business firms not robbed outright were forced to buy protection in much the same manner that American businessmen buy protection from the Mafia.

The writings of both Taruc and William Pomeroy, the American Huk, support the official Philippine estimate that the peak organized strength was approximately fifteen thousand.[5] There is no such consensus, however, as to the number of Huk sympathizers. Most US and Philippine estimates range from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand while Taruc claims two million.

LOGISTICS

The Huk soldier provides an excellent example of obtaining maximum military power for minimum cost. He normally carried everything he owned on his back. If he were lucky he had a poncho and shoes, but if he didn't have those luxury items he performed without them. His only continual requirement was food, and even though this requirement was meager by most standards, a considerable portion of the total manpower was devoted to the procurement of food.

Those units and individuals that operated in the barrios obtained food from the farmers and merchants either by purchase or donation. The donations were obtained voluntarily if possible, otherwise force and intimidation were used.

One of the primary functions of the BUDC was to provide food to the combat units. Each squadron had a "balutan" or porter squad which had the mission of transporting the food collected by the BUDC to the squadron camp. The "balutan" squads supporting squadrons operating in the mountains or swamps often required several days to make the roundtrip. Although the Huks might

steal or capture a vehicle for use in a raid or other special operation, they maintained no vehicles for normal use, nor did they use animals for transport.[6]

The Huk supply depots, called production bases, were scattered through the mountains and used for storage of supplies and small vegetable gardens. Due to the mobile nature of Huk operations, the production bases were often of limited value.

Although food was the most important item, other items that caused supply problems were medicine, weapons, and ammunitions. Medicine was always in short supply because, unlike food, it could not be acquired from the farmers or even the rural merchants. During World War II weapons had been plentiful, but over the years many had become lost or unserviceable. The preferred method of obtaining weapons and ammunition was to capture them from government forces. When this method was impossible they were purchased from black market operators or stolen from American military installations--sometimes with the assistance of US personnel.[7] The most common weapons among the Huk combat units were US Carbines, M1 Rifles, and Browning Automatic Rifles. They also had a limited number of machine guns and 60mm mortars, but use of these weapons was limited by a shortage of ammunition. Hand grenades were not commonly used.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INTELLIGENCE

The Huks were especially weak in communications. They did not use radios (other than standard commercial AM receivers) or

field telephones, but rather depended on a courier system.[8] They had a simple but effective warning system based on visual and audible signals that were common to life in the barrios. These systems worked well as long as the Huks stayed among the people and the people supported them. When they were forced into the mountains and/or lost the peasants' support, both systems broke down.[9]

During the initial stages of this conflict, the Huks had an excellent intelligence system. Their agents infiltrated various levels of the civil government and even the security forces. Many officials and security personnel who were not Huk sympathizers were, nevertheless, susceptible to either bribery or female flirtation. The peasants themselves provided the best source of information regarding troop movement. In the latter stages, when the Huks were cut off from the people, their intelligence system, like the courier and warning nets which supported it, became much less effective.

TRAINING

The picture of the Huk training program is very hazy. Taruc, in his second book (written in prison), speaks of basic training for recruits, as well as " . . . schools for intelligence officers, couriers, and medical workers." He also mentions cadet officer schools and courses in propaganda, political science, and government.[10] Pomeroy, on the other hand, indicates that the recruits received no basic military training, not even marksmanship training (due to ammunition problems), and acquired their military skills

by "O.J.T." He was also very skeptical of the military qualifications of the Huk leadership. He states:

> In the entire Philippine national liberation movement there is not one military leader of any professional caliber. Neither G. Y. nor any of the staff of his Military Department has had formal military training nor has had the means for studying it.

He goes on to say:

> In the case of other techniques usually associated with guerrilla warfare there is incredible ignorance. The knowledge of dynamite or explosives of any kind is extremely meager, and they remain unemployed. An effort was made to develop explosives in Bulacan, but the man experimenting was blown to bits and the project was dropped.[12]

Filipino officials and American experts writing on this struggle are generally silent on this subject. In any event, it is very clear that the Huk leaders, most of whom had received their military training during the Japanese occupation, afforded a higher priority to political training and indoctrination than to basic military skills.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

From the termination of the 1948 amnesty until the end of 1949 the Huk purpose and goals were not clearly defined. They had become stronger militarily and in the barrios, and had caused much consternation in the Philippine government, but they had not yet publicly admitted to being Communists. They were still operating under the cloak of agrarian reform and conducting political activities through various front organizations. They

had even supported their old enemy, Jose Laurel, as the Nacionalista candidate in the 1949 elections.[13]

The CPP and Huk grand strategy was, however, brought clearly into focus at a Politburo meeting held in the Sierra Madre mountains from late December 1949 to mid-January 1950. A list of objectives was adopted which included intensive preparations for an armed struggle to seize power within two years, definition of a political program similar to Mao Tse0tung, publicizing Communist party leadership, granting executive and judicial powers to the Secretariat, and the imposition of military discipline on all mass organizations.[14] The program to achieve these objectives included a rather ambitious expansion of their combat units to a strength of almost one hundred twenty thousand, party membership to one hundred seventy-two thousand, and organized masses to two and a half million.[15]

