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THESIS

**COUNTERINSURGENCY: THE ROLE OF
PARAMILITARIES**

by

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December 2004

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) <p>This thesis examines the role of paramilitary forces in the counterinsurgency operations being launched by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA). The Philippine government and the AFP firmly believe that the present Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary (CAA) is an essential component of the AFP's Operational clear-hold-support methodology.</p> <p>Many scholars have argued that separating the Communist guerrillas from the populace is an important element in winning the counterinsurgency campaign. Isolating the Communist insurgents is done through the creation of local militia. However, some authors contend it would be dangerous for any government to train paramilitary forces because, in the long term, the governments are unsure of the future loyalties of these paramilitary forces. They may currently be working for the government, but as they work and gain skills, these paramilitary forces could use these same skills against the government in the future. Thus, it is quite dangerous to train paramilitary forces.</p> <p>The Philippine paramilitaries are good examples of paramilitary forces being used effectively for counterinsurgency. Their primary task of protecting the communities and the people from the coercive and abusive acts of the Communist insurgents are achieved. They are an effective counterinsurgency force because of proper training as well as command and control.</p> <p>This thesis concludes that the Philippine government and the AFP are headed in the right operational direction for utilizing paramilitary forces for village defense and as the protectors of the people. The paramilitary forces in the Philippines need the proper training as well as command and control in order to make these paramilitary forces effective counterinsurgency forces.</p>			
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COUNTERINSURGENCY: THE ROLE OF PARAMILITARIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of paramilitary forces in the counterinsurgency operations being launched by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA). The Philippine government and the AFP firmly believe that the present Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary (CAA) is an essential component of the AFP's Operational clear-hold-support methodology.

Many scholars have argued that separating the Communist guerrillas from the populace is an important element in winning the counterinsurgency campaign. Isolating the Communist insurgents is done through the creation of local militia. However, some authors contend, it would be dangerous for any government to train paramilitary forces because, in the long term, the governments are unsure of the future loyalties of these paramilitary forces. They may currently be working for the government, but as they work and gain skills, these paramilitary forces could use these same skills against the government in the future. Thus, it is quite dangerous to train paramilitary forces.

The Philippine paramilitaries are good examples of paramilitary forces being used effectively for counterinsurgency. Their primary task of protecting the communities and the people from the coercive and abusive acts of the Communist insurgents is being achieved. They are an effective counterinsurgency force because of proper training as well as command and control.

This thesis concludes that the Philippine government and the AFP are headed in the right operational direction by utilizing paramilitary forces for village defense and as the protectors of the people. The paramilitary forces in the Philippines need the proper training as well as command and control in order to make these paramilitary forces effective counterinsurgency forces.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The communist insurgency in the Philippines has continuously wrought havoc on Philippine society while affecting millions of Filipinos for the past 35 years. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), has exploited the people, expanded their influence and capitalized on the weaknesses of both the Philippine government and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Their goal has been the creation of a Marxist state. The CPP has exploited the popular grievances of economic inequality, land disputes, monopolistic industries, corrupt leadership and an elite class more concerned with its own self-interests than with the public good. "The macro-level maldistribution of wealth, un- and underemployment, poverty, anxiety, the collapse of traditional social structures, corruption, factionalization, frustration brought about by unrealistic expectations concerning the government's capabilities, repression, weak national identity and inadequate political mechanisms for peaceful change" are preconditions for insurgency according to Steven Metz.¹

"The prime political objective of guerrilla action is to overrun a *barangay* (village), to hold it, consolidate it, and develop it into a communist cell."² The CPP sends out party cadres to indoctrinate and organize the local populace in their ideology, and to establish a shadow government. The cell provides shelter and intelligence to the NPA. Within the cell, the Communists collect taxes, recruit new members and mete out instant justice to people who conspire with the government. The Communists had control of approximately 20% of the 42,000 *barangays* in 1986. The Communist movement has gradually increased its operation and has grown into a force estimated at 15,000 to 22,500 guerrillas with a local militia of 20,000 and a mass base of one million citizens.³

The growth of these communist cells could have been stopped if the Philippine government and the AFP had pursued a serious counterinsurgency campaign against the

¹ Steven Metz, "The Future of Insurgency," U.S. Army War College, December 10, 1993.

² Claude A. Buss, Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines, (California: Stanford Alumni Association, 1987), p. 120.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

CPP/NPA. “Combating the guerrillas is both a military and a political problem.”⁴ The counterinsurgency campaign could have eliminated these communist cells if the government and the armed forces pursued the three major tasks simultaneously: 1) the military defeat of the guerrilla forces, 2) the separation of the guerrilla from the population, and 3) the re-establishment of governmental authority and social order.⁵

The earlier paramilitary forces originally called the Barrio Self-Defense Units (BSDU) and later renamed the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF), were appropriate to oppose the militias organized by the NPA. However, the government militias were improperly utilized and unjustly treated by the government because they received only a few pesos as compensation for their services.⁶ The armed forces failed to provide the proper cadres and appropriate training to these militias on how to do their job.

This thesis assesses how paramilitaries can help the AFP in combating the Communist insurgents, and in particular in the task of separating the insurgents from the population. Paramilitaries play a major role in the AFP Operational clear-hold-support methodology. The mobile forces, which are the maneuver battalions, are responsible for the conduct of internal security operations while the territorial forces consisting of the government paramilitaries and the local police are responsible for village defense. Both the local police and paramilitaries provide protection to the communities and the people by preventing the re-entry or incursion of the Communist insurgents.

The present Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary (CAA) of the AFP has been actively involved in the counterinsurgency campaign against the Communist insurgency. These paramilitaries were restructured, reorganized, retrained and closely supervised by the AFP in order to utilize these paramilitaries effectively against the insurgents and not against the people.

Finally, proper command and control of these paramilitaries by an appropriate unit will transform these counterinsurgency forces into more responsive, alert, dedicated, and committed territorial forces.

⁴ Peter Paret and John W. Shy, Guerrillas in the 1960's, (London: Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1962), p. 40.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The peso is a monetary unit used in the Philippines.

A. THESIS ORGANIZATION

Chapter II traces the history of paramilitary forces in the Philippines. The paramilitary was introduced in the early 1950's against the Huks insurgency. The ex-Huks were re-armed and utilized in counter-guerrilla operations against their former comrades. Several militia units were formed and used by the regular troops in the anti-dissident campaign. The formations of these militias, unfortunately, led to the rise of several vigilantes, which explains why the majority of the people became aggrieved since abuses and coercion were common occurrences in the early 1970's. The AFP provides the rationale for creating and integrating of the CAA into the AFP campaign strategy. The CAA plays a major role in counterinsurgency as effective territorial forces.

Chapter III focuses on the purpose on the organization of the Civilian Home Defense Forces. It includes the basic organization, mission, training and method of control and administration of these paramilitary forces. This chapter will also examine the threat of the Communist insurgency and the different government responses and the AFP strategies against the CPP/NPA. It will also explain the causes of the abuses committed by the paramilitaries and the reason why they became ineffective counterinsurgency forces.

Chapter IV examines the organization of a new paramilitary called the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units Active Auxiliary. It explains the mission, incentives and the concept of the paramilitary program. This chapter also discusses the different AFP strategies and the role of the paramilitaries in the counterinsurgency campaign against the Communist insurgency.

Chapter V discusses the lessons learned for utilizing the paramilitary forces in the counterinsurgency campaign. It also explains the comparison of the previously organized paramilitaries and the present CAA as well as the contributions of paramilitaries in the counterinsurgency strategy.

Chapter VI concludes with a recommendation on how to enhance and improve the utilization of paramilitaries in a counterinsurgency campaign. Paramilitaries can help the AFP in combating the Communist insurgents.

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II. HISTORY OF PARAMILITARY FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

A. INTRODUCTION

After the Japanese occupation, the Philippines was beset by the growing Huk insurgency. The Huk rebellion had amassed weapons and armaments taken from the Japanese during the war and the liberation period. There were about 100,000 Huks with as many as 12,000 armed.⁷ The movement had a large membership because of its conviction, nationalism, and perhaps, idealism to drive out the Japanese invaders.

Huks, an abbreviated form of HUKBALAHAP (Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon) means the People's Army Against the Japanese. It was a group formed in a remote village in Central Luzon on March 29, 1942 to fight the Japanese invaders.⁸ The Huks were described as a "tricky, elusive, hard-hitting guerrilla outfit that is rigidly disciplined, indoctrinated and operated under tight Communist rule."⁹ The Huk guerrillas harassed the Japanese at any opportune moment, propagated the communist ideology in the rural people and fought the anti-communist guerrilla units.¹⁰ The Huks had been fighting the Japanese since 1942 and they decided to resume the armed struggle even though the United States had granted the Philippines independence in 1946. The men who had been fighting the Japanese invaders were now fighting for themselves. They wanted a share of the land for which they had fought. The army of 30,000 soldiers was helpless to contain the 12,000 armed guerrillas because of the cooperation of an estimated one million Filipinos.¹¹

⁷ Alvin H. Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism, (California: Stanford University Press, 1955), p. 28.

⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁹ Guy J. Pauker, Government Responses to Armed Insurgency in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Examination of Failures and Successes and Their Likely Implications for the Future, (California: The Rand Corporation, 1985), p. 28.

¹⁰ Gregorio F. Zaide, Philippine Political and Cultural History, (Manila: Philippine Education Company, 1957), p. 377.

¹¹ Robert Taber, War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare, (Washington D. C.: Brassey's Inc., 2002), p. 136.

On April 28, 1950, the Huks changed their name to Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (HMB) or People's Liberation Army. Several atrocities and coercions were committed by the HMB against the people and the government. The Philippine government waged an active anti-Huk campaign (referring to HMB) with extensive U.S. military assistance. Ramon Magsaysay, who was the Secretary of Defense and later became President, reorganized and streamlined the armed forces by discharging or retiring undesirable soldiers and rewarding those who did well. The armed forces became involved in partisan politics and career officers filled high government posts.¹² The author would argue that Magsaysay wanted to maximize the power of the civilian authority over the military. According to Michael C. Desch, "a state facing low external threat and high internal threats should experience the weakest civilian control of the military."¹³ Magsaysay's campaign strategy against the insurgents in the early 1950's was focused on a combination of reformed armed forces and a policy of attraction that proved effective against the Huks insurgency in 1951. "Counter- guerrilla warfare, then, is an extremely difficult kind of war to wage- indeed, far more so than the clash of armies- because the war cannot be won without extensive reforms."¹⁴ Magsaysay formed the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) as part of the army.¹⁵ EDCOR was a resettlement and homestead program for the ex-Huks in order to rehabilitate them as loyal and productive citizens. The government propaganda and campaign strategy were effective because the Huk insurgency was defeated.

B. ORIGIN OF PARAMILITARY FORCES

The paramilitary was introduced into the Philippine counterinsurgency effort against the Huks as early as the 1950's. The homestead became a reward to ex-Huks for surrendering to government forces and for participating in counter-guerrilla operations against their former comrades. The surrendered insurgents were utilized as militia against their former comrades. Another typical civilian volunteer was the group of former United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) guerrillas who wanted to contribute their

¹² Roland E. Dolan, Philippines: A Country Study, (DA Pam 550- 72, 1993), p. 246.

¹³ Michael C. Desch, Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment, (Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 14.

¹⁴ Steven W. Hook and John Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2004), p. 125.

¹⁵ Scaff, p. 38.

spare time to patriotic service.¹⁶ The counterinsurgency effort started to develop a grass-roots political organization, or the “barangay” movement with paramilitary characteristics. Military operations became effective with strong armed forces and civilian volunteer counter-guerrillas.¹⁷ The 7th Battalion Combat Team (BCT) developed the model paramilitary called civilian guards. The guards were provided with radios, trained and equipped for counterinsurgency campaigns.¹⁸ Civilian guards took orders from the military but they were employees of local elites who were disliked by the people because of a bad reputation. Suppressing the Huk insurgency became the primary mission of the armed forces while also maintaining peace and order in the countryside. According to former Secretary of National Defense Angelo T. Reyes, “that the mission was sometimes complicated by the fact that the hacenderos-owners of large estates tilled by tenants-maintained private armies, ostensibly to protect their haciendas and their persons from the Huks and other criminal elements.”¹⁹ Secretary Reyes was emphatic that these private armies were also used as tools of intimidation and control.

Ten Battalion Combat Teams were organized pursuant to The Army Appropriation Act for 1950 to address the Huk insurgency.²⁰ Several militia units were organized to assist the regular troops in the anti-dissident campaign. They came under different names, such as Civilian Guards, Civilian Commando Units, Home Guards or Special Police. These militias were used in the following ways:²¹

- As security for the town or barrios to protect the lives and property of the civilians.
- As a blocking force to intercept the movements of the insurgents and their supplies.

¹⁶ Instrument of Statescraft: U.S. Guerilla Warfare, Counterinsurgency, and Counterterrorism, 1940-1990, “Toward a New Counterinsurgency: Philippines, Laos and Vietnam”, <http://www.statecraft.org/chapter4.html> (June 29, 2004).

¹⁷ A barangay is the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines, roughly equivalent to a rural village or urban neighborhood.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁹ Speech of Ambassador Angelo T. Reyes at the Asia Pacific Research Center at Stanford University on October 9, 2003.

²⁰ Scaff, p. 37.

²¹ Restituto L. Aguilar, “Sibul CAA Detachment: The Longest Serving Militia Facility in Western Luzon,” Army Journal, 4th Quarter Issue, 2001.

- As guides and helpers to carry supplies for the government troops.
- As a strike force in coordination with regular armed forces units.

In early 1968, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reactivated its counter-insurgency machinery due to increased dissident activities. It was assessed that a communist movement was formed and composed of a few dozen peasant rebels who were remnants of the Huk movement. “The Communist Party of the Philippines had grown to nearly 2,000 members and poorly armed New People’s Army (NPA) squads were launching hit-and–run ambushes in Central Luzon, the Sierra Madre of northeast Luzon and a few other pockets of the 1,000 mile-long archipelago.”²² There are several different types of guerrilla movements, as well as different levels of guerrilla conflict. According to Gerard Chaliand, “the most important element in guerrilla campaign is the underground political infrastructure, rooted in the population itself and coordinated by middle-ranking cadres.”²³ Through this element, it will guarantee growth; provide the necessary recruits, information and local logistics. The CPP is an underground movement with a framework for a revolutionary struggle aimed to overthrow the government.

The AFP’s response to the emerging insurgency was to formulate active measures to contain the insurgency by denial and counter-insurgency operations.²⁴ Denial operations were meant to deprive the insurgents of logistical, intelligence and other foodstuff support from the local populace. The counter-insurgency operations involved pacification drives through the conduct of small-unit patrols, and continuous combat operations in the insurgent infested areas. In 1970, the armed forces started to sanction the organization of civilian volunteers initially under the operational supervision of the Philippine Constabulary utilized for intelligence and information gathering, and later used for counterinsurgency operations against the growing insurgents in Central Luzon.²⁵ The AFP formed and organized the Barrio Self-Defense Units (BSDU) in the affected areas under the direct supervision of the Philippine Constabulary.

²² Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 6.

²³ Gerard Chaliand, Guerrilla Strategies: An historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan, (California: University of California Press, 1982), p. 10.

²⁴ Army Journal, 4th Quarter Issue, 2001.

²⁵ Justus M. van der Kroef, Aquino’s Philippines: The Deepening Security Crisis, The Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, (England: The Eastern Press Limited, 1988), p. 17.

The action of the armed forces was based on the Department of Defense order no. 445 issued on July 10, 1971. It contained the organization, operation and utilization of the Barrio Self-Defense Units and other similar units, which were under the jurisdiction of the Undersecretary for Home Defense.²⁶ BSDU was a legitimate militia organization formed to assist the Philippine Constabulary against the insurgency movement.

The thrust of the armed forces was to provide the BSDU with arms and cadres for the immediate defense of their communities against the insurgents. A BSDU organization was composed of five enlisted men and five civilian volunteers. The militia was basically independent in their operations and controlled by the enlisted men, who in the long run, became their buddies and partners in the performance of their tasks of protecting the communities. The BSDU was doing well in the early stages of its inception but became a liability to the armed forces due to their illegal activities and abuse of authority over the civilians. “The principal task was to tackle the political, social and economic conditions that bred support for the guerrillas in the first place- that is, they must regain the “hearts and minds” of the populace.”²⁷ The author would argue that the armed forces lost the hearts and minds of the populace because of the dissatisfaction and grievances of the civilians toward the BSDU.

The militia members heavily relied on the support of barrio (village) officials and members of the community for their operational needs and probably even their personal needs because this militia was not one of the government’s priorities in terms of both organizational and operational support. It was not surprising that many militia members became bodyguards of influential people and politicians because of remunerations and benefits they received from them. Militia members were performing everything for the politicians instead of doing their duty as a village defense unit. The problem was exacerbated with the feeling of resentment of the people toward the government, which had been unable to resolve key issues such as agrarian reform, social services, health care, justice and other social services. As Julian Paget argued, “there is no purely military battlefield in counter- insurgency warfare, and the campaign can only be won by

²⁶ Army Journal.

²⁷ Hook and Spanier, p. 125.

combined civil- military efforts.”²⁸ The people felt they were ignored and the militia was organized to further their suffering because of the abuses of the militias. The people were forced to provide material support to the militias for their services. Supporting the BSDU was too much of a burden for the people in the barrios because most relied only on their harvests for daily sustenance.

C. COUNTERINSURGENCY AND PARAMILITARY FORCES

1. Roxas Administration (1946 - 1949)

The Roxas administration intended to eliminate the Huk in 60 days. “Extermination through military action was the basic aim.”²⁹ The Government troops, poorly trained and underpaid, were sent to eradicate the Huk menace but failed. The troops resorted to maltreating innocent suspects in an effort to extract information. People felt that the military was more abusive than the Huks. The government used the policy of mediation when the policy of all-out force was not effective. A three-month truce with the Huks was arranged where teams composed of government and Huk representatives went barrio to barrio to persuade the dissidents to lay down their arms. The truce ended in bitter fighting between government forces and the Huks.³⁰ The people feared the military more than the insurgents and they continued to support the communists.

2. Quirino Administration (1949 - 1953)

The Quirino administration had attempted appeasement and fairness schemes toward the insurgents. A negotiation option with the Huk leaders was made, and in the process, amnesty was proposed for all to be forgotten and forgiven. Amnesty was proclaimed on June 21, 1948.³¹ However, the Huks demanded extensive reforms in the government and they refused to disarm. Few insurgents accepted the amnesty offer, and therefore, the government collected few firearms. The government initiative was a failure.

²⁸ Julian Paget, Counter- insurgency Operations: Techniques of Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Walker and Company, 1967), p. 157.

²⁹ Scaff, p. 28.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

³¹ Zaide, p. 378.

3. Magsaysay Administration (1954 - 1958)

Magsaysay, as Secretary of the Department of National Defense in the early 1950's, reorganized the armed forces with the integration of the Philippine Constabulary into the Army as a unified command.³² According to Julian Paget, "the second condition which is essential to effective civil- military co-operation is the establishment of a unified command, with the direction and control of the campaign in the hands of one person."³³ The Magsaysay strategy changed the image and credibility of the armed forces. He punished the undesirable but rewarded those who were effective soldiers. Civil affairs officers participated in community activities and tried to win the support of the civilians. He established an Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) as part of the army. There were homesteads for the Huks who surrendered. They were resettled in Mindanao. It was successful and it caused the collapse of the Huk insurgency. The Philippine government won the counterinsurgency campaign.

4. Marcos Administration (1965 - 1986)

The Marcos administration reorganized the armed forces to make the military more effective in combating the NPA.³⁴ Presidential Decree Number 1086, creating the Integrated Civilian Home Defense Force (ICHDF) on September 22, 1976, was issued and implemented to assist the AFP in the effective solution to the peace and order problem of the country. ICHDF was an integration of all paramilitary units and its mission was village defense. The intention of the armed forces was to establish a firm base where government troops could actively and aggressively patrol to dominate the areas frequented by the insurgents.³⁵ However, the mission and tasks of the ICHDF were unclear and its utilization was placed in the hands of both military and police commanders who were influenced by the local executives and powerful politicians. This militia unit did not receive any training and was not given even enough stipend for their services. The people argued that the militia was unfit for the job of protecting the community against the newly formed communist movement. The Philippine government

³² Scaff, p. 36.

³³ Paget, p. 158.

³⁴ Richard J. Kessler, Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines, (North Carolina: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 116.

³⁵ Paget, p. 175.

had not actually developed a coordinated civilian- political doctrine to combat the insurgency.³⁶ At the early stage of an insurgency, the government must declare its national policy so that all concerned can work towards one common purpose and plan.³⁷

Powerful individuals who had connections with the police and military, and those who were very influential estate owners, also maintained “private” CHDFs for the security of their property as well as for their personal protection. CHDF became abusive and counterproductive in the government campaign strategy against the growing insurgency threat. CHDF was a failure because the insurgent movement grew in number and the people’s support remained with the insurgents.

5. Aquino Administration (1986 - 1992)

The Aquino administration disbanded the CHDF and other illegal armed groups or private armies not recognized by the duly constituted authority.³⁸ However, after a few months, the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliaries (CAA), another militia unit, was activated to assist the AFP in confronting the growing insurgency threat. This militia unit was trained, better equipped and closely supervised by the AFP in its counterinsurgency operations against the CPP/NPA.

6. Ramos Administration (1992 - 1998)

President Fidel V. Ramos viewed security in broad terms taking into account military, political, economic, societal and environmental factors.³⁹ The AFP has been subordinated to civilian leaders and given the task of providing external defense and the responsibility against domestic subversion. Michael C. Desch argues that “an externally oriented military will have less inclination to participate in domestic politics, especially if the state is supplying sufficient resources to execute the military’s external missions.”⁴⁰

³⁶ Kessler, p. 119.

³⁷ Julian Paget, Counter- Insurgency Operations: Techniques of Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Walker and Company, 1967), p. 158.

³⁸ Section 24, Article XVIII, Transitory Provisions, 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

³⁹ Clark D. Neher, Southeast Asia in the New International Era, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p. 81.

⁴⁰ Michael C. Desch, Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment, (Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 14.

Ramos provided the armed forces the needed resources and ensured professional leadership. Ramos allowed the armed forces to continue with the CAA program to assist the AFP in its counterinsurgency campaign.

D. RISE OF VIGILANTISM

The rise of vigilantism, particularly in Mindanao, was due to a growing insurgency threat and the need for a “People Power” type response to the NPA threat.⁴¹ One anti-communist organization that started to function in Davao City was the *Alsa Masa* (Masses Arise) in November 1986 founded by Rolando Cagay, a former NPA “tax collector” in Davao City. The *Alsa Masa* was legitimized by the police because it was an effective vigilante against the NPA. The NPA feared the *Alsa Masa*. Other vigilante groups were the *NAKASAKA* (an acronym for *Nakhahiusang Katawhan Alang sa Kalinaw* or People’s United for Democracy) in Negros, and the *Puersa Masa* (People Power) in Misamis Oriental.⁴² The people in these areas sided with these vigilante groups because they were able to drive out the NPA, eliminated the tax collection as well as the NPA’s coercive activities.

It became very alarming that several vigilante groups started to form because of the earlier support provided by the local military and police commanders in the area, such as the *Davao’s Toktok*, *Cebu City’s Citizens against Communism Army (CACA)*, and other groups whose actions were no longer against the NPA but rather against their personal enemies. The control of these groups became a problem for the military and the police. The people would both fear the NPA and the vigilante groups. They could hardly distinguish who were communists and anti-communists because of their actions and attitudes toward the people. Both became abusive and demanding.

E. RATIONALE OF EMPLOYMENT OF PARAMILITARY FORCES

The AFP is a total force. It means that the armed forces are composed of a regular and reserve force in order to perform its mission. As mandated in the 1987 Constitution, the Philippine government shall maintain a regular force and a reserve force that will serve as the expansion base in the event of war, invasion, or national emergencies.

⁴¹ Justus M. van der Kroef, *Aquino’s Philippines: The Deepening Security Crisis*, The Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, (England: The Eastern Press Limited, 1988), p. 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Due to the prevailing security conditions affecting the country and expansion of the Communist Party of the Philippines nationwide, the AFP has to deploy additional combat units and recruit additional personnel in order to address the communist problem. The national campaign strategy made the AFP the lead role in internal security operations with the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the supporting role. The AFP has organized and activated CAA to complement the AFP in its counterinsurgency campaign strategy.

Peter Paret and John Shy argued that different tactics must be used against guerrillas depending on whether they are well established, closely identified with the population or just beginning the process of indoctrination and organization.⁴³ In the case of the CPP, it is a 35 year old insurgency that requires serious, lasting and doable solutions. The CPP/NPA has no external support and heavily relies on mass base support. In many instances, the NPA resorted to extortion, forced taxation, and criminal activities such as robbery and kidnapping. During the recent national election of 2004, the NPA was able to collect what they call permit-to campaign fees from electoral candidates. Parret and Shy mentioned that three major tasks characterized the counter-guerrilla action and it was necessary to execute them simultaneously because success in one area depends on progress in the others.⁴⁴

- The military defeat of the guerrilla forces
- The separation of the guerrilla from the population
- The re- establishment of government authority and social order.

The CAA was primarily to defend the villages from the insurgents' attacks and prevent the re-entry of the insurgents in the villages or communities. Basically, these tasks are undertaken to separate the insurgents from the population. The insurgents can no longer coerce, intimidate and collect taxes from the populace. The CAA serves as the protectors of the people and as security for the villages. In the case of both Malaya and Kenya, that the establishment of a Home Guard was the most decisive step in counter-insurgency warfare.⁴⁵

⁴³ Peter Paret and John W. Shy, Guerrillas in the 1960's, (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962), p. 40.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴⁵ Paret and Shy, Op. Cit.

It is not easy to separate the insurgents from the populace because guerrillas are not solitary fighters hiding among the people but mobilize the people to fight against the government. “Counter-guerrilla warfare, then, is an extremely difficult kind of war to wage- indeed, far more so than the clash of armies-because the war cannot be won without extensive reforms.”⁴⁶ Any counter-insurgency campaign must include political and military goals. Julian Paget argues that the military aim is dependent on political considerations, and it is essential that the political directive should include three points:⁴⁷

- the purpose and scope of military operations
- the short- term political and military aims governing the campaign
- the long- term political aim which it hopes to achieve when the military campaign is over

With the CAA and the local police providing the security and defense of the communities, the Army can be more mobile and effective in the conduct of COIN. The CAA becomes force multipliers in the internal security operations and is an essential component of the Win-Hold-Win Strategy of the AFP.

F. CONCLUSION

The paramilitary forces from the CCU to the present CAA had been utilized by the AFP as force multipliers in its counterinsurgency operations. The basic mission of paramilitary forces is to support the armed forces in maintaining a secured environment by safeguarding the community against the communist insurgents. The civilian guards were organized in 1949 to fight the Huk insurgents. The guards took orders from the military but they were tied directly to the local elites and the people disliked them for having a bad reputation. The Barrio Self- Defense Units were organized in 1971 after the civilian guards were disbanded to assist the Philippine Constabulary in its campaign against the Communists Party of the Philippines. Their primary task was intelligence and information gathering for identifying and locating the communist insurgents. The BSDU became an active component of the Philippine Constabulary in the conduct of combat operations against the communist insurgents. In 1976, BSDU was disbanded and a new paramilitary unit called CHDF was formed and organized to assist the AFP in counterinsurgency campaigns but its mission was focused on village defense under the

⁴⁶ Hook and Spanier, p. 125.

⁴⁷ Julian Paget, p. 156.

supervision of the police and the army. The CHDF was disbanded in 1987 due to alleged irregularities and illegal activities. CAA was organized a few months after the CHDF was deactivated. The CAA's primary mission is to defend the villages from insurgents' attacks and to prevent the re-entry of the insurgents into the villages. The CAA was placed under the close supervision of Army units after the separation of the Philippine Constabulary from the AFP in 1990, and placed under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

III. CIVILIAN HOME DEFENSE FORCE

A. INTRODUCTION

Due to the rise of the New Peoples Army (NPA), the government authorized the formation of local militias originally known as the Barrio Self-Defense Unit (BSDU) and later as the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF).⁴⁸ The BSDU was organized in the early 1960's and composed of five enlisted men and five civilian volunteers. The main motive of the BSDU was to take responsibility for the immediate defense of the local community from the growing communist movement. It was increased to 15 members to deprive the insurgents of logistics, intelligence and other types of support from the local population effectively. The services of the BSDU in the community were compensated by the community providing subsistence and other provisions because they received nothing from the government except the firearms for protecting themselves and the community from the insurgents.

B. THREAT OF THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY

The New People's Army (NPA), the military arm of the CPP expanded very rapidly. The NPA has established itself throughout the Philippines. The NPA organized the peasantry to demand reduction of land rent and helped the farmers to form production cooperatives. The NPA commanded a broad base of popular support and able to organize the people's militia.⁴⁹ New guerilla fronts were formed and the number of villages falling in the guerrilla zones.

The NPA was actively attacking poorly defended armed forces detachments with the intent to acquire more weapons and ammunitions. The raid of the armory at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), the country's equivalent of West Point, in December 30, 1970 was one successful effort of the NPA to generate arms from the

⁴⁸ Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 124.