Huk tactics included raids on small military/police posts, ambushes of government forces, murder and kidnapping of government officials and unfriendly landowners, and robbery to secure both money and supplies. In typical guerrilla fashion they conducted most of their operations at night, and sought to avoid contact with government security forces except on their own terms. They were especially proficient in small scale "hit-and-run" operations, but would sometimes mass as many as five hundred troops if the targets were worthwhile. One exception to standard guerrilla tactics, however, was the Huk's failure to engage in widespread sabotage.[16]

COMPOSITION OF THE HUKS

The Huks and their sympathizers, although completely dominated by the CPP, were not all Communists and it is doubtful if the majority had more than a vague understanding of the term communism. Party membership probably never exceeded ten thousand and, according to Pomeroy, many of the unit commanders were not party members.[17] The Huks were, however, a fairly homogeneous group of peasant farmers. Some of the party leaders were members of wealthy families, some were products of the Manila intellectual community, some were workers from the trade unions, and some were merely opportunistic politicians; but the majority of leaders were also peasants from the barrios.

The workers and intellectuals of Manila, in spite of their support of Huk causes, were not normally inclined to take to the hills as guerrilla soldiers. As Taruc expressed it, "They may have just been waiting to be 'liberated' by someone else."[18] Even the workers in the sugar mills were not a lucrative source of Huk recruits.

There were, of course, many and varied reasons why an individual joined or supported the Huks. Some peasants had been abused by the security forces or the landlords and truely believed the government was oppressive. Some farmers were so deeply in debt that they felt they had nothing to lose. Some, perhaps many, were impressed by the terror visited on their neighbors who refused to support the Huks. Some, like Tarciano Rizal, had committed crimes

and joined to escape punishment.[19] Many people had become disillusioned with the corruption of the central government, especially after the election of 1949. There were also those who believed that the Huk promise of "land for the landless," represented the only solution to their deplorable situation. In one study involving 400 captured Huks, 95 percent said their main reason for fighting was land for the peasants.[20]

Another study indicates that in 1952 almost 60 percent of the Huks in combat units were under 30 years of age and that only 11 percent were over 35.[21] Although this study is based on a limited sampling, many young men, and some young women, joined the Huks as a means to escape the drudgery and boredom of barrio life.

Whatever their specific reasons for joining or supporting the Huks, it is clearly evident that a substantial number of the people who lived on the Central Luzon plain had lost confidence in their government.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

1. Fred H. Barton, Salient Aspects of Paramilitary Warfare in Three Asian Areas (1953), pp. 53-54.

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3. Taruc, Born of the People, pp. 116-117.

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5. Ismael D. Lapus, COL, AFP, "The Communist Huk Enemy," in Anthology of Related Topics on Counterinsurgency, Vol. 2, p. 143.

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7. Luis Taruc, He Who Rides the Tiger (1967), p. 97.

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10. Taruc, He Who Rides the Tiger, p. 47.

11. Pomeroy, The Forest, p. 158.

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13. Robert Ross Smith, p. 486.

14. Taruc, He Who Rides the Tiger, pp. 68-74.

15. Lapus, p. 142.

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19. Jesus Vargas and Tarciano Rizal, Communism in Decline: The Huk Campaign (1957), (pages not numbered).

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21. Barton, p. 53.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONSTABULARY--A MEMBER OF THE TEAM

Many American writers tend to condemn, at least by inference, the Constabulary as being unequal to the counterinsurgency task. They also infer that after the Constabulary had failed, the Philippine Army (PA) was assigned the mission and was successful. Neither of these conclusions is valid.

Obviously the accomplishments of the Constabulary from August 1948 to the end of 1950 were not completely successful, however, the performance cannot be characterized as a failure. It is estimated that the Constabulary eliminated at least half of the original guerrilla forces during this period, either by killing them, capturing them, or causing them to permanently abandon the Huk forces.[1]

In consideration of the many obstacles imposed on the Constabulary (which were discussed in Chapter II), it would appear that the Constabulary's degree of success was somewhat greater than that of the national government. It would further appear that the Constabulary's degree of failure, ineffectiveness, and corruption was somewhat less than that of the national government.

In any event, the Constabulary was the best counterinsurgency force available. The PA was plagued by leadership problems and corruption, not trained for counterinsurgency operations,

organized mostly into noncombat units, and had only two infantry battalions that were combat-ready.[2]

On 23 December 1950, the Constabulary was transferred from the Department of Interior to the Department of National Defense, and became one of the four active components of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Prior to gaining control of the Constabulary, the Secretary of Defense had directed reorganization of the PA into battalion combat teams (BCT's), but progress was slow and the PA required additional training along with reorganization.