⁴⁹ E. San Juan, Crisis in the Philippines: The Making of a Revolution, (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc., 1986), p. 147.

government. Approximately 21 automatic rifles, 14 carbines, six machine guns, one bazooka, grenade launchers, and more than 5,000 rounds of ammunition were carted away by NPA guerrillas led by a former constabulary officer Victor Corpus.⁵⁰

The NPA raided the towns of Mapanao and Gamay in northern Samar in April 1979 where they disarmed the police and military and conducted dialogue with the people emphasizing their needs and problems. The NPA left the areas with weapons and communication equipment taken from the police and military.⁵¹

Theodore G. Shackley argues, “the 26,000- strong New People’s Army (NPA) appears variously as terrorists, urban guerrillas, or rural guerrillas.”⁵² The NPA was terrorists because they threaten to kill American business executives. They are also considered urban guerrillas because they assassinate policemen and United States soldiers by the so called “sparrow squads”. In addition, they are rural guerrillas because they attack police stations and ambush military convoys.⁵³

1. Communism Reemerged

The resurgence of communism in the Philippines was started by a small group of academics led by Jose Maria Sison. He was a prolific writer and author of the book *Philippine Society and Revolution*. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), Maoist in orientation was founded in December 1969.⁵⁴ After a few months, a group of guerrillas led by a certain Commander Dante joined the CPP, which was the beginning of the expansion of communism in the Philippines.

2. Sison’s Strategy

In the early years of the insurgency, Sison adopted one key element of Mao’s strategy, the development of stable base areas in the countryside. “The key to a successful revolution in the Philippines, Sison confidently declared, was a measured, stage-by-stage war led by a peasant army operating from “stable base areas” in the countryside and

⁵⁰ Jones, p. 47.

⁵¹ E. San Juan, p. 147.

⁵² Theodore G. Shackley, Robert L. Oatman and Richard A. Finney, *You’re the Target*, (New World Publishing Ltd., 1989), p. 30.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Guy J. Pauker, *Government Responses to Armed Insurgency in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Examination of Failures and Successes and Their Likely Implications for the Future* (California: The Rand Corporation, 1985), p. 29.

guided by the theories of Mao.”⁵⁵ The concept was not properly defined resulting in various interpretations by the cadres. The CPP Central Committee discarded the concept in late 1974 in favor of creating a mobile guerilla base. Sison dispatched several cadres throughout the country to develop guerilla fronts simultaneously instead of concentrating on a single base area.

The primary motive of Sison’s strategy was self-reliant and autonomous guerilla fronts. The guerilla bases would be situated in the provincial boundaries. This situation favors the guerilla fronts’ political and military influence over two or three provinces. Guerrilla operations would be conducted in a wide area and in a decentralized fashion.⁵⁶ The strategy of the guerrilla is to force the government troops to spread out in all directions and force them to set up permanent bases.⁵⁷ Small groups of government forces must be surrounded and destroyed and their equipment seized. Another advantage of the communist movement was that “the government would be forced to disperse its forces and would be unable to destroy the rebels on any one island.”⁵⁸ Sison believed that fighting a prolonged guerrilla struggle in a country with many scattered islands would be difficult but in the long run, it would turn into the long-term strength of the CPP. The mountainous geography if used properly would also offer great advantages to the NPA according to Sison. He knew the difficulty of waging war simultaneously on all fronts. For this reason, the central committee, the regional as well as local personnel must be politically autonomous and materially self-sufficient. Guerrilla operations would be decentralized in nature.

During the 20th Anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Central Committee in its anniversary message stated “the guerrilla warfare with the

⁵⁵ Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 95.

⁵⁶ Samuel Griffith, Mao- Tse Tung on Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1961), p. 24.

⁵⁷ Abdul Haris Nasution, Fundamentals of Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 42.

⁵⁸ Jones, p. 96.

enthusiastic support of the masses must be extensively and intensively employed to wipe out and disarm the enemy, destroy his anti- people facilities and drain him of his strength politically, militarily, economically and morally.”⁵⁹

Geography is a risk factor in conflict according to Paul Collier. “Geography matters because if the population is highly geographically dispersed, then the country is harder for the government to control than if everyone lives in the same small area.”⁶⁰ The risk of conflict was more likely because it is unusually hard for the armed forces to control the population.

The CPP/NPA was able to exploit the popular grievances against the government. The problems that beset the country included economic inequality, land disputes, monopolistic industries, corrupt leadership and an elite class more concerned with self-interest than with the public good. According to Stephen Metz, “the insurgent strategies would attempt to try to mobilize the discontented and frustrated by emphasizing the uneven distribution of the rewards of economic development.”⁶¹ The grievances evolved over economic deprivation, social injustice, government corruption and abuse of power.⁶² The government was weak that governmental programs could not be implemented due to the patronage of a network that limits the authority of the people in power. There were no coherent governmental programs that could be implemented because the authorities were not free of the oligarchic connections. After the 1986 People Power revolution when the democratic government was restored, the government was unable to form policies that undermined the oligarchic power structure.⁶³

John W. Sloan argues, “In the mind of the new military officer, the lack of economic development is the most significant national weakness because it invites

⁵⁹ Central Committee message during the 20th Anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines, <http://www.philippinerevolution.org/cpp/astm/1988/1988e03.shtml> (August 23, 2004).

⁶⁰ Paul Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy,” June 15, 2000.

⁶¹ Steven Metz, “The Future of Insurgency,” December 10, 1993.

⁶² Staff Report to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence United States Senate on November 1, 1985.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

aggression by more developed states and subversion by leftist guerrillas. The conditions associated with underdevelopment are threats to national security and are therefore of increasing concern for military officers.”⁶⁴

3. Communist Two-Stage Agrarian Revolution

The communist revolution is “a struggle for land among the peasants.”⁶⁵ Sison had outlined a two- stage agrarian revolution to be executed in the countryside. The landlords would be forced to lower farm rents and interest rates. When the areas are already controlled by the NPA, lands would be taken from their owners and given to poor peasants. The landlords deemed the “parasites” of society would be eliminated as a class.⁶⁶ The land rentals in areas controlled by the NPA were lowered and peasants’ livelihood had improved. The communist land reform became an effective means of winning the loyalty and support of the peasants. The CPP’s slogan “Land to the tillers” was proven attractive to many desperate peasants.⁶⁷ The CPP was successful in mobilizing the poor peasants to participate in Party- organized rallies and demonstrations.

4. Status of the Communist Insurgency

The CPP/NPA insurgency now can still be categorized in the strategic defensive stage whereby “the guerrilla movement concentrates its efforts on building up its military and political base support.”⁶⁸ The insurgents are incapable of controlling the key cities and towns or areas that can pose a strategic stalemate with the government troops. “Communist leaders had mapped out strategy that called for an escalation of the war in 1989- 1990, with the hope of forcing a military stalemate by 1992.”⁶⁹ CPP/NPA was able to form as many as 60 fronts around the country and was estimated to have 16,500 troops and approximately 20 percent of the villages in the country were influenced by the NPA.⁷⁰ Violent atrocities perpetrated by the NPA were being felt in many of the

⁶⁴ John W. Sloan, Public Policy in Latin America: A Comparative Survey, (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984), p. 172.

⁶⁵ Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 178.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Jeffrey D. Simon, “Country Assessments and the Philippines,” A Rand Note, March 1987, p. 7.

⁶⁹ Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 9.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

provinces. The Communists always engage under the conditions of their own choosing because of superior knowledge of the terrain and they used it to their advantage. The guerrillas fight only when the chances of victory are in their favor, they withdraw if the tide of battle is against them.⁷¹ The NPA was successful in using the terrain to their advantage. Their attacks were sudden, violent and short duration. The insurgency movement posed a serious challenge to the government.

The Philippine churches are no exception to the communist expansion. Cardinal Jaime Sin has confirmed that Communists have infiltrated his church.⁷² Radical clergy in the Philippines did not only provide funding to the revolution but also openly encourage it. Other church officials admitted that a few dozen of the country's 5,500 priests and nuns have joined the armed Communist rebels.⁷³

The Central Committee message on the 20th CPP Anniversary stated that "the ideological, political and organizational strength that the Party has accumulated since 1968 provide a basis for advancing at a cumulative rate toward the maturation of the strategic defensive, further on toward the strategic stalemate and finally toward the strategic offensive in the armed revolution."⁷⁴

As of last quarter of CY-2003, CPP/NPA was able to organize 106 guerrilla fronts with 8,293 members (93% belong to pro- Sison faction) broken down into 4,337 CPP members and 3,956 NPA elements. The total firearms were 5,889. The total number of affected "barangays" was 2,490.⁷⁵ The rising trend in the number of guerrilla fronts since 1995 had an annual average rate of increase of 11%. Of the 106 fronts, only 14 are

⁷¹ Samuel B. Griffith, Mao-Tse-Tung On Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1961), p. 23.

⁷² Theodore G. Shackley, Robert L. Oatman and Richard A. Finney, You're the Target, (New World Publishing Ltd., 1989), p. 39.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Central Committee message during the 20th Anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines, <http://www.philippinerevolution.org/cpp/astm/1988/1988e03.shtml> (August 23, 2004).

⁷⁵ Barangay is the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines, roughly equivalent to a rural village or urban neighborhood.

categorized as very active and advanced fronts distributed as follows: 6 in Luzon, 3 in Visayas and 5 in Mindanao.⁷⁶ The additional fronts are part of the CPP's plan to further spread the government forces thinly.

C. GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

1. Land Reform Program

The government's comprehensive land reform program of former president Ramon Magsaysay in 1953 gave the small farmers new hope. He instituted a land reform program that caused the Huk insurgents to no longer have mass base support upon which they had largely depended.⁷⁷ Magsaysay addressed the root causes of the peasant's rebellion and reestablished the image and credibility of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that led to the defeat of insurgency after almost eight years of struggle against the government ⁷⁸

In 1972, the land reform program was characterized by mismanagement and lack of integrity on the part of the bureaucracy. Only 132,000 tenants- farmers instead of millions in 13 years were offered titles to the land they tilled. The reason was insufficient land to be distributed and the government decrees could not overcome the landlord resistance. The government also discovered land distribution would not automatically increase productivity without capital. Another weakness was 90% of the beneficiaries of the program were reluctant to pay their annual installments.⁷⁹

When Marcos was deposed, the new administration tried to address the land reform issue. The Agrarian Reform Bill was approved by Congress and signed into law in 1988. "The program aimed to redistribute farm plots to landless peasants and farm workers or implement production or profit sharing arrangements between landowners and their tenant farmers or plantation workers."⁸⁰ All public and private agricultural lands

⁷⁶ AFP operations data.

⁷⁷ The Huk insurgents were the guerrillas organized by Luis Taruc against the Japanese forces in 1942.

⁷⁸ Guy J. Pauker, Government Responses to Armed Insurgency in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Examination of Failures and Successes and Their Likely Implications For The Future (California: The Rand Corporation, 1985), p. 28.

⁷⁹ Claude A. Buss, Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines, (California: The Portable Stanford, 1987), p. 51.

⁸⁰ Gregg R. Jones, Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 183.

became subject to the land reform program. However, wealthy landowners with some backing of prominent politicians tried to find ways to circumvent the program. Only 37% of landowners registered their farms for the land reform program and eventual redistribution. Many landowners “denounced the effort as communistic and vowed to fight- with violence, if necessary- the implementation of agrarian reform.”⁸¹ Another problem identified was the cost of the implementation of the comprehensive agrarian reform program which would cost about \$70 billion during the 10 year plan.⁸² The source of funding was unclear, and thus, land reform remained unresolved.

2. Martial Law declared

Martial law was imposed in September 21, 1972. The writ of habeas corpus was suspended which caused the communists and their supporters to go deep underground. The key leaders including its founding chairman were arrested and detained. The military and police directly addressed the period of disorder and violence. Law and order was restored especially in Manila.

The streets of Manila, particularly at night, had been amongst the most dangerous in the world. Suddenly the atmosphere was transformed: the hold- up men, pimps and thieves to be found round any street- corner disappeared as if by magic- either locked up or afraid to show their faces- so that the citizen could get about on his lawful occasions with a quite new sense of security.⁸³

Many had claimed that the early years of martial rule was successful and productive because of the earlier successes of the land reform, agricultural and other government programs including health and family planning services and the improved security situation. The people’s lives had improved and security was felt even in the remote villages.

According to Ambassador James Alexander Turpin of the British Diplomatic Service, one of the crucial objectives of martial law was “to narrow the spectacularly

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² David Joel Steinberg, *The Philippines: A Singular and a Plural Place*. (Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1990), p. 169.

⁸³ Alex Turpin, “New Society’s Challenge in the Philippines,” *Conflict Studies*, (Great Britain: The Eastern Press Ltd., 1980), p. 4.

wide gap between the very rich and very poor by encouraging growth in all sectors of the economy and thus creating new job opportunities.”⁸⁴ The emphasis was for all Filipinos to have access to the basic amenities. Turpin said these were President Marcos’ words:

Equality in the sense of our progressive society does mean, however, that he is going to have his three square meals, a roof over his head, efficient public transport, schooling for his children, and medical care for his family. Without these things, he cannot be very productive, trapped in a vicious circle: unproductiveness keeps him poor and poverty keeps him unproductive.⁸⁵

However, the people felt differently as the government become more authoritarian than constitutional. “Unemployment rose to 20% and underemployment to 40%, real income shrank as inflation increased and corruption reached an intolerable state under “crony capitalism” whereby Marcos’ friends were placed in charged of business conglomerates despite their lack of business acumen.”⁸⁶ The country suffered negative growth rate and chaotic economy.

According to Morris Janowitz, “the role of coercion in the developing nations requires a perspective that encompasses more than the military, one that can include coercive institutions, such as police and paramilitary formations, and the various forms of repression.”⁸⁷

Political repression, government-military factionalism, economic mismanagement, and corruption were critical issues that affected the stability of the country. The most prominent issue threatening the stability of the Philippines was the growing New People’s Army insurgency.⁸⁸

3. Sison and Buscayno Released

After the People’s Power peaceful revolution in February 1986, Jose Ma Sison, the professor- theorist of the revolution, who has been held in solitary confinement for

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Clark D. Neher, Southeast Asia in the New International Era, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p. 67.

⁸⁷ Morris Janowitz, Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations, (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 20.

⁸⁸ Jeffrey D. Simon, “Country Assessments and the Philippines,” A Rand Note, March 1987, p. 10.

seven years, and Bernabe Buscayno- also known as Commander Dante- who had converted the ragged band of outlaws into the most formidable communist resistance force in the world today were unconditionally released.⁸⁹ The government released about 500 political prisoners and called on the NPA to enter into peace talks with the government.

President Aquino explained her program in these words:

I will use the power of the state to fight any force, whether communist or not, which will seek to overthrow our democratic government or destroy our cultural heritage, including our belief in God. But I will respect a communist's right, or anybody's right for that matter, peacefully to sell his ideas to others. I am confident that under a government that enjoys the confidence of the people, ideologies that run counter to our cultural and religious values will be rejected without need of bloodshed.⁹⁰

President Corazon Aquino remarked that if the hard-core communists would continue to fight the government, she would fight them with all the means at her disposal. On the mass base, she offered them food, medicine, new hope and a better alternative than joining or supporting the NPA. She offered amnesty and would allow the CPP to operate as an ordinary political party.⁹¹ "The National Reconciliation and Development Program were established to encourage NPA defections by offering land, job training and assimilation into society."⁹² The program was a disappointment to the government because very few insurgents surrendered. The hard-core communists proclaimed that they would fight until imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism were eliminated. The policy of reconciliation and peace negotiation with the CPP/NPA did not work well. After 60 days of truce, "Cory urged her officers to hit hard and to retaliate against any NPA attack."⁹³

⁸⁹ Claude A. Buss, Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines, (California: The Portable Stanford, 1987), p. 128.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ronald E. Dolan, "Philippines: A Country Study," ((Area Handbook Series, ISSN 1057- 5294)(DA pam; 550-72)), 1993, p. 225.

⁹³ Claude A. Buss, Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines, (California: The Portable Stanford, 1987), p. 135.

4. Peace Talk

In 1992, the National Democratic Front, the political arm of the CPP and the Philippine government started the peace talks. The contentious issues were the treatment of political prisoners and victims of human rights violations. The negotiation's aim was to bring to an end to the hostilities and atrocities being perpetrated by the insurgents. However, the peace talks did not prevent the NPA from committing high-profile military actions such as the raid on police headquarters and the abductions of members of the government militia. "Government sources attribute recent NPA activity as attempts by the revolutionary forces wanted to obtain a status of belligerency as leverage in the on going talks."⁹⁴

D. MILITARY STRATEGY

The communists' strategy of expansion from the country side was greatly affected by martial law and the already clandestine organization went even deeper underground because of the aggressive military campaign against the communist movement. However, the outbreak of the Muslim secessionist movements in Mindanao forced the government to increase its armed forces.

The armed forces whose troop size in 1967 was 45,000 had strength of 164,000 soldiers by 1997.⁹⁵ The AFP had saturated the areas with troops and militias where communists were active. "But even at their increased strength the armed forces are not large as a percentage of the population or in relation to the terrain they have to cover, and the defense budget is a modest one by Western standards."⁹⁶

Eleven infantry battalions and two marine battalions were activated to cover the insurgent threatened areas. The rotation of battalions in the combat areas and improved logistics lines had increased the combat effectiveness of units against the insurgent movements. The fielding of new commanders also contributed to the successful combat operations against the NPA.

⁹⁴ Aileen S. P. Baviera, "Security Challenges of the Philippine Archipelago," <http://apan-info.net/ndep/occasional-papers/HTML/baviera99.htm> (March 5, 2004).

⁹⁵ Gregg R. Jones, *Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), p. 124.

⁹⁶ Alex Turpin, "New Society's Challenge in the Philippines," *Conflict Studies*, (Great Britain: The Eastern Press Ltd., 1980), p. 20.

1. The COIN Campaign

The Counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign strategy adopted in 1986 was contained in a Letter of Instructions (LOI) Mamayan, indicating people whose goal was to neutralize the growing threats of the NPA and the Muslim secessionist groups and to secure the villages from the infiltration of insurgents.⁹⁷ The government favored the restructuring of the existing militia organization to address the threat of the insurgents' infiltration of the villages. The restructured Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) would provide security to the villages while the Army and the police were chasing the communist insurgents. "The formation of new militia units was viewed by military commanders as important steps toward effective COIN."⁹⁸ It will provide the physical protection of the villages, control the populace and prevent them from supporting the insurgents.

Counterinsurgency is not simply a problem of the armed forces; it should be shared by other branches of the government and the civilian population as a whole. Since counterinsurgency is a national problem, it is the responsibility of everyone.⁹⁹

Michael McClintock argues, "the doctrine of counterinsurgency strongly emphasized the need both for regular armed forces units with irregular warfare skills and for irregular forces, often made up of civilians with a military background to operate in their local areas."¹⁰⁰

Concerned government agencies should be able to assist the AFP and police in undertaking measures to stop the resurgence of CPP influence in cleared areas.

⁹⁷ AFP Campaign Plans were called Letters of Instructions (LOIs) where civic action was central to these campaigns.

⁹⁸ Ronald E. Dolan, Philippines: A Country Study, ((Area handbook series, ISSN 1057- 5294) (DA pam; 550-72), 1993), p. 225.

⁹⁹ Hillam Ray Cole, Insurgent Communism: The Problem of Counter- Measure in Malaya, Vietnam and the Philippines, (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1984), p. 218.

¹⁰⁰ Michael McClintock, The American Connection: State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985), p. 34.

The 64,000 members of the CHDF were placed in insurgent influenced and threatened areas in order to counter Sison's strategy of self reliant and autonomous guerrilla fronts operating nationwide. The main purpose was to deny the insurgents of mass base support and infiltration of the villages.

2. The Legal Basis of the CHDF

Presidential Decree 1016 mandated the creation of the Integrated Civilian Home Defense Forces (ICHDF) on September 22, 1976 in order to assist the armed forces in the expeditious and effective solution to the peace and order problem throughout the country and to accelerate socio- economic development. There were three categories of CHDF that had close connection to the military and the elite:¹⁰¹

- Active reservists, including planters which provided an excuse for high officials and prominent businessmen to carry weapons;
- Private security guards employed by prominent businessmen; and
- The bulk of the CHDF, part- time soldiers paid a monthly salary of two hundred pesos with an annual clothing allowance of two hundred pesos and a nine- thousand- peso insurance policy.

The ICHDF had 63,000 full time and 10,000 part time members. The monthly pay was one factor why many wanted to be militia. Most members were farmers and low income earners in the rural areas. The authority to possess firearms was the main reason for joining the militia. According to Richard Kessler there were other categories of armed civilians under the ICHDF program: special paramilitary forces consisting of former rebels and other individuals under the control of politicians, local security guards, provincial guards, civilian firearms holders and civilian volunteers (Kawal ng Barangay). The police and the army controlled CHDF for counterinsurgency operations. "A CHDF's mission was "village defense," protecting a local barangay."¹⁰² Lateral coordination among military and police commanders and local officials in these areas were the basis of deployment and utilization of militias. The governors and mayors had strong influence over the utilization of militias.

¹⁰¹ Richard J. Kessler, Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines, (New Haven, Conn:Yale University Press, 1989), p. 120.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 120.

E. OTHER ANTI- COMMUNIST VIGILANTES

“The Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights also reported that vigilantes regularly performed police and military activities such as patrols, manning of checkpoints and search and seizure operations.”¹⁰³ However, the vigilantism in Mindanao particularly in Davao City, the anti- communist vigilantes called Alsa Masa was organized by the police and was successful against the NPA. General Fidel Ramos, the former Chief of Staff identified the Alsa Masa as deserving the full support and encouragement in dismantling communism.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, the Fuerza Masa in Leyte was also successful against the illegal armed groups and the NPA.

F. CHDF BECAME AN ABUSIVE AND INEFFECTIVE FORCE

The militia detachments had been a good source of weapons and ammunitions for the insurgency. The CHDF members were ill trained, unequipped and incapable of performing the function of village defense. Some militia units until today are a good source of NPA weapons and ammunition. “Frequently, CHDF forces will throw their arms and flee when challenged by the NPA.”¹⁰⁵ Militia detachments had weak defenses against NPA attacks as well as being weak in command and control. Poor cadre leadership was one factor.

Many claimed the CHDF became private armies of some local officials engaged in illegal and violent activities.

The CHDF was a total disaster. They were untrained, undisciplined, and unpaid- but armed- which was a sure- fire formula for corruption and abuse of their helpless victims. They were the primary source of all stories of abduction, salvaging, and torture that gave the military its bad name. They were the main reason why the government lost out in its choice was a matter of life and death.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Eva- Lotta E. Hedman and John T. Sidel, Philippine Politics and Society in the Twentieth Century, (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 53.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁰⁵ Staff Report to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence United States Senate on November 1, 1985.

¹⁰⁶ Claude A. Buss, Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines, (California: The Portable Stanford, 1987), p. 125.

It was during this period when the CHDF were allegedly engaged in a wide- range of violent and coercive activities victimizing the civilian populace whom they were supposed to protect from insurgents atrocities.

They were notorious for stealing rice and chicken, for forcing peasants to bring them food and beers, dig their holes, and supply them with women. At checkpoints on highways or rural roads slightly drunk personnel would extort money, pull off kidnappings and torture- or even execute- suspected informers for the NPA.¹⁰⁷

Militias were more abusive than the insurgents where civilians were directly the victims of extortion and human rights abuses. Paret and Shy argued, “once a substantial number of members of a community commit violence on behalf of the government, they have gone far to break permanently the tie between that community and the guerrillas.”¹⁰⁸ It was not surprising that the people sided with the insurgents for their own protection from abusive militias. Many people questioned the ability of the government to protect them from lawlessness and abuse of militias. Many could not distinguish the regular soldiers from militia because abuses were prevalent even in areas not influenced by insurgents.

Recruitment and screening of militias are factors that contribute to the problem of abusive and notorious militias. Most were relatives and friends of local officials who were unemployed and their interest were purely personal. Local officials used their own people for their protection and the protection of their businesses or private properties. Their loyalty was to the local officials and not to the service. Militias were supervised by a handful of regular enlisted personnel, who in the long-run, established a bond detrimental to the military organization. Extortion became a means of support for the militia detachments because of the little support received from the higher headquarters. The military cadres were untrained for the job. The Internal Security Operations assessment report revealed a need to reorganize and improve the control and supervision of the CHDF.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 124.

¹⁰⁸ Paret and Shy, p. 49.

¹⁰⁹ Philippine Army Assessment Report, CY 1987.

G. CONCLUSION

The AFP recommended the deactivation of the CHDF because of its ineffectiveness in counterinsurgency operations. The lack of control and training of the militias contributed immensely to the growing insurgency situation. The primary aim of organizing paramilitary forces becomes counter productive to its intended purpose of protecting the civilians from the insurgents' atrocities. Civilians opted to side with the insurgents rather than the military and paramilitary forces because of fear and abuses committed by CHDF members. The CHDF became more a liability force than an effective deterrent against the insurgents' acts of violence and extortion activities. Civilians could hardly distinguished CHDF members from the NPA insurgents. Both were involved in extortion but the CHDF was more abusive.

Executive Order 275 was issued on July 15, 1987, which set the gradual and orderly dissolution of all paramilitary units and the conversion of its budgetary appropriations into the Citizen Armed Force Program.

IV. CIVILIAN ARMED FORCE GEOGRAPHICAL UNIT

A. INTRODUCTION

After the deactivation of the CHDF, the President of the Philippines signed Executive Order 264 on 25 July 1987 for the creation of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units Active Auxiliaries composed of all reservists organized into geographical units. Reservists and qualified volunteers are recruited to render military active auxiliary duty, whose purpose was to attain the desired manpower level in the Armed Forces of the Philippines to confront the growing insurgency and other threat groups effectively without overburdening the government budget. The government expanded the role of the Citizen Armed Force.

The U.S. Department assessment report in November 1985 stressed that the key issues within the AFP that needed to be addressed were accountability for corruption, upward mobility and effective leadership. The U.S Department report also emphasized reform of the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF) for the counterinsurgency campaign.¹¹⁰ That paramilitary unit could be effective as a counterinsurgency force. According to Michael McClintock, “paramilitary irregulars being drawn from the local population itself are generally more familiar with the local scene than are conventional forces, and thus capable of more effective local operations.”¹¹¹

The abuses of vigilantes would end with the organization of highly trained and disciplined paramilitary forces. The testimony before the House Foreign Operations Subcommittee made by David Lambertson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, “stated that CAFGU was formed in part to stop the abuses attributed to “vigilante” groups and that it would have a “more formal relationships” with the military than the latter had.”¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Jeffrey D. Simon, “Country Assessments and the Philippines,” A Rand Note, March 1987, p. 16.

¹¹¹ McClintock, p. 35.

¹¹² _____, “The Philippines,” Human Rights Watch Publications, <http://www.hw.org/reports/1989/WR89/Philippi.htm> (June 16, 2004).

B. ORGANIZATION OF CIVILIAN ARMED FORCE GEOGRAPHICAL UNITS ACTIVE AUXILIARIES

The Department of National Defense issued the implementing rules and regulations for the organization of the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units Active Auxiliaries (CAA) throughout the country. The primary objective was to complement the operations of the AFP.

In 1995, the primary responsibility for Internal Security Operations (ISO) was transferred from the Philippine National Police (PNP) back to the AFP, effectively giving the AFP the lead role in internal security and in territorial defense operations. The prevailing security threats called for the immediate realignment of forces, adjustments of operational/- tactical boundaries of units, and the administrative supervision of the CAFGU Active Auxiliaries was transferred from the Area Commands to the Major Service Commands to ensure an effective and efficient program.¹¹³

The CAA consisting of volunteer- reservists and citizen- volunteers is called upon to render active auxiliary service. Their primary mission is the defense of their localities. The State Department report to the House Appropriations Committee entitled -Citizens' Self Defense Groups in the Philippines included the following characteristics of CAFGU: screening of recruits in consultation with civilian officials and rejection of abusive or criminal elements; human rights and values training; deployment in the community from which the recruits are drawn; and careful supervision by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.¹¹⁴ The restructured CAA is different from the earlier paramilitary units such as the BSDU and the CHDF that were criticized for being abusive and corrupt.

The members of the active CAFGU were full time militia who were recruited and based in their home areas, where they were charged with defending against insurgent attacks. CAFGU companies were trained and commanded by active officers and NCOs of the army and constabulary. If mobilized, the militias were to become part of their sponsoring active army or constabulary unit. The 720 CAFGU active auxiliary companies had around 64,000 members in 1990.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Letter of Instruction 20/01 (Tangol- Bayan Charlie) issued on 20 August 2001.

¹¹⁴ _____, "The Philippines," Human Rights Watch Publications, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1989/WR89/Philippi.htm> (June 16, 2004), p. 3.

¹¹⁵ Ronald E. Dolan, Philippines: A Country Study, 4th ed. (DA pam;550- 72, 1993), p. 271.

The Philippine Army has 741 CAFGU Active Auxiliary companies with 46,827 members as of June 2003.¹¹⁶ These CAA units are all under the direct control and supervision of the Army.