The Constabulary was partially included in this reorganization and many of the first BCT's to take the field against the Huks were organized from experienced PC companies.[3] This was true in the case of the 7th BCT, which became one of the most successful. In addition to the entire companies that were incorporated into the PA, many experienced PC officers and men were transferred into key positions in the PA. It was not so much that the counterinsurgency effort had been transferred from the Constabulary to the PA, but rather that it had been transferred from the Secretary of Interior to the Secretary of Defense, and that the Secretary of Defense utilized all of the resources of the PAF. Those members of the Constabulary who were experienced, honest, loyal, and proficient represented a very valuable resource of the AFP whether they remained in PC units or were integrated into PA units. Any examination of AFP operations against the Huks after December 1950 automatically included examination of

the Constabulary, whether specified as such or not, and it is on this basis that this Chapter is presented.

THE IMPACT OF MAGSAYSAY

Ramon Magsaysay, who became Secretary of National Defense in September 1950, is generally credited with reorganizing the PA into the BCT configuration. In point of fact, this reorganization had begun under his predecessor, Secretary Kangleon, and Magsaysay merely convinced President Quirino to include the Constabulary in the reorganization.[4]

What Magsaysay did for the members of the Armed Forces was much more important. He restored their integrity, efficiency, confidence, and initiative. Without these factors, the reorganization of the AFP would have been meaningless.

Magsaysay was determined to eliminate corruption, graft, and incompetence within the AFP. He forced some officers into early retirement, transferred others, and court martialed some when there was sufficient evidence of crimes. He issued orders, and then personally visited units in the field to insure that his orders were being carried out.[5] Gradually, the members of the AFP, officers and men alike, realized that Magsaysay was serious about his reforms. A unit that had received an unannounced visit from the Secretary in the middle of the night usually did not require a second lesson. He was as quick to commend as to criticize, and those men who had demonstrated ability received on-the-spot promotions. He also insured that the troops received

both pay and rations, the lack of which had long been a morale problem. Magsaysay instituted a program of a 1,000 peso payment to a soldier's beneficiary within 24 hours after confirmation of death, and later provided for cash assistance to the families of seriously wounded soldiers. These actions were also big morale boosters. Magsaysay realized that it was not enough just to improve the Armed Forces, but that he must also change the attitude of the people toward the Armed Forces. Like Taruc, Magsaysay was a man of the people from a poor family, and he knew that many of the peasants' grievances against the government in general, and the military in particular, were justified.[6] He said that a soldier had two missions: "He must be an ambassador seeking to build good will for his outfit and his government; he must also be a fighter seeking to kill or capture at least one enemy."[7]

Magsaysay was constantly seeking new ideas to improve the relationship between the people and the security forces. He provided the medics with extra medicine and ordered them to treat the sick in villages. Between combat operations he put the troops to work repairing roads and bridges, building schools, and in general making themselves helpful in the barrios.[8]

No detail was too small to escape Magsaysay's notice. He observed that the troops habitually entered the villages with their weapons at ready, as though they considered the peasants their enemies (often they were), and were expecting to be attacked at any moment. He instructed the troops to enter the villages as though they were among friends. Magsaysay also remembered that

American troops were always surrounded by children, because they always seemed to have candy. He used all means possible, perhaps even some slightly illegal, to procure candy and chewing gum for the troops to distribute to the children. Soon every patrol entering a village was surrounded by children. By methods such as these, the barriers of resentment between the troops and the people were gradually broken down. There was a bonus effect to the candy program. Even the Huks were unlikely to attack troops surrounded by children, especially when their own children were included.[9]

Not only did Magsaysay make frequent visits to his troops, he also went among the people. He would walk into a village and invite the people to sit under a tree and talk. The same gregarious personality and rustic sense of humor which had gotten him elected to congress, repeatedly, from his native Zambales province enabled him to make an impression on the peasants of "Huklandia." He questioned the people about the conduct of the troops, and when a soldier was punished for an offense against the people he insured that the punishment was public and well publicized. He also sent military lawyers into the barrios to represent the peasants in civil litigation.

The most dramatic battle in Magsaysay's campaign to restore the people's confidence in the Armed Forces occurred during the congressional elections of 1951. As the elections approached, President Quirino made the customary announcement that they would be free and honest and that the polls would be protected by the

Armed Forces. This announcement was greeted with general skepticism because many people believed the military had been involved in the "dirty election" of 1949. Magsaysay, armed with the President's public statement, made it clear to his troops that he did, indeed, expect honest elections. To reinforce the AFP at the polls, he mobilized hundreds of high school and college ROTC cadets, along with some two thousand Reservists. In addition, he announced that the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), which represented almost every civic, patriotic, and Veterans group in the Philippines, was welcome to post watchers at the polls to watch the troops. When the votes were counted most of the congressmen elected were members of the opposition party and everyone, except the Huks, agreed that, for the first time since World War II, honest elections had been held.[10]

Along with his actions to change the attitudes of the troops and the peasants, Magsaysay sought ways to change the attitude of the Huks. He was not opposed to killing Huks, but he reasoned that many of them could be taken out of action by other means, thus making it easier to kill those who were left. Some of the techniques employed in the psychological war against the Huks included: a schedule of payments was announced for illegal weapons turned in to the AFP. Rewards were offered for all Huks turned in--dead or alive, and were promptly paid. Relatives of Huks made recordings urging their loved ones to come down from the hills and surrender. In this regard, Taruc tells of hearing his mother's voice broadcast daily for over a month before he surrendered.[11]

The most brilliant and successful of Magsaysay's psychological efforts, however, was the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR). The EDCOR law had been passed before Magsaysay became Secretary, and was designed to provide homesteads for military veterans, but it had never been fully implemented. Magsaysay secured the necessary presidential and congressional approval to modify the program to include Huks who were willing to surrender. The first projects were established in the virgin lands of Mindanao, far from the influence of "Huklandia." The first group of families included both captured/surrendered Huks and retired soldiers. They were provided about 15 acres of land and given assistance by PA Engineers in clearing the land and building their houses. In the form of a low-interest loan, they were advanced seed, tools, clothing, medicine, and food until their first harvest was complete.

When it became obvious that the first two projects were succeeding, Magsaysay initiated a publicity campaign. Foreign and domestic journalists (including some of those most critical of the government) were invited to visit the EDCOR sites. The Huk settlers were asked to write letters to their former comrades describing, in their own words, how they felt about the program. These letters were turned into leaflets and widely distributed. Huk leaders were offered safe conduct passes to visit the sites and judge their value for themselves; the only stipulation attached to this offer was that the Huks must return to their units and tell their men what they had seen.

From both a practical and psychological standpoint EDCOR was a huge success. One authority estimates that only about 300 Huk families were resettled, but that at least 3,000 Huks either surrendered or returned to a peaceful life as a direct result of this program.[12]

Just as he had countered the Huk slogans of military oppression, equal justice, and fair elections; Magsaysay took over their "Land for the Landless" campaign with EDCOR.

A STROKE OF LUCK

When he became Secretary of Defense, Magsaysay announced that he was willing to meet with anyone who had suggestions to combat the Huk menace. Since he was already well known to the Huks, both as a successful guerrilla leader against the Japanese and for his strong anti-Huk stand as a congressman, they perceived that he would be a source of trouble (they could not have imagined just how much) and decided to have him assassinated. The task was assigned to a minor Huk leader named Tarciano Rizal, who arranged for a secret meeting with Magsaysay only a few weeks after he took office. Out of curiosity, he decided to talk to Magsaysay, and during the conversation became convinced of the Secretary's honesty and strength of purpose to the point that he disclosed his intentions and offered to help Magsaysay.[13]

The information provided by Rizal led to raids on 22 homes in Manila, which resulted in the arrest of 105 CPP officials, including the Secretariat and seven members of the Politburo. Of equal

importance with the prisoners were some five truckloads of documents and records comprising the entire archives of the party. Large amounts of money and weapons were also seized.[14]

Since it was obvious that such a large number of prisoners could not be adequately investigated and charged within the prescribed 24 hours, Magsaysay was able to prevail upon President Quirino to use his constitutional power and temporarily suspend the writ of habeas corpus.

ORGANIZATION FOR COMBAT

As has been previously indicated, the primary combat unit of the AFP after 1950 was the BCT. The base of the BCT was an infantry battalion with a headquarters company, three rifle companies of 110 men each, and a heavy weapons company. Normal attachments were a 105 artillery battery, a reconnaissance company, a military intelligence team, and a civil affairs team. Motor transport units were added as required.

Initially 10 BCT's were organized and deployed, and ultimately a total of 26 were organized; but this conflict period ended before some of them saw action. The peak combined strength of the PA and PC during this period was approximately thirty thousand.

Another significant unit was the Scout-Ranger Team, which was a specially trained patrol team varying in size from three to ten men. The Scout-Ranger teams were primarily used for intelligence missions and fought only when they had to.

There is one more organizational element, the civil guard units, worthy of note. Civil guard units had long been organized in the towns and larger villages, but their contribution had been minimal. A concerted, and reasonably successful, effort was made to improve their capabilities. After a brief investigation, those units that were generally free from Huk influence were provided adequate weapons, radios, and two or three military personnel as instructors. Veterans and former USAFEE guerrillas were specifically recruited for these civil guard units. Ultimately most of the civil guard units took over the local security mission, thus free the AFP units for field operations.

INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

The old adage that "nothing succeeds like success" was certainly true in the Philippine situation. The peasants in the barrios represented the best source of intelligence for both the government and the Huks. As the various programs initiated by Magsaysay began to be felt by the people, the flow of information, which originally had been almost entirely toward the Huks, gradually began to shift toward the government. Farmers not yet brave enough to openly contact the troops became willing to utilize signs and signals (the old Huk warning net methods) to indicate the presence of Huks.

The government forces began to make better use of their own agents to infiltrate Huk units, especially loyal citizens who were relatives of known Huks. One such case is presented here to

illustrate the elaborate preparations necessary to provide a cover. An agent was recruited who was the cousin of a Huk leader. The agent was given intensive training for two months, and then his house was "raided" and burned by government forces. His brother was put in jail and his mother and father were evacuated, but the agent managed to "escape" and join the Huks. He was given an assignment as an ES collector for the National Finance Committee. He became so proficient in obtaining money and equipment (at government expense) for the Huks that he eventually was able to make his way into the Huk GHQ and take pictures of Taruc and his staff. Three months after the agent joined the Huks the GHQ was attacked and, although Taruc escaped, information developed by the agent led to the arrest of 1,175 members of the Finance Committee.[15]

Another technique developed by government forces was to flood the Huk intelligence nets with so much conflicting information that it could not be processed or evaluated.