The AFP has also activated Special CAAs as additional territorial forces aimed at securing private companies found in areas frequently visited by the communist insurgents. The firms provide the budget requirements of SCAA for protecting them from progressive taxation and harassment by the insurgents. SCAA utilization is primarily for the security and interest of the business company financing it. The local government units were also allowed to activate SCAA through the Peace and Order Council (POC) because of the intensified activities of the CPP/NPA. The AFP provides firearms and ammunition and supervising personnel. Both the regular CAA and Special CAA are under the command and control of military units.

1. Concepts of the Program

The AFP has identified that screening and selection of volunteers is important to have an effective CAA program. The Major Service Commands are responsible for the selection process in consultation with the Peace and Order Councils (POC).¹¹⁷ In cases of conflict with the POC, the decision of the Major Service Commander shall prevail. The screening and selection, appointment and reappointment, payment, arming, equipping, accounting and other administrative matters are the primary responsibility of the Major Service Commander, while the operational control of all CAA/SCAA units is the primary responsibility of Area Commanders.

An appropriate number of cadres composed of officers and enlisted personnel of the AFP regular force will be assigned to handle the CAA/SCAA units to ensure effective command and control. The organization was patterned after the Army's regular rifle company, platoons and squads organization. One full-size CAA Company is organized into three CAA/SCAA rifle platoons and one headquarters platoon. The authorized strength of one company consists of one officer, 12 enlisted personnel and 88 CAA members. (See Appendix A) Generally, CAA units are handled and supervised by

¹¹⁶ Philippine Army operations data.

¹¹⁷ Peace and Order Council is chaired by the provincial governor with local executives, military and police commanders and other government agencies as members.

responsible enlisted personnel only. The Battalion operations officer (S3) is usually designated as the CAA officer for all CAA units under the control and supervision of the Battalion. CAA units are deployed in a manner that the normal livelihood activities of members are not impaired. CAA members perform paramilitary duties for a certain number of days a week so that on other days they can also attend to their livelihood activities such as tilling their lands because most of them are farmers and low income earners from the rural areas. It is necessary for the CAA members to attend to their primary source of revenue. The number of days for duty is still determined on a case-by-case basis, which is largely based on the security situation in the area.

All CAA are subject to military laws and the Articles of War. The purpose was to treat them like regular forces covered by military regulations. The CAA members have specific duties to perform and subjecting them to military laws will make them more responsible members of the government's paramilitary units and the community they serve. The military has instituted reforms in the administration and operational control of all paramilitary units. Military commanders can easily weed out any CAA member who violates human rights and tarnishes the image of the AFP.

Finally, one important provision in implementing the rules and regulations to EO 264 was that once the situation in the area has returned to normal based upon the assessment of Area Commander, the CAA unit in the area can be deactivated.

2. Incentives for CAA

CAA members receive the monthly stipend or allowance, educational benefit for qualified dependents, combat clothing and individual equipment, hospitalization and medical care, disability benefits, death benefits and they are now entitled to separation gratuity pay. (See Appendix B) The monthly stipend or the subsistence allowance is equivalent to the subsistence allowance of regular Army soldiers, which is now Php60.00 per day.

The monthly stipend or allowance of the SCAA is shouldered by the business establishment and the Local Government Units (LGU). They also receive educational

benefits, hospitalization and medical care, disability benefits, death benefits and burial assistance from the business firms and LGU. The AFP provides military burial benefits to SCAA members

3. Mission of CAA

The primary mission is to support the AFP in the protection of life and property, security of vital facilities and public utilities and to assist the local government authorities in the delivery of services in their respective communities specifically during local emergency.

C. AFP STRATEGIES

The desired end state is for the CPP/NPA and the other major security threats to ultimately accept peace under the government's terms. The AFP has developed and used different strategies in order to achieve the end state. The strategies include a holistic approach, win-hold-win approach, sustained operations and the "Lambat-Bitag" (Net Trap) strategic precepts.¹¹⁸

1. Holistic Approach

The strategy of holistic approach is the national strategy that possesses the political, socio- economic and psycho- social and security components in addressing the three main internal security threats, which are the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group, the local communist movement called CPP, and the Southern Philippines Secessionist groups or the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The AFP and PNP combined will defeat the armed components of these threats in order for the other government agencies to proceed with the socio- economic development and address the causes of insurgency.

2. Win-Hold-Win Strategy

The win- hold- win strategy means focusing of combat power against identified threat groups while the economy of force is on lower priority threats. Of the 106 guerrilla fronts only 14 are categorized as very active fronts of the CPP/NPA. The AFP's combat power is focused on these active fronts with fewer forces focused on the less active fronts. After winning the targeted active fronts, combat power will be shifted to the next targeted fronts. The strategy involves risks in lower priority threat areas. The AFP's shifting of forces depends on the national priority concerns.

¹¹⁸ AFP ISO Plan 02-01 (Bantay- Laya) dated 01 January 2002.

3. Strategy of Sustained Operations

The various Area Command campaigns are launched against the CPP/NPA fronts without cease until these insurgent fronts are decisively defeated. The Area Commands are primarily addressing different priority guerrilla fronts using the general operational concept of one infantry brigade against one guerrilla front.

D. ROLE OF CAA IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN

The primary objective of CAA was village defense in order to prevent the re-entry of insurgents into the villages. It protects the people and secures the villages from the atrocities and forced taxation of the insurgents. The CAA performs security duty of vital facilities and installations and defends the villages from insurgents' attacks. The CAA provides limited support to the AFP offensive operations, security for the rear area and main supply route and base defense operations. The CAA undergoes the basic military training with emphasis on village defense and respect for human rights. The other objectives of the basic military training include military courtesy and discipline, and to develop physically fit and people-oriented CAA and effective components of the AFP in internal security operations. (See Appendix C). Civil relations and value formation are also taught to new CAA members. They are given training on individual skills, weapons proficiency, and small unit operations. Practical applications are being done before they are deployed and utilized for village defense. A disciplined and trained paramilitary can be an effective deterrent force against insurgent attacks as well as, providing a safe environment for development in rural areas. Government agencies such as the Departments of Health, Education, Social Welfare and other government services can reach the rural areas for their programmed development activities without feeling insecure.

According to Michael McClintock, "counter-insurgency is to proceed through a sequence of preparatory, clearing and holding phases."¹¹⁹ Enactment of emergency legislation, registration of civil population with the military and identity card system, training of police and military units, and organization and training of paramilitary forces were part of the preparatory phase. The paramilitary forces whenever possible composed

¹¹⁹ Michael McClintock, The American Connection: State Terror and Popular Resistance in Guatemala, (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985), p. 62.

of former military and police personnel.¹²⁰ The clear phase calls for offensive actions by conventional forces to clear insurgents from specific area. Conventional forces collaborate with the armed militias to eliminate the insurgent forces.¹²¹ The holding phase involves “the armed local irregulars are to be institutionalized with communication links directly to central authorities.”¹²² The armed irregulars would continue to assist the conventional forces in information and intelligence gathering.

The clear, hold, consolidate and develop methodology against the CPP/NPA was adopted by the government and the military establishment in order to execute planned, coordinated and integrated efforts of the AFP, other government agencies, the people and the civil society. The clear stage involves sustained security operations against the insurgent armed groups and neutralization of the CPP’s politico-military infrastructures. The CPP/NPA has exerted influence even in previously cleared areas, increased agitation propaganda activities, coerced local candidates to pay campaign fees and established additional guerrilla fronts. The task of clearing insurgent infested areas was the primary responsibility of Army battalions with the support of the police mobile forces.

The hold stage involves the CAA in providing security and defense of the villages against the re-entry or incursions of the insurgent armed groups. The participation of the CAA in this stage is important because it disassociates the civilian populace from the insurgents and cuts off the insurgents’ mass base support. The insurgents are denied access to the people and prevented from securing intelligence and foodstuff and other supplies. Protection of the population and physical and psychological separation of the insurgents from the population are important elements in the integration of military and civilian programs in counterinsurgency.¹²³

120 Ibid.

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid., p. 63.

123 Robert E. Harkavy and Stephanie G. Neuman, Warfare and the Third World, (New York: Palgrave Publishers Ltd., 2001), p. 202.

The consolidate stage involves the military, the police, the civilian government agencies and the people to strengthen government control and authority in cleared areas. Cleared areas as defined by the AFP are areas categorized free of insurgents' influence and control.

The hold and consolidate stages are the responsibilities of the territorial forces:- the CAA and police units. The CAA units play an important role in the physical security and protection of the populace and properties against any insurgent attacks. The AFP has effectively operational zed the Integrated Territorial Defense System (ITDS) in order to put an end to the cycle of NPA returning to areas previously cleared by the military. ITDS was established in all identified AFP controlled areas after the clearing operations to prevent insurgents from re-influencing the areas. It is a strategy of harnessing the efforts of territorial forces and local populace into a defense and security system that will secure and insulate the locality from enemy influence, incursion or re- entry. CAA units, civilian volunteer organizations (CVO), and other anti-communist base organizations are employed and integrated for defense against insurgent attacks. The police conduct law enforcement operations and provide augmentation support to the territorial forces.

Finally, the develop stage involves the implementation of the government's socio-economic, psychological and political reforms in order to address the root causes of insurgency:-poverty and injustice. Balanced development includes political, social and economic programs and mobilization of popular support for the government are major elements in counterinsurgency.¹²⁴

E. CPP'S THREE-YEAR PROGRAM

The CPP's three-year program was to advance the people's war and to intensify its tactical offensives against the AFP, PNP and all CAA units in order to acquire additional firearms and ammunitions. The NPA will conduct more daring raids similar to the PICOP incident in order to acquire more firearms to sustain their armed struggle. The AFP lost 108 high-powered firearms during the NPA raid at the PICOP CAA detachment in Bislig, Surigao del Sur. Other major operational setbacks involved CAA patrol bases

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 202.

in Eastern Samar, Misamis Oriental, Agusan Sur, Capiz and Bukidnon where government troops suffered 26 soldiers killed and lost 52 high-powered firearms for short period of six months in 2003.

The annual average rate of increase of NPA's firearms was 1% from 1995 to 2001. The estimate is broken into 4,819 high-powered and 1,314 low-powered firearms.¹²⁵ The CPP/NPA had been monitored and they generated about P94M in 2003 or a 40% increase compared to P67M in 2002 extortion activities. The CPP/NPA exploited the election period to increase their extortion activities. The communist insurgents conducted 57 arson operations against business companies destroying properties worth P138M. Most of the incidents were conducted against telecommunication facilities located in far-flung areas and less protected by government troops. Reports also indicated that the CPP/NPA was demanding firearms, ammunitions and military supplies as part of their extortion demands.

The mass protest activities initiated by the communist front organizations also increased by 18% compared to the 2002 figures, and 31% of the total 961 mass protest activities were done in the National Capital Region (NCR). Multi-sectoral groups, labor, student and youth and peasant sectors capitalized on social, economic and political issues that mobilized the masses. The average number of mass action participants also increased by 12 % compared to 2002 data.

Overall, the CPP/NPA has increased guerrilla operations against poorly defended military and CAA detachments, mass protest rallies, extortion activities and the rising trend in the number of guerrilla fronts. Since 1995, the average rate of increase of guerrilla front expansion was 11%. The total guerrilla fronts at present is 106 fronts but only 14 are categorized as very active and the advanced fronts distributed as follows: six in Luzon, three in Visayas and five in Mindanao.

F. CONCLUSION

The restructured, retrained and supervised CAA units strengthen the village defense of several communities against insurgents' attacks. More CAA units were activated in mostly insurgent influenced areas in order to prevent the insurgents'

¹²⁵ AFP Operations data.

expansion and recruitment activities. The CAA members are believed to be more dedicated and committed to their job of protecting the people and the community they serve. The CAA has been the cutting edge in the maintenance of peace and security in areas where the presence of regular troops are rarely felt.

The increasing trend of the CPP/NPA in affected areas indicates their relentless mass organizing efforts not only in the far-flung areas but also in the urban centers. The insurgents had intensified its offensives against poorly manned military and CAA detachments to acquire additional firearms and exploited the election period to increase their extortion activities to sustain the movement.

The AFP has recognized that there is still a need to improve the utilization of CAA further, particularly in remote areas with less command and control from military units. Recent operational lapses were committed by mostly CAA detachments during insurgents' surprised attacks and some of these incidents were considered major debacles due to the large number of government casualties and loss of military equipment. The most important lesson learned from these incidents was the poorly manned detachments, which resulted in the killing or wounding of military cadres and CAA members, and sometimes capture by insurgents. Several firearms and military equipment were lost and in some cases, the civilian populace was reported as casualties of cross fires.

From the operational standpoint, the maneuver battalion's combat effectiveness in counterinsurgency operations is drastically reduced due to the administration of CAA. The campaign strategy demands focusing the maximum combat power of maneuver battalions against identified threat groups while economy of force to lower priority threats. The strategy requires maneuver battalions to be 100% combat effective primarily to clear its area of guerrilla fronts within a specific time frame. The maneuver battalions are combat effective if personnel and equipment are available for combat operations. However, the present arrangement causes maneuver battalions to be concerned both with the ISO campaign and administration of all CAA units in their area of responsibility. The CAA administration requires a number of personnel and equipment in order to control, supervise and administer effectively and prevent them from being overrun by insurgents. The CAA administration becomes a major concern of unit commanders because it is

becoming targets of insurgent attacks. The problem is compounded by the fact that most infantry battalions deployed for ISO are about 80% filled or an average of 15 officers and 400 enlisted personnel only. One company dedicated for CAA administration results in a great reduction in the combat efficiency of a battalion.

The evaluation of the deployment of CAA also indicates that there were some serious violations of the standard operating procedures (SOP), poor networking, and fast turn-over of units handling the CAA. Some detachments overrun by insurgents were manned by a few CAA members and commanded by one or two cadres which are violations of the existing directive that a detachment must be at least a platoon sized detachment. No reinforcements from the nearest detachment arrived because of not being able to communicate. The CAA detachments possessed weak defenses and a weak leadership ability of cadres. These weaknesses need to be addressed to use the CAA effectively as force multipliers and protectors of the communities, and more importantly, to prevent the occurrence of operational debacles in the future.

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V. LESSONS LEARNED FOR UTILIZING THE PARAMILITARY IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

The overthrow of the government through armed struggle remains the main objective of the Communist movement in the Philippines. According to Professor Jose Ma Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines,

two governments exist in the Philippines. One is the nationwide revolutionary government of workers and peasants based in the countryside. The other is the counterrevolutionary government of big compradors and landlords centered in Manila.¹²⁶

In 1986, the Communist insurgency had actually grown from an irritant into a threat to national existence.¹²⁷ The Communists had established a “shadow government” and had continuously expanded its influence in several areas of Central Luzon. The country, faced with increasing Communist guerrilla fronts from a small group of disgruntled peasants, clearly indicated that Communism has grown into a serious security threat. The former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile had raised concerns over the CPP/NPA’s attacks by battalion-size forces in the Bicol region.¹²⁸ This raised a question about the future of the Philippine national security because of the growing insurgency condition in the country:

How could 500 armed rebels move freely in an area like Bicol? Did the military not receive any intelligence report on the movement of this armed group? If they did, why did they not act to stop rebel operations? Or can 500 armed rebels now move freely among the people because they are now enjoying the support of the people in the area?¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Jose Ma Sison, “Two Governments Exist in the Philippines: One is Revolutionary, the Other Counterrevolutionary,” <http://www.philippinerevolution.org/cgi-bin/statements.pl?author=jms:date=040821:language=eng> (September 1, 2004), p. 1.