Improved treatment of prisoners, combined with better trained interrogators, not only produced better intelligence but also resulted in more Huk defections.

As the Huks were forced out of the barrios and into the hills and swamps, the Scout-Ranger Teams and reconnaissance patrols sent out from the BCT's became increasingly important in the production of combat intelligence.

SUCCESSFUL TACTICS AND TECHNIQUES

Except for the special emphasis by Magsaysay on the soldiers' conduct toward civilians, the tactics employed by the AFP combat units were generally standard small-unit tactics, modified to fit local situations.

Although small unit operations were emphasized, there were numerous large scale operations, especially during the later stages after the Huks had been forced into the mountains. One of the advantages of large scale operations was that they facilitated the use of stay-behind units.

One psychological technique that did not have official AFP sanction, but was nevertheless very effective, was to allow faulty ammunition to fall into the Huk supply system. If a man's weapon blew up it made his comrades nervous, and usually they couldn't tell if the weapon or the ammunition was at fault.

When a shortage of napalm developed, a fairly effective substitute was devised using coconut husks and gasoline.[16]

There were many examples of individual ingenuity by military commanders. One particular incident is worthy of consideration. A Constabulary Province Commander was convinced that the mayor of a certain town was a key Huk agent, but he did not have sufficient proof to arrest the mayor. One night a Huk courier was killed near this town. The next day the commander drove into town, called a meeting in the public square, thanked the mayor for his assistance in identifying the courier, and drove off--

leaving the body lying in the square. That night the mayor arrived at the province headquarters willing to exchange his vast information about Huk activities for protection.[17]

USE OF AIRPOWER

During the early stages of this conflict the majority of support furnished by the Philippine Air Force (PAF),was in the form of logistical, reconnaissance, and intelligence missions, using primarily L-5's and some C-47's. Combat air strikes were generally limited to the Mount Arayat region and the Candaba Swamp, since air strikes against the Huks operation in the populated areas would have been counterproductive. The PAF fighter-bomber was the Mustang, armed with 50 caliber machineguns and 100 pound anti-personnel bombs. In the later stages, when the Huks had been forced into the mountains, air strikes were used more extensively.

From the ground commander's viewpoint, the L-5 was the work-horse of the air support effort. They were habitually used to resupply long-range patrols and bring back patrol reports. On one occasion a two BCT Task Force conducted a 72 day operation throughout the entire length of the rugged Sierra Madre mountain range. The two BCT's were resupplied exclusively with two L-5's and, according to the Task Force Commander, none of the troops missed a meal. The supply drops were free drops utilizing a rattan ball woven around boxes padded with hay or straw.[18]

The L-5 pilots were especially effective in reporting the signals made by civilian agents, who could not afford to be seen talking to ground troops.[19]

One L-5 pilot acquired a supply of 60mm mortar shells, had them modified to explode on impact, and dropped them on Huks.[20]

Another successful intelligence technique was to take captured or surrendered Huks up in a C-47 with an intelligence officer and have the informer try to identify the Huk installations from the air.[21]

Other uses of airpower included loudspeaker and leaflet missions. A limited number of helicopters were available in the final stages of this conflict and were limited, almost exclusively, to medical evacuation, which was a big morale factor for the ground troops. A not insignificant contribution of airpower was that of enabling Magsaysay to make his unannounced visits to the troops and barrios.

THE END OF THE CONFLICT

It's a fairly common practice among writers to pick out one action or one event as the "turning point" in any conflict. The "turning point" for this conflict has been variously described as the ambush of Mrs. Quezon, the appointment of Magsaysay, the activation of EDCOR, the arrest of the Politburo, or the free elections of 1951. In point of fact, all of these events were important and contributed to the counterinsurgency effort, and

at some imperceptible point in time the initiative passed from the Huks to the government.

If an indicator of the success of a counterinsurgency effort is required, the observations by a senior AFP Commander seem most valid. He measured success by the spontaneous intelligence information provided by the people to the soldiers.[22]

The combination of increasing military pressure and decreasing popular support drove the Huks deeper into the hills and isolated them from their source of food. With their production bases destroyed and the BUDC units either neutralized or turned against them, they had to send out more and more "balutan" squads in search of food. Many of the "balutan" squads failed to return. Whether they were captured by the troops, turned in by the peasants, or simply took the opportunity to submerge themselves in the civilian population, the result for the Huks in the mountains was the same--hunger.