¹²⁷ Claude A. Buss, *Cory Aquino and the People of the Philippines*, (California: The Portable Stanford, 1987), p. 125.

¹²⁸ Justus M. van der Kroef, “Aquino’s Philippines: The Deepening Security Crisis,” (United Kingdom: The Eastern Press Limited, 1988), p. 9.

¹²⁹ Published Manila Bulletin on September 24, 1987.

General Fidel V. Ramos, on December 31, 1987, had emphasized, in a review of the security situation that the CPP and its NPA fighting arm remained the nation's "No. 1 threat".¹³⁰ The CPP/NPA still remains a major security threat to the Philippine government and its people.

It was actually in the mid-1980's that the escalating Communist insurgency had affected the prospects for stability in the Philippines. The State Department assessment in November 1985 presented by Paul Wolfowitz, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated that the Philippine armed forces need an effective and strong military to combat the growing Communist insurgency. The deficiencies in the armed forces cited the problems of leadership, upward mobility and accountability for corruption and abuse of authority. The CHDF was also necessary to reform the counterinsurgency campaign.¹³¹

The Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency defines insurgency, which states:

Insurgency is a protracted political-military activity directed toward completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations. Insurgent activity- including guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and political mobilization, for example, propaganda, recruitment, front and covert party organization, and international activity- is designed to weaken government control and legitimacy while increasing insurgent control and legitimacy. The common denominator of most insurgent groups is their desire to control a particular area. This objective differentiates insurgent groups from purely terrorist organizations, whose objectives do not include the creation of an alternative government capable of controlling a given area or country.¹³²

The Philippine Defense Department had noted that the Communist insurgency was becoming the major threat to the country and the efforts to revitalize the armed forces against this threat had failed. The NPA's urban assassination squad, the so called Alex Boncayao Brigade (ABB), had been responsible for gunning down more than 100 military and civilian "people's enemies"¹³³. At about the same time, the Defense

¹³⁰ Kroef, p. 9.

¹³¹ Jeffrey D. Simon, "Country Assessments and the Philippines," (N-2588-OSD, March 1987), p. 16.

¹³² Daniel Byman et al., Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements, (California: RAND, 2001), p. 5.

¹³³ Kroef, p. 19.

Department had resorted to allowing vigilantism and listed a set of guidelines for vigilante formation and activity. The purpose was to prevent the Communists from harassing and coercing the populace. Anti communists and Civilian Volunteer Organizations (CVO) were formed and organized. As Paret and Shy had asserted, “the great weakness of the mobile striking forces-imperfect tactical intelligence- is better corrected by the creation of local militia.”¹³⁴ The Department of National Defense’s directive had emphasized “those volunteer groups could not meddle with government functions nor act as “private armies” of political organizations or of the rich and powerful.”¹³⁵

According to the Asian Human Rights Commission, the government’s encouragement of the vigilantes and its total war policy against the Communists was turning the whole country into a battlefield and “pitting civilian against civilian”. The Commission cited the human rights violations in Kidapawan and Davao in Mindanao and also in Cebu and in other areas in the Visayas. A similar report made by the London-based Amnesty International stated that the human rights violations committed by the regular military and the paramilitary civil defense forces were being condoned by government authorities in their counterinsurgency campaign.¹³⁶ These allegations were fabrications or exploitations against the armed forces. As one experienced observer summarizes the point:¹³⁷

Every insurgency...requires a cause. [But] there is always some issue which has an appeal to each section of the community, and, even if dormant, an inspired incident may easily revive it in an acute form...All governments are vulnerable to criticism, and every grievance, shortcoming or abuse will be exploited.

The former president Corazon Aquino gave the armed forces a free hand in the conduct of an all out war against the Communists because of the incessant NPA attacks in the countryside. All out war means conduct of extensive combat operations against the

¹³⁴ Peter Paret and John W. Shy, Guerrillas in the 1960s, (London: Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1962), p. 44.

¹³⁵ Kroef, p. 19.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

¹³⁷ Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, Jr., Rebellion and Authority, (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1970), p. 31.

Communists and that such operations must ensure the protection and security of the people. The general headquarters issued a set of operational guidelines as well as the rules of engagement to be adhered to in the course of the operations.

According to David Kowalewski, “Fighting revolutionary deviance with counter-revolutionary paramilitary deviance seems counterproductive.”¹³⁸ Kowalewski contends paramilitarism encourages political deviance. The civilian populace would perceive paramilitary as being unconstitutional and engaging in illegal behaviors. The paramilitary units should be perceived as providing order against deviance and not as provoking further deviance.¹³⁹

The economic reason why governments would like to train paramilitary forces is the cheaper cost rather than training regular people in the armed forces. Paramilitary forces do not receive the same benefits as regular military personnel.¹⁴⁰ The cost of one paramilitary member is Php30, 000.00 while a new recruit of the armed forces with the rank of private is Php199, 000.00. The initial cost includes only the basic pay and allowances. Other incentives such as longevity pay and retirement benefits are provided to regular soldiers but not to paramilitary members. The cost of recruiting and maintaining paramilitary is much cheaper.

B. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE CHDF AND THE CAA

1. Civilian Home Defense Force (1974- 1987)

The CHDF was categorized as part time soldiers who received a monthly salary of Php200 and a 9,000 peso insurance policy. The CHDF members were recruited in the villages of the countryside for village defense. There were 50,000 armed CHDF members in 1985.¹⁴¹ The CHDF was a cheap alternative to regular Army units. The plan was to utilize the CHDF to gather intelligence, and at the same time, provide a certain level of physical security to the populace. However, Richard J. Kessler claimed that the CHDFs

¹³⁸ David Kowalewski, “Counterinsurgent Paramilitarism: A Philippine Case Study,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 29, Issue 1, February 1992, p. 81.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁰ “Philippines: Cool Response to US ‘Friendly Militias’ Plan,” *Asia Pacific Programs*, August 13, 2004, http://www.abc.net.au/asiapacific/location/asia/GAPLocAsiaStories_1176364.htm (September 3, 2004), p. 2.

¹⁴¹ A Special Report on the “Philippines: Facing the Future,” (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1986), p. 24.

“were ill trained, unequipped and incapable of performing that function adequately.”¹⁴² A similar analysis in the special report made by the Asia Society on the assessment of the prospects for the Philippines stated that the Philippine armed forces turned to a short-term stratagem, which was the creation of a Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF) of underpaid, under-trained, armed units recruited in the villages of the countryside for village defense.¹⁴³ Kessler further argues that the Constabulary controls the CHDF theoretically but is actually under the army’s direction or that of the political figures.

The author would argue that the CHDF was organized based on what the military and police units had perceived was important at that time and that the creation of paramilitary forces would enhance not only the manpower requirement but more the capability to assist the armed forces in fighting against the growing communist insurgency. However, when the CHDFs were organized, there was no clear guidance on the utilization of these militia units. The control and administration were not properly defined as well as who would be responsible for their administration and operational activities. The control of these militias became a problem for the armed forces.

“If the paramilitary organizations are left to fight semi- independently, under charismatic leaders, there is a tendency for them to backfire on their organizers.”¹⁴⁴ McClintock cited the incident on May 1958 when the 3,300 strong “South Algerian Commandos” revolted against the French where only 300 men remained loyal to them. McClintock argues close military and political supervision of the paramilitary units must be maintained.¹⁴⁵ The military institutions in Guatemala and El Salvador had bad experiences on armed civilian organizations and they had reinforced their internal institutional control on the new irregular paramilitary forces.

According to Peter Paget and John W. Shy, “the ultimate technique in isolating the guerrillas from the people is to persuade the people to defend themselves.”¹⁴⁶ The

¹⁴² Richard J. Kessler, Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 121.

¹⁴³ A Special Report on the “Philippines: Facing the Future,” (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1986), p. 24.

¹⁴⁴ McClintock, p. 36.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Paget and Shy, p. 49.

people could form militia-type local defense units to help defeat the guerrillas. “They protect their communities, ambush raiders, and furnish intelligence and security to mobile forces in the vicinity.”¹⁴⁷ The Philippine militia was intended for the same purpose and intention but the CHDF failed not only to isolate the guerrillas from the people but also failed to protect the communities from insurgents’ attacks and coercive actions. “The problem of unprotected villages is a real one, and whatever the level of the regular armed forces might be, the problem cannot be avoided.”¹⁴⁸ The Communist insurgency continued to grow and to expand their influence. The failure of the CHDF is caused by several factors such as poor leadership of cadres, low pay, poor quality of militia members, poor training, poor control, abuse of authority and many people accused the elected local leaders of somehow causing the CHDF’s failure.

What is the role of the elected officials or leaders as far as the CHDFs are concerned? The CHDF was seen by the people as an arm of the local government. Local leaders in the 1970’s had a free hand to utilize the militias even for personal reasons because it did not prohibit them from doing whatever they pleased. Some local politicians utilized the CHDF members as their personal bodyguards and security during the electoral process. Many people claimed that militias resorted to extortion and abuse of power because they had the backing and protection of local “warlords”. A number of cases proved that militias were used for illegal activities by powerful individuals in the localities. “Paramilitary groups tend to reflect the interests and prejudices of the ruling political and economic powers.”¹⁴⁹ The armed forces failed to set the guidelines and operational directives that clearly defined the roles and functions of the militias. There were no consultations with the local leaders in the areas where they were recruited that made them ineffective. These militias were effectively utilized as the paramilitary forces against the people and not against the Communist insurgents.

Another reason for failure was that the armed forces’ insurgency campaign strategy did not define the exact role and disposition of CHDF. These paramilitary units were organized and armed but the role on how to secure the villages was not clearly

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Op. Cit, p. 24.

¹⁴⁹ McClintock, p. 35.

stated during its inception. Even the CHDF members were not aware of their role in the governments' counterinsurgency effort, much less of their disposition and relations with the local officials, local police and other local civilian volunteer organizations (CVOs).

The command relationships of the CHDFs with the regular army and police units operating in the area were serious problems that caused grave consequences-mistaken encounters. One major problem also identified with the CHDF was the command and control aspect. The police and the army had different methods of handling and controlling the militias. There was no clear mandate on how militias were to be administered and operationally handled. Loyalty is to those who lead and control them. Militias were led by a few enlisted personnel with basically no training on how to handle the CHDF. It turned out that the CHDF was mishandled and abused in terms of utilization and purpose and not used as conceptualized.

Another weakness of utilizing the CHDF in counterinsurgency operations was that its organization was not designed for combat operations. Many operational lapses were caused by improper utilization of paramilitary forces. It should be clear that the CHDF's were local defense units primarily aimed at protecting the communities and not conducting long-range patrols to look for the Communist insurgents. Another cause of failure was that the CHDF units lacked the necessary firepower and communication equipment aside from the little training on village defense they received from their cadres. The CHDF detachments were being overrun by insurgent attacks because of a lack of training. It was an accepted fact that at that time the CHDF was not a top priority agenda item of the armed forces in terms of training, arming and providing the operational equipment support. The armed forces were partly to blame for the failure of the previously organized militias.

Combating the communist's guerrillas is both the concern of the political and military leaders. The Communist insurgency requires a political response as well as a military response.¹⁵⁰ This was probably not clear to many political leaders, and particularly to the local leaders, that allowed the CHDF to be utilized for abusive and illegal acts. The problems of the CHDF are the problems of the local government.

¹⁵⁰ Andrew M. Scott and et al., *Insurgency*, (N. Carolina: The University of North Carolina, 1970), p. 116.

According to a report of a study mission to the Philippines, many of the abuses of the civilian population were committed by the CHDF units.¹⁵¹ These abuses caused severe damage to the armed forces. Instead of utilizing the paramilitary forces to protect the communities, it prolonged the Communist insurgency, lost the confidence of the people in their armed forces, and lost the hearts and minds of the local populace.

Andrew Scott argues, “a government’s effort to improve its relations with the people can be easily undermined if the army behaves in a harsh and arrogant way.”¹⁵² The abusive behavior of the CHDF was a reflection of the entire armed forces and the CHDF was part of it. The government has to broaden its base of popular support in any campaign. If the officers and men can show compassion for the people while engaging in combat near villages and can be careful and helpful, this can be an important factor in improving the relations between the government and people.¹⁵³ However, CHDF units were viewed by both local and international communities, and particularly by the human rights organizations, as abusive and corrupt. The CHDF lost the confidence of the people and it was apparent that losing the people’s support would no longer make the CHDF an effective counterinsurgency force. The government was pressured to deactivate and disband the CHDF and the other illegal armed groups.

2. Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units Active Auxiliary (1987 - to Present)

a. Internal Security Threats

The Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary (CAA) was established on July 25, 1987 to support the AFP in the counterinsurgency campaign against internal security threats. The Philippines is presently facing the following internal security threats such as terrorist groups, the Local Communist Movement or the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army (CPP-NPA) and the Southern Philippine Secessionist Groups (SPSG).

¹⁵¹ A Special Report on the “Philippines: Facing the Future,” (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1986), p. 24.

¹⁵² Scott, p. 125.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

With the existing security threats, the Philippine government and the armed forces fully assessed that the government militias called the CAA are an essential component in its counterinsurgency campaign. At present, there are 741 CAA companies with 46,827 members, all under the direct control and supervision of the Philippine Army. These CAA companies are deployed nationwide and are distributed into the five Area Commands of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.¹⁵⁴

A Letter of Instruction 20/01 dated August 20, 2001 was issued redefining the transfer of the administrative supervision of all CAA from the Area Commands to the Major Service Commands to ensure a more efficient and effective CAA Program.¹⁵⁵ The LOI places the Philippine Army headquarters in charge of the administration of the CAA in the selection, appointment and reappointment, payment, arming, equipping, accounting and other administrative matters.

b. Major Role and Tasks of CAA

The AFP is the lead agency in maintaining security in all areas affected by insurgency. The AFP has integrated the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the CAA in harnessing the territorial forces in order to secure and insulate the community from Communist influence, incursion or re-entry. The communities are considered safe havens of the Communist movement. Safe havens or sanctuaries are essential to the success of any guerrilla movement. “It serves as staging area from which to mount attacks; and, in some cases, function as an additional base for recruitment, training, dissemination of propaganda and contact with the outside world.”¹⁵⁶ Economically, these base areas can funnel resources to the movement.¹⁵⁷ To deny the use of these sanctuaries or base areas is the primary concern of the government militias. Denying the base areas would mean denying the resources to the insurgents. Base areas under the insurgents’ control can erode popular support for the incumbent regime.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ AFP Operational Data 2003.