The election of Magsaysay as President in 1953 enabled him to intensify his program of social reforms designed to eliminate the basic causes of peasant discontent. His first major legislative success came in August 1954 with the passage of the "Agricultural Tenancy Act of the Philippines," which set forth the rights and obligations of both the tenants and the landlords.[23]

There is a wide range of "box-score" estimates on the number of Huks killed, captured, and wounded, along with the disposition of their weapons. The exact figures are not considered important. What is significant, however, is that at their peak strength the

Huks had over fifteen thousand armed and well organized combat troops, backed up by over fifty thousand active support personnel, and perhaps two hundred thousand sympathizers. They also exercised de facto control over large areas, and were making plans to attack Manila and establish a Communist government. When Taruc surrendered in September 1954, the Huks had been reduced to less than 2,000 harried and hungry men roaming in small disorganized bands through the mountain jungles, with virtually no popular support or political base.

CHAPTER IV FOOTNOTES

1. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 114.

2. Andrew R. Molnar, et al., Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare (1963), p. 325.

3. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 123.

4. US Department of the Army, Command and General Staff College, Reference Book 31-100, Vol. 2, Insurgent War; Selected Case Studies (1969), p. 1-23.

5. Robert Ross Smith, p. 498.

6. Napoleon D. Valeriano, COL, AFP, (Ret.), "Psychological Warfare," Lecture (Fort Bragg: 2 October 1964), p. 10.

7. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 105.

8. Thayer, p. 35.

9. Valeriano and Bohannan, pp. 205-206.

10. Ibid., pp. 239-240.

11. Taruc, He Who Rides the Tiger, p. 137.

12. Charles T. R. Bohannan, LTC, (Ret.), "Unconventional Operations," in Anthology of Related Topics on Counterinsurgency, Vol. 2, p. 156.

13. Valeriano and Bohannan, p. 68.

14. Quentin Reynolds and Geoffrey Bocca, Macapagal, the Incorruptible (1965), p. 104.

15. Medardo T. Justiniano, MAJ, AFP, "Combat Intelligence," in Anthology of Related Topics on Counterinsurgency, Vol. 2, pp. 152-153.

16. Bohannan, "Unconventional Operations," p. 154.

17. Thayer, p. 33.

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19. Ibid., pp. 39-40. (J. M. Tinio, LTC, AFP.)

20. Ibid., p. 36. (Valeriano.)

21. Ibid., p. 43. (Edward G. Lansdale, MG, USAF.)

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23. Frances Lucille Starner, Magsaysay and the Philippine Peasantry (1961), p. 211.

CHAPTER V

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

One of the distinguishing features of this conflict is that both the insurgents and the counterinsurgents were indigenous Filipinos. Each side, however, received some support from external sources, and the purpose of this chapter is to examine this support in terms of type, amount, and effect.

SUPPORT TO THE HUKS

The question of external support to the Huks, like so many other aspects of this conflict, is subjected to many points of view. In 1951 the House Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities found evidence to indicate that the CPP was regularly receiving funds from abroad as late as 1946. This committee also found evidence of correspondence between the CPP and the Communist Party of the US as late as 1950, but no specific mention of funds.[1]

There was Chinese participation in the Huk movement dating from May 1942, when an all Chinese Squadron was activated and assigned the number 48, in honor of the Chinese Eight Route and New Fourth Armies.[2]

There is no evidence to indicate that squadron 48 was reactivated in 1948 (or subsequently), but Chinese were active in the CPP. The Politburo had a special agency called the "Chinese Bureau" (CB) to coordinate the activities of Chinese members. Taruc indicated that the CB was rather independent of Politburo control

and was vague about its connections with the Chinese Communist Party.[3]

There were frequent reports that Chinese were involved in internal supply and finance operations of the Huks, but this is not especially significant, as Chinese are widely engaged in commerce and banking in the Philippines. There were probably many Chinese who contributed to the Huks under duress, just as did other Filipinos.

Robert Ross Smith indicated that Communist China provided the Huks with money, a limited number of weapons, propaganda material, and a few advisors.[4] Barton generally agreed with this analysis and also indicated that some Huks were sent to China for training.[5] Most other authorities are less specific, but there is general agreement that most external support was in the form of money and that the Huks received no substantial amount of military equipment from external sources.

During the early stages of this conflict, it seems doubtful that either China or Russia could have provided anything the Huks wanted, other than money. From the Huk viewpoint, food and weapons were not a critical problem. They probably didn't feel the need for advisors, and foreign manpower would have been counterproductive. In the later stages, the transportation and distribution of significant amounts of either food or weapons would have exceeded their logistical capabilities. Foreign manpower would have been even more counterproductive at this time. It must also be remembered that the Chinese Communists were fairly

well occupied by the Nationalists until 1949, and during 1951 and 1952 much of their attention was devoted to Korea.

The matter of external control and/or influence is also subject to speculation. Brian Crozier indicated that the Huks refused the 1948 amnesty offer because of instructions from "Calcutta," but did not provide a further explanation.[6] This theory was not advanced by any of the other sources consulted, and it appears counter to the political attitudes of the Huk leadership at that period. Taruc indicates that the Huks were influenced and encouraged by the successful Chinese Communists experience, but he goes on to say: "But to my knowledge, no direct organizational link existed with either Russia or China during my years in the Party."[7]

The periodic disputes among the CPP leaders, just prior to and during this conflict period, tend to indicate that any external control was not effective. In describing his final break with the other CPP leaders, Taruc accuses them of placing international Communist principles and dogma ahead of concern for the people. Of course, these observations were made in prison; after he had surrendered, returned to the Church, and been expelled from the party.

In summary, the Huks received moral support, money, propaganda material, and possibly some weapons and advice from external sources, but the amount of aid received was not sufficient to have a significant impact on the conflict.

SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT FORCES

There is no question but that the US furnished large amounts of assistance to the Philippine government in general, and to the Armed Forces of the Philippines in particular. The difficulty lies in trying to separate the assistance given specifically for the counterinsurgency operation from the overall assistance program, both as to time and purpose. No attempt has been made, therefore, to determine the total amount of US aid during the period of this conflict; rather, some samples will be displayed merely for illustrative purposes and the types and effectiveness of the aid will be examined.

In a sense, the period begins with the Constabulary equipped almost entirely with US furnished equipment as a hold over from the pre-Republic period when the Constabulary (then called Military Police Command) was an integral part of the US Army.

During the period immediately prior to, and subsequent to the actual granting of, independence (4 July 1946) there were a number of actions that resulted in US dollars being infused into the Philippine economy. The Philippine Rehabilitation Act of the US Congress made available five hundred twenty million dollars, and also authorized the transfer of surplus US property to the New Republic. Another four hundred million was paid out in war damage claims. The US Veterans Administration distributed about two hundred million dollars as back pay to Filipino veterans. The surplus war material transferred to the Philippines had a

procurement price of one billion dollars, but only about fifty million was actually recovered by the Philippine government. Various other US public and private agencies supplied millions of dollars to the Philippine economy. Total US aid to the Philippines from 1946 to 1951 is conservatively estimated at two billion one hundred fifty million dollars.[8] As substantial as this sum is, even in terms of 1949 dollars, it was barely able to keep the government on its feet because of the extensive devastation caused by World War II. There was certainly not enough money for the Philippines to afford a modern military force.

On 21 March 1947 an agreement was signed between the US and the Philippines providing for US military assistance to the Philippines in the form of military hardware and training, to be provided until 4 July 1951. (This agreement has been periodically reviewed and remains in force.) This agreement also authorized the establishment of a Joint US Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) in the Philippines.[9]

Sometime in late 1947 or early 1948 the JUSMAG became operational,[10] armed with authority to grant approximately nineteen million dollars in aid for the first year. The training assistance by JUSMAG included both in-country training and training in the US. During Fiscal Years 1950-1955 inclusive, US military aid totaled over one hundred seventeen million dollars. This amount was only about half that provided to Thailand during the same period, but was slightly more than the total for all Latin American countries. The hardware provided during this period included 53

ships and harbor craft, 126 aircraft (102 fighters), approximately 5,200 trucks, 55 105mm howitzers, approximately 21,000 rifles and carbines, and over twenty million dollars worth of ammunition.

During the period April 1948 to December 1954, the US Foreign Operations Administration (one of the forerunners of AID) provided about 93 million dollars in economic assistance. In 1951 special arrangements were made for the US to pay the AFP troops in the event the Philippine treasury could not, but this action did not become necessary.

As previously indicated, the Constabulary had been trained and equipped by USAFFE during the MPC days, but as a part of the Interior Department from January 1948 to December 1950 the PC was not specifically included in the JUSMAG program. However, some of the equipment furnished the PA was subsequently provided to the PC. Even after the PC returned to the Defense Department, JUSMAG did not provide equipment especially for the PC, rather the PC shared a portion of that provided the Army. After 1950 JUSMAG had one military police officer, out of about 80 personnel, assigned as Constabulary Advisor.

In considering the effectiveness of the US advisory effort, the following factors seem significant: The "special relationship" between the two countries, and the fact that Filipino military personnel had a long experience of working with Americans, fostered a friendly atmosphere and prevented or minimized the frictions and misunderstandings that have frequently occurred in other USMAG situations. Colonel Valeriano and other senior

AFP officers frequently commented after the war about the good relationships between the advisors and the Filipinos. Ravenholt described the initial JUSMAG members as " . . . men of rare talent."[11]

It must be remembered that, during this period, the US Army had not developed or emphasized counterinsurgency training. On the other hand, however, the majority of the PA and PC officers had received their initial military training in the pre-war Constabulary, and had received "graduate level" training against the Japanese.

Probably the most important contribution of the JUSMAG personnel, other than providing hardware and US school quotas, was their influence with the Philippine elite in gaining their support for the stringent measures that were necessary during this crisis. Some writers, including some Communists, even go so far as to attribute the appointment of Magsaysay as Secretary of Defense to JUSMAG pressure, but it appears unlikely that JUSMAG is deserving of such high praise.

In return for the Military Assistance Agreement of 1947, and the large amounts of financial assistance furnished the Philippines, the US received a 99 year lease (later reduced to 25 years) on 22 military bases in the Philippines and secured a strong anti-Communist ally in the Western Pacific.