¹⁵⁵ Letter of Instruction (codenamed Tangol-Bayan Charlie) on August 20, 2001.

¹⁵⁶ Daniel Byman et al., Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements, (California: RAND, 2001), p. 84.

¹⁵⁷ Scott, p. 103.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

The author would argue that the AFP has recognized the importance of separating the Communist guerrilla from the populace through the use of territorial forces. The Communist insurgents are separated from their popular base or sanctuaries. As Paret and Shy have clearly indicated, one of the major tasks of counter-guerrilla action is the separation of the guerrilla from the population.¹⁵⁹ The scheme was effective during the Malay campaign (1948-1960). The Home Guard isolated the population both physically and mentally from the guerrillas and the effort was reinforced by increased police patrols in the villages and rubber plantations.¹⁶⁰ Both the Home Guard and the police had extensive drive against extortion and intimidation to win the confidence of the people. The CAA companies and the local police must be involved in a similar drive to win the confidence of the people.

The LOI 20/01 mentioned the mission of CAA, organization, training, deployment guidelines, command relationships, and disposition as well as CAA benefits and allowances. The AFP's commitment to utilize the CAA to support the AFP units in its counterinsurgency efforts was well established. The CAA will be utilized primarily for the defense of the community in support of the AFP operations. CAA units are tasked to secure vital facilities and public utilities, intelligence collection, public information drive and community development activities. The author would argue that these CAA tasks are clearer and understood by CAA members, police and military commanders in the area and including the role and participation of elected public officials. The CAA members are now well informed of their duties and responsibilities to the people and communities they serve.

The plan was similar to the "Briggs Plan" applied to Malaya in 1948. The plan was initiated by Lieutenant-General Sir Harold Briggs while he was the Director of Operations in Malaya. It was a Master Plan for winning the campaign and has four main objectives:¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Paret and Shy, p. 40.

¹⁶⁰ Paget, p. 67.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 57.

- To dominate the populated areas and to build up a feeling of complete security, which would in time, result in a steady and increasing flow of information coming from all sources.
- To break up the Communist organizations within the populated areas.
- To isolate the bandits from their food and supply organizations in the populated areas.
- To destroy the bandits by forcing them to attack the Security Forces on their own ground.

c. Major Lessons Learned

(1) Combat Effectiveness. At present, the Infantry or Special Forces battalions are the holding units in charge of the administrative and operational activities of all CAA units. These regular units provide the military cadres to the CAA companies based on the approved CAA organization and manning (See Appendix A). Due to this organizational set-up, the security forces tasked to conduct internal security operations against the Communist insurgents operate in reduced strength and capability.

An infantry battalion of approximately 500 men is a mobile force deployed in insurgent affected area with an average of about 6 to 8 CAA companies and each company requires at least 12 to 14 personnel as cadres. In the Philippine campaign strategy, the combat units are the infantry battalions with corresponding combat support and combat service support units in a pre-designated Area of Responsibility (AOR). The battalions have two main responsibilities: as holding forces in charge of the administration of territorial CAA units and as security forces tasked to conduct internal security operations. Operationally, a battalion can operate with only two ready companies and without any battalion reserve forces because of the administration of territorial CAA units. The author, as a result of this situation, would argue that the infantry battalion has an operational limitation for combat operations in terms of manpower and capability.

How can the security forces defeat the Communist insurgents with reduced strength and capability? Another question that needs an answer that significantly affects the campaign is how can the CAA members perform their tasks as territorial forces without placing the administrative burden on infantry battalions? These are major problems that need to be addressed by higher headquarters because it affects the combat

effectiveness of units and the overall the campaign strategy of defeating the insurgents as soon as possible. Combat effectiveness is an essential element in defeating the Communist insurgency.

(2) Importance of Operational Methodology. Over the years, the AFP has developed an applicable operational methodology to fight the Communist insurgency. It is called the Clear-Hold-Support methodology. This tactic defines the roles and functions of the AFP and the different agencies of the government in addressing the insurgency problem. In this operational methodology, the mobile forces aim to clear insurgency affected areas from armed groups and dismantle the insurgent political-military structures. The territorial forces secure the cleared areas to allow other government agencies for the developmental activities. The clear and hold stages are the responsibility of the Department of Defense-AFP and the Department of Interior and Local Governments-PNP while the support stage is the responsibility of the civil government agencies.

According to Steven W. Hook and John Spanier, “counter-guerrilla warfare is an extremely difficult kind of war to wage- indeed far more so than the traditional clash of armies- because the war cannot be won without extensive reforms.”¹⁶² The country’s support stage is actually the developmental efforts of the other agencies of the government. The national government felt the need to utilize all government instrumentalities for political, social, economic and psychological reforms in order to defeat insurgency.

(3) Unified Commands Relevance. The clear stage requires massive security operations against the Communist insurgents by the armed forces and the police. “The counter-guerrilla operations in Greece, South Korea, the Philippines, and Malaya-have combined close territorial control with mobile striking forces.”¹⁶³ The country was divided into six territories with each placed under the jurisdiction of a unified command. This was an excellent tactic with one main purpose: the unity of command. The task of a Unified Command is to conduct joint operations in its Area of Responsibility in order to establish a peaceful and secured environment and assist the

¹⁶² Steven W. Hook and John Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, (Washington, D.C.:CQ Press, 2004), p. 125.

¹⁶³ Paret and Shy, p. 42.

local government agencies in their socio-economic, ecological and developmental activities. “The necessary organization must exist to coordinate and implement an effective unity of political-diplomatic, socio-economic, psychological-moral and security-stability efforts against those who would violently depose a government.”¹⁶⁴ The unity of effort is one important component in a counterinsurgency campaign but joint operations under one command are operationally essential to defeat the insurgents.

(4) Modern Technology Relevance. The armed forces are organized and trained to fight the insurgents but the use of modern technology is one aspect that the AFP must consider. According to Paret and Shy, the mobile striking forces must be well organized and have the best trained regulars to fight unorthodoxly but exploit the benefits of modern technology.¹⁶⁵ The AFP had acquired some military equipment but it was not sufficient to sustain continuous combat operations. Sophisticated weaponry and combat equipment such as helicopters and other air assets are factors in gaining arms superiority over the insurgents. One long-term typical problem is the communication capability of CAA detachments. Many detachments had either World War II vintage radios or no radios or any means of communication with the holding units. Reinforcements and other means of combat support to detachments being attacked had not been made because there was no communication link with the nearest friendly detachments. The cost of losses of firearms and other combat equipment was higher than providing these much needed communication requirements, not to mention the many CAA lives lost due to this lack of communication.

(5) Consistent Strategies. One factor that contributes to the ability of the AFP to stop insurgency is consistency in strategies. A particular strategy may not fit the overall objectives of the counterinsurgency campaign. As Andrew Scott has stated, “to decide which strategy or tactic to employ, the counterinsurgent must take several things into account: (1) whether he possesses the capabilities needed to employ the strategy or tactic; (2) whether its use fits into his over-all political, military and psychological objectives; and (3) what benefits are to be realized from its use in relation

¹⁶⁴ Max G. Manwaring, “Internal Wars: Rethinking Problem and Response,” *Studies in Asymmetry* (September 2001), p. 24.

¹⁶⁵ Paret and Shy, p. 42.

to the cost of its use.”¹⁶⁶ Scott also argues that “it is often easy to tell if the first condition is met but more difficult to tell if the second condition is satisfied.”¹⁶⁷ The example Scott presented was the destruction of a village and the killing of some insurgents. The incident could be a military success, but psychologically and politically, it was counterproductive. The previous search and destroy strategy of the armed forces was proven not effective and was a good example of strategy that did not support the political objectives and ran counter to the national objective of winning the hearts and minds of the people. The principal task of the security forces is to regain the hearts and minds of the populace.¹⁶⁸ The armed forces are more concerned with the aspect of gaining the people’s support to assist the government in its counterinsurgency campaign rather than just body counts after combat operations. The success of the campaign is measured through winning the hearts and minds of the people.

(6) Importance of Training. The hold stage prevents the guerrilla’s expansion or incursion. The CAA and the local police are tasked to isolate the population from the guerrillas. The Communist insurgents are prevented access and entry into the community. How to deny the Communists their popular base? The Communists must lose their hold over the people and be isolated from them. The author would argue that the CAA members could perform these duties of preventing access and entry of insurgents into the community if they were trained and properly equipped and led by the responsible cadres. Training is one factor that makes the CAA different from the CHDF. CAA members are competent, skilled and disciplined paramilitary. “The strength and skill of the government forces are the most powerful determinants of an insurgent campaign.”¹⁶⁹ The basic training makes the CAA members physically fit and people oriented auxiliaries and a much better component of the AFP in internal security operations. Refresher training is also required for all CAA and military cadres in order for the CAA to become a more effective counterinsurgency force.

¹⁶⁶ Scott, p. 122.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Hook and Spanier, p. 125.

¹⁶⁹ John Mackinlay, Globalization and Insurgency, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 33.

C. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN

The Philippine armed forces has been involved and seriously considered many tactical operations strategies to combat the Communist insurgency. Although the AFP has not totally defeated the NPA, it has gained the upper hand in its counterinsurgency efforts. The CAA program has been successful in many areas by regaining the areas previously under the Communist influence. The minds of the people have been won over but it is a completely different matter to win their support for the government's campaign against the Communist insurgents. According to John Mackinlay, "the strongest governments, and therefore the ones most difficult for the insurgents to operate against, are formidable because they have a high degree of popular support and legitimacy, as well as being militarily strong."¹⁷⁰ The CAA has played a significant role in this effort to win the support of the populace by extending kindness and help to those in need. In the Malaya campaign, "Operation Service" was implemented by the Police Force and the Home Guards to extend their kindness and assistance to the people in need. It was a major contribution to the battle of winning the hearts of the people.¹⁷¹

The CAA has become an effective counterinsurgency force by preventing the expansion of the base areas of the Communist insurgents. These base areas are sources of manpower, intelligence and supplies of the insurgents. A base area could be used as a training ground or staging area and source of manpower for the Communist movement. Andrew Scott argued, the larger and greater the control of these base areas, the greater the percentage of the area's resources that the insurgents could utilize.¹⁷² The CAA had been successful in making the probable areas of expansion inaccessible to the Communist insurgents.

The CAA detachments adhere to certain Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in order to protect the community and make the people feel secured. The existing dispositions of CAA detachments are tactically and strategically defensible from insurgent attacks.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁷¹ Paget, p. 67.

¹⁷² Scott, p. 103.

D. CONCLUSION

One writer argues that it would be dangerous for any government to train paramilitary forces, because in the long term, the governments are unsure of the future loyalties of these paramilitary forces. They may currently be working for the government, but as they work and gain skills, these paramilitary forces could use these same skills against the government in the future.

Thus, it is quite dangerous to train paramilitary forces.¹⁷³ The counter argument could be that the paramilitary can be effective counterinsurgency forces as long as they are provided with the correct incentives, training to be more competent and disciplined, and having good command and control by responsible cadres. Paramilitary forces had been organized almost at the same time the Philippine insurgency had reemerged in 1969. There was no recorded incident that these militias had used their skills against the government. It is accepted that the early local militias did not receive much compensation from the government but their coercive and abusive acts were basically due to their cadres' failure to control and administer the militias. It also cannot be denied that it was the government's inability to provide the proper legal sanctions for unauthorized utilization of militias that resulted in this situation.

Adequate training, proper command and control and responsible military cadres can make the Philippine paramilitary forces become effective counterinsurgency forces. The other important factors such as sufficient incentives, quality of recruits, and preparatory training were already addressed and proved useful in transforming the CAA into more effective and efficient counterinsurgency forces. The organization of the CAA is one of the essential components of the AFP' Internal Security Operations strategy designed to defeat insurgency. The CAA had successfully helped the AFP and other governmental agencies to suppress the expansion and growth of insurgency in the Philippines. The CAA as well as the military cadres need to undergo continuous refresher and proficiency training to become more competent forces and to prevent the CAA from becoming targets of opportunity by the CPP/NPA.

¹⁷³ "Philippines: Cool Response to US 'Friendly Militias' Plan," Asia Pacific Programs, August 13, 2004, http://www.abc.net.au/asiapacific/location/asia/GAPLocAsiaStories_1176364.htm (September 3, 2004), p. 2.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. INTRODUCTION

For the past 35 years, the Armed Forces of the Philippines have been engaged in fighting the Communist insurgents. The AFP has utilized different strategic concepts and principles and civil military tactics to defeat the major security threat to the Philippine government and the Filipino people: the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army. The search and destroy strategy employed by the AFP was proven not to be an effective means of defeating the Communist insurgents. The more the AFP uses this type of operational strategy, the more the AFP loses popular support because the soldiers committed more human rights violations than accomplishing the mission.

The formal objectives of an insurgency might be arranged along a continuum. At one end would be minimum objectives such as minor reforms. At the other end would be an objective such as the complete reorganization of society. Between the extremes would be objectives such as achievement of significant reforms, participation in government, control of government, overthrow of the government, and modification of the entire political system.¹⁷⁴

The aim of an insurgent movement is to accomplish the goals it has set and it can accomplish these goals only if it survives.¹⁷⁵ The CPP/NPA has survived the 35-year struggle against the Philippine government.

The AFP shifted its course through civic military operations to regain the popular support and at the same time continued to eliminate the Communists operating in the countryside and in the villages. It took a lot of effort to regain the people's support because the people had been used to supporting the Communist movement. Civic-military actions flooded the countryside to regain the people's support. The government and the military tried to convince the people that insurgency did not offer the best option for them to progress and be able to live in harmony. However, the newly created local militia-the BSDU, later renamed CHDF did not protect the populace from the

¹⁷⁴ Andrew M. Scott et al., *Insurgency*, (N. Carolina: The University of North Carolina, 1970), p. 20.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Communists, but instead committed atrocities and abuses against the people. The CHDF was branded as an arm of the local politicians and powerful political warlords. The militias were accused by both local and international human rights groups as very abusive and coercive against the people. The government had neglected the people and the paramilitaries became its tool of abuse.

During the long period of turmoil and chaos from 1974 until 1987 under the undisciplined and abusive militias, the people had resorted to organizing and forming their armed groups for their own protection. Several armed groups later emerged to be called vigilantes and had no distinction from the government militias because, in the long run, they also committed abuses.