As a matter of interest, the Philippines provided a 1,500 man BDT to the UN in Korea during the period of difficult internal problems.

CHAPTER V FOOTNOTES

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2. Taruc, Born of the People, p. 75.

3. Taruc, He Who Rides the Tiger, p. 33.

4. Robert Ross Smith, p. 492.

5. Barton, p. 51.

6. Brian Crozier, The Rebels; A Study of Post-War Insurrections (1960), p. 217.

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CHAPTER VI

LESSONS LEARNED, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With full realization that no two nations face counterinsurgency situations exactly alike, and that the Philippine Government enjoyed several advantages not likely to be present in any other nation, this successful counterinsurgency experience, nevertheless, contains valuable lessons and basic principles worthy of diligent and objective consideration by those personnel concerned with both the planning and execution of counterinsurgency operations.

LESSONS LEARNED

The most obvious and most important lesson to be learned from this conflict is also, perhaps, the most difficult for the professional soldier to understand or accept. Namely, that the successful solution involved not only military operations, but also political, economic, and social campaigns against the insurgents. This coordinated program is especially vital when the insurgency is primarily an indigenous product.

Security forces engaged in counterinsurgency operations will generally mirror the attitudes of the government they represent, and if they are to be successful, they must be controlled and supported by authority and leadership at top levels of government.

Study of the insurgents propaganda themes will provide significant indications as to their strengths and weaknesses.

From the military point of view, there were really no new tactics developed during this struggle. Rather, it was a matter of adapting proven tactical principles to the insurgent situation by means of new techniques and shifted emphasis. Space does not permit a complete listing of all the successful techniques employed by the government forces, however, some of the more important included small unit operations, stay-behind forces, extensive patrolling, and special emphasis on intelligence acquisition and transmission.

The AFP also displayed ingenuity in psychological operations, both as a means of gaining intelligence and of undermining guerrilla confidence and morale. The "blank paper," "magic eye," "group photograph," and "paraffin test," were all noteworthy techniques.

Exotic and ultra-sophisticated weapons and equipment are not required for successful counterinsurgency operations. For the most part, the government forces utilized "off-the-shelf" items.

Government forces do not necessarily require a ten to one, or higher, manpower advantage over the insurgents. Throughout this entire struggle, the overall government ratio was never more than four to one, including the civilians in the civil-guard units. When considered by specific area or specific engagement, the government forces were frequently successful although outnumbered by the guerrilla. The required ratio is, of course, a function of many variables, and the significant factor is not how many troops--but how effectively they are employed.

This struggle serves once again to illustrate that emphasis on basic military skills and adherence to high standards of individual performance, combined with enterprising leadership at all levels, produces success in combat.

Each commander, down to include company level, engaged in counterinsurgency operations should be supplied with some amount of discretionary funds to be expended in support of intelligence activities.

Airpower, even in limited amounts, can make a significant contribution to counterinsurgency operations.

CONCLUSIONS

The Philippine counterinsurgency effort was successful only because of coordinated political, social, economic, and military operations aimed not only at the destruction of the insurgent but also at the elimination of the basic causes of insurgency.

The basic military tactics employed by the government forces during this successful counterinsurgency operation conforms, in general terms, to US Army doctrine.

The programs of Magsaysay, in spite of his integrity, drive, initiative, imagination, and knowledge of guerrilla warfare, would not have succeeded except for the fairly large nucleus of officers and men in the Armed Forces of the Philippines who executed his programs with honesty, vigor, and competence.

The Philippine Constabulary was a very effective counter-insurgency force during this period of low-intensity conflict.

Despite appearances to the contrary, based on changes in terminology and unit designations brought about by the AFP reorganization of 1950, the Philippine Constabulary provided the core of military effort against the insurgents, in terms of manpower, expertise, leadership, spirit, and tradition.

Although the Philippine Constabulary was an American invention; it has no counterpart in US history, is not widely understood or appreciated by US Army personnel, and has been allowed to fall under the advisory auspices of the Agency for International Development (AID) by default.

A well trained Constabulary, properly employed, combines some of the advantages of a police force with some of the advantages of a military force; and represents the most effective and economical internal defense force for a developing nation with limited resources.

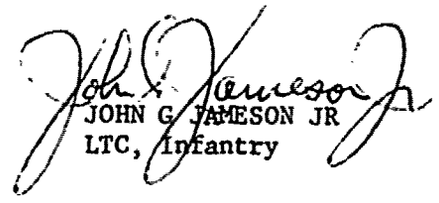
The US Army Military Police School, in conjunction with the Combat Developments Command Military Police Agency, has the capability to develop doctrine and techniques appropriate for the organization and training of Constabulary type forces, as well as other police forces, in developing nations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the US Army seek the mission of providing foreign assistance in the Constabulary and police fields.

It is recommended that the United States promote the establishment of Constabulary-type forces in selected developing nations which have a significant insurgency threat.

It is recommended that the book, Counter-Guerrilla Operations: The Philippine Experience, by Valeriano and Bohannan, be required reading for all US Army officers whose duties in any way involve counterinsurgency or stability operations.



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