The government was pressured to disband the CHDF and all illegal armed groups for their abusive acts and human rights violations committed against the people. However, the insurgency continued to grow and prosper. It was able to recoup and regain strength to fight the government forces again. The AFP did not take advantage of the time when Sison, Commander Dante and other Communist leaders were jailed and had absolutely no contact with the organization. The NPA splintered into several groups during this period that tried to survive independently on their own with no support from the CPP Central Committee and from its political organization, the National Democratic Front based in Manila.

B. AFP'S REFORMED PARAMILITARY FORCES

The AFP recommended reviving the militias to assist the government forces in fighting the Communists. This time the AFP learned several lessons from the previous militias, such as that improper utilization would prolong the insurgency problem. The militias being referred to were the CHDF previously organized to assist the AFP in its counterinsurgency operations. It would be detrimental to the legitimacy of the armed forces to protect the people and the communities from the insurgents and other lawless elements of society. The AFP realized that the proper use and adequate control of militias would help combat insurgency. Separation of the populace from the insurgents is an important element in defeating the insurgents. The insurgents would lose their mass base support and their sanctuaries for survival.

The reformed militias had a significant role to play in the counterinsurgency campaign. The proper use of the government militias as envisioned would mean obtaining the popular base of the insurgents, winning over the people and eventually gaining the people's support against the Communist movement.

The AFP has defined the clear role and mission, the functions, the training, the means of recruiting, the pay and allowances and other benefits of the CAA as well as the mode of control and relations with the local elected officials. The armed forces aimed to primarily utilize the paramilitary forces to separate the populace from the insurgents, and at the same time, gain the people's support for the insurgency campaign against the CPP/NPA. However, the present guidelines and SOP for the utilization of the CAA still need to be improved and enhanced with regard to training and command and control. Many debacles recently involving CAA detachments were caused by the incompetence of both cadres and militias, and ineffective command and control. The CAA must conduct regular training to enhance competence and professionalism among the cadres and militias. The CAA has been active in village defense and had regained many villages previously influenced by the Communists. These villages are now supporting the government campaign. However, better command and control aspect still needs to be studied to maximize the use of paramilitaries against the insurgency. After all, the total defeat of insurgency is the overall aim of the government and the armed forces.

C. VIABLE OPTIONS

The following options will further improve and enhance the use of CAA paramilitary forces in the counterinsurgency campaign.

1. Organize One CAA Battalion that Will Administer and Manage the CAA

Due to budgetary constraints, the AFP may not be able to organize the number of battalions as per organization of the CAA. But at least it can mobilize one battalion in non-insurgency infested areas and two battalions in heavily infested areas. There are three divisions that comprise a big number of CAA members. Therefore, a total of 12 battalions will be organized and restructured for CAA administration and management.

a. Advantages

- Unity of Command and Control is achieved on the administration and supervision of the CAA.
- The AFP's operations clear-hold-support methodology can still be implemented.
- The AFP campaign plan will push through as envisioned.
- Maneuver battalions will continue to perform its mission to combat the communist movement.
- The AFP will not implement major reorganization and adjustments in the operational boundaries of major units.
- The training of all CAA will be standard and more focused on village defense, security of the populace and prevention of the incursion of the Communist insurgents.
- The shoot and communicate capabilities of CAA detachments, particularly those located in remote villages, will be addressed.
- The holding unit will attend to the administrative problems such as delayed subsistence allowances and benefits for CAA members, as well as operational support. Morale of CAA members will remain high.
- "Ghost" CAA members will be eliminated. "Ghost" means that some CAA members exist in the payroll only. This problem can be easily checked because there will be only 12 battalion commanders responsible for the payroll of all CAA members. The auditing and resources management procedures will be simpler and lesser chance of corruption.
- The CAA battalions will be directly concerned on the development of the skills and expertise of all CAA members.
- The CAA will be more responsive and receptive to their roles as village defense and as protector of the populace.

b. Disadvantages

- Entails great costs to personnel and equipment requirements (firepower, mobility, and communication) to include training and arming.
- The implementation and transition period will be longer because of recruitment, training, arming, construction of facilities and other administrative requirements.
- Prone to exploitation and abuse in the long run by powerful politicians

2. Designate One Battalion in Every Brigade to Handle the Administration and Management of CAA Members

A brigade has three maneuver battalions. A total of 27 battalions will be used for CAA duties. The remaining maneuver battalions will have expanded area of operations because of the area previously occupied by the other battalion.

a. Advantages

- Unity of Command and Control is achieved for the administration and supervision of the CAA
- Supports the AFP' Operational clear hold support methodology
- Minimal time of transition and implementation
- Training, arming and fill up of personnel requirements entail lesser costs.

b. Disadvantages

- The AFP campaign plan is disrupted because of reduced maneuver battalions. This option will make at least 27 battalions or approximately 30% of the previous maneuver battalions to be designated for territorial functions.
- There will be more petroleum, oil and lubricant (POL) and mobility requirements because of the extended areas of coverage.
- Battalions designated for CAA duties will need additional personnel and equipment (firepower, mobility, and communication) fill up, and training.
- The AFP will implement major readjustments of operational boundaries of major units.
- The maneuver battalions and other mobile forces will have expanded area of operations.

3. The Special Operations Command (SOCOM) Will Handle the Administration of the CAA Nationwide

SOCOM is composed of the Scout Ranger Regiment, the Special Forces Regiment and the Civil Affairs Group.

a. Advantages

- Unity of Command and Control is achieved on the administration and supervision of all CAA
- SOCOM does not need training because they know how to handle the CAA in terms of recruitment, training, arming and other administrative functions
- Maneuver battalions can concentrate on internal security operations because they are relieved of territorial functions

b. Disadvantages

- SOCOM will need to filled up on personnel and equipment requirements
- The AFP campaign plan will be disrupted because many SOCOM units are currently deployed to support the Area Commands for special operations missions.
- SOCOM units (Scout Rangers, Special Forces and Civil Affairs) will be only utilized for territorial functions.

4. Other Options

There are other options that can be tested and implemented to seek better command and control of all the CAA, but these options entail large amounts of financial resources in personnel, equipment (firepower, mobility and communication), facilities, trainings and other administrative needs. These options are not preferred not only because of financial constraint but more because of operational considerations such transition time and organizational problems. These options are:

- Designate one battalion in every division as the CAA administrators
- Designate the AFP Reserve Command to handle the CAA administration
- Task the PNP to handle the administration of the CAA nationwide
- Restructure the battalions' organization by adding one company as the administrator for the CAA

D. RECOMMENDATION

Considering the advantages and disadvantages, the most viable and workable option is the organization of one CAA battalion in a division with less insurgency and at least two CAA battalions in heavily insurgent infested areas. This option entails great financial cost initially but on the operational standpoint, it is the most feasible option in the long run. The primary role and function of the CAA battalions is to administer, manage and supervise the activities of the CAA members. CAA battalions will be responsible for the administrative and operational activities of all CAA in the division. CAA battalions will primarily command and control all CAA members.

APPENDIX A. CAA/SCAA COMPANY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

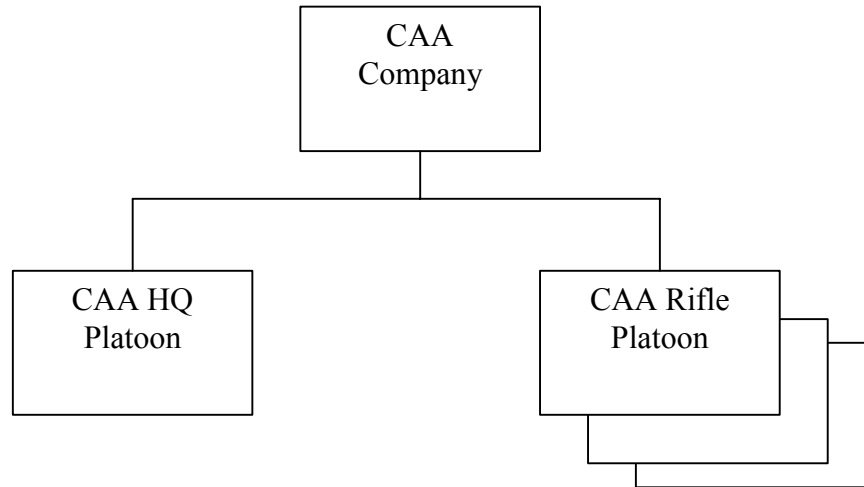


Figure 1. Manning of CAA Company (From: General Headquarters Letter of Instruction 20/01 (*TANGOL- BAYAN CHARLIE*) issued on August 20, 2001).

Company Headquarters	Grade	Strength
Company Commander	01- 03	1
Company First Sgt	E7- E8	1
Supply Sgt	E5- E6	1
Admin/ Finance/ Intel NCO	E5- E6	1
Asst Supply Sgt	CAA	1
Asst Admin/ Finance/ Intel NCO	CAA	1

Rifle Platoons (3)

Platoon leader	E6	1
Team leader	E4	2
Riflemen	CAA	22

Recapitulation

Company Headquarters	Officer	1
	EP	3
	CAA	22
Rifle Platoons (3)	EP	9
	CAA	66
	TOTAL	101

APPENDIX B. ALLOWANCES AND BENEFITS OF CAA/SCAA

Emolument	Regular CAA	Amount	Special CAA	Amount
Subsistence Allowance	Basic subsistence	Php 60 per day	Subsistence shouldered by business firm	Php 60 per day or may be increased by business firm
Educational Benefits	Can avail AFPEBSO educational benefit program	Dependent on course and school	Dependent on Company policy	Dependent on company policy
Hospitalization and Medical Care	Treated in military hospitals for injuries and sickness incurred in the line of duty as authorized by existing AFP circulars at government expense	Dependent on ailment and duration of treatment	Confinement in military hospitals authorized provided that all expenses incurred out of the treatment of the SCAA are shouldered by the business firm or company/ LGU	Dependent on ailment and duration of treatment
Combat Clothing and Individual Equipment	Yearly Issuance of Basic CAA CCIE Items at government cost	Dependent on budget allocation	CCIEs of 10 line items to be shouldered by the business firm/ LGU	Usual CCIE line items maybe be increased by business firm/ LGU
Disability Benefits	Special financial assistance pursuant to RA 6963 AFP MBAI insurance benefit	Depends on the extent of disability per AFPMBAI existing policy	Dependent on company policy	Depends on the extent of insurance
Separation Gratuity Pay	Members of a deactivated CAA company shall be entitled to a separation gratuity in accordance with the provisions of AFP Circular Nr 2 dated 07 March 1994	See GHQ circular in Appendix 2 from government	Separation gratuities for members of a deactivated SCAA company shall be granted by the business firm or LGU	Amount IAW but not limited to the revised circular 2 at company's expense
Death Benefits	Special Financial Assistance Burial Assistance MBAI Insurance	Php 10,950.00 from government Php 2,000.00 from government	Special Financial Assistance to be given by the company Burial Assistance MBAI Insurance	10,950 of maybe increased by business firm/ LGU 2000 or maybe increased by business firm/ LGU

Emolument	Regular CAA	Amount	Special CAA	Amount
		18,000.00 for battle casualty from government 6,000.00 for non battle casualty from government		18,000.00 for battle casualty or maybe increased by company/ LGU 6,000.00 for non battle or both maybe increased by the business firm/ LGU
Military Burial Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Military Honors provided by the AFP b. The Philippine flag shall be presented to the wife or family of the CAA who dies. while: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. On active duty or active duty training ii. Performing authorized travel to and from the area of deployment or training. iii. Hospitalized/undergoing treatment for injuries incurred or disease contracted while on active duty or training. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Military Honors to be provided by the AFP b. The Philippine flag shall be presented to the wife or family of the SCAA who dies. While: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. On active duty or active duty training ii. Performing authorized travel to and from the area of deployment or training. iii. Hospitalized/ undergoing treatment for injuries incurred or disease contracted while on active duty or training. 	

Table 1. Allowances and Benefits of CAA/SCAA (From: General Headquarters Letter of Instruction 20/01 (*TANGOL- BAYAN CHARLIE*) issued on August 20, 2001).

**APPENDIX C. PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR CAA/SCAA
BASIC MILITARY TRAINING (12 WEEKS)**

<u>SUBJECTS</u>	<u>NO. OF PERIODS</u>
I. SERVICE ORIENTATION MODULE (1st – 2nd Week)	52
Mission and Organization of AFP	4
CAA Organization and Administration	8
Legal Bases of CAFGU Creation	8
Military Courtesy and Discipline	8
CAFGU Rules and Regulations	8
Guard Duty	4
Drills and Ceremonies	4
AFP Physical Fitness Program	4
Marches and Bivouacs	4
II. HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL RELATIONS (2nd – 4th Week)	104
And VALUE FORMATION MODULE	
Human Rights and Int'l Humanitarian Law	48
Rules of Land Warfare	8
Rules of Engagement	8
AFP Code of Ethics	16
Civil Relations	8
Character Guidance and Value Formation	16
III. JUSTICE and LAW and ORDER MODULE (5th Week)	32
Military Justice	16
Pertinent Laws on Revised Penal Code	16
IV. INDIVIDUAL SKILLS DEV'T MODULE (6th – 7th Week)	60
Elem Map Reading and Ground Nav	12
Intelligence Training	4
Elementary Signal Communication	4
Concealment and Camouflage	4
Personal Hygiene, First Aid and Fld Sanitation	4
Hand to Hand Combat	16
Individual Day and Night Training	16
V. WEAPONS PROFICIENCY MODULE (8th – 10th Week)	68
Individual Weapons Training	16
Preparatory Marksmanship Training	16
Record Firing	16
Grenades	8
Night Firing Techniques	12

VI.	SMALL UNIT OPERATIONS MODULE (11th – 12th Week)	116
	OFFENSE (48 periods)	
	Squad tactics	8
	Techniques of fire	4
	Patrolling	8
	Raids	4
	Ambuscades	4
	Cordon and Search	4
	Special Operation TEAM Training	16
	DEFENSE (68 periods)	
	Field Fortification	8
	Landmine Warfare	8
	Battle Indoctrination	8
	Harbouring	8
	Immediate Action Drill	12
	Route Security Operations	4
	Movement Security	4
	Perimeter Defense	4
	Checkpoint Operations	4
	Counter Guerilla Operations	8
VII.	PRACTICAL EXERCISES (As scheduled)	
	Inspections, Drills and Ceremonies	24
	Marches and Bivouacs	16
	Physical Fitness Exercise	24
VIII.	TROOPS INFORMATION AND EDUCATION	12
IX.	MILITARY STAKES, EXAMINATION AND CRITIQUE	16
X.	COMMANDER'S TIME	4
	TOTAL	528 Periods

Table 2. Program of Instructions for CAA/SCAA Basic Military Training (12 Weeks)
 (From: General Headquarters Letter of Instruction 20/01 (*TANGOL- BAYAN CHARLIE*) issued on August 20, 2001)

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